



CONGREGATION BETH JEHUDAH

THE CBJ Conversation

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OUR INNER PHARAOH

RABBI MICHEL TWERSKI

I want to begin by expressing my personal gratitude to the individuals who devoted their precious time and energy to renew an old project of the synagogue, where, many years ago, we would regularly publish a newsletter to keep in touch with all of our constituents. Hopefully, this publication will be the first of many more to come. May Hashem reward the project managers with all the Heavenly blessings their efforts so richly deserve.

One of the central themes of the Passover holiday is that of freedom from slavery. It is certainly of signal importance for each of us to reflect on the ways in which we have allowed ourselves to become slaves to bad middos and habits which demean us. Not taking control of the qualities of character, in which we know ourselves to be deficient, is an expression of "avdus," a state of servitude inconsistent with the Torah's understanding of "freedom."

There is yet another theme, of no less importance, which is generally overlooked, and that is the concept of acting like a "Pharaoh" in our relationships with others. This may seem absurd at first glance, but I believe that a redefinition of the concept of enslavement is in order. I suggest that every form of exploitation, wherein we take advantage of another person, is an expression, albeit remote, of Pharaohic behavior. We need to be cautious of using our positions of office, power or relationship, to obligate others to do what we want.

Certainly, we, as parents and teachers,



need to teach and to discipline those entrusted to our custodianship. Certainly, we, as parents and teachers, need to give our children and students, young and old, opportunities to fulfill their mitzvos of honoring parents and elders, by being caring and helpful to us. That being said, there is a fine line between the above, and using our position to make them or others give up their time and energy, for no reason, other than to save us the trouble. To be sure, this raises a very complex dimension in our lives, and deserves to be treated more exhaustively. Until we can do so, let us be aware that the Passover holiday is not only about our not being slaves, but also about our not being Pharaohs.

In the Divrei Torah during the seder, and in general our discussions during the Yom Tov meals, we might explore together manifestations of this unwelcome behavior in our lives. Like every other challenge, as members of the nation that faced down the mightiest empires in history, we can surely find the spiritual resources to prevail over this challenge, as well.

Along with the Rebbetzin, whose wise counsel will also be found in these pages, I wish everyone a Chag Kosher V'Sameach.

MILWAUKEE'S OWN PESACH STORY

REBBETZIN FEIGE TWERSKI

As we approach the Yom Tov of Pesach and prepare to tell the amazing story of B'nai Yisroel's freedom from Egypt, I think we should pause and reflect on the very amazing story of our own fabulous community.

It all began with a magical event that awakened the consciousness of our "chevra." By "chevra," I refer to the group of families who have been the backbone of the Beth Jehudah community for the past 30 years, and are the shoulders upon which an entire generation of young Torah men and women stand.

So, here's how it started:

I was invited, some three decades ago, to address the Young Women's Leadership of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation. The subject was supposed to be "Jewish Calendar Events" or some such benign topic. As I scanned the eager Jewish faces in the room, I sensed that there was something deeper, beneath the surface of these beautiful young women, that needed to be addressed. I pocketed my notes, and spoke about what, in essence, we Jews are all about. To fully appreciate the miracle that ensued, it must be remembered that we are talking about members of a generation that were very secular, and to whom much of Torah and mitzvos was completely foreign. Nonetheless, when they heard about the concept of a Jewish "neshama," it resonated. They related immediately to the intangible spiritual, eternal and G-dly dimension that sets us apart from all subhuman life.

When asked how they were nurturing and cultivating this "neshama" investiture, these highly accomplished and intelligent women were, atypically, at a loss. When it was pointed out that in the greater majority of important decisions we make in life, i.e., a marriage partner, where to live, what house to buy, which

schools to attend, where to invest our money, what kind of a car to buy, we do serious inquiry and probing, whereas, when it comes to our spirituality we have done little to no research or study, their heads nodded in agreement. When it was further pointed out that people were far more knowledgeable about the material aspects of their lives which, after all is said and done, are physical and moribund, than they were about their eternal substance, they admitted how incongruous things were. In trying to communicate the 'eternity' of the soul, I appealed to a well-known metaphor which offers, that if the largest colosseum in the world was filled with sunflower seeds, and once in a thousand years a bird came to remove one seed, the time it would take to empty the entire colosseum would not even begin to approximate eternity.

To the group's great credit, they *heard* and they responded. We began to meet regularly, and organized a study group. What began then, with women to whom Torah and mitzvos were Greek, grew to become families whose children and grandchildren are not only Torah observant, but in many instances, Torah leaders of *frum* communities around the country. The twentieth century "Egypt" of American Jewish ignorance of the rich traditions of our people, and the remarkable journey of our "chevra," although not attended by supernatural events, is a modern "Ye'tzias Mitzrayim" miracle, and is a story worth telling.

That being said, the march to freedom from bondage is far from over. Each of us has areas of weakness and character flaws which we have failed to master that await our taking control. We know what they are, recognize our servitude to them, but secretly believe that we can't liberate ourselves from them. The story of Pesach, describing the



exodus from Egypt after generations of slavery, the narrative of a nation on the cusp of the deepest level of "tumah" and spiritual defilement, as well as the story of our own exciting Jewish community, tells us that, with the help of Hashem, if we persevere, we have the strength to extricate ourselves from all the "Pharaohs," personal, social and cultural, and move on to greater levels of freedom and fulfillment.

Have a happy
and rewarding
Pesach.

OUR LITTLE REMINDER ROOM

RABBI BENZION TWERSKI

For reasons beyond my comprehension, I was not asked to speak at any of the grand Siyumim HaShas that recently took place. Despite this egregious oversight on the part of the organizers, I didn't want you to miss out on the brilliant message I have to convey.

Our sages draw our attention to the centrality of the Yom Tov of Pesach in Jewish life, and the fact that Pesach precedes Shavuos, the day which marks the giving of the Torah on Har Sinai. As Hashem sets the stage to extricate His people from Egyptian slavery by inflicting incredible plagues on our oppressors, He consistently repeats what His goal is. The Torah writes, "And Egypt will know that I am Hashem," as well as "you will know that I am Hashem."

Over thirty years ago, I spent a Shabbos with my father Shlit"a in Yeshivas Ner Israel in Baltimore. At one point during the Shabbos my father shared the following thought:

The Medrash (Shmos Rabba 33, 1) teaches: Hashem says to Klal Yisroel, "I sold you my Torah, I was sold with it, as it says, 'Vayikchu li Teruma.'" The Medrash offers an explanatory parable that tells of a king who had an only child, a daughter. A king from another country visited, and he wound up courting and marrying her. The groom, being a sovereign in his own right, wished to travel back home and, understandably, to take his bride with him. The bride's father said to his new son-in-law, "Your wife is my only child. On the one hand, I cannot bear to be separated from her. On the other hand, I cannot prevent you from taking her home with you, as she is your wife. I have one request of you. Wherever you go, designate a room for me, so I can live near you, for I cannot bare to be separated from my daughter."

So too, Hashem says to His people, "I gave you the Torah. I cannot be separated from it. Yet, I cannot tell you not to take it. However, I plead with you... Wherever you go, make a room for Me where I can dwell, as it says, 'Make for Me a Mikdash.'" My father suggested that the goal of the "room" that the king requested is not so that he would have a place to live near his only child. Far more importantly,

he wanted his son-in-law to always remember that his wife was a princess. The room designated for the king would be a constant reminder to the son-in-law that he was not married to a simple commoner, but to the daughter of a king.

This message is critical to our relationship with Torah study. Maintaining our awareness of Kedushas HaTorah, the exalted holiness of our Torah as the wisdom of Hashem, is central to its study and practice. The Baal HaTanya once said that the uniqueness of Mattan Torah, the awesome spectacle of Har Sinai and all of the miracles that occurred there, was that it was the very last time the wisdom of Torah could not be separated from the Giver of the Torah.

In our times, the "little reminder room" of the King's presence in our lives when we study the Torah, is the institution of Tefillah. It is all that remains from the magnificent Bais Hamikdosh that served as the source of our awareness in our rich past, where the daily offerings correspond to our contemporaries coming together to daven.

The 17th century posek, the Bach, writes in his commentary on the Tur in the laws of Birchas HaTorah that when this message was forgotten, it brought about the destruction of our holy Temple in Jerusalem. The Bach quotes the Talmud in Nidarim, that states that the Land of Israel was lost to us despite the abundant Torah study that occurred because they did not recite Birchas HaTorah, the brachos recited each morning before one studies Torah.

