

Living Jewish



Tell your Children

A High Powered Lawyer

About two hundred years ago, a Jew from Rumania named Mendel departed that country and took up residence in Russia, in the city of Kishinov. Another Jew, whom he had once been close to but before he moved had become his enemy, leveled a nasty libel against him to the Rumanian government. He claimed that Mendel had found a treasure chest of gold coins, which in reality was lost government property, and that was why he had left Rumania for Russia.

The Rumanian government sent a request to the Russian government to extradite Mendel to Rumania so that he could stand trial there. The Russian government refused; Mendel had already acquired official citizen papers and all the rights to which that entitled him. Instead, they replied, if Rumania wanted to make a legal claim against him, they would have to do so in Russia, in the courthouse in Kishinov. They would be welcome to send their own prosecutor, and whatever witnesses he desired to bring along with him.

Mendel traveled to the "Holy Grandfather," the "*Shpoler Zeide*," and told him the whole story. The Rebbe told him not to be afraid of the impending case, only that he should do everything within his power to arrange that the trial take place on Purim day. He also told him not to hire a lawyer, for he himself would send him an excellent defender. Mendel asked how much this first class lawyer would cost him. The Shpoler Zeide replied that he was arranging the wedding of an orphan girl to an orphan boy and that if Mendel would help with the expenses of three hundred rubles, he himself would take care of any legal fees. Mendel happily contributed the entire sum, and the Rebbe blessed him. Mendel then asked when he would be able to meet his attorney-to-be. "Not until the day of the trial." The Zeide answered. "He will meet you at the courthouse. Be sure to have your power-of-attorney prepared for him to file in the court."

"But how will I know who he is?" asked Mendel, puzzled. "Oh, that will be easy," smiled the Rebbe. "He'll be wearing a white hat and red gloves."



Mendel returned to Kishinov, where after considerable effort on a number of different fronts, he succeeded in having the trial delayed until the exact date of Purim. Immediately he sent a telegram to the Rebbe to notify him of the auspicious news. Four weeks before Purim, Mendel received official notification of the charges against him and a summons to the trial. At the same time the Rumanian government received an invitation to send a prosecuting attorney and whatever witnesses they had. Shortly before Purim, Mendel discovered someone on his way to Shpoler to spend the holiday with the Rebbe. Mendel sent with him a *kvittel* (note) requesting the Rebbe's blessing, and money and food packages for the Rebbe to distribute to the poor on Purim day.

Purim in Shpoler was always interesting, as well as joyful. Whenever the Zeide had some mission to accomplish that required overcoming government obstacles, he would convene a "Purim Performance." He would draft a number of clever people from among his followers to appear in disguise. Sometimes he would appoint one of them to be a "Purim King" or a "Purim Chief Rabbi," while others would take the parts of noted court dignitaries or other significant personages. A case would be presented before the esteemed gathering, and they would decide according to the Shpoler's wishes. All this was based on secret mystic principles, and wondrous salvations for individuals or the community often followed close upon the conclusion of the Purim Play. This year the Zeide requested that on Purim certain men should come to his house and disguise themselves as judges of the secular court system. The chief Rabbi of the town was designated to play the head judge, while two others represented the other two

judges, in order that they could conduct a mock trial of Mendel. Another chassid was assigned the role of the prosecutor from Rumania. He blackened his face, and every time he spoke everyone present would jeer and catcall and otherwise make fun of him. Someone else was given the role of the informer and of course someone had to play Mendel. Rounding off the cast were two others acting the role of witnesses from Rumania that would testify in Mendel's behalf. Finally, the Shpoler Zeide spread on top of his large, round *streimel* (fur holiday hat) a white handkerchief, and enclosed his hands in a pair of red gloves. He himself would assume the part of the lawyer for the defense! Guards were posted to make sure that no one but the players could enter the Rebbe's room.

The trial began. Secular court procedures were followed precisely. The chief judge read out the charges. The prosecutor presented the claim in the name of the government of Rumania, although they continually interrupted to heckle and ridicule him. Then the informer testified his version of events. Next to take the stand were the two witnesses for Mendel. They described how they had seen the informer approach Mendel, and arrogantly demand a large sum of money. He had threatened Mendel that if he didn't pay, he would take nasty revenge upon him. Finally, the judges called upon the defense attorney to present the case for his client.

