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Chabad Lubavitch to Honour Steven Latner

Plans are in full swing for the upcoming annual dinner of Chabad Lubavitch. The gala celebration to be held November 20, 2014 will honour Steven Latner. "This honour is long overdue," said Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum, Regional Director of Chabad Lubavitch, "and will give us the opportunity to recognize the Latner family for their long standing support of Chabad Lubavitch and their involvement in our organization."

"It all began some thirty-five years ago when I came to



the Greenwin office without an appointment to see Steven's father Mr. Albert Latner" said Rabbi Z. Aaron Grossbaum. "He offered me a Havana cigar and although I don't smoke, I lit up and that gave me a 45 minute window of opportunity to explain what Chabad Lubavitch is all about."

In addition to the city wide efforts of Chabad, visible to all, Steven and his wife Lynda, have witnessed firsthand the

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The Sotloff Initiative

Out of the grim savagery of another brutal execution by ISIS, comes a most inspiring tale. As has been widely reported, Steve Sotloff observed some Jewish traditions and rituals during his time of captivity, even while hiding the fact that he was Jewish.

When everyone was praying to Mecca he turned inconspicuously to face Jerusalem and recite the Shema. Steve even managed to fast last Yom Kippur by feigning illness! As noted in the very popular London Daily Mail headline "Heroic Steven Sotloff feigned illness so he could still fast for Yom Kippur." Talk about a Kiddush Hashem – what a sanctification of G-d's name!

If Daniel Perl reminded us, by the heroic way he died ("My father's Jewish, my mother's Jewish, I'm Jewish,") of the unbreakable bond between the Jewish Neshama (soul) and Hashem (G-d), then Steve Sotloff taught us how to LIVE like a Jew, under any circumstance!

How courageous and how inspiring your observances are, Steve, to me and the rest of your family; the Jewish people. How free and liberated you were, Steve, even while you lived your last year of life in chains. How perverted and pathetically shackled are your evil captors, even while brandishing those potent weapons.

To my fellow community members; together let us proclaim the "Toronto Sotloff Initiative", where EVERY Jew in Toronto, whose health allows, fasts this Yom Kippur. Fasting on Yom Kippur is about being a little elevated from the mundane for one day, allowing us to fully focus on our relationship with G-d.

Our dear brother Steven, may Hashem avenge your blood. From our part, we will never forget you. This Yom Kippur, as we work on our relationship with G-d, as we resolve to be better people, it is you who will serve as our guiding light!

May we quickly merit a world of redemption and Moshiach, when we will be reunited with Daniel and Steve, and we will then finally merit the better world they both so aspired to.

Best Wishes for a happy and blessed new year and an easy fast.

TORAH IN THE WINTER

Each week of the year, another of the Torah’s fifty-four parshiot (sections) is studied, publicly read in the synagogue, and its lessons applied to daily living. Thus the Jew lives with the Torah: the Five Books of Moses are his calendar, their chapters and verses marking, defining, molding and inspiring the weeks and days of his year.

Simchat Torah is the day on which we conclude the annual Torah-reading cycle. On this day, we read the Torah section of *Vezot Haberachah* (Deuteronomy 33–34), and immediately begin a new Torah-reading cycle with the reading of the first chapter of Genesis.

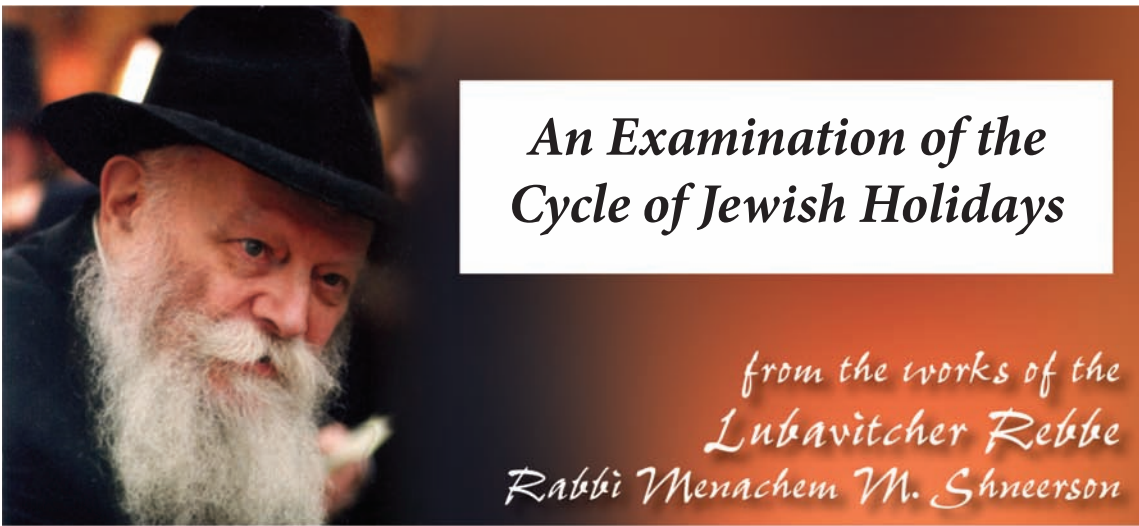
Simchat Torah means “the rejoicing of the Torah,” for the Torah rejoices on this day. The Torah is the stuff of the Jew’s life: his link to his Creator, his national mandate, the very purpose of his existence. But the Jew is no less crucial to the Torah than the Torah is to the Jew: it is he and she who devote their life to its study, teaching and practice; he and she who carry its wisdom and ethos to all peoples of the earth; he and she who translate its precepts and ideals into concrete reality.

So if we rejoice in the Torah on Simchat Torah, lifting its holy scrolls into our arms and filling the synagogue with song and dance, the Torah, too, rejoices in us on this day. The Torah, too, wishes to dance, but, lacking the physical apparatus to do so, it employs the body of the Jew. On Simchat Torah, the Jew becomes the dancing feet of the Torah

Why Not on Shavuot?

Simchat Torah immediately follows the festival of Sukkot. Indeed, the biblical name for Simchat Torah is Shemini Atzeret, which means “the eighth day of retention,” for the function of this festival is for us to retain and absorb the attainments of the seven days of Sukkot.

(Outside the land of Israel, where the festival of Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah is observed for two days, the name Shemini Atzeret is usually applied to the first day and Simchat Torah to the second—the day on which the actual conclusion and beginning of the Torah takes place. In essence, however, the two days constitute a single festival, and the name Shemini Atzeret applies to both its days.)



But why celebrate Simchat Torah on Shemini Atzeret, the twenty-second (and twenty-third) day(s) of the month of Tishrei? As a rule, the festivals are located at points on the calendar that mark the historical sources of their import and significance. Passover is observed on the fifteenth of Nissan, the anniversary of our Exodus from Egypt on Passover; Rosh Hashanah occurs on the first of Tishrei, the date of the creation of man; and so on. Accordingly, would it not have been more appropriate to rejoice over the Torah on the

sixth of Sivan, the day on which G-d revealed Himself to us at Mount Sinai and granted us the Torah as our eternal heritage?

Indeed, we mark that date with the festival of Shavuot—a festival devoted to reexperiencing the revelation at Sinai and reiterating our covenant with G-d forged by Torah. Yet our joy in the Torah is reserved for the festival of Shemini Atzeret—a date with no apparent historical connection to our relationship with the Torah.

One might explain that our living with Torah through the an-

nual reading cycle, studying it and implementing it in our daily lives, is of greater significance than our original receiving of it at Sinai. But this itself requires explanation: why do we conclude and begin the Torah on Shemini Atzeret? Why did Moses, who established the Torah-reading cycle, not schedule it to end and recommence on the festival of Shavuot?

Calendar Twins

Actually, a closer look at Shemini Atzeret and Shavuot reveals a striking resemblance between the two festivals. Shavuot,

too, carries the name Atzeret, for it too serves as a vehicle of retention and absorption for the festival that precedes it. The resemblance is further intensified by the fact that, like Shemini Atzeret, Shavuot is also an eighth day of retention—a one-day festival which culminates a cycle of seven. Shemini Atzeret immediately follows the seven days of Sukkot, while Shavuot closes the seven-week sefirah count begun on Passover.

The two atzerets mirror each other across the yearly cycle. The Jewish year is like a circle with two poles—two key months, Nissan and Tishrei, are both considered, each in its own realm, to be the first and head of the entire year. The fifteenth of Nissan is the date of the Exodus, and begins the seven-day festival of Passover. Exactly six months later, the fifteenth of Tishrei begins the other seven-day festival of the Jewish year, Sukkot. And both of these seven-day festivals are capped by a one-day atzeret. The only break in the symmetry is the fact that the atzeret of Sukkot is a literal, contiguous eighth

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Moshiach’s Donkey

And Moses took his wife and children, set them upon the donkey, and returned to the land of Egypt

Exodus 4:20

The prophet Zechariah describes Moshiach as “a pauper, riding on a donkey.” The simple meaning of the verse is that Moshiach -- whom the Midrash describes as “greater than Abraham, higher than Moses, and loftier than the supernal angels” (Yalkut Shimoni after Isaiah 52:13) -- is the epitome of self-effacement. Indeed, humility is the hallmark of the righteous: they recognize that their tremendous talents and achievements, and the power vested in them as

leaders, are not theirs but their Creator’s. They live not to realize and fulfill themselves, but to serve the divine purpose of creation.

On a deeper level, Moshiach’s donkey represents the essence of the messianic process: a process that began with the beginning of time and which constitutes the very soul of history. In the beginning, the Torah tells us, when G-d created the heavens and the earth, when the universe was still empty, unformed, and shrouded in darkness, the spirit of G-d hovered above the emerging existence. Says the Midrash: “The spirit of G-d hovered” -- this is the spirit of Moshiach.” For Moshiach represents the divine spirit of creation -- the vision of the perfected world that is G-d’s purpose in creating it and populating it with willful, thinking and achieving beings.

Moshiach’s donkey has a long, prestigious history. Time and again it makes its appearance through the generations, surfacing at key junctures of the messianic process. Each time we see it fulfilling the same function, but in a slightly different manner -- reflecting the changes our world undergoes as it develops toward its ultimate state of perfection.

Abraham, Moses, and Moshiach

Moshiach’s donkey first appears in the year 2084 from creation (1677 bce), as Abraham heads for the “Binding of Isaac”, his tenth and greatest reiteration of his faith in G-d. “Abraham rose early in the morning and readied his donkey,” the Torah relates (Genesis 22:3), and loaded it with supplies for the Binding (the wood, the fire, and the knife) for the three-day trek from Hebron to Mount Moriah in Je-

rusalem.

Seven generations later, Moses was also dispatched on a mission by G-d: to take the Jewish people out of Egypt and bring them to Mount Sinai, where I shall communicate to them their mission in life as My chosen people. So “Moses took his wife and children, set them upon the donkey, and set out for Egypt.” The donkey, stresses the Torah -- the very same donkey, our sages explain, that served Abraham and that will bear Moshiach.

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ON OUR COVER

On our cover a painting by Chassidic artist Michael Muchnik, titled “Bringing Heaven Down To Earth”.

Chassidic masters teach us that while earth may seem like a jungle, in G-d’s eyes it is a beautiful garden that needs to be cultivated. During the month of Elul, it is up to a Jew to initiate a relationship with G-d in order to bring heaven down to earth.

The World of Lubavitch Chabad Lubavitch of Ontario

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Chabad Lubavitch to Honour Steven Latner

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work of Chabad at the numerous universities where their children often visited the Chabad House for Friday night Shabbat dinner. From a personal perspective Rabbi Grossbaum noted, “Steven is a dear personal friend, he has never let me down, even if he is travelling overseas, he always responds when I need him.”

Indeed, after some four decade of public service, Chabad Lubavitch is recognized as a catalyst that connects Jews with Judaism. From our flagship centre in Thornhill, the Chabad Lubavitch Organization reaches out to the entire Jewish community with programs that continues to educate and promote traditional values. With an unrestricted mandate that caters to young and old alike, new initiatives are constantly being added. Most significant of late is the embrace of technology and our informative web presence on line. The cyber site: chabad.ca is a virtual reservoir of all things Jewish. In addition to numerous essays, holiday guidance, life-cycle info, the site connects the entire Jewish world.

Whether you are looking for kosher food in Beijing, to purchase a mezuzah for a friend in South Dakota, map a trail of comfort (and assistance) for your son as he backpacks through Asia, the site brings it all to the screen of your iPhone, (or computer screen).

In the formative days of Chabad Lubavitch of Southern Ontario, while still in its infancy the Latner family graciously put all their resources at our disposal. This would come to include their office staff, their trades, suppliers, and consultants. Indeed, this access and their expertise as land developers and builders facilitated construction of the Chabad Lubavitch headquarters at 770 Chabad Gate, Thornhill. So too, over the years, their various partners and associates were subtly invited to come on board as supporters.

During the course of some three decades the connection matured and intensified. Today, the third generation, the children of Steven and Michael are also lending a helping hand to ensure the success of Chabad Lubavitch. The dinner will be held at the Beth Abraham Yoseph Synagogue in Thornhill.

Lubavitch Day Camp Enjoys Record Enrollment

Close to seven hundred children attended Lubavitch Day Camp for the summer of 2014, and having stretched thin all amenities and utilized every conceivable space, some late comers could not be accommodated. Children could be seen

the campers learned rhythm and different beats. Other specialties included; karate, art, swimming, yoga, music and movement, Zumba and cake decorating.

During the intensified ‘nine days’ of mourning the destruc-

apprentice they receive guidance and the opportunity for growth with respect to responsibility and maturity.

The CIT’s boys division were invited up to Haliburton to spend a weekend Shabbaton at Camp Gan Israel. In addition to experiencing the exuberance at the Shabbat meals, the teens engaged in numerous activities and enjoyed some of the regional recreational attractions. Merging both camps together proved beneficial to both, the host camp and guests, both were at their best behavior.