Why, he asks, was there such a severe punishment for something that appears to be so trivial in the grand scheme of things? The Bach explains: Hashem's intent in giving the Torah was that our neshamos could be connected and unified with Himself, the Source of Torah. Therefore, Hashem gave us His Torah in order for us to cleave to Him through the 613 mitzvos and its study. If only, the Bach asserts, this would have been their intent as they studied Torah, they would have become a "Merkava," a chariot to the Shechina, Hashem's Divine presence. Hashem would have made His dwelling place in their midst, and the entire land



would have been illuminated by His light. The Heavenly abode and the world below would have been completely unified.

Tragically, this was not the case. They studied Torah for their own pleasure, in order to know the laws for their own ulterior motives, to exploit others in business, and to display their vast Torah knowledge to others. This lack of good intent created a separation, and Hashem removed His Shechina from the earth. As a result, the world remained dense, physical, lacking in kedusha and void of holiness. This, he concludes, was the cause of the destruction of the Bais Hamikdosh and the loss of our land.

Baruch Hashem, we were recently privileged to witness worldwide celebrations that marked the completion of the study of Shas in its entirety. Throughout the world, hundreds of thousands of Jews and their supportive families rejoiced as this wondrous milestone was reached. These events were some of the greatest public sanctifications of Hashem's name in our history. Now, it is our responsibility to reconnect that Torah with its Giver. By making that connection we call upon the Master of the world to return His exalted presence to Earth.

Pesach precedes Shavuos so that we remain aware of centrality of Hashem to His Torah at all times. By maintaining our focus on the purpose of Torah study and our practice of mitzvos we can beseech the Author of the Torah to restore His room to us by rebuilding the Bais Hamikdosh, speedily in our days.

PESACH, THE JOURNEY STARTS HERE

RABBI CHAIM TWERSKI

As we embark on the journey from Pesach and yitzias mitzraim to kabolas hatorah we have to ask ourselves, "How will this Yom Tov change us? What lessons can be learned from the mitzvos of the seder and the restriction from chametz throughout Yom Tov?"

רבן גמליאל היה אומר כל שלא אמר שלשה דברים אלו בפסח לא יצא ידי חובתו ואילו הן, פסח מצה ומרור-Rabban Gamliel used to say, "Anyone who did not say these three things on Pesach, has not fulfilled his obligation. And these are them, Pesach, Matzah, and Marror." Why is stating these three things so important to the fulfillment of the mitzvah?

Today, more than ever, we live in an impulsive world. We seek immediate and almost constant gratification. Commerce and industry are constantly evolving to get consumers their products quicker and with less effort from the consumer. The new rage is, "buy it now; you can always change your mind, or, sign up for a free trial." In other words, "you don't have to think this through now. We hope you won't think about it later either." We are quick to express our views; we have text, email, phone, WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter, all encouraging us to say what we think, quick and easy; you almost don't need to think about it.

We are counseled that without being vigilant, our עבודת ה' -service of Hashem, is in danger becoming a matter of habit. We risk our davening, our learning, our brachos, and the mitzvos we perform becoming a matter of routine. We need to have passion, drive, a sense of privilege, and recognize that all of these opportunities are our pathway to connect with and to serve the Ribbono Shel Olam.

The Yom Tov of Pesach brings pause to our life. It gives us an opportunity to stop and think about our actions. We need to contemplate the food we will consume. We need to be deliberate

and mindful as we prepare and bake the matzah. We need to ask questions, we need to praise and be grateful. There is no room for impulse, and no place for routine.

Rabban Gamliel instructs us that it isn't enough to just perform the mitzvos of the night but we must articulate what and why we are doing them. We must pause. We must think.

As we journey to receiving the Torah, we need to be ready to slow down and contemplate our actions. We need to be deliberate and purposeful in our actions. We need to fight the drive for impulsivity. Every action we take, in thought, in speech (written word as well), and in action, can bring us closer, or G-d forbid further, from ה'. It's the thought that makes all the difference.



Chag Kosher V'somayach



INSPIRING FOR A LIFETIME

RABBI DOVID KOSSOWSKY

Yom Tov is a time that most children think of fondly. Many have favorite parts that they look forward to. As adults, that begins to change for us as we go from being the participants to the creators of those moments. We sometimes grow anxious thinking about how to prepare for Yom Tov so our children will also have those positive moments that they will cherish for the rest of their lives.

So the question emerges, what do we do to make the perfect Yom Tov experience for our children? For Pesach, how do we create the seder that will help our children grow in Yiddishkeit, and in turn, want to make it for their children?

When I look back on my youth and I think about the sederim I had growing up, I remember saying the Mah Nishtana. But for the most part, my grandfather, Reb Shloime Twerski Zatzal, ran a large seder with many adults which was not particularly child friendly. If anything, he spoke to the adults, and many of them will recount how inspired they were by those meals and by the meals that took place every Shabbos and Yom Tov. I recall becoming proficient at tying shoelaces together under the table, but that was not a particularly popular chumrah that most people wanted their children to embrace.

This is truly curious. As I grew, I became passionately inspired to follow in my grandfather's ways. I was even willing to suffer much antagonism growing up and attending Litvishe yeshivos, where my Chassidishe minhagim were often questioned, if not mocked. So what did my grandfather do to engage me in my youth that so touched me to the core and carried me into adulthood?

Further contemplation only leads to greater questions. My favorite Yom Tov by far is Sukkos, and shaking the lulov

and esrog is the most powerful mitzvah for me. If I think about my grandfather, I recall him spending hours in the sukkah shaking the lulov by himself. It was the only time he did not daven with the minyan as his avodah could not be contained in that structure. We would wait for him to finish before we could eat, and I remember staring out the window that connected the house to the sukkah, often with my nose flattened against that window, wondering when he would finish so we could begin the seuda. Strange how, despite the wait, that mitzvah has such positive childhood associations for me.

As I have been in education for many years, this seeming contradiction has been answered for me with one word: genuineness. Children often learn from many things. Good lessons, positive teachers, happy experiences, even failure can be an excellent teacher, and of course, good parenting. But what often reaches a child's heart is encountering a person who is genuinely inspired in his or her own beliefs and behavior. This is further nurtured if the child develops a meaningful relationship with that person. This quality is what separates good teachers from inspirational teachers. It is what draws people to their role models. It is not necessarily in ways that a child can articulate at that time, but it does inspire them for the rest of their lives. A person who is genuinely committed to what he or she is doing because it is meaningful to him or her conveys sincerity and inspires emulation as few others can.

So my first suggestion for those who are looking to inspire their children in a way that will last a lifetime is to find inspiration in their own performance of the mitzvah. Don't focus on being a good parent and creating a child-friendly experience at the expense of one's own meaningful performance of the mitzvah. After all, how can a child be inspired by a watered down version of a spiritual experience made simple?



Rabbi Shloime Twerski Zatzal

I believe that this is part of the message we find in the mitzvah of Hakhel. As stated in the Torah:

Gather the nation, men, women and children and those that dwell in your gates, in order that they will listen and in order that they will learn and fear Hashem your G-d, and guard to do all that is stated in this Torah.

Here the entire nation was commanded to come the Bais Hamikdash, men, women and children, to hear the king read Sefer Devarim. If one contemplates this mitzvah it becomes obvious that this was not a child-friendly mitzvah. The people had to travel great distances by foot or horseback, cram into a small space relative to the amount of people present, and stand around for hours while a single person read aloud from an ancient text. This certainly doesn't seem to accommodate the needs of the children attending.

Rashi quotes the Gemara in Chagiga that the point of bringing the children was to give reward to their parents for bringing them. However, this Gemara is hard to understand. The pasuk states that the purpose for all of the people coming is to learn and to be inspired.

The Alshich reconciles this contradiction by explaining that the greatest reward for parents is that their child will grow up inspired to follow the ways of Hashem, and fulfill the mitzvos of the Torah. However, our question remains unanswered. How does this mitzvah that is not age-appropriate inspire the child? The answer is that when a child observes a parent fulfilling the mitzvah despite the difficulties, it makes an impression.

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INSPIRING FOR A LIFETIME *continued from page 5*

When he or she is exposed to tens of thousands of people gathered together, it makes an impression. When a child sees his or her parents fulfilling the will of our Creator, despite not comprehending it and despite being forced to participate for a long period of time, the child absorbs more than he can understand, and it makes an impression. This impression will last a lifetime.

So this is what we must do for our children. We need to provide them an exposure to a real and meaningful mitzvah, even if it is above their level of understanding. So my first suggestion is to work on our own inspiration, and make their Shabbos and Yom Tov experiences as true and as genuine as possible.