(continued on page 3)

Shabbat Times

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat
Jerusalem	4:57	6:09
Tel Aviv	5:14	6:11
Haifa	5:05	6:10
Beer Sheva	5:14	6:11
New York	5:22	6:22

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A Fire Burns on the Inner Altar

The Torah portion, Tetzaveh, relates in detail the instructions for making the golden altar. What relevance can we make of these instructions today, when we have no Temple and no altar?

The Temple within every Jew

When G-d told Moses to erect a Sanctuary, He said: "They shall make Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell in them," meaning in the soul of every Jew. Thus, even though the physical Temple in Jerusalem has been destroyed, the inner Temple, which each Jew makes within himself, survives, indestructible.

In addition, the service which he conducts in the reaches of his soul mirrors in every respect the service of the Temple and Sanctuary. Thus these laws, which appear at first to have no contemporary application, are in fact instructions as to the inner life of a Jew.

The Pure Altar in our Heart

Of the many vessels and implements in the Holy Temple, some could become ritually impure while others could not be defiled. (The golden altar was of this second category.) Each vessel had its own particular function.

There is an analogy to this in the Jewish soul, with its many capacities. It may be that in the course of serving G-d, some

ulterior motive, some unholy desire, intrudes. This can be compared to the defilement of one of the Sanctuary vessels.

When this occurs, our thoughts have become impure, and we must seek ways of removing the impurity so that our thoughts can become worthy of taking part in the "service of the inner Sanctuary." For within the Sanctuary, no impurities are allowed.

There are, amongst Jews, Jews of copper and Jews of gold. Those who are rich in spiritual worth are like gold: their every act is like this precious metal. The spiritually poor are the copper altars of religious life.

But every Jew, however he behaves inwardly or outwardly, preserves intact at the heart of his being an essential desire to do G-d's will - a spark of faith, sometimes hidden, sometimes fanned into flame.

The previous Lubavitcher Rebbe said: "A Jew does not want, nor is he able, to be torn away from G-dliness." This spark is where the altar of the Jew's inner Temple is to be found.

The Fire of G-dly Love

The Temple service included burnt offerings. These were animals, consumed by a fire sent from G-d. This sacrifice also occurs within the soul of the Jew; the sacrifice is of himself. The animal is his animal soul, his egocentric desires. And

the fire which consumes them is the fire of the love of G-d, whose undying source is the spark of holiness at the essential core of his soul.

Whether a Jew belongs to the "altars of gold" or is one of the "altars of copper," as long as he reminds himself that essentially he is an altar where the fire of G-dly love consumes the "animal soul" of his self-centered passions, he cannot become impure.

When a Jew concentrates on this aspect of his soul he becomes like the earth. Just as the earth we tread on is a symbol of humility and can never become impure, so our soul becomes void of any will except the will of G-d and remains pure.

Adapted from the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Shabbos Table, From our Sages and Moshiach Now reprinted from www.LchaimWeekly.org - LYO / NYC

Purim Farbrengen

Purim farbrengens of the Lubavitcher Rebbe always had an intimate air to them. The fiery sichos (speeches), the lebedige (happy and heartfelt) nigunim, the personal lechaims.

In the earlier years, there were often direct conversations with individual people present, encouraging, chiding and blessing. There were years when the Rebbe asked that someone be moitzie (fulfil the obligation of) the assembled with "ad de'lo yoda..."

"Beginning in the early 5740's," Reb Hillel Dovid Krinsky of JEM recounts, "we would broadcast five or six of the Rebbes major farbrengens on national television, every year. This was a major leap forward in accessing Yidden in their homes, and connecting them.

"Before every such farbrengen we would ask the Rebbe's permission, and then make the necessary arrangements.