The annual Shabbat dinner for campers and their families, held towards the end of the summer attracted a capacity crowd. The cuisine and Shabbat delicacies were prepared with love and devotion by Mrs. Estee Steinmetz and the counselors. The all night effort proved to be exceptionally successful and managed to feed and satisfy even the additional unexpected guests. The Friday night program held at the Chabad Lubavitch Community Centre was heralded in with the unmistakable sound of children’s voices filling the hallways. Some two hundred and fifty campers, parents, and counselors joined together to welcome the Shabbat with prayer, song,



The girls division of LDC enjoyed a zumba session.

in the foyer, coatroom, and the orts. The boys division which had a record enrollment of over 200, was housed at the CHAT Willowdale campus. Its close proximity to the Irv Chapley tennis courts accommodated for the specialty sport of tennis which was led by Joel the founder of Ten Ten Tennis.

The all-time record enrollment was facilitated by well over 200 counselors and staff members. Without doubt the success and excellent reputation of the LDC can be attributed to the director Estee Steinmetz, who is attentive to the needs of each and every camper. Notwithstanding her many years of experience, Mrs. Steinmetz is noted to “think out of the box,” and continues to implement new initiatives and novel programs. Indeed, “with so many youngsters coming back year after year, we have no choice but to be creative,” said Estee Steinmetz. New field trips included, zip lining and tube sliding at Chicopee Park, and African Lion Safari. These excursions complemented the existing roster of a visit to Woodbine Indoor Park, the Metro Zoo, Chuck E Cheese, and of course the end of summer trip to Canada’s Wonderland. For the older divisions it was Go Karting, roller skating, and for something different there was whirly ball, a derivative of basket ball from the [dis] comfort of bumper cars.

For the Girls division and the Preschool, an added specialty was drumming! Once a week, under the guidance of Daniella of Just Drum It

tion of the holy Temple, when the pleasure of recreational swimming is suspended, a giant 18’ water slide was erected and provided relief and the opportunity to cool off.

The CIT program in LDC continues to gain city-wide recognition. Boasting over sixty young teens, this unique experience allows teenagers to enjoy the summer months



while acquiring the necessary skills needed to become staff members in the future. The CIT’s, an acronym for Counselor in Training, embrace a dual agenda. Their daily program includes activities for their own enjoyment, such as field trips, art projects, and sports, and also includes training sessions. Activities are planned by their dynamic leaders to ensure maximum benefit for what might be their last experience as campers. Once a week the CIT members spend a full day with experienced counsellors to learn, hands – on, what being a responsible and caring counselor entails. While serving as an

and dance. The evening atmosphere was an excellent sampling of the prevailing LDC spirit.

To keep the parents informed, LDC harnessed to power of Facebook. Daily updates and photos were posted which informed the parents about the upcoming activities and when to expect late arrivals back home. For the inside scoop and for a glimpse of “behind the scenes” the out of town counsellors produced 6 Episodes of Babaga News. These comical productions posted on YouTube continue to carry over the camp experience well after the summer has come to an end.

THE JEWISH CONNECTION
(905) 731-7777
Selection 2

Camp Gan Israel Completes Third Season

Now after completing its third season, Camp Gan Israel in Haliburton has acquired the halachic distinction of chazaka, stability. Indeed, a project of this magnitude would not be possible without the devotion and dedication of the two visionaries, Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum and his partner Mr. Sidney Spiegel. Together they formed the proverbial biblical alliance of Yissachar and Zevulun. The former was blessed by Jacob, the third Patriarch, with erudition and scholarship and the latter with entrepreneurial prowess. The two entered an agreement to share the combined net gain. Zevulun, the merchant would provide the sustenance needed so that the family of Yissachar could dedicate their lives for Torah study without worry. Each would offer their best in order to realize maximum results. So too, Camp Gan Israel, Haliburton was

rector. The fresh water lake is home to a variety of fish and this sport was also introduced this summer when the children went fishing with makeshift rods which were soon after replaced by with “reel, line, hooks and sinkers,” graciously provide by Mr. Gary Stern. The amenities and facilities remain a work in progress. Currently, a sixth double bunkhouse is under construction to facilitate the projected enrollment of 150 campers per session. So too, a large tract is being cleared and leveled for field sports and will honour the memory of Marty Handelman Alev haShalom, a dear friend of Chabad Lubavitch who loved the great outdoors. “Once all the heavy equipment leaves the site, we will then focus on the landscape and the “greening” of all the exposed terrain,” said Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum. The daily routine was



blessed by the combined stewardship of two distinct leaders, that address and facilitate the material and spiritual needs, the integral components of Camp Gan Israel as envisioned by the Rebbe of blessed memory. Indeed, the overnight camp continues to receive high marks and copious compliments from parents, expressing the sentiments of their children who attended and brought home wonderful memories. And why not, all the facilities are spacious and custom built, surrounded by lush foliage and towering trees. The 207 acre site is located in picturesque Haliburton, a village surrounded by dozens of lakes and forests. The campgrounds meet up with 6000 ft of shoreline along Basshaunt Lake. The pristine lakefront (no motors) managed by trained lifeguards is used not only for swimming but for all sorts of nautical activity. In addition to the canoes, rowboats and paddle boats, the camp acquired 3 sailboats. This addition graciously gifted by Mr. Richard Cooper, introduced the art of sailing. “This sport entails teamwork, skill, maintenance, and responsibility, and it is these features that we wish to promote,” said Itchy Grossbaum, Camp Di-

carefully planned with exciting divergence almost every day. The administration was attuned to any and all needs a camper may have had. The counselors were devoted and dedicated beyond the call of duty. The spirit, especially on Shabbat was truly amazing, best paraphrased by the traditional Shabbat liturgy, “A glimpse of the world to come, is the day of Shabbat.” Each of the three Shabbat meals was a feast to behold, replete with life lesson stories and complemented by classic camp songs composed over the course of some 50 years in CGI’s around the world, with lyrics worthy of “topping the charts!” The girls, during the month of July favoured creative activities. This objective was facilitated by numerous options; for some it was specialty baking, for some scrapbooking, still others, dance and drama, or sports. Naturally the boys session, during the month of August, was dominated by competitive sports. The youngsters learned to be sensitive to others, be a member of a team effort, and how to resolve their differences. During the month of July, the capacity enrollment brought together girls from all over the



On a visit to monitor the progress of camps building expansion, the Spiegel family enjoy breakfast at Gan Israel. L to R: Mark Steinfeld, Rabbis Zalman & Yitzchak Grossbaum, Sidney & Naomi Spiegel, Ashley Fienberg & Esther Grossbaum.

world. Under the meticulous care of Goldy Grossbaum, each camper was treated and perhaps pampered like a daughter. Keeping with camp tradition, the girls session included the “Mock Wedding” romantically held on the waterfront dock while the sun was setting, and for the boys it was the ever exhausting two day competitive called Colour War. Still, to satisfy high octane campers for the duration of four weeks, you must be privy to the “secret sauce” recipe. And in this regard everyone, from camper, to counselor, to visitor will attest to the culinary skills of Manis Okounev who runs a spotless kitchen and introduces diversity even when preparing common fare. Looking after all medical concerns, from scrapes and bruises, to administering TLC when needed, is Rabbi Yisroel D. Goldstein, a long time member of Thornhill Hat-zalah, a volunteer brigade of first responders.

Now after our third season, the celebrated late Saturday night creative smorgasbord prepared by Mrs. Esther Grossbaum and her daughter Bluma, has become a staple and serves as a platform for the staff to interact with the administration on a weekly basis. But, ultimately an overnight camp site is a virtual village and subject to myriad de-

tails and contingencies. At the centre of gravity and keeping all the systems humming while juggling and responding to diverse needs, is camp director Rabbi Itchy Grossbaum. Still this monumental endeavour is a work in progress, with much in store in order to create an oasis where youngsters will enjoy the great outdoors while they grow both physically and spiritually.



Pre Rosh Hashana Trip to Ohel

During the month of Elul, on the eve of the new year, Jews from all over the world will be visiting the holy resting place of Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, of blessed memory, the Lubavitcher Rebbe to petition Heaven for a blessed New Year. Pictured above (L to R) Rabbi Z Aaron Grossbaum, Alex Shnaider, Fred Waks, Dr. Jon Barret, Allan Goslan, Randy Masters, Stuart Suckonic, David Goodman, Stephen Tile.

Refurbished Mikvah Celebration Honours Leah Aiello

“Good ideas should be carried out,” so goes a well worn cliché. Indeed, this was certainly evident at last year’s birthday party of Mrs. Leah Aiello. In keeping with the Rebbe’s initiative to utilize a birthday as a time of reflection and resolve, Leah announced to her guests that all gifts should be in the form of a contribution towards a new luxurious bridal suite at the Chabad Women’s Mikvah. Soon after, the giving and caring nature of Mrs. Aiello infectious began to snowball, both with resources and with the scope of the endeavour. Seeing the stark contrast from the newly built and elegantly appointed bridal suite to the existing décor of the other prep rooms, Mrs. Aiello rallied the ladies to think big. Soon the entire Mikvah was being renovated and no effort or cost was spared.

Notwithstanding the repositioning of fixtures which required concrete blasting, the Mikva continued to serve patron without interruption. Indeed, this could only be made possible by the yeoman efforts and timeless devotion of



Mrs. Esther Grossbaum (r) presents Mrs. Leah Aiello with a set of Chabad Rebbe Coins as a token of appreciation.

Mrs. Aiello and her crew. On a daily basis as the contractors would depart, Leah and her crew would appear and prepare the facility as if they were to receive and entertain dignitaries. With the cost escalating in tandem with the upgrades, a “Crowd Funding” campaign was launched and within 24 hours a considerable sum was raised.

One year later, on Rosh Chodesh Elul, August 27, 2014 the ladies once again gathered to celebrate. But this time it was not just a few friends but a grateful community. The birthday initiative of one individual became the embrace of many. At an exquisite birthday Bracha brunch held at the Chabad Lubavitch Community Centre, Mrs. Esther Grossbaum paid tribute to Leah Aiello and presented her with a limited edition set of Chabad Rebbe Coins. The bronze minted coins, a series of five, depicts an image of the one of the Chabad leaders on one side and an all embracing one line mission statement on the other side. In recognition, the honouree acknowl-

edged the privilege and zechus to spearhead an endeavour that facilitates the holiness of the G-dly soul within each and every Jew. Mrs. Sultana Nakkar whose legendary devotion to family Purity spans some four decades, noted Leah’s resolve, “she didn’t just sigh Oy! but she acted with alacrity on her conviction. Needless to say, an all embracing conviction of this nature would not be possible without the support and mirrored commitment of Leah’s husband, David. In paying tribute to his Aishet Chayal, David acknowledged that all the success he enjoys in commerce is a result of reaching out to others.

After a sumptuous and lavish meal the women enjoyed a tour of the newly renovated Mikvah. No doubt, as Esther Grossbaum had noted earlier in her tribute, “You only get one chance to make a first impression,” we are certain, she continued, “that the well appointed facility will add to the allure and importance of Mikvah observance and most definitely bring divine blessings to all who made it happen.”

GOT YIDDISHKEIT? Ad campaign Launched

During the last few years Chabad Lubavitch has grown and expanded considerably. In addition to our Thornhill flagship centre on Chabad Gate, the GTA is host to 15 Chabad satellite centres, strategically positioned in recognizable Jewish enclaves. Indeed, with the focus on a specific area, countless families and individuals have availed themselves to the neighbourhood young rabbi and rebbetzin who man these posts. The casual one on one interaction, discussions, and dialog has helped fan the flame of the soul. For some it’s the warmth of a family Shabbat dinner, for others the dynamic holiday programs, and yet for others it’s the

creative children’s Torah class.

Another area of visible growth are the Chabad House student centres. Today all the major Universities along the rim of Southern Ontario are graced with a Chabad presence. The resident rabbi and rebbetzin create a “haimishe” atmosphere that is most inviting and appreciated.

The Chabad House Friday night dinners enjoy much popularity and are attended by hundreds of students on a weekly basis. The sumptuous meal is complemented by discussions and social interaction amongst the attendees.

To tie all this together and to underscore the shared

common objective, Chabad Lubavitch has launched a series of point ads. Each week the banner advertisement will highlight a single objective. The ads will appear weekly in the same spot, in both, The Canadian Jewish News and The Jewish Tribune.

The succinct message can’t be missed and invites the reader to avail himself to his nearest Chabad centre for accommodation and assistance accordingly. Naturally as we prepare for the High Holidays the message is: “Got High Holiday Seats?” Alongside the message, is an impressive list of the 23 Chabad branches ready and able, to be of help.


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got shabbat
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ChabadFlamingo.com

CHABAD OF RICHMOND HILL
ChabadRC.org

CHABAD ISRAELI CENTER
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CHABAD OF MIDTOWN
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CHABAD ON CAMPUS

CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF HAMILTON
JewishMcMaster.ca

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CHABAD OF WATERLOO
JewishWaterloo.com

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JewishU.ca

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UTJews.com

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CHABAD OF KINGSTON
ChabadStudentCentre.ca

BRINGING THE LIGHT OF TORAH AND WARMTH OF MITZVOT TO JEWS EVERYWHERE

The Weinbaum Family Tefillin Bank



It all started some 10 years ago when Rabbi Grossbaum received a casual call from a dear friend. “What happens when someone is ready to don Tefillin daily, but cannot afford the cost?” the caller inquired. After a long moment of silence, the caller, Mr. Jack Weinbaum spoke up and graciously offered to partner with each individual who would be committed to embrace this fundamental Mitzva on a daily basis, but needed financial assistance. Indeed, the entry point for a quality pair of Tefillin can be beyond reach for some, and escalates in tandem with “upgrades.” After some discussion the parameters of the Tefillin Bank were established and launched.

Being cognizant of the Talmudic dictum “A doctor for a penny is worth a penny,” and may not be appreciated, the applicant is asked to participate in half of the cost. Naturally under special circumstances payment plans are also considered. Since its inception, over 125 individuals have availed themselves to this most meaningful gesture. They may be a university student, an immigrant, or a person with a limited income.

