



# THE FOUNDATION OF THE HOME (I)

## A Mother's Devotion

There was a couple in Vilednik who simply could not get along. In fact things reached the point where the woman left her husband. Later, facing pressure to be reunited, she told Reb Yisroel of Vilednik that if the *tzaddik* promised that she would be blessed with children as great as he was, she would return to her husband.

"Is that so?" asked the *tzaddik*. "Very well. If you will be like my mother, you will no doubt have children like she did."

And with that he shared two stories of his righteous mother:

Once while lighting the *Shabbos licht* she cried so much over the candles that they extinguished. When she opened her eyes and saw what had happened she was so pained that she broke down into further sobs. A miracle occurred and the candles were relit.

The second story:

His mother was widowed at a young age and had to toil laboriously to support her five children. Soon the work caught up with her and she fell ill. As she lay in bed, distraught over how she would now feed her children, she asked young Yisroel to hand her a huge *sefer* from the shelf. The book was a Rif, a classic compendium of all the *halachos* in the *Gemara*. She had no understanding of its contents or what it was at all, but she knew it was a holy *sefer*. She took the book in her hands and said, "Holy letters! Rise up before the *Ribbono shel Olam* and *daven* for me, that I should recover and be able to feed my little children!"

And she soon recovered.

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"ב מעשה קי"ב)

In a talk addressed to *Nshei UBnos Chabad*, the Rebbe once pointed out that the task of establishing the home as a *Mishkan* for *HaShem* begins in the heart of the woman of the home.

When a home is run by an *akereshabayis* whose heart is a *Mishkan* for *HaShem*, and her conduct follows the directives of the Torah, this is reflected in the conduct of her husband, sons, and daughters. Their thought, speech, and action are likewise permeated with the goal of creating a *Mishkan* for *HaShem*.

When that happens, even the mundane vessels in the home become permeated with *kedushah* and *Elokus*, just like the *Mishkan* in which *HaShem* dwells. And this brings peace and *achdus* in the home, amongst all the family members.

(תו"מ תשמ"ז ח"ג ע' 345)

Like the daughters of Tzafchad, the women and girls of every generation are entrusted with the task of endearing *Eretz Yisroel* to themselves and to their families, and to create "*Eretz Yisroel*" wherever they live. This is accomplished through a lifestyle of Torah and *mitzvos*, practiced with *chassidische* liveliness.

Doing so does not require miraculous feats. One only needs to reflect every day on whether her conduct is in harmony with the way a *Yiddishe* home and a *chassidische* home should be conducted, and whether it is appropriate for *Yiddishe* daughters, all of whom are likened to Sarah, Rivkah, Rochel and Leah.

When a woman begins to think in this direction, she will be able to establish a new home for *HaShem*.

(תו"מ ח"ז ע' 66)

The Rebbe once explained that a woman is called the *akeres habayis* since she is the *ikar* (the main component) of the home. It is clearly observable that the primary education of young children and even infants is accomplished not by the father, *melamed*, *rosh yeshiva*, or the *rov* – but by the child's own mother.

(תו"מ תשמ"ח ח"ד ע' 341)

## Tender Loving Care

In a *yechidus* in תש"ג (1953) with the leadership of the Chabad women of Worcester, Massachusetts, the Rebbe likened the tender care given by a mother to that given by a nurse:

When a person is ill, he consults a doctor. The doctor, who understands the physical workings of the body, diagnoses the nature of the illness and prescribes treatment. If the case warrants it, he recommends care in a hospital, where it is the doctor who prescribes the treatment, but the nurse is the one who usually administers it. The nurse, who is generally a woman, can with tender

patience sweeten a bitter-tasting medicine and make a most difficult medical procedure more tolerable.

Similarly, to secure a remedy for spiritual ills, one must consult the person who, like the doctor, the expert for the body's needs, knows and understands the needs of the soul, as explained in the Torah.

However, the expert who diagnoses and prescribes the treatment is not necessarily the one who is best suited to administer it. Thus we come to the role of the spiritual "nurse"—an individual with the compassion, sensitivity and patience that the task requires.

As is the case regarding physical medicine, the woman has been blessed with a character that makes her optimally suited to serve as a spiritual "nurse"—one who draws her fellow Jews close to Torah with kindness, gentle benevolence, and love. A woman's strength is such that she can prevail upon others to fulfill the precepts, including those which, on the surface, might seem difficult or "bitter-tasting"—with willing acceptance and joy.

(מורימת היחידות)

The *Zohar* writes: A woman should light *Shabbos* candles with joyfully and willingly, for it is a great honor for her. Moreover, it brings her the *zechus* of having holy sons who will light up the world with Torah, *yiras Shamayim* and peace, and grants her husband long life.

Rabbeinu Bachaye explains that the time of lighting the *Shabbos licht* is opportune for women to *daven* and ask to be blessed with sons who will shine in Torah, for the Torah is also called "light."

(זהר בראשית מ"ח ע"ב, רבינו בחיי יתרו ל"ט)

### CONSIDER THIS!

- What makes a woman the main component of the home?