"One year, a suggestion arose to broadcast the Purim farbrengen. We wrote in our idea, but to our surprise the Rebbe turned it down. The context of the answer was that on Purim the Rebbe farbrengs just with the chassidim, since halacha prescribes that the meal of Purim should be celebrated with family."

reprinted from The Weekly Farbrengen by Merkaz Anash, on-line at TheWeeklyFarbrengen.com

From our Sages

You must command the Israelites to bring to you (Ex. 27:20)

The menorah was kindled by Aaron, the high priest, whereas the collecting of the oil was the responsibility of Moses. The lighting of the menorah is the apportioning of energies to each of the different categories of Jews to assist in their G-dly service. The gathering together of these different factions into one entity, however, is far more difficult. That had to be accomplished by the leader of the generation.

(The Previous Rebbe)

You must command... (Ex. 27:20)

The preface is you - you must observe and do. Only after you do this is it appropriate for you to command others.

(Ma'adanei Melech)

...To keep the lamp constantly burning... in the communion tent, outside the curtain (27:20-21)

The G-dly light within every Jew has to be present and noticeable not just when

one is in the "communion tent" - the synagogue or study hall, and not just at the time that one is involved in prayer, Torah study or other mitzvot. But also "outside of the curtain" - outside, on the street, in one's daily activities and in one's actions between oneself and others.

(Yalkut Eliezer)

And these days are commemorated and celebrated.

When a holiday is "commemorated" properly, when it is truly relived, one can access the spiritual influences that were manifest on the original holiday, "celebrating" and actualizing them every year anew.

(The Ari Zal)

The joy of Purim is an expression of the deepest dimension of the soul that transcends awareness of self. It was this level that was revealed during the days of Mordechai and Esther and led to the salvation that likewise transcended the natural order.

(The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

Chassidus page

Purim

The Zohar notes that Purim is similar to Yom HaKipurim. This means that what is accomplished on Yom Kippur by fasting can be accomplished on Purim by rejoicing. Furthermore, the very name Kipurim ("like Purim"), implies that Purim is the greater Yom Tov, impacting a person more powerfully.

Indeed, Chazal teach that when Moshiach comes, all the Yomim-Tovim will cease to exist; only the Yom-Tov of Purim will remain. Chassidus explains that the kedusha and joy of Purim are so great, that even when we have the kedusha and joy of the geulah, Purim will still stand out. In other words, the other Yomim-Tovim will "cease to exist" in the same sense as a candle is not noticeable in the sunlight — its light is nullified by comparison with a much brighter light. Similarly, the light of the other Yomim-Tovim will be nullified in comparison to the light of the geulah. So too, the light elicited by the other festivals will pale in comparison with that elicited by Purim.

The Megillah says that after the miracle of Purim, the Yidden were blessed with simcha, which Chazal understand to mean that they were now able to celebrate the Yomim-Tovim. The Rebbe explains that although goyim also have holidays, they celebrate them with drinking and unbridled conduct. Yidden, by contrast, even when they rejoice and drink they become closer to HaShem, and heighten their yiras Shamayim and their kedusha.

Ad D'Lo Yada

The Rebbe explains that the simcha of Purim is greater than all other types of simcha. The happiness on Purim should be to the extent that one does not feel himself at all, and is totally enveloped with simcha. This is the meaning of 'ad d'lo yada'.

The Rebbe also explained: it's obvious that we must distance ourselves entirely from anything negative ("cursed be Haman"), and seek to treasure and embrace all good things ("blessed be Mordechai"). That applies at any time. The unique aspect of Purim is that we can accomplish this by allowing our neshama to express itself freely. This kind of avoda is superior to serving

HaShem by means of conscious thought (yada). Indeed, in this kind of avoda we can resemble the Yidden at the time of the Purim story who, when the inner power of their neshamos surfaced, fulfilled all the mitzvos faithfully, even to the point of mesiras nefesh, self-sacrifice.

On the first Purim after his wedding, the Alter Rebbe explained the avoda of reaching 'ad d'lo yada'. On Purim we must ensure that the "lo" - the things that are forbidden, should be "yada"-known. What we are supposed to do is well-known, but it is also necessary to know what is forbidden and to treat it with extra caution. *reprinted from The Weekly Farbrengen by Merkaz Anash, on-line at TheWeeklyFarbrengen.com*

(continued from page 1) The Shpoler Zeide rose and began to speak eloquently. He explained how the informer was motivated by jealousy and the desire for revenge. He proved that the story of the treasure chest filled with gold coins was a total fabrication. He also elucidated that even if there were such a chest, the Rumanian government anyway would have no legitimate claim upon it. His delivery was emotional yet brilliant, and thus extremely convincing. As soon as the Zeide finished, the judges announced their verdict: they declared Mendel to be totally innocent. All the players then shoved the man in blackface out of the room, whereupon he ran off to wash away the paint and makeup. After they had all removed their disguises they rejoined the chassidim, and the Zeide sat at the head of the table to lead the Purim festive meal. Word spread among the Chassidim about the "trial" that had taken place in the house. That night they received a telegram from Kishinov: Mendel had won his case and would soon travel to Shpola.