Indeed, most of the recipients of the The Jack & Chana

Weinbaum Tefillin Bank had their first Tefillin encounter with a Chabad volunteer as a result of the Tefillin Campaign launched almost 50 years ago by the Lubavitcher Rebbe of blessed memory in 1967. During the trying days before the Six Day War the Rebbe urge Jews the world over to embrace the mitzva of Tefillin. He quoted the biblical verse, “And the Nations will see the name of G-d on you,” which the Talmudic sage, Rabbi Eliezer, explains is a reference to Tefillin. The Rebbe’s call has been the impetus for tens of thousands to begin observing this mitzvah on a daily basis. So too, wherever Jews gather or congregate you are bound to see Chabad representatives encouraging men and boys to don Tefillin. Indeed, today all Chabad Yeshivot have an organized Tefillin Campaign. Every Friday afternoon, the students will disperse though out the city and visit their established clientele. This could be the office towers downtown, shops along Eglinton Avenue or industrial parks on the outskirts of the GTA. After offering assistance with Tefillin, invariably a discussion will follow on the merits of “going solo!”

1,500 Women at Chabad’s Mega Challah Bake

By: Allison Solomon

It started with a call and ended with 1500 women, mothers, daughters, sisters and friends, in a banquet hall in Vaughan. The room was beautifully decorated as 1500 women sat down. But it wasn’t the room that people noticed, it was the energy, the sense of community, and the feeling of pride of being Jewish and participating in one of the mitzvahs that Hashem commanded Jewish women, the mitzvah of challah.

It was an uplifting night and spiritual experience, a night of connecting with our matriarchs, acknowledging the past and understanding that we the Jewish women of our community are the future matriarchs. We have the power to lead our families to maintain Jewish traditions and to ensure that our children continue these traditions.

Donning an apron with

bolized a moment to pause and pray for a family member or friend, for one’s self for health, happiness, success and to maintain Jewish tradition. The women mixed and prayed and the energy in the room grew and grew culminating in 1500 women dancing around their tables, laughing and celebrating life. The power and energy was nothing that anyone in the room had ever experienced.

This is the power of Chabad. This is the power of 25 rebbetzins in Southern Ontario who decided to hold a Mega Challah Bake for 1,000 women which then grew to 1500 women, and many others turned away because of space constraints. This is the power of Chabad leaving 1500 women feeling a strong sense of Jewish pride, motivated to go out and be better mothers, sisters, friends and people.

So on that Shabbos 1500

their family and friends.

Credit is due to the incredible rebbetzins of Chabad of Southern Ontario for enabling so many to experience a night that fed the mind, body and soul.

The power of this event lives on in each and every one of those 1500 women who attended the event. To be a part of this power and energy find the Chabad house nearest you and continue to be part of our events and lead the charge laid down by our Jewish matriachs Sara, Rebecca, Rachel, and



the attractive event logo, each woman found the premeasured ingredients of flour, oil, sugar, water, salt and yeast at their station. Each ingredient sym-

households across Ontario had homemade challah on their table. It wasn’t just any challah, but a challah made with love and filled with blessings for

Leah. We are the future, we have the power to continue and maintain Jewish traditions. So let’s do it.

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Friendship Circle to Introduce New Initiatives

In addition to the Friendship Circle primary program which partners teenage volunteers with children with special needs for a weekly home visit, a few new ‘add-ons’ will extend the perimeter for the new season of 2014/15. This dynamic program rallies teenagers from across the spectrum of the entire community to volunteer on a regular basis to befriend and interact with a child with special needs. After completing a training session, the FC coordinators match up the teenagers with their new found friend. They mentor, support, shadow, but most importantly, ‘hang out’ and chill with the children. This incredible brigade of volunteers dedicate their time and extend unconditional love to their “special friends” each week. Currently some 90 special children are in the program and interact with approximately 130 volunteers. The teens in turn, 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.

dren while providing the family some respite and support. Indeed, as we get ready to launch our 13th season we are pleased to announce a few new initiatives that we will be instituting for this coming year,” noted Goldy Grossbaum, Friendship Coordinator.

On the agenda is sports instruction and teaching Aleph Beit. Taking it to the next level, FC is also inaugurating the Sib Circle Club. This program will provide a variety of programs and support for siblings of special needs children. Quite often parents are busy 24/7 caring for the child that needs the most care, whether it be physical or emotional. Yet, each child craves and has a need for their parent’s attention. Unfortunately at times the healthy child feels somewhat neglected. So too, at times the sibling of a child with special needs feels embarrassed. They are not necessarily afforded the opportunity to discuss these emotions with professionals or other children who share their predicament. In addition to professionals and specialists who will participate and lead the group dialogue, host question and answer sessions, the Sib Circle Club will organize excursions



Volunteer who attended the Evening of Appreciation, May 2014. Pictured in the centre of the first row l. to r. Regional Councillor Alan Shefman, Rabbi Yitzchok Grossbaum, Regional Counsellor Michael DiBiasi, Deputy Mayor Gino Rosati, Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum, Esther Grossbaum, Goldy Grossbaum



FC volunteer Tamar Gerber filling the glass tube with gum-balls representing the volunteers hours contributed during the 2013/2014 year

In addition to the weekly home visits, the Friendship Circle hosts a group Sunday Circle, pre-Holiday programs and a Cooking Circle. “We are always seeking new innovative ways to cater to the chil-

and entertainment. “The children and volunteers cannot wait to get started for another fun filled year of visits and activities,” said Esther Grossbaum who has been at the helm since its inception.




Chabad Waterloo Welcomes Jewish Students on Campus

The annual BBQ is very popular with the students, as it offers them the opportunity to meet Rabbi Moshe and Rivky Goldman and their family, and to learn about the various ways that Chabad supports them during their years away from home. “This was our biggest turnout yet, with nearly 200 students in attendance”, said Rabbi Goldman.

“Students perceive that our love for them is unconditional, as our Rebbe guided us, and that the Judaism we present is relevant, meaningful and even fun. They respond to the Chabad approach by showing up in great numbers. We are committed to reaching every single Jewish student and fanning the flames of Yiddishkeit that burn in their hearts”.

Chabad maintains a full time presence at all major universities across Ontario. Contact our office for more information or to make a referral.


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HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES

R O S H H A S H A N A H	Wednesday, September 24	Y O M
	Candlelighting 6:53 p.m.	Mincha 3:15 & 4:15 p.m.
	Mincha 7:00 p.m.	Candlelighting 6:36 p.m.
	Maariv 7:45 p.m.	Kol Nidre 6:50 p.m.
	Thursday, September 25	
	Shacharis 9:00 a.m.	
	Shofar approx. 11:30 a.m.	
	Mincha 5:45 p.m.	
	Tashlich 6:15 p.m.	
	Maariv 7:50 p.m.	
Light Candles after 7:52 p.m.		
Friday, September 26	K I P P U R	
Shachris 9:00 a.m.		
Shofar approx. 11:30 a.m.		
Mincha 6:30 p.m.		
Candle Lighting 6:49 p.m.		
	Saturday, October 4	
	Shachris 9:00 a.m.	
	Yizkor 12:00 p.m.	
	Mincha 5:00 p.m.	
	Neilah 6:15 p.m.	
	Maariv 7:35 p.m.	
	Yom Tov & Shabbos Services	
	Shacharis 10:00 a.m.	



9 Year Old Jewish Boy Walks Off Baseball Field After Being Told to Remove Tzitzit

By *Sol Rieger*
Yossi, a 9 year old boy from Fountain Hills, Arizona, is making the news for a simple act that he did, choosing to fulfill a 'Mitzvah' (religious commandment), instead of listening to his umpire.
Yossi, an avid baseball fan, and valuable team member on the local Little League team, was dropped off by his parents, all dressed up ready to play on his team. As the game was going along, Yossi's chance to bat the ball came up. When Yossi was there the umpire noticed that Yossi was wearing 'Tzitzit'. The umpire insisted that Yossi needs to remove that garment saying that wearing

be worn throughout the whole day. He explained to the umpire respectfully that he's been wearing this since he started playing and it was never an issue. However, the umpire wouldn't change his mind and told Yossi that it was either him playing the game without the 'Tzitzit' or he can leave the game.
Yossi then chose not to remove his religious garment and walked off of the field. What followed was a shock to his umpire: Yossi's teammates all walked off the field in protest, ready to forfeit the game to protect Yossi's religious rights.
After a significant 'pow-wow' between the coaches and



it can cause 'interference or unfair advantage'.
He tried explaining the umpire that this garment is a religious garment, and that it's something that is supposed to

the umpire, Yossi was called back and allowed to play, 'double uniforms' and all.
(Yossi is the son of a Chabad Rabbi of Fountain Hills, Rabbi Mendy Lipskier.)

CTeen Helps Make 'Mitzvot' Name of the Game at JCC Maccabi Events

Jewish pride was alive at this year's JCC Maccabi Games, where more than 12,000 athletes and guests from around the world gathered in three U.S. cities to participate in sports, entertainment and community unity.
Though much of the energy can be attributed to the athletic events that took place in Boca

rated ceramic tiles sent to Israel to adorn the walls of bomb shelters there. A huge success in the past, it was brought back because of the current desire to do something positive for Israelis, who have spent a large part of their summer at war with Hamas in Gaza, spending time going in and out of local bomb shelters.

portant that while they are playing sports, they feel that they are part of something bigger and something that ties them all together—their Jewish identity and connection to Israel. This will help to ensure Jewish continuity today and in the future."
Athletes at each location felt the impact of CTeen's presence. "Spending time with



More than 4,000 teenage boys and men donned tefillin at this year's JCC Maccabi Games in Boca Raton, Fla.; Cherry Hill, N.J.; and, like this teen, in Detroit

Raton, Fla., Cherry Hill, N.J., and Detroit, what happened off the fields and tennis courts had a significant impact on Jewish identity, according to participants.
In the course of three days, a record 4,000 teenage boys and men donned tefillin, while many women and girls took on the mitzvah of lighting Shabbat candles. All this and more can be credited to the work of CTeen (The Chabad Teen Network) mitzvah booths, which were coordinated with the help of local Chabad emissaries.
In addition to the booths at all three locations, CTeen hosted the "Hangtime Room" at the Boca Raton site, an area for athletes to relax and play games in between their competitions. Participants enjoyed "Jewish Jenga," musical chairs and a giant ring toss with volunteer rabbinical students. Rabbinical students also staffed the mitzvah booths at the games in Cherry Hill and Detroit.
One of the most popular activities was "Tiles for Smiles," a project where athletes deco-

Other projects included decorating sweatbands for special-needs athletes and making medals for wounded soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces, who have fought so valiantly as part of "Operation Protective Edge."
For their efforts, athletes received special mitzvah pins to display among their other Maccabi pins on their ID badges. This year's collection included categories such as tzedakah, mezuzah, Shabbat candles, tefillin, kashrus and learning Torah.
"Coming at the close of a difficult summer for Israelis and Jews around the world, the mitzvah booths served as a beacon of Jewish unity and encouraged strong Jewish identity," said Chabad's Rabbi Mendy Kotlarsky, explaining the incredible openness teens had for various mitzvot
"I think this is such a pleasant surprise," Cindy Bergman, associate executive director of the Jewish Community Center in Boca Raton, said of the project. "It brings Israel home to all our Jewish teens. It's im-

the organization was an awesome, spiritual and fun experience," said Anthony Fodamp from Boca Raton. "We all put on tefillin as a team before the games, and I felt how it made a difference."
Jake Schner said he was grateful for the group's presence as well. "The CTeen table was amazing; they always had the best energy and know how to have fun," he said. "Getting wrapped for tefillin was great, too."

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The Caribbean Islands now boasts 11 Shluchim

By Menachem Posner,

Summer came early to Puerto Rico, and in the backdrop of such balmy weather, a local businessman named **Chaim** found himself sitting recently around a table laden with kosher food, together with a dozen black-hatted, bearded rabbis. It was a far cry from when he first landed on the U.S. territory for business back in the winter of 1990.

“At that time, I was walking around the streets of

Caribbean dates back nearly 60 years to 1957.

At the time, Rabbi **Yehuda Krinsky**, now the chairman of Merkos L’Inyonei Chinuch, and the late Rabbi **Leibel Raskin**, who went on to serve as a Shliach in Morocco, were sent by the **Rebbe** to travel from island to island, bringing Torah literature and a personal connection from the outside Jewish community to Jewish people in Puerto Rico, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic.

Throughout the years, young “Roving Rabbis” also

U.S. Virgin Islands in 2005. They were followed by Rabbi **Shimon** and **Michal Pelman**, who moved to the Dominican Republic in 2008. The following year, Rabbi **Moshe** and **Simcha Nemni** founded Chabad-Lubavitch of Martinique, and Rabbi **Moishe** and **Sara Chanowitz** settled in St. Maarten.

Chabad of Puerto Rico opened a satellite branch in Old San Juan under the directorship of Rabbi **Levi** and **Leah Stein** in 2011. In 2013,



out that the warm reception is largely due to the personal connections and goodwill fostered by the young rabbis who have been visiting the island for decades. In fact, the Jewish prime minister of the Dutch state, Mike Eman, has had a longstanding relationship with these Chassidic men, from

satellite welcome centers near cruise terminals. They are also in the midst of constructing spacious new centers that will host mikvahs and other amenities.

“Having a daily minyan was one of our early priorities,” says Chaim, who notes that he never missed a day of Kaddish during the respective years of mourning for both of his parents, thanks to the consistent services at Chabad of Puerto Rico. “It’s just beautiful to see people—some of whom may have become distanced from Judaism at one point or another, and others who never put on tefillin in their lives—coming every day to Chabad to pray, and whose lives were changed.”

Eighty miles of blue sea to the east, Rabbi Federman says he sees similar dynamics.

Federman explains that the center currently being built, which is being constructed with seed money supplied by the late philanthropist Sami Rohr family on a hilltop with a sweeping panoramic view of the ocean, will help accommodate the crowd, in addition to creating a larger home for Chabad’s activities and programs. At the same time, he says that he and his family will be living on the one-acre campus so that it retains the homey atmosphere that attracted people in the first place.

The network of Chabad centers and rabbis has broadly expanded the vacation options for Jews looking to unwind without relaxing their religious observances. The availability of kosher food, prayer services, Torah classes—and now even mikvahs—provides unprecedented opportunity for Jews to take a vacation and uphold their religious standards.



Puerto Rico wearing a kippah or other head covering. Seeing that I was Jewish, people would approach me with questions, and I felt I needed a place to refer them to,” says the New Jersey native, who divides his time between his Teaneck home and his Puerto Rican business interests. “When I saw that I was going to be invested here in the long term, I recognized that this was a place ripe for a permanent Chabad presence.”