That being said, I do not suggest ignoring our children completely. Rather, we should find ways to incorporate them into the mitzvos as much as possible, while maintaining the spirit of the mitzvah for ourselves.

An example that comes to mind that demonstrates this balance is the seder my family participated in for many years at my aunt and uncle's home in Far Rockaway. Maggid was divided into two parts; the first part was focused on the first night, and the second on the following night. Each person was assigned a paragraph in advance of the seder to prepare something to say about it. Anyone was allowed to interject a comment or explanation in addition, if he or she so desired. But the feature that made the experience so awesome was the complete attention given to the person presenting. It was amazing how truly thoughtful conversations took place among a large group where each person was important, no matter how old or young. Each person felt valued as his or her explanation was listened to and responded to, and sometimes challenged. If the younger participants slipped away at times, or if an adult needed to attend to something, that was



fine. When his or her turn came, they were the center of everyone's attention, and their contribution added to the glory of the ceremony.

This prevented the student of an overzealous teacher from dominating the seder, or another child not having the courage or fortitude to get his or her two words in. It was super stimulating to the adults and uplifting to the children to be treated and responded to like real participants.

This approach may not work as stated for you and it may need to be adjusted for your family. But I challenge you to have the courage to bring your inspiration to your Yom Tov while encouraging your children to experience something they will never forget, a love for a mitzvah.

OLD MILWAUKEE'S PESACH STORE

HOWARD KARSH

In the days of yore, when my family first arrived in Milwaukee in the 1960s, the very first sign of the approach of Pesach was the opening of the Twerski-Richt Pesach Store. It was the only place in town where you could buy Pesach food. Jews came here from all over Milwaukee, and indeed all over Wisconsin. It was a community meeting place, meaning the wider community. No one in those days thought that Chicago was a place to shop.

The original owner-partners of the Pesach store were Aaron and Sonia Richt and Rabbi Mottel Twerski, the second son of Rabbi Yisroel and Rebbetzin Devorah Leah Twerski. The Richts were Holocaust survivors. In the beginning of the incarceration, Jews believed volunteering for anything and being chosen meant a chance to live. Mr. Richt volunteered as an experienced welder and wound up working next to a benevolent

soul who took him on as an apprentice. This was how he made it through the war. Both he and Sonia lost their mates and children during that hellish period, and, like many others, they met and married in the DP camp following the end of the war.

In Milwaukee, he didn't bare his soul to people. He smiled, started a new life, was blessed with a daughter, and worked hard and well. Mr. Richt was the shammes and the official caterer of CBJ, and there were many community celebrations here. He was a wonderful cook. He was a master at herring, kishka and tasty food, and he assembled a workforce of fellow survivors - Sara Baum, Tzili Stundel and others when needed. As shammes, Mr. Richt wore many hats: he was the official greeter, the seat assigner, and importantly, during the dues assignment meetings, he was the source of pertinent medical

information. One couldn't miss his comments - "Sugar..." meant diabetes, "Hartz..." meant coronary difficulties, and "Tzures..." - well, that meant tzures needing compassion.

Back to the Pesach store. Sherman Park was home to a significant population of Jews. The famous Kohl family were the original owners of Reb Michel's house. Bud Selig and many of the most prominent leaders of the Jewish community graduated from Washington High School, one of the elite high schools in the city.

CBJ was located on the corner of 54th and Center Streets. Surrounding it, one could find two kosher bakeries, four butcher shops, a Jewish gift shop, and storefront chadorim. In the pre-Pesach season, the Twerski-Richt Pesach store joined in the mix.

MEMORIES

REBBETZIN RUCHEL SPITZ

Often there is an aroma that evokes a memory or a nigun that takes you back in time. Like a slideshow of the past, with the tantalizing smell of gefilte fish cooking or the lemony tang of sponge cake wafts in the air, I recall Bobby, wearing her apron, in the basement kitchen surrounded by her faithful friends. She would mass produce the balls of fish and store them in containers. My mother would serve them piping hot on Shabbos and it had the taste of Gan Eden. Tzili Studel, Goldie Forman, Sura Baum, and others, were Bobby's right hands. Bobby's sponge cake was also a standard Shabbos staple and was as light as a feather, it melted in the mouth. As children we would perch on the top of the chest freezer in the basement and watch the proceedings. It was also the place from which we observed Zaida's Purim seuda hosting many guests and family members.

Zaida was the most loving man on the planet. When in his "daled amos" one felt warm and special. There was never a doubt in our minds that we were most important to him. I would sit on his lap and he would tell me stories and allow me to pinch the skin on the back of his hands to see how slowly it would

recede back to normal as opposed to the elasticity of skin on my hands.

Bobby also played games with us and then the same with the next generation. Everyone remembers fondly the "ele bella bu" game. She would ask us to sing the nigunim that her father composed and when we sang we could tell that her eyes were seeing a world that was no more. Bobby shared tales of the tzadikim she had known in prewar Europe and the miracles she had witnessed. Each Sunday we went to Bobby's house for lunch. She treated us to corn soup, salmon patties, and spaghetti with or without ketchup. We looked forward to it all week.

When I was older, I asked Bobby how she found time to daven three times a day and review the parsha of the week with meforshim. She informed me that when her children were youngsters she didn't daven that much and concentrated on raising her sons. Now that she had more time, she was able to devote her hours to tefilla and learning. Bobby did not go to school as her younger siblings had the opportunity to do. She was self taught and read many languages. I assume she inherited her grandmother

Sura Mariam's genius. That great grandmother could recite the Sefer Meor Einayim by heart and claimed that even the walls of her father's home could learn Torah. It was the same with Zaida and Bobby's home. There was an abundance of love for every Yid, love of Torah and mitzvos, it seeped into the hearts and souls of all those who had the privilege of being there.

Zaida's hakafa nigun brings back memories of Simchas Torah when Zaida danced in the middle of the circle embracing the Sefer Torah. He did a special dance step with his foot that I have not seen anyone replicate. It was uniquely his. I also recall standing beside him on the bima when he watched my father dance on the table in honor of the Torah and he would tell him to come off already!

It is difficult to condense a lifetime of memories into a few lines. The experience of being with Zaida and Bobby was feeling a connection to the previous generation. It was real because they made it authentic and solid by being a link to the past as role models for us. I saw it in their eyes, heard it in their words, and felt it in their embrace.



From left to right:
Rebbetzin Feige Twerski,
Rabbi Michel Twerski,
The Rebbe and Rebbetzin A'h,
Rabbi Aaron Twerski,
Rebbetzin Kreindel Twerski

Rabbi Dr. Shea Twerski
behind Rabbi Aaron.
R' Shea's son R' Yitzchok
Twerski behind Rabbi Michel.

Children
Rebbetzin Baila Geldzahler,
Rebbetzin Ruchel Spitz,
Rabbi Benzion Twerski,
Rebbetzin Yocheved Weiss,
Rebbetzin Rochme Frankel

A FRAGILE FRANCHISE

ALAN BORSUK

Back in the 1990s, Bud Selig often used the term “fragile franchise” when he talked about the Milwaukee Brewers baseball team. He was the president of the team and acting commissioner of baseball during that period. Selig was fighting for a financial plan that would allow teams in small markets such as Milwaukee to hold their own in comparison with teams such as the New York Yankees and Los Angeles Dodgers.

I bet you can tell where I’m heading with this already. There was another fragile franchise around that time in Milwaukee that needed to find a way to hold its own when compared to bigger communities. We were it.

I’m not going to dwell on the details and, frankly, I get uncomfortable when anyone starts talking about what was accomplished by those of us in the Jewish community who then lived in Sherman Park.

Yes, Rabbi Twerski really did put in front of all of us what he called the tale of two cities, one that built up the institutions that a thriving Orthodox community needs and one that dwindled as residents headed elsewhere and few moved in.

Yes, we decided to take the ambitious route. A small group of people committed themselves to the work that it required. With few resources and little idea of what we were really committing ourselves to, we launched into opening an elementary school – yes, we called it YES – and a kollel, followed a couple years later by the TAM girls high school. (WITS was already in Milwaukee.)

Yes, Baruch Hashem, we grew. Let’s put it this way: The opening year, as I recall, YES enrolled 64 children from 26 families. It is now at about 215 children from more than 75 families.



have built up the community, made it a place where families can lead full Jewish lives, and sometimes even attract people from places such as those New York area communities.

Yes, it’s 30 years later and we’re much stronger than we once were, while we’ve still kept a lot of the virtues of a small and close-knit community.