Several days later Mendel showed up at the synagogue in Shpola. The chassidim were overjoyed to hear him and wanted to know all that had transpired. Mendel reported an outline of events, and emphasized that the main ingredient of his success was the wonderful lawyer that the Rebbe had sent to defend him. "He gave such a magnificent speech in court," Mendel exuded, "and so brilliant." The chassidim expressed interest in exactly what the clever lawyer had said, so Mendel began to quote from the speech to them. They stared at him in amazement. It was word for word what the Zeide had said in his lawyer disguise during their mock trial on Purim!

At his first opportunity Mendel entered into the Rebbe's study to speak to him privately. Before he could say a word, the Zeide said to him: "Nu, Mendel, so how did you like the lawyer I sent you?" "He was great!" Mendel exclaimed. "He captivated everyone in the court with the brilliance of his defense, and as you know, I was judged innocent as a result of his efforts." The happy Mendel was startled by the Rebbe's response to his words. "You should know, Mendel, that your defender was an angel from heaven, created by the generous donation you gave me for the wedding of the two orphans. If you merit you will see him again advocating on your behalf, in the heavenly court when (after you reach 120 years of age) it will be time to give a reckoning of your deeds in this lowly physical world."

Translated and adapted by Yrachmiel Tilles from Sipurei Chassidim II # 268. Yerahmiel Tilles of Tsfat is a co-founder of ASCENT. His mailing list (ytilles3@gmail.com) is now in its 21st year. The first two of his "Full Moon" storybooks (Koren Publ) are available for purchase at KabbalaOnline-shop.com and Jewish bookstores. The above story is in Festivals of the New Moon.

Moshiach Now

Love & Unity

In the time of Mordechai and Esther the deliverance of our people was brought about by Jewish unity.

May our efforts to spread love and unity among our people at present enable us to "join one redemption to another" (Talmud Megila 6b) – and proceed from the redemption of Purim to the ultimate Redemption, speedily in our days.

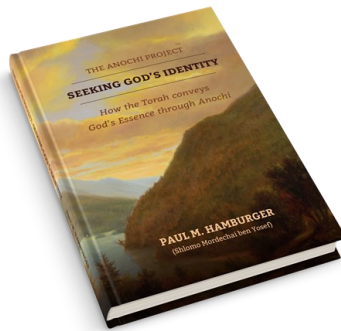
(The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Purim 5722 - 1962)

Human Interest

The Anochi Project

What stimulates someone to learn more about Chassidus? It might be a charismatic rabbi. Sometimes it is an important life event. Perhaps it is even a l'chaim with some tasty cholent! But sometimes one's interest in Chassidus is stimulated simply by sitting and learning Chassidus. That's what happened to Shlomo Hamburger (a partner in the international law firm Proskauer Rose LLP and a member of the International Advisory Board for Chabad on Campus International) some 10 years ago. He was studying one of the Rebbe's sichas on Parshas Yisro where the Rebbe explained the significance of the word "Anochi" as a reference to G-d's Essence.

"After studying that sicha," Hamburger said, "a lightbulb went on. If the Rebbe said Anochi was significant, it must be true. So I decided to prove exactly how true it was." After investigating available resources, Hamburger could not find a source that analyzed the deeper significance of all of the uses of Anochi in the Torah; so he created



his own. Hamburger started with a document containing all 141 uses of Anochi in the Torah. He then studied classical, rabbinic and Chassidic authorities to find a common theme. After years of study, Hamburger compiled his learning in a book entitled *"The Anochi Project: Seeking God's Identity."*

After reading *The Anochi Project*, Rabbi Chaim Dalfin (noted author and lecturer) commented "Shlomo Hamburger's book, *The Anochi Project*, is a most important addition to the world of Torah scholarship. It is well sourced and shows the hidden truths in the Torah. His anecdotes clarify complicated ideas and his excellent writing demonstrates true academic prowess." Rabbi Mendel Bluming of the Chabad Shul of Potomac, Maryland, agreed. "Shlomo Hamburger's words are deep and relevant. His thoughts are clear and well-articulated." *The Anochi Project* is currently available at www.lulu.com (search for Anochi) and will soon be available in bookstores and on Amazon.com.