As the “founder” of the first Chabad center in the Caribbean and a key force behind its growth, Chaim—who requested that his full name not be published—was invited to be the lead speaker at the recent regional conference of Chabad rabbis earlier this month, which was attended by Chabad rabbis serving the Caribbean Islands, as well as two from Mexico (Cancun and Playa del Carmen) and senior Chabad officials from New York.

Chabad’s involvement in the

hopped from island to island—even making clandestine visits to Cuba. In 1999, Rabbi **Mendel** and **Rochie Zarchi** would be the first Chabad couple to move full-time to serve local Jewish residents and the numerous tourists who flock year-round to the Caribbean’s emerald seas and pristine sands.

Beyond Puerto Rico, Rabbi Zarchi quickly became the point person for Judaism in the Caribbean, as communities turned to him to facilitate certain services, as well as entreat the presence of “Roving Rabbis” sent from the Chabad-Lubavitch headquarters in Brooklyn, N.Y. In time, he worked with headquarters and donors to bring permanent Chabad couples to a growing number of islands.

Eleven Chabad couples now call the Caribbean home—and more are on their way.

Joining the Zarchis, Rabbi **Asher** and **Henya Federman** moved to the

Rabbi **Berel** and **Rikal Pewzner** moved to Grand Cayman Island; Rabbi **Boruch** and **Chaya Rozmarin** set up a Chabad on Campus for Jewish medical students in Grenada; and Rabbi **Ahron** and **Chaya Blasberg** made Aruba their home in the very end of December, catching the last few weeks of the major tourist season. Also in the area are Rabbi **Mendel** and **Rochel Druk** of Cancun and Rabbi **Mendel** and **Chaya Goldberg** of Playa Del Carmen.

“We heard that the folks with timeshares were still on the island, and we hopped on a plane,” says Rabbi Blasberg, who was born in Israel and is married to a native of Leeds, England. “It’s really a beautiful place to live. People have been so welcoming to us. On Passover, we had 70 people at our seder the first night, and the next night we had 30 guests—almost all locals.”

Blasberg is quick to point

whom he even received his own pair of tefillin.

While Chabad on Aruba is still in its infancy, the Chabad centers in some of the other islands have grown beyond anyone’s expectation. Both Puerto Rico and St. Thomas boast daily prayer services, kosher catering facilities and

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”.

Plan for the Future

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. All information will be kept strictly confidential.

Exceptional Anniversary gift: 450 Kids Enjoy Tel Aviv's Luna Park

An official "Fun Day" at Tel Aviv's Luna Park served as a rather unusual anniversary gift for one New Yorker and her husband.



Arthur and Randi Luxenberg

"I never realized my greatest gift to him would be to give to someone else," Randi says in a video put together by Colel Chabad on the day of the anniversary.

For the last 29 years, Randi Luxenberg of Great Neck, N.Y., has bought rather traditional items for her husband, Arthur, to mark their anniversary—shoes, wallets, business accessories. For their 30th anniversary, however, she decided to try something very different.

"There is no receipt, this is not returnable, and no one can ever take it away," she states in a videotaped message to her husband.

The gift also wasn't directly geared to Arthur Luxenberg, founding partner of the New York-based law firm Weitz & Luxenberg, or their family, which includes two daughters.

Instead, she teamed up with Colel Chabad's Widows and Orphans project in Israel—known as Chesed Menachem Mendel—to sponsor a "Fun Day" at Luna Park in Tel Aviv for hundreds of kids from single-parent homes throughout the country. The outing was held on Aug. 14, the Luxenbergs' anniversary.

"I never realized my greatest gift to him would be to give to someone else," Randi says in the video put together by Colel Chabad on the day of the anniversary, which incorporated videos of families and individuals enjoying the morning at the park.

According to Menachem Traxler, director of volunteering for Colel Chabad, Arthur Luxenberg "is a person who can't stop giving. He's always concerned with the other person. Are they comfortable? Do they have enough to eat? ...

He is overflowing with love."

And that's why the anniversary present, which allowed 450 kids to attend a fully funded trip to an amusement park, was so fitting.

"He was totally shocked," says Traxler, noting that Colel Chabad representatives texted with him during the day. "He talked to one of the widows for a few minutes, and he was so grateful to be honored with this event."

In the videotaped message, Chava, a widow with seven children, says: "We'd like to thank you very much for this wonderful day. It's really exciting for me, for my children. ... As you can imagine, losing their father was very difficult, and it's these kinds of activities that make life that much more fun and bearable."

Yair, a widower and the father of five children, also had words of gratitude for the Luxenbergs. Noting that his family lives in Ashdod—a town in southern Israel that has come under constant rocket fire this summer from Hamas in Gaza—he says having a day away from the war was really important.

Initially, Colel Chabad was planning to take some 50

kids to Luna Park thanks to the generosity of the Chesed and Achdut Mission, run by Rabbi Naftali Besser, a principal at Yeshiva of Flatbush in the Brooklyn, N.Y. That group had raised funds to send a busload of children to the park for a day.

When Randi Luxenberg heard about it, she decided to extend the trip to all of the children who participate in Colel



A First for America's Oldest Man

By: Mindy Rubenstein

At 111, Alexander Imich has been officially verified as the oldest man in America and the second oldest in the world. A resident of Manhattan who lives on the Upper West Side, he had the honor of being congratulated by the New York State Senate last year, on his 110th birthday.

But recently, he received some more attention, as well as some unexpected help—putting on tefillin for the first time in almost 100 years, getting a mezuzah for his apartment door, receiving replacements for the much-needed hearing aids he had lost, and having round-the-clock home attendants to help care for him and new people to keep him company.

All of this was the result of a recent hospital visit by Rabbi Pinny Marozov, co-director of Chabad of Coney Island in Brooklyn, N.Y., with his wife, Chaya. The 30-year-old rabbi found out about Imich while in Seattle seeing family. A Shabbat guest suggested that he pay the elderly man a visit, though neither of them realized at the time quite how old he was, recalled Marozov.

On his return to New York, Marozov dropped in on Imich,

who was in Roosevelt Hospital being treated for a fall in his apartment. Imich celebrated his 111th birthday there, on Feb. 4. He had lost both of his



hearing aids at the hospital, which made communicating difficult; nevertheless, the two men connected.

He also helped Imich wrap tefillin. Marozov said he didn't think Imich had put on tefillin since his Bar Mitzvah—nearly 100 years ago—in Czesochowa, Poland.

Born in Poland in 1903, Imich underwent his schooling

there, including earning a Ph.D. in 1927. He survived two World Wars, the Holocaust and two years in a Russian labor camp near the White Sea, before leaving for the United States and starting a new life there with his wife, Wela. She passed away in 1986.

Imich spent his career as a chemist, ultimately trying to prove to other scientists that the neshama (soul) survives physical death. In 1995, at the age of 92, he edited and published a book called *Incredible Tales of the Paranormal*.

At this point, he said, he has outlived all of his peers. He and his wife had no children, and most of his family members perished in Nazi concentration camps. Imich and his wife survived because they were deported to a Russian labor camp instead of Auschwitz.

The rabbi returned for another visit once Imich was back home. While there, Marozov helped Imich put on

Chabad's Orphans fund—a total of 750 kids, more than half of whom attended the event.

As for Arthur Luxenberg, who dedicated the Colel Chabad soup kitchen at the Kotel Plaza by the Western Wall in Jerusalem and who is involved in many charitable programs, his wife's choice of an anniversary present couldn't have been more on target.

"What an amazing and appropriate gift," he said a few days after the event. "It's a gift that gives back and touches so many."

tefillin once again and also affixed a mezuzah to the door leading into Imich's apartment, where he has lived—these days, alone—since 1965.

"He was very happy to see me," said Marozov, adding that Imich was alert, and able to see and walk on his own. "It didn't seem like a rabbi had ever visited him in his home or made any contact before. I know it meant a lot to him," said the rabbi.

The rabbi said the older man simply lit up when the tefillin was wrapped and the mezuzah hung.

"It was beautiful when he recited the Shema prayer, which he knew by heart," said Marozov. "It brought up a spark from deep inside him."

Other sparks ignited from there. On that visit, Marozov invited Beth Sarafray—a reporter from The Jewish Press, based in Brooklyn—to come along with him, and a full story on Imich was printed in the Feb. 28 edition. It got tremendous feedback. Readers learned of his situation and hastened to help: two days later, Imich had replacement hearing aids, home attendants to support his recovery and many new visitors.





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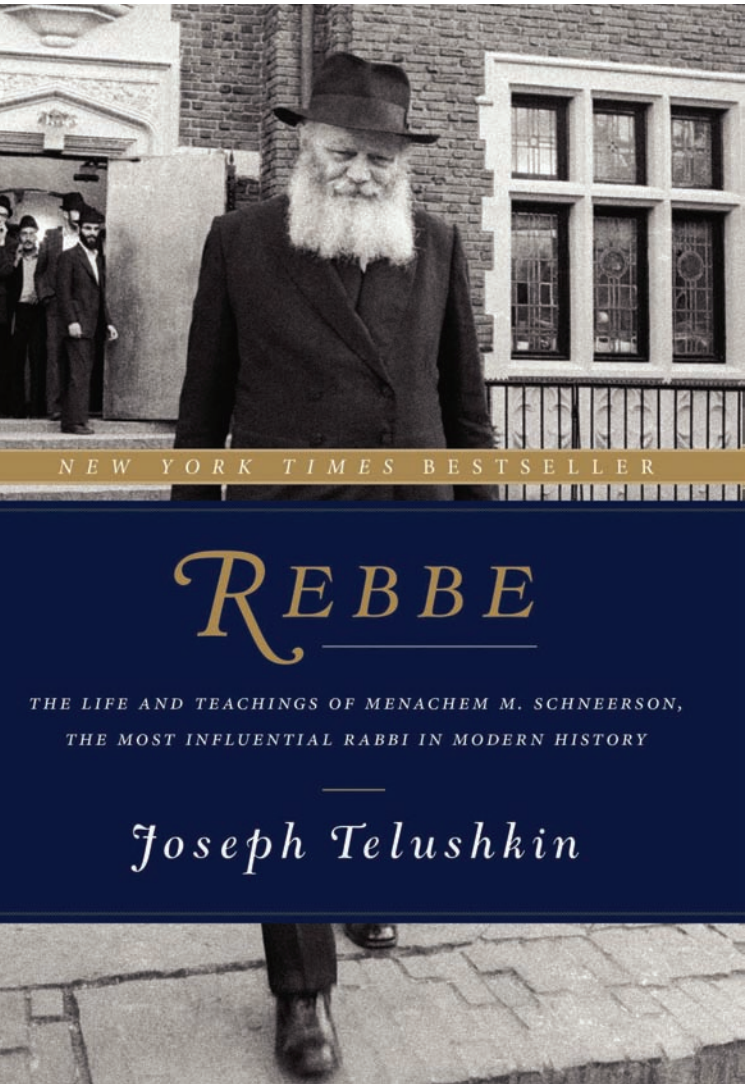
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Highly Acclaimed Bio of Lubavitcher Rebbe Earns Spot on Prestigious Best Seller List



New York - A new biography of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, released just in time for the 20th yahrtzeit of the iconic leader, has been well so well received that it has made The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal and Reuter’s top ten best seller lists.

Rebbe, The Life and Teachings of Menachem M. Schneerson, the Most Influential Rabbi in Modern History, received glowing reviews from numerous publications including The Wall Street Journal, The Huffington Post, The Chicago Jewish Star and New York Journal of Books. The 640 page book, written by Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, was published by Harper Collins Publishers and includes a detailed biography of Rabbi Schneerson’s life as well as a detailed look at seven of the Rebbe’s philosophies of life.

“I have long felt that the Rebbe was one of those uncommon leaders whose reach extended well beyond his community to most traditional Jews and even those who are non-traditional and the non-Jewish world as well,” Rabbi Telushkin told VIN News. “I think the fact that there are now

Chabad houses in 49 states and over 80 countries marks the Rebbe’s influence as unique.”

Rebbe, which went on sale on June 10th, sold out its first printing before its official release date and, according to Katherine Beitner, director of publicity at Harper Collins, the biography is already in its fourth printing, with 55,000 copies printed to date.

“While we always knew we had a real winner on our hands with Rebbe, the public’s interest in this remarkable leader is even greater than we realized,” said Beitner. “We are thrilled that the book has hit The New York Times Bestseller List. Clearly the Rebbe’s message and example are as vibrant and vital as ever, and people of all walks of life are hungry to learn about them and apply them to their lives.”

Rabbi Telushkin, a 65 year old author of more than sixteen books, and lecturer who lives on the Upper West Side and has been named as one of the 50 most influential rabbis in America by Newsweek magazine, began working on Rebbe five years ago.

“I thought it would be fascinating to examine the

life and times of a man who influence was felt, and continues to be felt throughout the Jewish world,” said Telushkin, who noted that two decades after Rabbi Schneerson’s death, the Lubavitch movement continues to grow.

Rabbi Telushkin observed that Rabbi Schneerson’s influence extended far beyond the Jewish world and is the only rabbi to have been honored with a Congressional Gold Medal, awarded posthumously in November 1994. The bill to honor the Lubavitcher Rebbe with the highest civilian award in the country was sponsored by then Congressman Charles Schumer and co-sponsored by Congressmen John Lewis, Jerry Lewis and Newt Gingrich.

“John Lewis was one of Martin Luther King’s closest aides and on the day the award was presented Lewis said he didn’t know of any other issue he and Gingrich had ever agreed on.”

Rabbi Telushkin said that during his research he discovered that President Reagan was so taken with the Lubavitcher Rebbe that when he would receive letters from him, the former president would take them upstairs in order to be able to reply to the Rebbe personally and that former Polish president Lech Walesa carries a dollar given to



him by the Lubavitcher Rebbe to this very day.

While not a member of the Lubavitch sect himself, Rabbi Telushkin said that the Rebbe has had a profound effect on his own life.

“The Rebbe was a big believer in using optimistic language,” said Rabbi Telushkin. “He would never call a hospital a ‘beit cholim’ a place for the sick, but rather a ‘beit refuah’ a place of healing. He never used the word ‘deadline’ but instead would talk about ‘due dates’. One word connotes death and the other connotes life and I have start adopting this use of positive language.”