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# A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin  
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Hora'ah Rechovot

## Faulty Car

I bought a new car and after driving it for a while I discovered that the transmission doesn't work well. Before I returned it, someone else hit the car and fled. Must I pay for the damages?

- When you buy a product that doesn't match the claims of the seller, it is a *mekach taus* (mistaken purchase) and the seller must return your money. As long as you didn't use the product you may return it to the seller, even a long while later. However, if you continue to use it after you notice the defect, you can't return it anymore, since in doing so you have accepted the defective product.<sup>1</sup>
- Some say that if the defect is obvious, you can't return it by claiming that you didn't notice it.<sup>2</sup> Some limit this to when the defect was visible before purchase.<sup>3</sup>
- If you notice the problem with the car while traveling, you may use it for the remainder of your journey and then return it, because you had no choice not to use it.<sup>4</sup> When returning the car, you must pay for using the car (at estimated value) for one of two reasons: (1) To avoid the prohibition of *ribis* – since essentially you lent the seller money (since it is all being returned to you) and you are receiving an added benefit of using the product as well.<sup>5</sup> (2) That you should not be stealing from the seller; since you used his product you must pay him.<sup>6</sup>
- If you damage the car you must pay for the damages;<sup>7</sup> however, if someone else damages it, you are not responsible. You also need not pay for normal wear-and-tear or usage of the car (e.g. removing the plastic on the seats).

6. סמ"ע שם סק"ג וכן נה"מ חידושים סק"ד וראה ביאורים סק"ה (ומשום ריבית לא חיישינן שזוהו אבק ריבית ולא מפקינן).  
7. שו"ע שם ס"ג וראה נה"מ ביאורים הנ"ל (שמדמוהו למזיק באונס דאבידה).

1. שו"ע חו"מ סי' רל"ב ס"ג.  
2. ראה סמ"ע שו"ע שם סק"י לטובת המוכר.  
3. שו"ת שבות יעקב ח"ג סי' קס"ט.  
4. ראה פת"ש סי' רל"ב ססק"א.  
5. שו"ע שם סי' רל"ב סט"ו לפי פירוש הלבוש שם.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

ליכות החתן הת' צבי פרוינד

וב"ג חנה אסתר אקינאוו שיחיו

לרגל בואם בקשרי שידוכין בשעתומ"צ

# OUR HEROES

## Reb Nochum

Reb Menachem Nochum, the oldest son of the Mittlerer Rebbe, was born around the year 5547 (1787) and resided in Lubavitch. Later on, he moved to Niezhin, making frequent extended visits to the *kever* of his grandfather the Alter Rebbe in Haditch. He passed away around eighty-years-old, and is buried in Niezhin.



During the time of the Alter Rebbe, a new fashion in Russia dictated that jackets should henceforth have collars. When his grandson Reb Nochum, son of the Mittlerer Rebbe, was preparing for his *chassuna*, the Alter Rebbe called for him and asked him about his silk *kapota*: would it be made in the traditional way, or would it conform to the new fashion? "It'll have a collar, of course," Reb Nochum replied.

The Alter Rebbe requested that he have it made without one, but Reb Nochum, then still a young *bochur*, argued, "Everyone else will have one, and I'll be embarrassed." The Alter Rebbe then promised him that if he wore a *kapota* without a collar, he would be together with his grandfather in Gan Eden. He then asked Reb Nochum that when his *kapota* was ready, he should come to him dressed in it. Reb Nochum asked if he must do it wholeheartedly or *kabolas ol* would be sufficient. The Alter Rebbe replied, "Of course it must be truthfully, and with the truth of the 'yechida.'" Reb Nochum was silent and nothing more was said.

Before the *chassuna*, the young man entered the Alter Rebbe's room, dressed in his new *kapota*... which had a collar. The Alter Rebbe then tore off a small piece of fur from the inside of the coat and promised him long life for that. Years later Reb Nochum commented, "I was young and didn't appreciate how great was the promise I had been given." To correct this incident, Reb Nochum would spend much time in Haditch by the Ohel of the Alter Rebbe.

The Rebbe explained that at that time and place, the challenge of fashions was extremely difficult. Had the Alter Rebbe been successful, that challenge would have been removed for generations to come. And that explains why he offered his grandson such a rich reward.

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א עמוד 29, רשימו"ד חדש ע' 97, תו"מ הל"ה ע' 278)

# A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

## How to *Farbreng*

In addition to the Rebbe's thousands of hours of *farbrengens*, the Rebbe constantly encouraged chassidim to *farbreng* amongst themselves on a regular basis. He accompanied it with clear directives:

The Rebbe writes (*Igros Kodesh vol. 15, p. 143*), "The custom of elder chassidim was to abstain from addressing a particular person at a *farbrengen*, rather to discuss the issue that needs attention, and the ways it may be rectified. This would be done in a manner so it would not be noticeable to whom the words were directed."

In the year 5717 (1957), someone turned to the Rebbe with a question (*Igros Kodesh vol. 14, p. 102*): "Is it possible to have a *farbrengen* without *divrei Torah*?"

The Rebbe answered sharply, "Merely entertaining the thought is a great surprise to me."