From the Rebbe’s wisdom

- The Harder Easier Path
  - There are two paths you could take:
    - An easier path or a harder one.
  - Knowing that G-d is everything, you may wish to reject all that the ‘world’ stands for.
  - Since everything is emptiness and vanities, you may deny yourself even necessities, living far and removed from the banalities of mankind, engaging only in the truths of the spirit, running from the confines of physical, mundane life.
  - This is the easier path.
  - On the other hand, knowing than within each thing G-d can be found, you may be inspired to refine and elevate our world, struggling with all its facets to find their true purpose, seizing every opportunity to coax out a little more of the world’s inherent good, living a spiritual life by using physical things in an enlightened way.
  - Both paths are true paths, and great sages have tread them both.
  - But the second, more difficult one, is the one we will all have the most benefit from, especially today.

Volume 13 Number 1
MONTREAL TORAH CENTER
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I have been in mourning. I lost my family rabbi.

Dear friend, I want to share with him with you. I want you to get a sense of him. I want you to be touched by this extraordinary man. In this way, I hope to give him a gift that I know he would cherish - that you be inspired and warmed by his story.

In the days following the passing of Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner, an avalanche of articles and personal testimonials flooded the media in Australia and Jewish news agencies worldwide. What follows is a sampling.

From chabad.org by Dovid Zakilkowski

...Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner, a passionate educator who devoted more than fifty years of his life to Australian Jewry, passed away at eighty-three-years-old on July 7, 2008.

A man whom politicians and Jewish community officials credited with shepherding a Jewish population whose numbers swelled after World War II, Groner originally intended his 1958 move to the continent from New York to be temporary. Sent at the behest of the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson of righteous memory for at least three years, Groner ended up calling Melbourne home for five decades. In that time, he built a school system serving over fifteen hundred students.

"Australian Jewry has lost one of its noblest personalities," said Isi Leibler, who led the Executive Council of Australian Jewry for close to twenty years. "History will record that Rabbi Yitzchok Groner was beyond a doubt, the greatest Australian Jewish leader of the past century."

"Rabbi Groner’s work is shown most of all by the institutions he has fostered," echoed Michael Danby, a member of the Australian House of Representatives. "When he arrived in Melbourne, he saw a community increasing in size due to post-war immigration, and he gave very strong support to Jewish education in order that the community would be able to survive in a secular society such as Australia."

Danby saw Groner’s greatest achievement in Melbourne’s Yeshiva Centre and the schools he headed; Yeshiva College and Beth Rivkah Ladies College, "two of the most highly regarded Jewish schools in Australia or anywhere," he said.

"His towering achievements and charismatic presence at all communal levels played a major role in transforming Australian Jewry into one of the finest communities in the Diaspora," added Leibler. "The extraordinary expansion of Chabad-Lubavitch educational institutions positively influenced the growth of Torah education and day schools throughout the entire Jewish community."

Born on April 18, 1925, Groner was the fifth of eight children born to his parents, who immigrated to the United States from what was then the British Mandate of Palestine.

With a lineage tracing back to the first Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, Groner vividly recalled the New York arrival of the sixth Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, of righteous memory, from war-torn Europe in 1941. In a rare newspaper interview shortly before his eightieth birthday, Groner described the Chasidic gathering that took place four days later at the Rebbe’s hotel over the holiday of Purim:

"Hundreds and hundreds of people came from all walks of life because they wanted to hear what’s going on in Europe," he told Dan Goldberg of the Australian Jewish News. "I remember how the Rebbe said ‘gut yom tov,’ a traditional celebratory greeting.

"And then he said, ‘How can I say gut yom tov when my brethren are being burnt?’ “ continued Groner, pointing out that while the Rebbe experienced the greatest joy at coming out of Europe alive, his heart was still with the Jews suffering there. "That talk killed me."

As a student, Groner enrolled in the Tomchei Tnimim Lubavitch yeshiva that was established soon after the Rebbe’s arrival. Though he kept strictly to the school’s learning schedule, he also immersed himself in the time-consuming outreach activities headed by the Rebbe’s son-in-law and future successor, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson.

“History will record that Rabbi Yitzchok Groner was beyond a doubt, the greatest Australian Jewish leader of the past century.”
Under the future Rebbe's guidance, Groner helped organize a grand children's parade down Brooklyn's Eastern Parkway, then the center of a sprawling secular Jewish community. With hundreds of children singing Jewish songs as they marched down one of the city's landmark boulevards, residents would look back at the parade as a quintessential moment of Jewish pride serving as a catalyst for similar events worldwide in the decades to come.