Rabbi Telushkin also noted how as far back as the 1970’s the Rebbe would never refer to children as ‘retarded’, preferring instead the term ‘special’, acknowledging the potential within every human being.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe was also unique in his insistence that women be well educated and not be relegated to performing supporting background tasks.

“The Rebbe insisted that the Chabad childrens’ magazine have girls on the cover as well as boys, though always in a way respecting the ideals of modesty,” said Rabbi Telushkin.

“He wanted the girls to

have that recognition and when shluchim are sent out, they are sent out as a couple, with both playing a vital role. The Rebbe placed a lot of emphasis on the education of Jewish women because he knew that even though women have been historically focused on raising the family, they have an enormous capacity to influence others.”

The Rebbe’s greatest legacy, according to Rabbi Telushkin, was his ability to bring the knowledge of G-d out into the world.

“The Rebbe was a classical tzaddik, who was scrupulously observant and a master of the Talmud and while he knew the most difficult teachings and the most obscure, he remained very committed to the simple pure love of his fellow Jew and wanted to transmit that message throughout the world.”

Rabbi Telushkin observed that even 20 years after his death, the Rebbe is still as revered and as recognized as he was during his life, even by those who never knew him.

“They say that you can judge a tree by its fruit and the fruit of the Rebbe is those who are still around after all these years,” explained Rabbi Telushkin. “People want to learn more about the man who planted the tree that gives such sweet fruit.”

SIMCHAT TORAH HAKAFOT

All are welcome to come & join the Celebration
SHMINI ATZERET

Wednesday, October 15		Thursday, October 16	
Candlelighting	6:16 p.m.	Shacharis	10:00 a.m.
Mincha	6:20 p.m.	Yizkor approx.	11:30 a.m.
Maariv	7:10 p.m.	Mincha	6:10 p.m.
Hakafot (followed by Kiddush)	7:30 p.m.	Candlelighting after	7:15 p.m.

SIMCHAT TORAH

Thursday, October 16		Friday, October 17	
Maariv	7:10 p.m.	Shacharis	10:00 a.m.
Kiddush	7:30 p.m.	Kiddush	11:00 a.m.
Hakafot	8:30 p.m.	Hakafot	12:00 p.m.
		Torah Reading	12:45 p.m.

Mumbai Celebrates Re-opening of Chabad Center

A renovated Chabad center in Mumbai, India, which was devastated in a 2008 terrorist attack, will enable continued growth in Chabad activities in the city, which have been ongoing since the tragedy.

Surrounded by guests from around the world and more than 25 Chabad-Lubavitch emissaries from

ever.

"We're not moving into a new building," noted Kozlovsky. "We are returning to our original building, and we will be continuing all of the activities that took place here, and hopefully, grow even more."

Gabi and Rivky Holtzberg moved to Mumbai in 2003, establishing a Chabad House to serve Israeli backpackers,

No sooner had the emotional funeral and customary seven days of mourning passed did Chabad programs resume in the traumatized city, first through rotating shifts of young rabbinical students from abroad working out of rented apartments and then with the eventual arrival of the Kozlovskys.

"We build communities," says Kotlarsky of Chabad's response in the weeks following the attack. "Therefore, while reconstructing the building was something we felt was important, serving the Jews in Mumbai, both locals and foreigners, was and continues to be our priority."

Kozlovsky explains that after a year-and-a-half of living and working together with his wife in Mumbai, he more fully understands why Gabi rushed to purchase a large building for his operation.

"There are so many possible complications here, bureaucratic and otherwise, that it becomes very difficult to work without a permanent base," he says. "Now we will have security rooms, a synagogue, offices, guest rooms, a restaurant and a commercial kitchen. It will be very different than running things out of a 1,200-square-foot apartment, but it will, Gd willing, allow us to grow. And it is, of course, fitting that we do this in the same place as Gabi and Rivky."

international Jewish businesspeople and the local Indian Jewish community. He was a soft-spoken shochet, mohel and Torah scholar; she was an empathetic and warm host and shlucha, always ready to lend a listening ear.

The Holtzbergs came to be known and loved by those they encountered, and their activities rapidly grew. Soon, Gabi purchased Nariman House—a large building in the Colaba neighborhood of Mumbai not far from the iconic Gateway to India—to serve as their full-time Chabad center.

One of Gabi Holtzberg's closest mentors and supporters was Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky, vice chairman of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, the educational arm of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement. The attack left a deep imprint on him, and at the couple's funeral, which was televised around the world and drew thousands of mourners, Kotlarsky vowed to rebuild their center and their mission.

He explains that while redoing the physical center was undoubtedly important, continuing to reach out to Jews from every background—the mission the Holtzbergs ultimately gave their lives for—was the central goal.

"We didn't pause after this great tragedy," recalls Kotlarsky. "We regrouped immediately and continued working, never stopping. That was our response to what happened in Mumbai."

Asia who are in India for a regional conference, Chabad of Mumbai's headquarters—also known as Nariman House—opened its doors once again this summer.

"Today, as we look to the future, our message is one of perseverance and unshakable belief in the power of light over darkness," said Rabbi Yisroel Kozlovsky, who now co-directs Chabad of Mumbai together with his wife, Chaya.

In November of 2008, Islamic terrorists entered the Chabad House run by Rabbi Gabi and Rivky Holtzberg in Mumbai, India, and murdered them and four of their guests in cold blood. In the immediate aftermath of the gruesome attack, photos of the smiling couple were transposed with images of their crying 2-year-old son, Moishe, and the bullet-riddled shell of the Jewish center the Holtzbergs had built in the heart of India's largest city.

The official reopening also serves as the starting point for the next phase of reconstruction: a \$2.5 million museum to be built in the apartment where the Holtzbergs lived and on the floor where most of the murders occurred.

The goal, say those who were involved with ensuring Chabad's presence in Mumbai, is to make certain that the Holtzbergs' work of spreading goodness and kindness by offering Jewish programs of every kind to local residents and visitors continues stronger than



Rabbi Yisroel and Chaya Kozlovsky, with their daughter Nava.



Kozlovsky notes that when people entered the wreckage of the building after the attack, they quickly grew emotional. "I think for people to learn about Gabi and Rivky, and the lives they led here—in the place where they worked and lived and were taken from—it could have a very powerful, positive effect on people."

Timed to coincide with the building's reopening, Mumbai is also host to the regional conference of more than 25 Chabad-Lubavitch emissaries in Asia, organized by Rabbi Yo-sef Chaim Kantor, who serves as both director of Chabad of Thailand and Chabad regional director. Kantor, too, was intimately involved with the Holtzbergs' work, and following the terror attack threw himself into the rebuilding process.

"The 'lamplighters' from throughout Asia, the Lubavitcher Rebbe's shluchim on this side of the world, are going to be in Mumbai to honor the work that our colleague started, and was so abruptly and shockingly stopped," Kantor explains. "We want to make a joint statement that the work here continues."

While continuing ongoing Chabad projects, many of which were initiated by the Holtzbergs, the Kozlovskys have worked diligently on increasing their activities. A Jewish kindergarten will open in time for this school year, and with the recent opening of Mumbai's new diamond district in a different part of the city, they have established a satellite Chabad center in that area to serve business travelers.

It took time before the right couple could be found to fill the void left by their predeces-

sors, but those familiar with the Mumbai community and charged with finding a new couple say they have been electrified by the couple's work and presence thus far.

"Rabbi Kozlovsky has done a tremendous job," says Kantor. "He's energetic and enthusiastic, and he's got the mission upmost in his mind."



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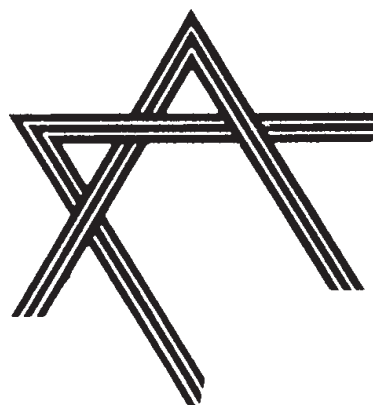
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As world Jewry recently commemorated the 20th yahrtzeit (anniversary of passing) of the Rebbe—Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory—print and electronic media have been awash with content devoted to his immense contributions to and influence on Jewish life in the 20th century and into the 21st.

As part of the broader relaunch of TheRebbe.org, two Chabad.org team members have crafted new works that explore an area that has been less accessible to the wider public—how the Rebbe’s Torah scholarship and philosophy were intrinsic to his life and leadership.

Chabad.org editor Rabbi Yanki Tauber recently completed the first section of an upcoming monograph, *The Rebbe’s Philosophy of Torah*. Chabad.org research writer and editor Rabbi Eli Rubin produced *Scholar, Visionary and Leader: A Chronological Overview of the Rebbe’s Life and Ideas*. Here, they discuss these new online works.

What is the primary motive and goal behind each of these new works?

Tauber: We’ve all seen many assessments of the Rebbe’s impact on the Jewish community and beyond as a leader and a visionary, but I felt that there could be more emphasis on his unique approach to Torah scholarship. What I set out to do is to try and demonstrate the underlying themes and groundbreaking approach that characterize the Rebbe’s prodigious output of Torah teachings.

For example, the section titled, *The Divine and the Human in Torah*, discusses the Rebbe’s approach to the human-Divine partnership that defines Torah. On one hand is the notion that every nuance of Torah is Gd’s wisdom that cannot be altered. Yet our understanding of the written and oral Torah is very much the cumulative product of thousands of years of human creativity, too. I’ve tried to show how the Rebbe blends two seemingly disparate axioms together into a cohesive philosophy.

Rubin: The goal of *Scholar, Visionary and Leader* is to highlight some of the central events and ideas that together make him so uniquely influential, both in terms of activism and leadership, and in terms of scholarship and philosophy. The product is 28 articles, each one encapsulating a period of the Rebbe’s life and highlighting a key idea or theme that characterizes it.

The entry covering the years 1927 to 1932, for instance—a period during which the Rebbe attended the lectures of Erwin Schrödinger at the University of Berlin—provides an analysis of how the Rebbe used the new developments in quantum theory to articulate his approach to science and Torah.

Other topics include the Rebbe’s youth and upbringing



*New online works offer insight into the Rebbe’s scholarship
A talk with two authors: Rabbi Yanki Tauber and Rabbi Eli Rubin*

in Yekatrinoslav, his marriage to the Rebbetzin, his approach to faith in the face of the Holocaust, his vision of America as a place of religious opportunity, his focus on empowering individuals, his efforts and policies vis-à-vis Soviet Jewry, and the responsibility Jewish people have to all humanity.

Is there one theme that you think characterizes the Rebbe’s life and ideas?

Rubin: The Rebbe’s communal policies and Torah scholarship are both marked by his vision of the Torah as a unified blueprint that illuminates everything. To my mind, what characterizes the Rebbe’s approach on every issue is his concern that the light of Torah continues to illuminate lives. It is therefore impossible to separate the Rebbe’s Torah scholarship and philosophy from his vision and leadership.

One thing that both Yanki and I keep coming back to is the theme of unity. Too often, unity is devalued; it’s turned into a cliché, or used to cover up differences and ignore them. But for the Rebbe, unity was the prism through which he saw everything. It was his mission to lay bare the singular essence that is the true core of all the complexity and dissonance of human experience. I can’t say I understand this; I don’t know if anyone understands it fully. But the more you study the Rebbe’s teachings and the more you study the Rebbe’s life, the more you see this.

There is one talk, later edited and published as an essay, *On the Essence of Chassidus*, in which the Rebbe definitively explained his unique vision of Chassidism and Torah. This is a text that is deeply profound, and the more you study it and restudy it, the more you see how it illuminates the entire corpus of the Rebbe’s ideas and teachings. More than explain what Chassidus is, he demonstrates how it works. He selects a Torah topic, analyzes it according to four classical forms of Torah interpretation and then shows you what happens when Chassidism discovers its essence.

In a similar way, it is very hard to explain why the Rebbe is so significant. But by presenting brief overviews of the Reb-

be’s life and ideas, I am trying to show the reader something of the harmony that the Rebbe drew from the Torah into every area of life.

Can you offer some examples of how episodes or themes that you describe demonstrate the Rebbe’s unified perspective?

Tauber: The Rebbe’s approach to Talmud study can be described as a synthesis of the approach innovated by Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik of Brisk



Rabbi Eli Rubin

with that of the Rogachover Gaon (Rabbi Yosef Rosen), with whom the Rebbe began corresponding as a teenager.

Brisk champions the understanding that fine lines can be drawn to differentiate laws and concepts that appear to be identical at the outset. On the other end of the spectrum, the Rogachover espouses the unity of Torah, teaching that a central unifying theme could be found in areas that appear to be completely unrelated.

The Rebbe drew from both. For example, he famously demonstrated how seven different disagreements between the schools of Hillel and Shammai all hinge upon a common, broader disagreement—and then went on to explain how each individual disagreement is unique.

Rubin: Two related examples come to mind. The first is the issue of science and Torah; the second is the issue of feminism and Torah. Even today, these issues remain extremely contentious and polarizing. What usually happens in these debates is that one person comes with one set of assumptions and another person comes with another set of assumptions, and each declares the other’s assumptions to be wrong. But the Rebbe didn’t do that; the Rebbe

did exactly the opposite. The Rebbe actually put scientific and feminist assumptions to work in support of the Torah position.

What does this have to do with unity?

Rubin: It seems to me that the reason why the Rebbe was able to give scientific and feminist assumptions validity—without altering his vision of Torah in any way—is because the Rebbe believed that everything in the world stems from the unified core of Torah. In *On the Essence of Chassidus*, the Rebbe tells a story about his father-in-law, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch: On one of his journeys, he encountered several people debating Torah’s view of various theories of social governance, communism, capitalism, etc. When they asked his opinion, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak said: “Being the ultimate truth and good, Torah includes all the good aspects of all the theories.”