Cooking Tip of the Week

For those that do not want to use corn syrup there are several substitutes. One cup of corn syrup can be exchanged for one cup maple syrup, one cup brown sugar with 1/4 cup water, one cup agave syrup or one cup honey. Back to healthy baking.

Alizah Hochstead lizahh@hotmail.com

Halacha Corner – Matanos L'Evyonim, Gifts to the Poor

Every person is required to give gifts or money of at least a nominal sum to two poor people on Purim day (not by night). The obligation can be fulfilled through any type of gift, money, food, or clothing. The gifts should be worth at least a peruta (approx 5c). That is the minimum requirement; it is proper to give more. Giving to the poor further demonstrates the spirit of unity among the Jewish people. Children, even if it is unclear whether they have reached the age of chinuch, are similarly obligated to give matanos l'evyonim. Matanos l'evyonim may be given to poor men, women or children (who understand). It may also be given to a poor mourner. On Purim, we do not weigh the appropriateness of the recipient of our tzedakah. Whoever stretches out his hand and asks should be given tzedakah. The minimum amount of matanos l'evyonim may not be given from ma'aser money. The Rambam teaches that it is preferable to give generously to the poor, rather than to prepare a lavish Purim se'udah or to give many mishloach manos to one's friends. "For there is no greater or glorious joy than to bring joy to the hearts of paupers, orphans, widows, and strangers, and one who brings happiness to these low spirited individuals is comparable to the shechinah." From the Badatz of Crown Heights, Rav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita, crownheightsconnect.com

Farbrengen

Question: I am a mother of three young children, ages six, four and two. My sister has been going to one of these parenting classes and shares with me what she learns. There is a lot of talk about giving the kids boundaries, not giving them everything they want. I find this hard. I love my kids and want to give to them. I do not like to hear them cry when they don't get and I like to see them smile when they do get. I feel like with my way of parenting a lot of tantrums are avoided. Is it really so bad to just give kids what they want?

Answer: As a parent I completely understand you and I am sure that many of our readers feel as you do. It is so easy to just give our kids what they want. We feel happy when they are happy and we avoid the tantrum.

The following story by Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananiah (Eruvin, 53B) may be helpful: Once a child got the better of me. I was traveling and I met with a child at a crossroads. I asked him, "Which way to the city?" and he replied: "This way is short and long, and that way is long and short." I took the "short and long" way. I soon reached the city but found my approach obstructed by gardens and orchards. So I retraced my steps and said to the child: "My son, did you not tell me that this is the short way?" Answered the child: "Did I not tell you that it is also long?"

To raise a child to be an independent, responsible and self-confident adult requires an eye to the future. Behavioral patterns that are formed at childhood will often be carried into adulthood. A child who tantrums and gets what he wants, may also tantrum as an adult, albeit in a different fashion such as passive aggressive behavior. This can negatively affect his marriage and other relationships. The way we educate our children prepares them for life.

Children want their parents to be strong and confident, not timid and apologetic. The world is big and unknown and children rely on their parents for support and guidance. Boundaries provide a sense of security and belonging, a feeling that someone cares. As a result, children will learn how to apply boundaries to their own behavior, providing them with inner strength and confidence.

It is also essential to nurture the parent/child relationship. For example, have set times to spend one-on-one time with each child. Children need this and will feel loved. The better the relationship, the better the behavior and growth of the child.

Parenting is both rewarding and challenging. While it is tempting to take the seemingly shorter road, we will often only reach our destination by choosing the long and short road.

Aharon Schmidt, marriage & individual coaching; 052-524-6528; send questions to coachingandcounseling1@gmail.com



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