

The Weekly *Farbrengens*



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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

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 U'Bnos 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 *akeres habayis* 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.

(ת"מ תשמ"ז ח"ג ע' 345)

CONSIDER

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

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 *chassidish* 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 *chassidish* 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*.

(ת"מ ח"י"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.

(ת"מ תשמ"ח ח"ד ע' 341)

TENDER LOVING CARE

In a *yechidus* in תשי"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.

(מרשימת היחידות)

The *Zohar* writes: A woman should light *Shabbos* candles 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 י"ט, ג.)



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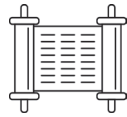
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GIVING NON-KOSHER TO GENTILES

I'd like to buy lunch for my cleaning lady. Can I order it from a non-kosher eatery?

Non-kosher foods forbidden in benefit—such as foods containing *basar b'chalav* or *yayin nesech*—may obviously not be given for a beneficial purpose. Giving them to a worker or acquaintance is a benefit since it will result in some benefit along the way.

Even if the food is permissible to benefit, Chazal set a prohibition to go into business with non-kosher foods. If the item came to him by chance—e.g., an animal that turned out to be a *treifa* or non-kosher fish that one caught—he may sell it, as he is not considered to be “going into business.” Another exception is *chelev*, forbidden fats, which the Torah explicitly permits to sell to non-Jews. (While Chazal may add decrees, they cannot go against the Torah's words by prohibiting what the Torah permitted.)¹

Due to this prohibition, the Rama rules that one may not purchase non-kosher food to feed his non-Jewish workers. Since it was standard practice to feed workers, it is like paying a debt, and he is engaging in a form of “business” by using cheaper non-kosher food.²

Other *acharonim* argue that buying food for workers isn't considered commercial business. Some say that even the Rama only referred to purchasing non-kosher animals to raise at home for this purpose and not merely buying such food from the market.³

Providing money for the worker to buy himself food is certainly permitted, even if the worker will buy non-kosher food.⁴ Some also permit if the worker buys himself food and the Yid pays the bill, since the Yid did not make the economical choice. (Yet, this would still not allow foods that are forbidden in benefit, since he would be benefiting from the lesser cost.)⁵

If a Jew owns a nursing home, the food served there is considered part of his business. Thus, he cannot serve non-kosher food to the non-Jewish residents. *Poskim* write that he may hire a company to manage all food arrangements and expenses. In this manner, he is not considered to be the one engaging in business with non-kosher food.⁶

1. משנה שביעית פ"ז מ"ג-ד. שו"ע יו"ד סי' ק"ז סק"ג.
2. רמ"א יו"ד שם. וראה ט"ז שם סק"ב*.
3. ראה שו"ע יו"ד סי' ק"ז סק"ג.
4. ראה פרי תואר סי' ק"ז סק"ג.
5. פרי תואר שם.
6. שו"ת יביע אומר ח"ה יו"ד סי' י"ג.

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



REB NECHEMYA OF DUBROVNA

The *gaon* Reb Nechemya Birech Halevi of Dubrovna was the son-in-law of Reb Chaim Avraham, the Alter Rebbe's son, and was one of the Alter Rebbe's outstanding chassidim. He earned his livelihood from a factory of *taleisim* that he owned. He authored *Sheilos Uteshuvos Divrei Nechemya*, as well as glosses on Gemara (printed in the back of the Vilna shas) and on the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch. He passed away on his birthday, Tu Bishvat תר"ב (1852).

Once, the *rov* of Dubrovna asked Reb Nechemya to deliver a *teshuvah* (responsa) he had written to the renowned Reb Efrayim Zalman Margolis. After reviewing it, Reb Nechemya added some thoughts of his own and signed, “Reb Nechemya the manufacturer.” Upon receiving the letter, Reb Efrayim Zalman asked, “Are all the manufacturers in Russia so learned?”

A *rov* once met Reb Nechemya after talking with him in learning he said, "I see you are a great *gaon*, why are you not

famous among the '*lomdim*'?"

Reb Nechemya replied with a *mashal*: A *seforim* seller once entered the home of a great *rov* and was surprised to see the walls lined with many and rare *seforim*. The seller asked the *rov*, "Why is it that I have a tenth of the *seforim* that you have, yet everyone knows about my *seforim*, while you have so many more *seforim*, but no one knows of them?" To which the *rov* replied, "Your *seforim* are for the world and therefore they are famous, but my *seforim* are for myself!"...

Once Reb Nechemya saw a soldier in the Russian army being whipped for having let his feet freeze while standing on guard duty. The soldier complained, “What have I done wrong? It was freezing outside!” He was told, “If you would remember the oath you have taken, to serve the king with all your might, this oath would have warned you.” It is said that from this event, Reb Nechemya had *chayus* for 25 years in his *avoda*, thinking of the warmth he should have as of a result of the oath he had taken before entering this world.

A Moment with The Rebbe

לזכות שניאור זלמן בן חוה לאה וכל משפחתו שיחיו לכל המצטרך בגשמיות ורוחניות



A SECRET FROM YOURSELF

A unique fatherly relationship formed between the Rebbe and Reb Berel Yunik. Already as a *bochur*, far from his family, the Rebbe constantly inquired as to his wellbeing.

“Why do you look like this?” the Rebbe asked a downtrodden Reb Berel in a 23 Adar 5713 conversation. “Are you going through something, physically or in *avodas Hashem*?”

“I don't know,” Reb Berel brushed it off. “I'm probably just tired from work.”

But the Rebbe wouldn't accept the

justification for the demeanor. “When one is drained, one eats and sleeps better... Perhaps it's a secret?”

“On no! I don't keep any secrets from the Rebbe!” Reb Berel protested.

“It's probably the kind of secret that you are also hiding from yourself. If you will tell yourself what is bothering you, then maybe you will also tell me. The Eibershter should help that you shouldn't have what to hide from yourself...”

(Diary of Reb Berel Yunik)