The Rebbe believed that even things that are clearly wrong and contrary to Torah must have a core of truth upon which they stand. There are things that are true and good, and there are things that are distortions of truth and good. Inherently, it is only when their own truth is distorted that science or feminism can be misrepresented in terms that contradict Torah. Our job is to reshuffle things so that the good shines through. An article in this series is devoted to each of these topics, and I don’t do all the explaining I’ve done here. Instead, I just try to give a snapshot of the Rebbe’s approach, giving some perspective, but by no means the whole picture.

What are some of the sources that you drew on for your research?

Rubin: In addition to the Rebbe’s published works, including the many volumes of talks, correspondence and personal journals, I owe an immense debt of gratitude to the JEM (Jewish Educational Media) “My Encounter” team for the interviews they have conducted—and continue to conduct—with people who encountered the Rebbe at various stages

in his life.

In addition to the historical corroboration of events from multiple witnesses and documents, and the many gaps that they have filled, JEM’s interview series also provides the very valuable element of human insight. You get to see how real people were touched in real ways.

Tauber: My most primary source is the more than 200 published volumes of the Rebbe’s works: the talks and Chassidic discourses he edited, the many transcripts of his talks produced by listeners, the copious correspondence that has been published so far, and scholarly notations (reshimot) in his personal journals that came to light after his passing.

In addition, there are my own memories from the more than 20 years of the Rebbe’s farbrengens (gatherings) that I attended, starting as a child. Although the Rebbe was addressing Jewish scholarship of a very high caliber at these gatherings, everyone was there—men, women and children of all ages and backgrounds. Toddlers would be there sitting on their fathers’ laps. Everyone absorbed something on their level. Beginning at the age of 10 or 11, I began to retain significant ideas from the Rebbe’s talks, and that continued until 1992.

For the past 25 years, I have devoted a significant part of my working life to authoring treatments of the Rebbe’s teachings. To compile this work, I’ve drawn on the hundreds of articles I have written in the past. In a way, this is an attempt to draw it all together into a cohesive picture of the Rebbe’s unique understanding and application of Torah.

What are some of the most important things you hope a reader will take away from your work?

Rubin: My hope is that people will take these articles and run with them. They are all footnoted, giving the reader plenty of scope for further study, and there really is so much more on every one of these topics, and so many more topics besides. So I hope scholars and laypeople alike will be inspired to delve ever deeper into the Rebbe’s ideas, and try to emulate something of the way he lived and taught. Thank Gd so many of the Rebbe’s talks and letters have been published. Especially insightful, but woefully understudied, are his personal journals from the years before he became Rebbe. JEM has also published many videos of the Rebbe’s talks and personal interactions. No one can say that there is not enough material. We all have a lot more to learn, a lot more to think about and a lot more to do.

Tauber: A better understanding of the Rebbe, of the Torah, and how Torah is the foundation of life.

Dear Rebby

By Rabbi Aron Moss



Heads or Tails?

I read somewhere that there is a custom to eat the head of a fish on the night of Rosh Hashana, to symbolize that in the coming year “we should be the head and not the tail.” What does this actually mean? I can’t make head or tails of it... (sorry...)

Answer:

We face today a crisis of leadership. In almost every area of life - familial, communal, global and personal - there is a gaping void at the top. Rather than leading with vision and purpose, today’s leaders are often no more than followers.

Governments and communal leaders aren’t building policies based on deeply held values and time tested truths, but rather shape their platforms by following popular opinion and adopting whatever pet issues are in fashion on the day.

Many parents are not giving their kids clear direction and guidance, but rather take their cues from the children themselves and cave in to their every desire.

Individuals are often not living lives directed by core beliefs and lofty ideals, but rather follow their lower instincts and then develop convoluted justifications for living a life of self-indulgence.

This is why we are so confused today. What should be the head is nothing more than a tail. Instead of ideals shaping reality, it’s the other way round - whatever my reality is, I will shape my ideals to fit it.

The reason for this crisis in the modern world is clear. We have forgotten G-d. We have lost our Head, our source of absolute truth. Once ultimate authority is weakened, all authority is weakened.

But we can turn this around. We can reconnect to our Head, the true Higher Authority. Only then can we have heads that are not tails.

Parents ought to have a clear picture of what they want their family to look like, based on eternal values that are as true today as they were for our grandparents. And then with love and sensitivity, along with firmness and discipline, parents must guide their children to live up to that standard.

Leaders need to have a moral vision that is immune from the shortsighted influence of mob thinking, and with pragmatism and resolve inspire their constitu-

ents to share that vision.

As individuals we must espouse ideals that transcend our own selfishness, a higher purpose that comes from a place beyond our own ego, so we can control our lower urges and live a life of meaning and soulful achievement.

So as a new year dawns, we pray that we should be the head and not the tail. We need it for our world, our families, and ourselves.

Swaddling in the Sukkah

I think I have the post Yom Kippur blues. Every year I get all inspired by the fast, and am sure that I will be more committed to Judaism in the year ahead. But somehow it dissipates pretty quick (like around the third mouthful after breaking the fast). I don’t want to lose it again this year. Any suggestions?

Answer:

I know just what you need. You need to be swaddled.

A newborn baby, moments after birth, is taken by a midwife and wrapped up in a swaddling cloth. This serves to keep the newborn protected and warm. Having just emerged from the security and nurture of the womb, the baby is particularly vulnerable and sensitive. A good swaddling cloth gives him a sense of protection from the cold and harsh world out here.

But swaddling doesn’t last long. You rarely see teenagers wrapped up in a cloth with their arms behind their ears. (Though perhaps some should be.) Swaddling is a brief bridging stage between the safety of the womb and the hazards of real life. A well wrapped baby will eventually grow to face life unwrapped. The swaddle cloth just helps him get there.

Your soul needs that bridge too. You have emerged from the womb of Yom Kippur a pure and renewed soul. The negative residue from your past has been cleansed. Your soul is now tender and sensitive, and easily susceptible to the coldness of spiritual apathy and other moral germs floating in the air. You need some protection. You need to be swaddled. You need a Sukkah.

The Sukkah is the only mitzvah that you do with your whole being. The holy air of the Sukkah completely envelops and surrounds you. It turns everything you do into a holy act. Just eating and drinking and chatting in the

Sukkah is a mitzvah, just because it is done in the divine shade of the Sukkah. When you sit in a Sukkah, you are being swaddled by sanctity.

Going from the highs of Yom Kippur straight back into the routine of the mundane world is like taking a new born from her mother’s womb straight out into the cold night. You just can’t do that. Sit in the Sukkah. Bask in its sacred shade. Be enwrapped in its warm embrace.

You aren’t suffering from post-Yom Kippur blues, you are just an unswaddled soul. The Sukkah can fix that.

The Legless Frog

Do you still hold on to the belief that the Torah is divine? Literary experts and historians have compared the Bible to other writings of 3000 years ago (when the Torah was supposedly given by G-d) and said that its style doesn’t fit in to the literature of that time frame, and so must have been written much later. How can you ignore a fact that has been scientifically proven?

Answer:

Did you hear about the recent study on frogs? Scientists took a random sample of over one hundred frogs and did the following test:

They placed each frog on a table, crept up behind it and shouted, “Jump!” The frog jumped.

Then they cut off one leg, and again shouted jump. It jumped, although not as far.

They then cut off a second leg and told it to jump, and then a third, each time observing that the frog responded, but jumped smaller distances.

Finally they cut off the fourth leg and again shouted “Jump!” They were amazed to find that in every case the result was the same. The frog did not move at all.

The conclusion: Frogs go deaf when you cut off their legs. It is scientifically proven.

We all come to the conclusions that we want to believe. When the experts find that the Torah is too advanced for its time, they conclude it must have been written later than claimed. When I study Torah, I conclude that it is still ahead of its time, because it was written by G-d for all times and all places. Even the parts that seem archaic and outdated, when explained on a deeper level, have powerful messages that I often feel are speaking directly to me. They are relevant and inspir-

ing to me, right here, right now.

Many have tried to either prove or disprove the Torah’s divinity. Neither attempt will be successful. G-d wants a real relationship with each of us, which means He wants us to freely choose to listen to Him. To maintain balance, there will always be seemingly valid arguments to discredit Him and His Torah. We can choose to buy those arguments, or see beyond them. Whether we open ourselves to the Torah’s message or not is a choice that comes from within, rather than being forced by proof from without.

The Torah has a message for you. The choice is yours. You can be as unresponsive as a legless frog, or you can take a leap in response to your higher calling.

The Anti-Jewish Jew

I recently saw a “Jewish” professor speaking at an anti-Israel rally with a Palestinian scarf around his neck. I was voicing my disgust to a friend of mine who knows this character from his youth. Apparently his parents had converted to Catholicism back in Europe and he was not circumcised or had a bar mitzvah, and is married to a non-Jewish woman. He claims in his speeches that he is a Jewish son of a Holocaust survivor. He may be the son of a survivor, but can we say once and for all that he is not Jewish?

Answer:

I share your disgust. But alongside my disgust, I have to marvel at such a person. He is a vivid illustration of the indestructibility of the Jewish soul.

Here is a guy who could easily identify as a non-Jew, and has every reason to. His parents converted to another religion, he married out, he reviles everything Jewish, and he sides with the enemy of the Jewish people.

So why doesn’t he just drop the whole Jewish thing altogether?

Because he can’t. Being Jewish can’t be dropped. It is a Jew’s deepest identity. Whether you love it or hate it, it will always be there. No conversion can change that.

And so in a twisted way, he finds expression of his Jewishness by being the anti-Jewish Jew.

Yes, he is using his

Jewishness as a weapon against Jews.

No, he should not be invited to speak at any Jewish event.

But yes, he is a Jew.

People like that can do a huge amount of damage. But the biggest damage is to themselves. Here is a Jewish soul yearning to connect to Jewishness, who has blocked his own path. Here is someone whose primary preoccupation, whose main claim to fame is their Jewishness, but a tormented Jewishness. Rather than embrace it, he fights it. He is an accomplice in his own persecution.

We need to counter such attacks on our people from one of our own, but we can’t take away the fact that he is a Jew. Somehow that Jewish spark is still alive. And any time he wants to embrace it, we will embrace him.

I Survived a Plane Crash, So What?

What bugs me about believers is you evoke G-d only when it suits you. When a plane crashes, and I just missed the flight because I got a flat tire on the way to the airport, I am supposed to see it as a miracle. As for the three hundred people who didn’t miss the flight and were killed, well, that’s just bad luck. If G-d is behind everything, isn’t he behind the crash too? So why be impressed that he saved me?

Answer:

You make a good point. For a believer, whatever happens, bad or good, was supposed to happen. Everything that comes our way is somehow a part of the divine plan. Nothing is random.

And that is precisely why someone who had a close shave must be thankful to G-d.

If you weren’t on that plane because you had no plans to fly that day, there’s nothing much for you to take personally. But if you had tickets for that flight and missed it due to unexpected circumstances, you just had a brush with death, and a brush of the divine hand. There must be a message there for you.

A close call happens to tell you that on some level, you were destined to die. Your soul’s time is up in this world. But you have been given an extension on life, a new soul with a new mission.

Dear Rebbby



You can't go back to living the same way you did before. Life can never be the same, because it isn't the same life, it's a new one.

Why some people die in tragedies and others survive, why people get sick and only some recover, why suffering visits one person and skips over another, we do not know. But the fact that life is so fragile means that we need to be grateful for every healthy day. And if you experience a near miss with the Angel of Death, that is G-d telling you that you have much more good to do in this life, and you've just been given more time to do it. So get on with it.

Should Torah be Rated PG?

I have a 3 year old who is quite bright. I try to read to her and teach her as much as I can about stories from the Torah, but recently it's become increasingly difficult. It seems like every story in the Torah needs to be edited for children. I find myself confused all the time with what I am supposed to teach her. Adam and Eve

sinning and being thrown out of the Garden of Eden, G-d destroying the world with a flood, the Ten Plagues visited on the Egyptians. Should the Torah be rated PG?

Answer:

It's funny, all these stories you mention, kids have absolutely no problem with them. It's we adults who have the issues. We have become morally queasy. But our kids need moral clarity.

Adam and Eve did what they were told not to, and they were punished. The generation of the flood was corrupt and was destroyed. The Egyptians who threw Jewish babies into the Nile were punished, after ignoring one warning after another, with the horrible plagues. The message is unmistakable: evil catches up with you. You can get away with it for a while, but not forever. A three year old gets that.

Now of course the world is not all black and white, people are not all good or all evil, and not every choice is between absolute right and wrong. Life is full of grey areas, nuances and subtleties, and in most moral dilemmas the lines are not so clear-cut. But subtlety is for

adults. A child needs the security of seeing things in black and white. Rules have to be plainly expressed, borders have to be sharply defined. Good is good and will be rewarded. Bad is bad and will be punished. Children struggle when things are vague and wishy-washy. They thrive on clarity.

We as parents need to be unequivocal about what is right and wrong, and the consequences of choosing the right way or the wrong way. This is the most important lesson you can teach your child. And that is the theme of the entire Torah. In a world of moral equivalence, this message needs to be communicated loud and clear.

Your child has an inner moral compass, but you need to help her cultivate it. Develop her sense of good and evil, and she will grow to be a morally healthy adult, PG (please G-d).

Is it true you are not

A Dead Man's Shoes?

allowed to keep shoes that belonged to someone who is

now dead? As we were going through my grandfather's possessions, my grandmother insisted on throwing away his shoes, including brand new pairs he never wore. Isn't it better to donate them to someone who can use them?

Answer:

A medieval mystic, Rabbi Yehuda Hachassid, warned against wearing shoes that belonged to the departed. While he didn't share his reasoning, others have offered various fascinating explanations. Here's an ingenious one.

The Talmud, in a section on dream interpretation, lists various dreams that signal negative portents. One of them is if you dream of a dead person coming back and removing your shoes. Such a vision, says the Talmud, is bad news. It means that death will soon visit you.

A shoe represents our physical life. Just as the shoe is our connection to the ground, so our body is the soul's grounding in this world. This is why Moses had to remove his shoes when

G-d spoke to him at the burning bush, why we don't wear leather shoes on Yom Kippur, and why angels are described as being barefoot. The absence of shoes represents the shedding of the body and identification with the soul.

In the symbolic language of dreams, a dead person removing your shoes means you are soon to shed your physical shell and join them on the other side.