How do we compare to the Milwaukee Brewers? Bud Selig (who, by the way, grew up at 52nd and Concordia) won the battle to change the financial structure of baseball and the Brewers have had far more success on the field in recent years than they had a couple decades ago. Maybe our equivalent was the rise of private school vouchers in Wisconsin, which changed the financial structure of YES and TAM in ways that have made a lot of quality possible. And, with huge gratitude, we can say that a big part of our growth has been the large number of donors who gave gifts, large and small, to fuel what we’ve done. Baruch Hashem, the West Side has had a lot of winning seasons, just like the Brewers.

But I would suggest an important difference. No one uses the term “fragile franchise” anymore when talking about the Brewers. On par financially with the

Yankees and other big market teams? Not quite. But strong and vibrant, yes. The Brewers are no longer fragile.

I think it’s important for all of us connected to our community to keep thinking and acting like we’re a fragile franchise. We’re still small. We’re still under constant financial pressure for all of our institutions – and for many of our families. We still need to connect with each other, support each other, and launch into building our institutions and our community as a whole. We’re never that far away from something that could destabilize what we have.

In many ways, it’s good to embrace our identity as a fragile franchise if it motivates involvement and generosity. Our status should spur us on. There were people back in the 1980s and 1990s who expected us to fail. Our grit is one of the reasons we did not. We continue to need that grit. And if we take to heart the need to act with the same kind of commitment we had back then, we can continue to show we can hold our own and make Jewish life among us rich, rewarding, and primed for our children and our adults to have nothing but winning seasons.



THE ENORMITY OF THE MOMENT

LISA HILLER

It's New Year's Day, 2020, a new decade, a day off from work to focus on the TAM play rehearsal coming up that evening; oh and yes, the Siyum HaShas. Noted - the 13th Siyum HaShas. Of course, I recall, the seven-and-a-half-year cycle of Daf Yomi learning. Just as that thought flits away and is taken over by consideration of the Shabbos menu, a WhatsApp notification chimes in. I notice it's not one of the several WhatsApp groups I follow with great interest, including Jewish Milwaukee Announces, Jewish MKE Eats, Torah Anytime - a Daily Dose, Milwaukee Chevra Updates, CBJ Family programming, Frum Your Info - Ladies, nor any of the Tehillim WhatsApp groups, nor my own family WhatsApp group.

Rather, it's news from an acquaintance in Baltimore.



My son Levi at the Siyum HaShas at MetLife stadium

The message reads, "Is this Levi?" Our son, Levi had driven from Detroit with our grandson Efraim, to be with his father-in-law, Rabbi Jeff Wohlgelemer, who had arranged terrific seats at the MetLife stadium event. And, there they were captured on the Live Stream Board in the heart of 90,000 brethren. The enormity of the moment hit me. At least four more WhatsApp messages, from a variety of sources, arrived within seconds, all accompanied with the same photo. How cool, what nachas!

A day later, our oldest son, Yisroel, who attended the Siyum HaShas at the Binyanei Hauma in Jerusalem with our two grandsons, Ezra and Kivi, sends a WhatsApp audio clip from Rabbi Elefant upon the completion of his second

cycle learning Daf Yomi. "I'm going to do something I've never done before in seven and a half years," the Rabbi explains emotionally, his voice catching as he speaks. "I'm going to speak personally to my talmidim, who I don't know; and you don't know me. And, we might sit next to each other and not even know that we have learned together. But, I am eternally indebted to everyone who listened to the shiur; whether he listened to one minute of shiur or he listened to every shiur for seven and a half years, because you have enriched my life and the life of my family and the life of K'lal Yisroel." The enormity of the moment hits me; and I am moved to tears.

Two days later, I found myself celebrating and shepping nachas, once again, thanks to the Siyum HaShas

- this time with our CBJ family at shul. A beautiful Melava Malka, put together by our local esteemed families, under the direction of the famed mother/daughter team of Gittle Ort and Miriam Liff, which added to the festivities, with music (provided by our local community musicians) and dancing. After the formal completion of the learning, we watched a documentary of the life of Rabbi Meir Shapiro and I was struck by the enormity of his heroic efforts to unite the Jewish people worldwide through the daily study of a page of Talmud.

The very next day, we discuss the amazing history during Rabbi Benzion's always fascinating weekly shiur for women. When Rabbi Meir Shapiro introduced the idea of Daf Yomi to the

first Knessiah Gedolah in 1923 in Vienna, Austria, he was a young rabbi and the leadership was not favorably inclined toward the idea. The gadol of the time, the Chofetz Chaim, however, was so enamored by the idea, he encouraged Rabbi Shapiro to walk in late so that the Chofetz Chaim would rise when he entered the hall. The other Rabbanim took note this was a person worth listening to, and that gave Rabbi Shapiro the "koach" to properly deliver this revolutionary idea. The Siyum HaShas validates the vision, despite unspeakable destruction and societal changes that K'lal Yisroel would experience in the years that followed, until today.

It occurs to me, without the heroic efforts and inspiration of our Rabbi Michel and Rebbetzin Feige Twerski, I would have no understanding of the meaning of this history, of this moment; I would most likely not be reveling in our children and grandchildren's Torah learning accomplishments; I would not have the wherewithal to experience the enriching relationships shared with a vibrant CBJ kehilla and a life's journey with Derech Hashem. This very momentous and uniting 13th Siyum HaShas, taking place in nothing short of tumultuous times, reminds us of the Hakoros HaTov we have for the Rabbi and Rebbetzin for standing up for us and encouraging us to enter the hall and connect to this "revolutionary idea."



My husband James and grandson Moishe dancing at the-13th Siyum HaShas - CBJ 2020

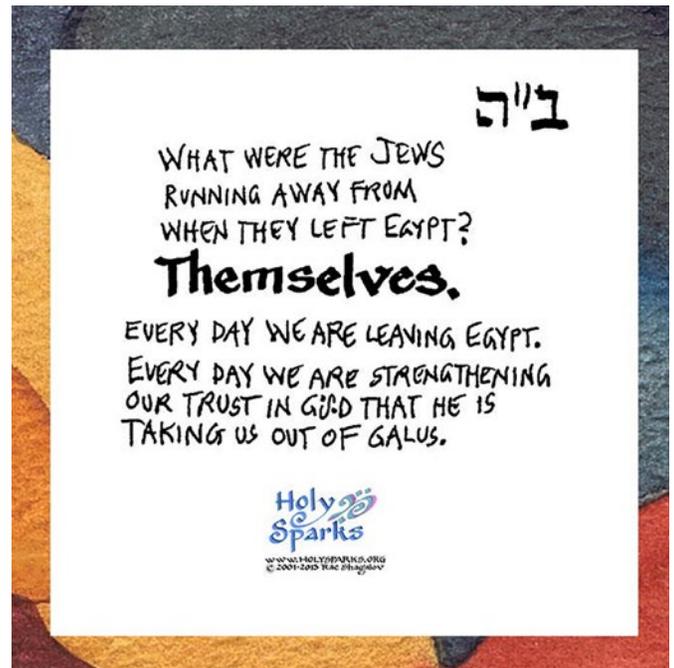
GUIDLINES IN HALACHA

RABBI BENZION TWERSKI

The laws and customs of the Pesach holiday are numerous and intricate. Nothing compares to proper preparation by learning the sefarim and listening to shiurim so that one can have the satisfaction and pleasure of properly fulfilling all the special mitzvos this season as to offer. Various tzadikim kept a list for themselves of all the things they wanted to make sure they took care of before Pesach. Following their lead, we have compiled a short list of helpful reminders and pertinent halachos, a checklist of sorts. Our hope is that you will find this list useful as an outline from which you might create your own. Happy preparations!

During the Days of Nisan:

- It is forbidden to eat matzah on *Erev Pesach*. The custom is to refrain from eating matzah starting from *Rosh Chodesh Nisan* (and some even from *Purim*).
- One who will be traveling from home before *Pesach* must check his house for *chametz* prior to leaving, if he does not plan to sell the *chametz* in that home to a gentile.
- When purchasing meat for *Yom Tov*, one should not say "This is for *Pesach*," rather he should say that "This is for *Yom Tov*."
- Donate generously to the *Maos Chitim* fund. *Maos Chitim* is an ancient and venerated *tzedakah* campaign, codified as a halachic obligation in *Shulchan Aruch*.
- Remember to perform *Mechiras Chametz*, selling the *Chametz* through the office of the Rabbi.
- Recite the *beracha* upon seeing the blossom of a fruit tree in Nisan. In Milwaukee, this is not usually possible until after Pesach in which case one may make the *beracha* even during *Iyar*.
- Shabbos Hagadol: This Shabbos is the beginning of the redemption. Like Shabbos Shuva before Yom Kippur, special effort should be made to take part in the *Shabbos Hagadol Drasha*.
- Many have the custom to recite *Avadim Hayinu* until "I'chaper al kol avonoseinu" from the text of the Haggadah after Mincha.