You don't want to have such a dream. So the last thing you want to do is wear shoes belonging to a dead person. We dream at night what we think about during the day. Wearing those shoes will cause you to think about their departed owner, and that association may bring you to dream of them coming back to repossess their shoes. You have created your own nightmare.

Rabbi Yehuda Hachassid suggests a simple solution: sell the shoes to a stranger, and give the proceeds to charity. The stranger won't associate the shoes with the departed, and the poor will benefit from the sale.

Moshiach's Donkey

Continued from page 2

Abraham, Moses and Moshiach -- three who employ this erstwhile donkey in their fulfillment of G-d's will. But the extent to which the donkey is involved in their mission differs. With Abraham, it carries his supplies; with Moses, his wife and children; while Moshiach is described as himself riding the donkey.

The Rescinded Decree

Conventional wisdom has it that the spiritual is greater than the physical, the ethereal more lofty than the material. Nevertheless, our sages have taught that G-d created the entirety of existence, including the most lofty spiritual worlds, because "He desired a dwelling in the lower world." Our physical existence is the objective of everything He created, the environment within which His purpose in creation is to be realized.

G-d desired that we refine and elevate the material existence; that the physical reality, whose concreteness and self-centeredness obscure our inner vision and distort our true priorities, be redirected as a positive force in our lives; that we bring to light the goodness and perfec-

tion inherent in all of His creation, including -- and especially -- the lowliest of His works, the material world.

The Hebrew word for donkey is chamor from the word chomer, material. Moshiach's donkey is the material beast harnessed, the physical directed to higher and loftier ends.

But humanity's mission of elevating the material entails a long and involved process, an historic effort in which each generation builds upon the attainments of its predecessors. For the physical and the spiritual are worlds apart; indeed, the very nature of G-d's creation is such that a vast gulf divides the two, making them natural antagonists. By nature, almost by definition, a person devoted to spiritual pursuits shuns the material, while material life coarsens a person's soul and dulls his or her spiritual sensitivity. Only when G-d descended on Mount Sinai was the wall between spirit and matter breached. The divine reality revealed itself within the earthly reality; the Torah was given to man, enabling him to sanctify the mundane, to express the all-pervading truth of G-d within, and via, the material world.

The Midrash uses the following parable to explain the significance of the event:

Once there was a king who decreed: "The people of Rome are forbidden to journey to Syria, and the people of Syria are forbidden to journey to Rome." Likewise, when G-d created the world He decreed: "The heavens are G-d's, and the earth is given to man" (Psalms 115:16). But when He wished to give the Torah to Israel, He rescinded His original decree, and declared: "The lower realms may ascend to the higher realms, and the higher realms may descend to the lower realms. And I, Myself, will begin" -- as it is written, "And G-d descended on Mount Sinai," and then it says, "And to Moses He said: 'Go up to G-d'."

This explains the difference in the extent to which Abraham and Moses involved the material donkey in their respective missions. Abraham, the first Jew, began the process of sublimating the material, of realizing its potential to express the goodness and perfection of the Creator. But Abraham lived before the revelation at Sinai, before G-d rescinded the decree that had divided the world between higher and lower, between matter and

spirit. In his day, the original order instituted at creation still held sway: the physical and the spiritual were two separate, incompatible worlds. The most Abraham could do was to harness the physical to serve the spiritual, to use the donkey to carry the accessories of his divine service. The physical remained as coarse as ever and could not directly be involved in his spiritual life; nevertheless, Abraham took the first step in wresting the material from its inherent self-absorption by utilizing it, albeit peripherally, to assist in his service of G-d.

Moses, on the other hand, was embarking on the mission that was to culminate in his receiving the Torah, the medium by which G-d empowered man to dissolve the dichotomy between the higher and lower domains. The Torah instructs and enables us to sanctify even the most mundane aspects of our lives, to integrate our material selves and environment in our spiritual goals. So Moses used the donkey to carry his wife and children. A person's wife and children are an extension of his own self -- in the words of our sages, "a person's wife is like his own body" (Talmud, Berachot 24a) and "a child is a limb of his father" (ibid.,

Eruvin 70b). Beginning with Moses, the material began to play a central and intimate role in our life's work.

But Moses marks only the beginning of Torah's effect on the physical world. Ever since, whenever a person uses a material resource to perform a mitzvah -- e.g. giving money to charity, using the energy his body extracts from his food to fuel his fervor in prayer -- he "refines" these physical objects, divesting them of their mundanity and selfishness. With each such act, the physical world becomes that much holier, that much more in harmony with its essence and function. Each such act brings closer the day when our world will finally and completely shed the husk of coarseness that is the source of all ignorance and strife, bringing on a new dawn of universal peace and perfection.

So Moshiach, who represents the ultimate fulfillment of Torah, himself rides the donkey of the material. For he heralds a world in which the material is no longer the lower or secondary element, but an utterly refined resource, no less central and significant a force for good than the most spiritual creation.

SHIURIM & CLASSES AT 770 CHABAD GATE

◆ MEN ◆ WOMEN ◆ MEN/WOMEN

WEEKLY CLASSES

SUNDAY

6:15 AM	TANYA	RABBI YARMUSH
8:00 AM	CHASSIDIC THOUGHT	RABBI GANSBURG
10:00 AM	PARSHAT HASHAVUA	RABBI SCHOCHET
10:00 AM	LIKKUTEI SICHOS	RABBI GANSBURG
11:00 AM	TALMUD (TAANIT)	RABBI SCHOCHET
11:15 AM	TALMUD (KRISUS)	RABBI SPALTER
7:00 PM	HALACHA	RABBI SCHOCHET
8:00 PM	CHASSIDIC DISCOURSES	RABBI GANSBURG
8:30 PM	SHULCHAN ARUCH	RABBI CHAIKIN

MONDAY

11:00 AM	THE JOY OF JUDAISM	RABBI SPALTER
1 HR BEFORE MINCHA	TALMUD (TAANIT)	RABBI SCHOCHET
7:45 PM	THE WEEKLY TORAH REVIEW	RABBI GANSBURG

TUESDAY

11:30 AM	TORAH STUDIES - PARSHA	RABBI GANSBURG
8:00 PM	TALMUD (CHULIN)	RABBI SPALTER

WEDNESDAY

11:30 AM	THE JEWISH LEARNING INSTITUTE	RABBI GANSBURG
1 HR BEFORE MINCHA	TALMUD (TAANIT)	RABBI SCHOCHET
7:30 PM	THE JEWISH LEARNING INSTITUTE	RABBI GANSBURG

THURSDAY

12:30 PM	A TASTE OF CHASSIDUS (IN HEBREW)	RABBI GANSBURG
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SHABBOS

9:00 AM	CHASSIDUS	RABBI GANSBURG
1 HR BEFORE MINCHA	THOUGHTS ON THE PARSHA	RABBI GANSBURG

DAILY CLASSES

SUN-THU	9:00 PM	RAMBAM	ALTERNATING
MON-FRI	5:30 AM	CHASSIDIC THOUGHT	RABBI YARMUSH
MON-FRI	6:30 AM	TALMUD (SUKKAH)	RABBI SCHOCHET
MON-FRI	7:10 AM	CHASSIDIC THOUGHT	RABBI GANSBURG

Torah in the Winter

Continued from page 2

to its seven days, while Passover’s atzeret is a more distant eighth, following a count of forty-nine (seven times seven) days that begins on the second day of Passover.

This leads the talmudic sage Rabbi Joshua ben Levi to say that the atzeret of the festival of Sukkot ought to have been fifty days later, like the atzeret of Passover.

Why, indeed, does Shemini Atzeret immediately follow Sukkot? Rabbi Joshua offers the following parable in explanation:

A king had many daughters. Some of them were married off nearby, and some of them were married off in faraway places. One day, they all came to visit with the king, their father. Said the king: Those who are married off nearby have the time to go and come; but those who are married off afar, do not have the time to go and come. Since they are all here with me, I will make one festival for them all, and I shall rejoice with them.

Thus, with the atzeret of Passover, when we are coming from winter into summer, G-d says: They have the time to go and come. But with the atzeret of Sukkot, since we are coming from summer into winter, and the dust of the roads is difficult, and the byroads are difficult . . . G-d says: They do not have the time to go and come; since they are all here, I will make one festival for them all, and I shall rejoice with them.

(Midrash Rabbah, Song of Songs 7:4)

What is an Atzeret?

To better understand the significance of Rabbi Joshua’s question and the answer provided by his parable, we must first examine the concept of atzeret. Why does a festival require an atzeret? What is the difference between an atzeret that immediately follows a festival, and one that comes several weeks later?

The chassidic masters explain that an atzeret is the absorption and internalization of what was earlier realized and expressed on a more external level. Atzeret is what digestion is to eating, what assimilation is to study, what conception is to marriage.

Our receiving of the Torah on Shavuot is the atzeret of our liberation from slavery seven weeks earlier. On Passover we became a free people—free of the taskmaster’s whip, free of subjugation to the cruelest, most debased society on earth. But what is freedom? How is it to be digested, internalized and integrated into our day-to-day existence? Is it freedom from responsibility, from the burden of moral choices, from purpose and definition to life? If such is freedom, then the most liberated creature on earth is . . . the slave! Indeed, this was the freedom some Jews yearned for when they complained to Moses several months later, “We remember the fish which we ate in

Egypt, for free.”

When G-d revealed Himself to Moses in the burning bush and charged him with the mission of taking the children of Israel out of Egypt, He expressed to him the nature of the freedom to be bestowed upon the newborn nation. “This is your sign that I have sent you,” said G-d. “When you take this nation out of Egypt, you shall serve G-d at this mountain.”

The purpose of the Exodus was that it should lead to Sinai. The freedom that G-d promised to Israel was not merely freedom from the geographical borders of Egypt, but freedom from all constraints and limitations, physical or psychological, external or internal. Freedom from doubt, freedom from hazard and inconsistency, freedom from servitude to one’s own nature, drives and desires. Freedom which enables the soul to realize her full potential, to experience her intrinsic bond with her essence and source, to actualize her mission and purpose in life. In other words, the freedom to be fully and uninhibitedly oneself. Such freedom is possible only through Torah, the divinely authored blueprint for creation which guides and directs us toward the understanding and actualization of who and what we truly are.

So every year, after receiving the gift of freedom on the fifteenth of Nissan, we embark on a forty-nine-day process of absorbing and internalizing it—a process which culminates in the atzeret of Shavuot. For seven weeks we labor to assimilate the true, inner significance of the Exodus into the forty-nine traits and sub-traits of our souls, to mature a circumstantial liberty into a state of inherent freedom.

Thus we graduate (as Rabbi Joshua expresses it) from winter to summer. From the chill of aimlessness to the warmth of passionate purpose; from the hardship of struggle to the delight of achievement; from the gloom of ignorance to the clear summer light of wisdom and understanding.

Then, six months later, come the festivals of Tishrei.

The Second Tablets

For life is not the unbroken progression of development and growth that we plan it to be. Instead, there are blunders, failings and regressions. Our life as a nation was no different: a few short weeks after we stood at Sinai, beheld our Creator, and attained the pinnacle of freedom and perfection, the Golden Calf was being worshipped in the Jewish camp.

But every fall also provides the momentum for a subsequent rise. The debacle of the Golden Calf gave us Yom Kippur—the holiest day of the year, and the source of an even deeper connection to Torah than the revelation at Sinai on Shavuot had achieved.

Following the revelation at Sinai, G-d gave Moses the

two Tablets of the Covenant, on which He had inscribed the Ten Commandments which encapsulate the entirety of Torah. Upon beholding Israel’s violation of everything the Tablets stood for, Moses threw the Tablets from his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. But out of the shattered Tablets and covenant, a second set of Tablets was born—a set of Tablets containing the Torah on a level that the earlier set did not, and could not, include. On the tenth of Tishrei, observed ever since as Yom Kippur, G-d gave us the Second Tablets, conveying to us a dimension of Torah that only the regenerative power of teshuvah (“repentance,” lit. “return”) can evoke.

On the most basic level, the Torah is a set of divinely ordained precepts, a list of dos and don’ts which outline the manner in which the Creator of life desired that it be lived; to act accordingly is to connect to G-d as the instrument of His will. This was the dimension of Torah that G-d inscribed on the First Tablets. But the Torah is much more than that, as evidenced by the fact that Torah itself provides the formula for teshuvah.

To rebuild a shattered relationship, one must access that part of the relationship that was never damaged in the first place. The possibility of teshuvah means that even when a person violates the divine will, G-d forbid, the essence of his connection with G-d is not affected; and the fact that the Torah itself includes the precept of teshuvah means that Torah is the vehicle not only for the connection between ourselves and G-d which is expressed and actualized by our observance of its commandments, but also for the inviolable bond that remains forever unaffected by our deeds. So also one who has shattered the “First Tablets” dimension of his relationship with G-d can reach deeper into Torah, to the very heart of the relationship tapped by the hunger, the longing, the recoil of teshuvah, and rebuild it anew.

As long as we did not stray from the straight and true path of life ordained by Torah, there was no need—and no opportunity—to employ the power of teshuvah. This is why the First Tablets contained only the conventional aspect of Torah, the connection with G-d achieved through the fulfillment of His will, while the deeper function of Torah remained locked in sublime latency. It was the Second Tablets, the product of our repentant response to our first (and prototypical) fall as a people, upon which G-d inscribed the essence of Torah—the bond between Him and us that transcends its laws and commandments.

Hidden and Revealed

And Sukkot is the celebration of Yom Kippur.

Teshuvah, by its very nature, is an introverted act: a soul

secludes herself with her G-d, agonizes over the distance she has created between them, and in the depth of her anguish finds the redeeming element of her iniquities, the power to repair and sublimate her defective past.

The private nature of teshuvah is demonstrated by a marked difference between the manner in which we received the First and Second Tablets. On Shavuot, the entire Jewish nation gathered around Mount Sinai amidst a tremendous display of divine power; there was thunder and lightning, clouds of fire and smoke, and the triumphant blast of the shofar, as the Almighty communicated the Ten Commandments to all of Israel and summoned Moses to the top of the mountain to receive the Tablets of the Covenant. But when Moses received the second set of Tablets on Yom Kippur, no one was there; G-d instructed that it be a silent and private affair, befitting the still, deep waters of teshuvah.

So Yom Kippur is hardly the environment for manifest joy and celebration. And yet, what greater joy can there be for the Jew than his joy in the Torah of the Second Tablets, in the essence of his eternal, all-enduring bond with his Creator? And the nature of joy is that it refuses to confine itself to the inner sanctum of the heart. It bursts its seams, floods the body, pours out of the throat in song and sets the feet dancing. Hence the festival of Sukkot, “the time of our joy,” five days later on the fifteenth of Tishrei. Sukkot is the joy of Yom Kippur come to light—the joy that the solemnity and inwardness of the day had kept concealed.

For seven days the joy mounts. But as with the freedom gained on Passover, the joy of teshuvah must be absorbed and internalized. Instead of remaining a once-a-year experience, it must be integrated into our nature and daily existence. So the seven-day festival of Sukkot is followed by an atzeret—a day on which our joy with the essence of Torah reaches its peak, and is immediately married to the cycle of our year-round lives.

Summer and Winter

Thus, the Passover-Shavuot orbit on the one hand, and the Yom Kippur-Sukkot-Shemini Atzeret constellation on the other, represent two dimensions of Torah and its role as the facilitator of the bond between us and G-d.

The journey from Passover to Shavuot represents the straight and true path outlined by Torah: the careful climb from the ignorance and selfishness of infancy to spiritual and moral maturity, the step-by-step progress of the righteous individual (tzaddik) who labors for a lifetime to develop the inherent goodness and perfection of his soul while safeguarding himself from the pitfalls of a corporeal and corrupting world.

On the other hand, the Second Tablets of Yom Kippur, and their celebration and internalization on Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret, represent the triumph of the baal teshuvah (“master of

return”)—the one who, having succumbed to the trials of earthly life, has exploited the negativity of his condition to touch the very core of his soul and stimulate its most quintessential powers.

This is reflected in the alignment of these two festival systems with the seasons of the year. The springtime festivals of Passover and Shavuot, marking the passage from winter to summer, embody the tzaddik’s measured progression from bud to bloom, from darkness and cold to light and warmth, from spiritual infancy to maturity. The autumn festivals of Tishrei represent the baal teshuvah’s return to the cold and gloom of winter, to uncover the treasures hidden therein.

The Parable

Now we might understand Rabbi Joshua’s parable, and how it explains the difference between the atzeret of Passover and the atzeret of Sukkot.

The Supernal King has many “married daughters,” many souls who have embarked on the mission and challenge of physical life. The soul comes down to earth and is joined to a body in order that their union should yield a progeny of good deeds, deeds which sanctify their material environment and fulfill G-d’s purpose in creation by developing it as a dwelling for His presence. Hence, the depiction of the soul’s earthly sojourn as a marriage.

Some of the King’s daughters are married off in a “near place.” These are the souls of the righteous, who, though they descend into physical life, never lose sight of their royal origins. They deal with the material, developing and refining their own physical natures and the world about them, but without falling prey to its adverse influences. They have left their father’s home, but never wander too far off.

But the King also has daughters whose marriages have led them to faraway places: souls whose involvement with the material reality has taken them far from the royal palace; souls who have become deeply enmeshed in the mundanity they came to redeem.

There are tzaddikim and there are baalei teshuvah, and there is also the tzaddik and the baal teshuvah within each and every one of us. We each have our moments and areas of perfect righteousness—moments and areas of our lives that remain forever unsullied by the evil we must contend with. And virtually every person has had the experience—to a greater or lesser extent—of grappling with that evil, being tainted by it, and being challenged to surmount the fall—only to be driven by it to even greater heights than the perfect self could ever attain.

Passover is the festival of the tzaddik, and of the tzaddik within us. On Passover we taste the pure, untarnished freedom of a newborn people. So the atzeret of Passover comes fifty days later. For it is springtime; the roads are clear, and we have the time

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Be Accepting

Marriage is Built with Kindness

Be kind to your spouse. Not a single person in the entire world would marry if he or she thought their partner would not treat him or her with kindness. Kindness is the fertile soil in which affection can grow. Kindness is the foundation upon which a strong and healthy family can be built.

Torah teaches that the world was built with “kindness.” And that kindness is rewarded in this world and the next. Kindness is kindness; whether donating a million dollars to a yeshiva or opening the door for an unknown stranger. Kindness is available 24/7 and the reward is immediate. What a wonderful Mitzvah!

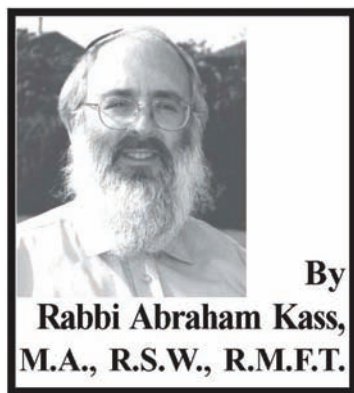
Marriage is a voluntary institution; a married individual must continually choose to stay with his or her partner. This is relationship reality whether we agree with it or not. When kindness is abundant within the relationship the choice to stay together is easy. Kindness ensures shalom bias and Hashem’s presence in the home.

Showing kindness to your spouse is fundamental to marriage. Without “kindness” your relationship will sour, G-d forbid. Fortunately, it’s easy to be kind. Here are some examples of everyday opportunities:

- Say good morning.
- Ask how he or she slept.
- Make something for him or her to eat.
- Help find something your spouse misplaced.
- Check with your spouse to make sure they have everything they need for the day (money, food, information, etc.).
- Call during the day to say hello.
- Pickup something at the store.
- Listen and comfort your spouse if he or she is upset.
- Help your spouse with his or her tasks at home.
- Speak gently and respectfully.
- Do favors.
- Spend time together before going to sleep.

There are many more ways, planned and unplanned, to behave kindly toward your

partner and he or she toward you. The more you do, the closer and healthier your family will be.



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

On the other hand, a kindness deficiency is the source of marital conflicts and the cause of most divorces. Anger, selfish and irresponsible behavior, and criticism, push away “kindness” and lead to relationship breakdown. The fact that the perpetrator of these hostile feelings and actions feels justified makes no difference. Little by little, lack of kindness chips away at the very foundation of the relationship and everyone in the family suffers.

Think back to the time when you and your spouse were courting. When your husband or wife was only your date, how did he or she treat you? With “kindness,” or otherwise? Certainly your answer is, “with kindness.” I know this because otherwise you would have run the other way³/₄you would have ended your contact immediately never wanting to see him or her again.

You only married your partner believing that the kindness you were shown during the dating period, during your courtship, would last forever. And for a fortunate few, this actually turns out to be true. Sadly, for far too many people, kindness slips away and the relationship becomes a painful struggle. But it needn’t be that way. You can easily be kinder to your partner. Make a decision to be kinder and begin behaving that way.

Being “kind” is actually very simple. The difficulty is starting and not stopping. But if you do, you will have a wonderful marriage with the benefits far outweighing the

effort. When you are “kind” to your spouse, and he or she to you, both of you will reap many rewards. Kindness will guarantee happiness.

Kindness is remembered. Each act of “kindness” toward your spouse creates a relationship credit for you. These credits are saved-up like dollars in a bank account. When you hurt your partner’s feelings—intentionally or unintentionally—these “relationship credits” can be used to reestablish harmony. They stand as advocates mitigating your partner’s hurt feelings, negative judgments, or thoughts to retaliate. The more credits you have, the easier it is to get beyond relationship mistakes.

Research has shown that it takes on average five positive interactions to eliminate one negative one. Thus, the more “relationship credits” you have, the more relationship mistakes you can survive. For example, if you say good morning daily, but one day forget, either your spouse won’t notice or just will casually mention it. However, if you never say good morning your spouse will likely conclude you don’t care about him or her.

Jerry and Susan were clients of mine (details changed to protect privacy). Once Jerry and Susan had extinguished their anger, they were now ready to work in a positive way on their relationship. I suggested: “Make a list of kind behaviors that your partner has done in the past, is currently doing, and could do in the future, that would make you feel loved and cared for.” When they had finished making their lists, they took turns discussing what they had written. Then I told them to exchange lists. Jerry had Susan’s list and Susan had Jerry’s. I suggested they pick from their partner’s list each day two acts of kindness and then do them. I explained that these were “gifts,” given without any conditions. They went home. The next time I saw Jerry and Susan in my office they were both beaming and happy. They didn’t look like the old Jerry and Susan I had first met six weeks ago. “What happened,” I asked. “Simple,” Susan answered, “I did what

was on Jerry’s list, and he did what was on mine.”

Kindness is contagious. Being “kind” to your spouse creates goodwill and cooperation. When you are kind your partner is far more likely to be, in-turn, kind to you. Emotional closeness, appreciation and love will grow stronger and stronger with each act of kindness you and your partner show each other. You don’t need to go to therapy to increase your marital acts of kindness. You know yourself what you can do to make your husband or wife happy.

Kindness is essential to a happy marriage. If you are not prepared to be “kind” to your spouse, you are writing for yourself a prescription for a failed relationship. You cannot replace kindness with money, good looks, a big house or exotic trips. Kindness is an attitude that manifests itself in all situations. Being “married” means behaving with “kindness”—it’s just that basic. There are no substitutes for kindness. There is a saying, “What goes around, comes around.” When you give “kindness,” you get “kindness.”

Kindness is something you can’t give away—it always comes back.

Have a sweet life; behave kindly toward your partner.

Abe Kass, M.A., R.S.W., R.M.F.T., is a 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. Abe is the publisher of Wisdom Scientific self-help educational programs. He has published 18 books and hundreds of articles. 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 Abe’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.



Torah in the Winter

Continued from page 18

to go and come. We are free to methodically make our way through the forty-nine steps from the revelation of Passover to the internalization of Shavuot. It is a gradual, step-by-step journey, characteristic of the gradual, step-by-step trajectory of the tzaddik’s path through life.

But on Sukkot we celebrate our capacity for teshuvah, our bond with G d embodied by the Second Tablets. At this reunion of the daughters that are married afar with their Father and King, they have not the time to go and

come. For we are coming from summer into winter, and the dust of the roads is difficult, and the byroads are difficult. We are journeyers along the volatile path of teshuvah, where opportunities must be grasped as they come, and lives are unmade and remade in a single, explosive moment.

So we plunge directly from Sukkot into the atzeret of Simchat Torah—directly into the immediate internalization of the Second Tablets edition of Torah and its retention through the winters and summers to come.



British Pop Sensation Balance Stardom with Orthodoxy

By: Chavie Liber

NEW YORK (JTA) – Alex Clare is really just a nice Jewish boy.

Sure, his hit Too Close was the seventh most popular song in the United States, his music video has garnered more than 53 million hits on YouTube and he has mobs of teenage girls chasing him around Europe. But at the end of the day, he still likes to sit down with a nice challenging page of Talmud.

“I have to say, it’s pretty easy being in this business and keeping the basics of Jewish law,” Clare told JTA in a phone interview before a gig in Manchester, England. “I travel with a full set of milk and meat pots and dishes, in addition to having a full suitcase of tins and dry kosher goods. And Shabbos and holidays aren’t an issue because I almost always go back to London or Israel or find a Chabad house to stay at.”

Clare’s career got a huge boost last summer when Microsoft chose Too Close for the commercial for the latest version of Internet Explorer. The 27-year-old resident of the heavily Jewish London neighbourhood of Golders Green had been dropped from his record label five months before the software company reached out to him. His 2011

album The Lateness of the Hour, on which Too Close first appeared, was considered a flop.

But Clare is embracing the commercial’s success and riding the publicity to fuel a European tour. He performed in the United States in November.

“It was definitely a good feeling to get that call that they wanted my music,” Clare said. “It’s tough not to want to give up.”

Clare began his career performing at bars and clubs in London. For a time he dated Amy Winehouse, the troubled pop star and fellow British Jew who died of alcohol poisoning last year. After Clare was picked up by Island Records in 2010, Winehouse reportedly told friends she was worried Clare would reveal details about their relationship in his songs.

Clare declined to discuss his relationship with Winehouse.

Asked about the subject matter of his songs, he replied that they are about “deep” themes and that he’s working on balancing a life of stardom and religious identity.

Watching Clare’s videos and hearing his raspy voice, one wouldn’t immediately assume he is a devoted member of the tribe, but he has been an Orthodox Jew for about five years. Raised in a secular home,



Emerging British pop star Alex Clare is working to balance his Orthodox religious commitments with the demands of global celebrity.

Clare hooked up with Chabad after studying in Jerusalem.

While on tour, Clare relies on daily spiritual guidance to help maintain his religious practice in a music world that provides no end of temptation. He studies the Tanya, a work of Chasidic philosophy by the founder of the Chabad movement, and the Talmud tractate Brachot. He also finds time to work on a new album, expected this year, which he says will incorporate subtle spiritual messages.

“One new song I’m writing is sort of based off of Shir HaShirim [Song of Songs], but you would never have known unless I told you,” he said. “But my goal isn’t to have an agenda through my music. Just to be living the way I am is a message in itself.”

Clare is part of a growing corps of Jewish artists whose religious commitments that preclude performing on Friday nights, including the Moshav Band, Peter Himmelman and Dov Rosenblatt of The Wellspring. But a more apt comparison may be Matisyahu, the reggae star and one-time Chabad adherent who achieved global success singing about spiritual themes while clad in

the black and white garb of a Chasid.

Clare acknowledges that many compare him to Matisyahu but insists that his mission is different, adding he doesn’t come with the same “shtick. I’m not trying to be a religious symbol for anyone.”

Clare said his team helps him keep certain religious laws. For example, his bodyguards help ward off the mobs of screaming teenage girls – and there are many – so that nobody touches him, since he adheres to religious laws of modesty,

which forbid touching women.

“I know clubs and concert halls are not the best place for a nice Jewish boy, but everyone has their life choices and this is mine,” he said. “It’d definitely be different if I was a Satmar Chasid. They’d probably disown me.”

Clare said that he did lose a record deal opportunity because he refused to play on Sukkot and tour over the holidays. However, he said these are small prices to pay, and even with sacrifices made, a little faith can go a long way.



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 ones on our Memorial Board which will insure The Observance of Yahrtzeit in perpetuity.

For further information call 905.731.7000