Purchase list for Pesach:

- One is to use his nicest utensils for Pesach, particularly for the Sedarim.
- It is a Biblical commandment to bring joy to one's family on Yom Tov. Therefore, one must purchase jewelry or clothing for his wife.
- Seder purchases: Shemura Matzah, Wine, Lettuce, Horseradish, wine cups that hold a *reviis*, Seder Plate, Zeroa, Matzah cover...

Cleaning for Pesach:

- All areas of the house that one remembers having entered Chametz into, or which is common for him to enter while eating require cleaning.
- Chametz that is found in unreachable areas can be rendered inedible by spraying bleach or cleaner.
- Check the pockets of clothing and the cuffs of pants. However, laundered clothing does not have to be checked.
- Remove all Chametz and place in area to be sold to gentile.
- One is not required to sell or put away inedible Chametz mixtures, cosmetics, perfumes, soaps, shampoo.
- One is not required to sell or put away medicines.

Mechiras Chametz:

- Before Erev Pesach, one is to visit a Rav and sign on a *Shtar Harshaa* (power of attorney) for him to sell one's Chametz.
- It is customary to give money to the Rav who is appointed to sell one's Chametz.
- All sold areas must be closed in a room that one will not enter during Pesach, or behind a *mechitza* of ten *tefachim* tall (approx. 40 inches).
- On Pesach, one may occasionally enter the Chametz room to retrieve an item.
- Do not store Chametz in the fridge or freezer, unless it is marked off properly.
- One is not required to clean or check any of the sold areas that are closed or behind a *mechitza* of ten *tefachim*.
- **Time Zones:** One may not sell his Chametz through a Rav that is in a different time zone if that time zone will accept Pesach after his time zone. However, he may sell it through a Rav in a time zone that will accept Pesach prior to his time zone.

Bedikas Chametz-Night of the 14th:

- Wrap 10 pieces of hard bread in paper in a way that they will not crumble out.
- Hide the pieces and make a note of their location.
- Do not perform *melacha*, eat a meal, or learn Torah within a half hour before nightfall of the 14th until the *Bedika* is complete.
- Begin the *Bedika* immediately after nightfall, after davening *Maariv*.
- Prior to the *Bedika* place all Chametz that one still owns in a guarded area from children and animals.
- Check your Matzah for Kefulos, folds, or matzos with air pockets. Remove a 2cm. circumference from the Kefula area and place it together with the Chametz.
- Check your car, garage, office, locker/ shtender at shul, tallis bags...
- After the *Bedika* place all the found Chametz in a guarded area.
- After the *Bedika* recite the *Kol Chamira*, nullifying ownership over any chametz.
- Place all Chametz vessels in a closed and locked area that one will not come to accidentally open on Pesach.

Erev Pesach:

- A *bechor* must fast from *Alos* until *Tzeis* or join a *Siyum*. If he is weak or unwell and cannot join a *Siyum*, ask the Rav what to do.
- Avoid mentioning "This meat is for Pesach". Rather say "This meat is for Yom Tov".

Shacharis:

- Awake early to daven Shacharis.
- Omit *Mizmor Lesoda* until after Pesach.

To do before beginning of 5th hour of the day – In Milwaukee: 10:13am CST

- Finish any last-minute koshering of utensils prior to the 5th hour.
- Finish eating Chametz prior to the 5th hour. It is forbidden to eat Chametz once the 5th hour has begun.
- Do not eat Matzah Ashira, egg Matzah, starting from the 5th hour until the end of Pesach.

To do before the beginning of the 6th hour – In Milwaukee: 11:33am CST

- Clean the house of all Chametz leftovers. Make sure the Chametz garbage is removed to an area that is public for all.
- Clean out your pockets.
- Burn the Chametz.

- After burning the Chametz, nullify the chametz by reciting *Kol Chamira*. It must be recited prior to the 6th hour. Don't recite the Bittul until at least a *kezayis* of the Chametz burns.

Before midday – In Milwaukee: 12:52pm CST

- Starting from midday [Chatzos] do not perform any Melacha that may not be performed on Chol Hamoed.
- Cut nails and take a haircut before Chatzos.

To do before 10th hour – In Milwaukee: 3:58pm CST

- Food restrictions that apply past the 10th hour [Three Zmaniyos hours before sunset]: Don't eat a large amount of food. One may eat a small amount of fruits and other foods. One may not drink wine or grape juice at this time.

Eiruv Tavshilin:

- Whenever the 2nd day of Pesach falls on Erev Shabbos one performs an Eiruv Tavshilin on Erev Pesach [Wednesday].
- The owner of the house takes a whole Matzah the size of a Kibeitza and a *Kezayis* of a cooked piece of meat or other food which one would eat together with Matzah.
- The *beracha* and relevant *halachos* can be found in most *siddurim* and *haggados*.

Seder preparation to do list (In addition to all regular Yom Tov preparations):

- Immerse new vessels in a Mikveh (one may not immerse keilim on Yom Tov).
- Wash and check the lettuce. (Don't soak the lettuce that will be used for Maror in water for 24 hours.)
- Roast the Zeroa.
- Do not roast any meat to be eaten for Seder night.
- Set up the Seder table and prepare as much as possible before nightfall so that one can begin the Seder upon his return from shul.
- Check the Matzos for Kefulos.
- Separate Challah from the Matzos if needed.
- Make saltwater.
- Cook the egg for Beitza.

During Pesach reminders:

- Do not touch Chametz with exception to when destroying it.
- Do not destroy Chametz found on Pesach if you performed *Mechiras Chametz*. Rather, sweep it into the area of the gentile.
- Men are to drink a Revius of wine daily.
- It is permitted to remove non-chametz items from the sold area on occasion, when necessary.

Erev Shevii Shel Pesach:

- Do not recite *Shehechyanu* during candle lighting.

Shevii Shel Pesach:

- It is customary to gather close to midnight to recite the *Shiras Hayam*. Some stay awake the entire night learning Torah.
- One may not prepare from one day of Yom Tov to the next.

Achron Shel Pesach

- It is the minhag to eat Gebrocks.
- *Yizkor* is recited on the last day of Pesach.
- Partake in a *Neilas Hachag/Baal Shem Tov's Seudah* towards the closing of Yom Tov.

After Pesach:

- Before partaking of any of the sold chametz, be sure to wait until after the Rav has bought it back from the gentile.
- When buying chametz products after Pesach, make sure the store sold their Chametz over Pesach.
- Recite *Pirkei Avos* after *Mincha* starting the Shabbos after Pesach.

First Shabbos after Pesach:

- There is an old custom to either knead the Challah dough in the shape of a key or to bake a key into the dough. It is brought from *tzadikim* that this is a *segula* for *pamasa*.



THE N'SHEI ORGANIZATION

MARNI SCOTT

N'shei of Milwaukee



N'shei of Milwaukee is a community based organization committed to doing acts of chesed. Our goal is to alleviate the stress on individuals and families during short term crises or challenging times. These include moves or relocations (both in town and inter-city), births, shivas, and illness. Our efforts are directed toward making a complicated time just a little bit easier to manage. Because we are a completely volunteer organization, we rely on our members to keep us efficient and dependable.

Often it may seem hard to reach out when a family is in "crisis mode" and it is often easiest to reach out to our friends and loved ones for support. There are a number of reasons why reaching out to N'shei and having a central organization to assist in managing our extenuating circumstances is so important:

1. N'shei is very careful to try and view the larger picture of the situation, and assist in covering as many bases as possible.
2. Sometimes you yourself may not be aware that a friend or neighbor is not in a position to help, and reaching out to them puts them in a difficult position.
3. N'shei knows who else in our community has volunteered recently and who is currently able to volunteer (e.g., going through their own crisis).

Therefore, we strongly encourage families who cannot reach out themselves to N'shei to involve a single trusted close friend/relative to be their liaison and contact N'shei on their behalf rather than using the trusted person as the go to and re-inventing a system that is already here to serve you.

The N'shei phone number is not a physical phone. It is a confidential voicemail line that is constantly monitored. When N'shei gets a call, we reach out directly to the person in need to find out what is most helpful to them. We then mobilize our volunteers to assist in those, potentially varied, areas. Sometimes a person in crisis wants to remain anonymous for privacy. We have the ability to ask our volunteers to help without ever mentioning who it is that they are helping.

About a year ago, we launched our N'shei freezer. This is a freezer with fully cooked foods made by volunteers so that we can pull them out for urgent last minute food needs. Foods are frozen after being freshly cooked, and in small portions. This allows us to service unexpected emergencies when none of our volunteers are able to help.

We started keeping N'shei records in August of 2014. Since then, N'shei has done 256 events with varying activities and intricacies. Our volunteers have assisted in 93 bikur cholim events, 61 births, 48 relocations, 32 shivas and 18 hachnosas orchim events. They have provided 50 childcare events, delivered 150 meals, driven over 300 rides, hosted 90 people and cooked over 2500 times!

N'shei is a valuable and necessary resource of the CBJ community. It centralizes our chesed and streamlines the process to provide help to those in need. Our volunteers are selfless and committed to helping others. We are proud to be part of this organization and hope to share in many simchos together.

If you need to contact N'shei please call the confidential voicemail at 414-939-6659.

**WHEN WOMEN
SUPPORT EACH
OTHER, INCREDIBLE
THINGS HAPPEN.**

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CBJ WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

We have had lots of wonderful activities and lectures available for the ladies of our community over the past few months. Rebbetzin Feige had a three-part series of classes leading up to the High Holidays. There was a creative art/writing activity to help clarify our yearly plan and for reflecting on teshuva. There were a couple of melave malkas, one hosted by Rebbetzin Chanie and one was a YES PTA event for women.

Rosh Chodesh Club has had a great lineup of speakers who gave us wonderful insights and food for thought. Mrs. Sara Simpser spoke in Cheshvan, Rebbetzin Feige Twerski spoke in Kislev, and Rabbi Lubchansky spoke in Shevat.

For Adar, we had a ladies' mini retreat at Bader Philanthropies. It was an evening of connection through varied pathways including relaxation/meditation, Torah learning, therapeutic writing, Empowered Wife book club, a Purim craft, plus inspirational talks given by Mrs. Aliza Bulow and Rebbetzin Feige Twerski. Over 60 ladies attended and enjoyed delicious food cooked by Mrs. Vicki Ganeles. The evening was sponsored by Bader Philanthropies, Inc.



THE PESACH COOKIES

SHAYNA HUNT

Many years ago I created an excellent recipe for non-gebrok cookies that I baked only for Pesach. These cookies became so addicting, that over the years people who ate at our house for Pesach, began to call us months in advance to book meals at our table with the agreement that I would be baking 'those special' cookies. Though I never advertised, some people would go so far as to offer to purchase batches of the cookies from me!

One of my dear friends in particular, would ask me several times randomly during the year - half-joking, half-serious, for me to please just give her the recipe. However, I vowed never to give anyone any of my recipes, because I was always planning to one day write a cookbook.

Flash forward nearly twenty years in the future, where most of my babies were grown, and my oldest was entering the shidduch world, with the others not far behind. For any parent whose child is 'in the parsha' knows, it can be a very stressful time. Hitting a dead end, I was advised to call a specific lady from a community near us, where we'd lived years before. Upon calling her I found out that she remembered me, and it was nice at first to just schmooze and catch up with her. Then I got to the ikkur of our conversation. For over an hour she helped coach me with advice on how to navigate the often rocky road of dating my daughter was traveling. When our conversation was coming to an end, I thanked her profusely for giving me so much of her time and advice.

She graciously and profoundly replied, "It was my pleasure! I like to share the knowledge I have to anyone who needs it! It's like giving out recipes, I never saw the wisdom in not sharing delicious recipes. I know so many people who hoard them. It's a shame! If you have something good and delicious like that, why not share with as many people as you can, instead of hoarding it? That's how I view my knowledge. I will give my knowledge away to anyone who desires it! If I can help someone, I feel good about it."

As her words impacted me, I wondered if when I lived in her city if I ever withheld a recipe from her? However, the more I thought, the more I realized that we were never in the same circles where that might have come up. So I deduced that her analogy must have come straight from Hashem Himself right to my sensitive heart! After hanging up with her, I processed our conversation even deeper. Once the meaning of her parting comment sunk in further, I realized that my recipe hoarding had now taken on a new meaning for me, and it left a bad taste in my mouth.

Just the week before, I hosted our shul's ladies' shalosh seudos. A friend of my daughter, the daughter in shidduchim, came up to me and told me that my carrot cake was the best she'd ever tasted and her chosson loved carrot cake. She asked me for the recipe. I thanked her for the compliment, and then replied, that as a rule I never give out recipes. My daughter later told me how sad this girl was.

So as I sat there, having just hung up the phone with a woman who had given me over an hour of her time just to help my family out from the goodness of her heart, I made a vow with Hashem, that I would give out my recipes from then on

out, with the condition that the person receiving them simply davens for my daughter that she should find her zivug speedily!

The next Sunday was my daughter's friend's wedding shower. So my daughter went out and found a gorgeous glass cake stand, and I made up a very pretty recipe card for my carrot cake, with a special note to the kallah. We gave the beautifully wrapped gift at the shower, and when she opened it and read the card and recipe, there were tears in the girl's eyes!

Next, I placed a call to my dear friend who'd always wanted my Pesach cookie recipe. Even though Pesach had just ended a month before, I left her a voice message that said, "Call me back, I have something for you that you've wanted for a very long time!"

When she called me back later that night, she jokingly started out the conversation with, "Shayna, tell me- do I finally get the Pesach cookie recipe?"

All I said was, "Yes."

Silence met me. It was as if she couldn't process my answer to her joke. Then she asked if I was okay?

After explaining to her my reasons for why I was actually giving her the recipe— she was so touched she verbally spoke a beautiful bracha for my daughter out loud, I answered a hearty, "AMEIN."

One month later, my daughter met the wonderful young man she would marry! The following summer they had their first baby! Hashem works in miraculous ways, but sometimes, we have to meet Him halfway!

When making either of these recipes, kindly daven to Hashem that Shoshana Eliana bas Chaya Shayna finds her zivug soon!

Shayna's Pesach Cookies (non-gebrok)

4 egg whites

½ teaspoon salt 1 cup sugar

*1 ½ cup shredded coconut

Or 1 ½ cup ground hazelnuts

Or ¾ cup coconut & ¾ ground hazelnuts

1 10oz bag semi sweet chocolate chips, melted.

Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Beat egg whites until stiff. Gradually add the sugar and the salt to it. Then fold in the nuts/coconut. Drop tablespoon size amount onto greased foil lined cookie sheets. Place on top shelf of oven for 1 hour. When 100% cool, and cookie can peel off foil, place back onto foil and drizzle melted chocolate onto cookies. Rapid cool in freezer for 10 minutes. Store in zip lock bags in refrigerator or freezer until ready to serve. ENJOY!

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SHAYNA'S CARROT CAKE *–pareve Shabbos version*

INGREDIENTS

4 eggs
1 ¼ cups sugar
1 cup oil
2 cups flour (for Gluten Free, replace flour with your preferred GF Flour Substitute Mix).
2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 ½ cups shredded carrot
1 cup shredded apple
½ cup chopped pecans

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl beat the eggs, sugar, and oil until mixed. Add flour, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon. Then add the eggs. Beat all together until thoroughly mixed. Stir in carrots, apples and pecans. Pour into 2 greased and floured 9x1 ½ inch round baking pans. Bake for 35-45 minutes or until knife comes out clean. Cool cakes before frosting them.

PAREVE CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

INGREDIENTS

1 8oz tub of room temperature Tofutti brand plain cream cheese
½ cup room temperature margarine

DIRECTIONS

Mix together and add 2 teaspoons of vanilla extract, and beat until fluffy. Gradually add up to 5 cups of powdered sugar. Spread over the top of cakes, to make a two layered cake and decorate as desired. ENJOY!

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ROAST CHICKEN *Reprinted from Delish.com*

INGREDIENTS

3 cloves garlic
2 carrots, chopped
1 onion, quartered
1/2 lb. yukon gold potatoes, quartered
extra-virgin olive oil
kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
1 large bunch fresh thyme
1 large bunch fresh rosemary
1 3-4 lb. chicken, gizzards removed
1 lemon, sliced

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 425° and cover the hole of the Bundt pan with foil. In the bowl of a large Bundt pan, combine garlic, carrots, onion, and potatoes. Toss with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Scatter sprigs of fresh thyme and rosemary on top of the vegetables. Pat chicken dry with paper towels. Season the inside of the cavity generously with salt and pepper, then stuff it with the lemon halves, a few sprigs of thyme, and a few sprigs of rosemary. Rub olive oil all over the skin of the chicken, then season generously with salt and pepper. Place the chicken in the middle of the Bundt pan, breast side up. Bake until the chicken is cooked through and skin is golden, 1 hour to 1 hour 10 minutes. Let chicken rest for at least 15 minutes before slicing. Serve with roasted vegetables and extra pan juices.



YIELDS: 6 SERVINGS
PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES

LOST AND FOUND

SHAYNA HUNT

The other day I lost something important and felt for sure it must have been lost in the abyss that's also known as my purse --- the bottomless portable catch-all for anything from important papers, to worthless balled up tissues that I always intend to throw away later, but never remember to do so. So it wasn't any wonder, as I dumped out the contents of the filing-cabinet-with-straps all over my dining room table, that I happened upon a gift card given to me so long ago I can't even remember what the gift was for!

It wasn't like I didn't know that I owned the Visa Vanilla gift card. I knew I had it and I knew that it was worth precisely \$25, which was why I had thrown it into my purse in the first place. You see, I was saving it for a rainy day. That's a saying I suppose I picked up from my mother. She was an expert saver...you name it, she saved it, and most often she saved it for those rainy days! In fact, now that I think about it...hmm, odd that her purse was eerily similar to mine! But I digress.

So, when I finally found what it was I was originally looking for in the war-zone spilled across my table, I began to load everything back up into it: receipts, make-up, granola bars, loose change, something I couldn't identify,

a gazillion grocery store coupons I've been collecting, and that \$25 dollar gift card. You see, I was saving that \$25 bucks to get myself something really nice to treat myself with. In fact that \$25 dollars, that had never been used to purchase something had already been spent in my head a million different ways and I was just waiting for that one special something to come along that would top all the other choices and then I'd have the \$25 dollars to spend towards it.

As I was about to slide the card back inside my purse, I noticed it had a sticker on it and my eye caught the word 'expire'. Oh no, I groaned out loud and pulled the card closer to look at it. The expiration date read one month ago! I panicked. All my something specials began to disappear from my head! I wanted to scream at myself ---loudly for never realizing that this card would even have an expiration date. Of course I should have known. I'm not unfamiliar with this type of scenario. If one were to analyze me, they might say this saving for a rainy day---then losing out, is a pattern I have fallen into. I know that I'm not alone in this behavior, but it is what it is.

Groaning and slightly short of breath from self loathing that I've done this to myself yet again, I quickly found the phone number for the Visa customer service. After ten minutes of going through their automated system I finally got a live representative to whom I told my entire life's story of woes on why I never purchased something with my card.

"No problem ma'am. I can easily reissue you another card with a new expiration date," the lady on the phone replied.

I breathed a sigh of relief and began making new plans of what I was going to do with my \$25. Then she spoke again.

"Well, it would seem because the card was inactive for nearly two years there have been some service fees on your card...let's see...yes, you owe Visa \$14.87." "Wh---what?" I stammered. "That's not fair, is it?"

Dead silence.

She cleared her throat and finally spoke while I was speechless with regret.

"Well, that's our policy and you can read it in the fine print on the back of the card. Inactive cards are charged a certain percentage for each month not used."

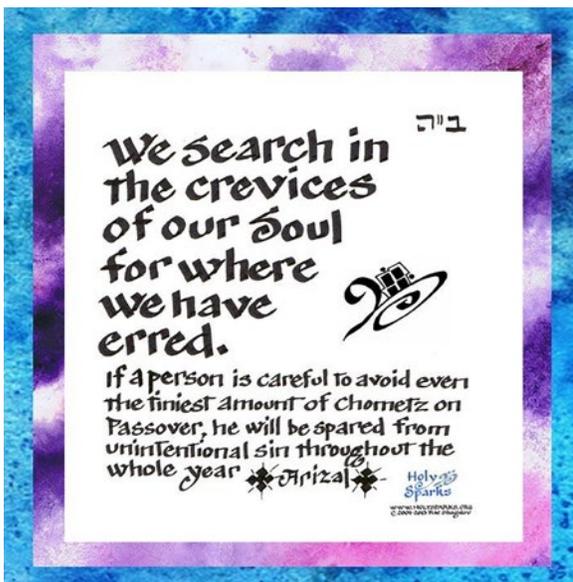
"So how much will my new card have on it?" I asked flatly, broken with more self loathing. "Your new card will be issued in the amount of \$10.13."

I hung up the phone spinning. In the grand scheme of things...\$14 bucks and some odd change isn't that much to lose. However, it was the principle of the way I've been thinking and living my life that really stung. What good was it doing me if I was so busy saving for that rainy day, that I never stopped long enough to spend any of that which I'd been saving? Had I not noticed the expiration date...I can tell you honestly, and I'm sure you have already figured it out I most likely would have never spent the money on the gift card.

I thought of my mother again. I thought of her freezer filled with food no one ever ate, the piles of coupons no one ever used, the change she would sink away every day in jars, the really pretty outfits hanging in her closet with tags on it saved for special occasions that never seemed to ever arrive.

Yes, I learned a lesson that day. My eyes were opened to see that rainy days are illusive. They are a figment of imagination that get fed a string of untruths. It's wonderful to save for something special, but it is important to balance that with making sure that the real opportunities to live for today don't pass by to be lost forever waiting for a tomorrow that is never recognized.

In the end, I guess I didn't lose the price of those service fees after all. Visa can charge all they want I still got my money's worth. A valuable life lesson learned for a mere \$14.87? I say money well spent!



ADAR PURIM SIMCHA

ALIZA KASTEL
MILWAUKEE, WI

Adar is a time of Simcha and cheer
Everyone decides what costumes they'll wear
Simcha bursts forth starting deep within
The music builds and we begin to spin
Circles and cycles, highs and lows
Happiness sparks from an inner glow
The knowledge that Hashem guides each thing
Behind every scene He is pulling the strings
Serving m'ahava, from a place of love
Yearning to connect to the One above
Giving of myself, one friend to another
Extending my hand to my sister and brother
Expansion of mind, a reaching within
This is where true Simcha begins



CORONAVIRUS

SURI TWERSKI
WESLEY HILLS, NY

I can change the whole world with just one small deed
Watch an exquisite garden grow by just planting a seed
Cast a pebble in the waters and see the ripples spread
Recognizing a one minute decision can affect years and years ahead
How can it be? Is a question we might ponder
That a single act of kindness, or self-control has such power?
Is it true that a prayer whispered in the confines of my home
Can change and shake the future in Israel, Iran or Rome?
We need to look no further than the virus in Wuhan
To teach us how one person's action can affect everyone
For it took just one individual who ate a wild bat
To transmit and spread a virus he would contract
Tens of thousands sickened, thousands more dead
Economies wiped out and a world filled with dread
If all of this was caused by one foolish act in the Far East
Then I know, that middah toiva meruba, at the very least
My tefilla, mitzva and chesed can change the whole world for the better
Even if to you and I it seems like it doesn't really matter

CHILDREN'S CONVERSATIONS

RABBI YOSEF PERLMAN

We have all learned that on the night of the seder every person has to look at himself as if he himself left Egypt. I feel like a Jew in Egypt eating his Korban Pesach as I need to stay with my group in my house, and I can't go out. We can look at this quarantine as a tragedy or an amazing opportunity to learn to get along with our brothers and sisters. We will remember this Pesach for the rest of our lives so take the time to think about what you can do to improve your middos and sensitivity to others. Here are two great stories about a Tzadekes who was always thinking of others.

Rebbetzin Kanievsky a"h related, "One year, on Erev Pesach, I suddenly felt terrible pains in my neck and back. I have suffered different illnesses and aches in my life, including kidney stones, which are extremely painful, yet never have I felt such excruciating pain. I immediately realized that this was a punishment for something, so I began to make a cheshbon hanefesh, examining my recent deeds to see what caused this pain to befall me.

I then realized what it must be: every year, I prepare the majority of the Pesach needs myself. The only exception is the charoses, of which I receive a little bit from my sister-in-law, Rebbetzin Barzam, and mostly from my daughter, Rebbetzin Tzivyon. This particular year, my daughter had not sent me charoses for whatever reason, so I only had a small amount of charoses—just enough for our own seder. Every year, I would send some charoses to Mrs. P, who is depressed and has many troubles. This year, because I didn't have any extra, I hadn't sent any to her! This must be what I was being punished for—although I couldn't send her charoses, I should have let her know the reason why, so she shouldn't think that she is being forgotten or overlooked!

I immediately asked Mrs. M. Cohen to bring her a bottle of wine from Reb Chaim's siyum, and explain to her that I didn't have any extra charoses, and that is why I hadn't sent any to her. Of course, I immediately began to feel better, and the pains receded..."

One night at 11 p.m., a certain Rosh Yeshiva came to Reb Chaim and said, "For the last few days, the Rebbetzin has been phoning me, and trying to convince me to accept a certain bachur into my Yeshiva. Initially I refused for various reasons, but she kept calling, explaining that this bachur had nowhere else to go. I continued to refuse, but I have now decided to accede to her request, and I will accept that bachur."

Reb Chaim immediately excused himself, and went to his bedroom to tell the Rebbetzin the good news. When he returned, the Rosh Yeshiva asked him, "The Rebbetzin was doubtless sleeping. Why did the Rav have to hurry to tell her now, couldn't it wait until the morning?"

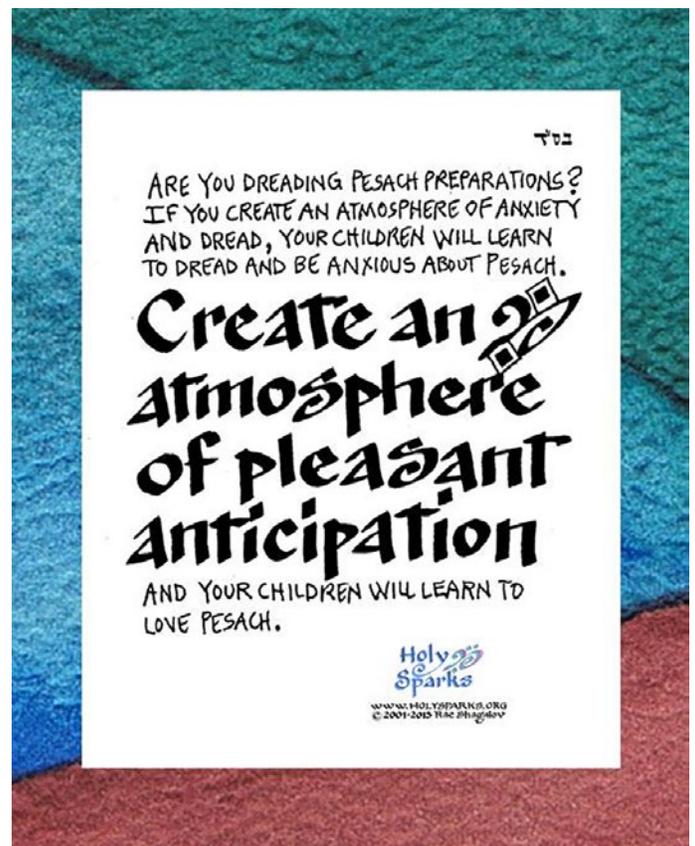
Rav Chaim replied, "On the contrary! Since she learned of this bachur's plight, she has not been able to sleep for worrying! She only dozes fitfully from time to time. Now that she knows that he has an appropriate place to learn, she will finally be able to sleep peacefully!"

When this story was mentioned to Rav Chaim, he said, "This was not an unusual occurrence!

It happened many times that the Rebbetzin put all of her energies into helping people with various troubles. Even when there was nothing else she could do, she was so empathetic that she couldn't rest until she knew that their needs were addressed!"

What inspired me about these stories is that WE COULD BE THAT WAY TOO! We could daven and have empathy for others who might be sick. We could think about the classmates we have that are home without any brothers or sisters to play with and give them a call. Be inspired and make a difference; yes you can!

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Created by Shalom Scott

ANNOUNCEMENTS & NEWS



Mazal Tov wishes to...

Births:

Rabbi & Mrs. Hillel and Devorah Brody on the birth of their son, Alter Chanoch Henoch

Mr. & Mrs. Yaakov and Bryna Handler on the birth of their son, Yisrael Ahron

Rabbi & Mrs. Mati and Chaya Esther Miller on the birth of their daughter, Atara Malka

Engagements:

Rabbi & Mrs. Yosef and Yonina Schluskel on the engagement of their daughter Chani to Menachem Kovitz

Mr. Tzvi Werther upon his engagement to Judith Prais of London, England

Rabbi & Mrs. Yerachmiel and Nechi Anton on the engagement of their daughter Esti to Avraham Menachem Cohen of Detroit

Marriages:

Rabbi & Mrs. Dov and Miriam Yarmush on the marriage of their daughter Esti to Moshe Segal

Mr. & Mrs. Yaakov and Chana Lieberman on the marriage of their son Avrumi to Adina Love

Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Berman on the marriage of their daughter Chana to Moshe Leib Goldenberg

Rabbi & Mrs. Dovid and Aliza Kossowsky on the marriage of their daughter Cheyenna to Dani Bin-nun

Rabbi & Mrs. Shlomo and Ahuva Jarcaig on the marriage of their daughter Miriam Esther to Nechemia Troppe

Kiddush Sponsorships:

Jan 4: The CBJ Kiddush Klub

Jan 11: Cosponsored in honor of members of the Chevra Kadisha AND by Mr. & Mrs. Yaakov and Chana Lieberman in honor of Avrumi's aufruf

Jan 25: Rabbi & Mrs. Mati and Chaya Esther Miller in honor of the birth of their daughter Atara Malka

Feb 1: In honor of Harry and Debby Rubin for everything that they do for their kids

Feb 8: Mr. & Mrs. Alan and Robi Borsuk

Feb 15: Mr. Mike Rice in honor of Caron's second yahrtzeit

Feb 22: Marvin and Marilyn Katchkey in memory of their mother, Evelyn Katchkey

Mar 7: Cosponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Marty and Ruth Bryskier in memory of Marty's father, Mike Bryskier, Meyer ben Michel on the occasion of his 12th yahrtzeit AND by Ms. Debra Askotzky

Mar 14: Cosponsored by Faiga Bandos, Marilyn and Yisroel Broder, Marcus and Melanie Bandos, and Helen and Mark Breslow in honor of the first yahrtzeit of Felix Bandos, Ephraim Fishel ben Raphael Yechiel Mayer AND by Chumi Twerski in honor of Elisha's aufruf

Shalosh Seudos Sponsorships:

Jan 18: Mr. Steve Eigen in honor of his mother's yahrtzeit, Shaindel bas Mayer

Jan 25: Rabbi Yitzchok Fox in honor of the yahrtzeit of The Rebbe Reb Leibele of Hornosteipel

Feb 1: Mr. Yaakov Handler in honor of his grandfather's yahrtzeit, Avraham ben Asher Zelig

Feb 8: Mr. Jay Frank in memory of his father Leo Frank, Eliezer ben Yisrael Yaakov

Feb 15: Rabbi & Mrs. Lensky in honor of the yahrtzeit of Judith's mother, Perel Zisal bas Shmuel Dovid HaCohen

Feb 22: Mr. Ian Hupert in memory of Yeruchum Yehuda ben Zerach

Feb 29: Marvin and Marilyn Katchkey in memory of their mother, Evelyn Katchkey

Mar 7: Rabbi Yitzchak Fox in honor of his grandfather's yahrtzeit, Eliyahu Ben Dovid

Mar 14: Cosponsored by Mr. Mark Schmidt in memory of his mother Jacqueline Schmidt

Kiddush and shalosh seudos sponsorships are great opportunities to honor the memory of a loved one and to celebrate joyous life events, while also supporting CBJ.

To sponsor kiddush or shalosh seudos, please contact the shul office at 414-442-5730.

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**Ladies,
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Our apologies if we neglected to mention anyone's contributions.

We apologize for any inadvertent omissions, errors, or misrepresentations in this publication.

For questions, comments, submissions, or for information on how to get involved,
please email us at cbjnewsletter@gmail.com

A L'CHAIM WAS HELD AT RABBI BENZION'S HOME
TO CELEBRATE THE PUBLICATION OF
RABBI MICHEL'S NEW SEFER ON SEFER BEREISHIS.



Photo by Yochanan Jones



Photo by Yochanan Jones



Photo by Yochanan Jones



Photo by Yochanan Jones

**A SIYUM HASHAS MELAVA MALKA
WAS HELD AT CBJ, INCLUDING
A LAVISH MEAL, INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKERS,
AND LIVELY DANCING.
THE EVENT WAS FOLLOWED
BY A VIDEO PRESENTATION ON THE LIFE OF
RABBI MEIR SHAPIRO.**



CBJ Succos Extravaganza



CHILDREN'S CHANUKAH PARTY AT CBJ



PURIM AT CBJ





CONGREGATION BETH JEHUDAH

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The background of the cover is a photograph of a sunset over a misty landscape. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm orange and yellow glow that fades into a dark blue sky. The foreground is filled with mist or low clouds, obscuring the ground and creating a sense of depth and atmosphere. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

THE CBJ
Conversation

**A NEWSLETTER FROM
CONGREGATION BETH JEHUDAH**