After yeshiva, Groner began traveling to rural communities to assist in the building of Jewish educational institutions. In 1947 at the age of twenty-two, the sixth Rebbe sent him and his newly married wife Devorah on a mission to Australia and New Zealand. The trip to Melbourne, which took fifty-five hours, was the Groners' first connection to a community that would end up adoring their fearless and unabashed dedication to Jewish activism and their boundless love for every Jew.

"I came in there and saw a hundred people [in the small synagogue]," Groner said of his first visit to the city. "I went to the corner and I started to cry. The next day I wrote a letter to the Rebbe, 'You should know there's Judaism here.' I was so impressed."

He later visited Australia again in 1953, this time as emissary of the seventh Rebbe.

In the years following the Groners' 1953 visit, the local Jewish community implored both Rabbi Groner and the new Rebbe that Rabbi Groner take up full-time residence in Melbourne. At the time, Groner refused to relocate, giving the Rebbe a litany of reasons why he couldn't pick up and move. And although he finally acceded to the Rebbe's encouragement, he held open the option to one day move back to New York. "I was a naughty boy," he said in an interview with Jewish Educational Media.

"You have the freedom to decide whether you wish to continue your work in Australia," the Rebbe wrote to Devorah Groner in 1960. "The important thing is that if the task is to be done successfully, the work must be carried on willingly, without compulsion and without considering it as penal servitude or deportation."

When the Groners arrived, the Melbourne community was debating if it should open a Jewish day school. Groner recalled that at the time, he viewed the school as "the only means by which the Jewish community will remain Jewish."

An anecdote related at the dinner honoring his eightieth birthday captured Groner's focus on education as the foundation of Jewish life and society-at-large: One year, the Chabad institutions in Melbourne were facing bankruptcy and the Commonwealth Bank was threatening to foreclose on their headquarters' mortgage.

A number of community officials and business figures scheduled a meeting with David Murray, the head of the Commonwealth Bank. Many of them knew Murray personally, and they trusted that he would be swayed by their argument that their day school was vitally important for the Jewish community.

Murray, however, was accompanied by a man commonly known as John "the Hatchet" Edwards, who was in charge of bad accounts and chaired the meeting. Right at the outset, Edwards made it known that he was an atheist who harbored no sympathy for religion. On the contrary, he thought that organized religion was the bane of society, and that everyone would be better off if children went only to public schools. As far as Edwards was concerned, the yeshiva was nothing more than a client, and a particularly bad client at that. If the school couldn't pay, it would face the same fate as any other business in default.

After about a minute, Groner – a very big man – got up to address Edwards, something the businessmen at the table were unable, or unwilling, to do.

"Hello," he said. "Your name is John. My name is Isaac. How do you do?" With that, Groner placed his hands on Edwards' shoulders.

"I don't think you understand what we do here," he said. "We make menschen. Do you know what a mensch is? A mensch is a person who has respect for all other human beings. A mensch is a person who cares about others. A mensch is a person who is a good civic citizen. Australia needs menschen, and we produce them."

Groner and the other officials walked out of that meeting with a compromise deal. Today, a chain of similar schools operates across Australia. Over the years, they have trained a whole generation of Orthodox rabbis who occupy the pulpits of synagogues across the city and the rest of Australia.

Groner's "life was education," said Rabbi Shimshon Yurkowicz, co-director of Chabad-Lubavitch of Malvern with Groner's daughter Rivkah. "Even in the hospital, he was involved in the day-to-day activities of the Yeshiva Centre."

Leibler noted that Groner regularly counseled hundreds of visitors seeking advice and answers to complex questions in Jewish law.

"Although unyielding on halachic principles," said Leibler, "he exemplified the best traditions of Chabad outreach and compassion. Despite his towering presence and erudition, he was a modest man who spurned materialism and inspired a love and respect..."
by all sections of the community, non-observer as well as religious.”

“Today the Lubavitchers are the most dynamic influence on Australian Judaism,” said Danby, giving the credit to Groner. “He is a great scholar, a great preacher, a great educator and a great inspiration to all who meet him. His influence reaches far beyond the Lubavitcher community into all corners of Australian life, and even an imperfectly observant Jew like me has felt his inspiration.”

On the occasion of his eightieth birthday, Groner paused for a moment to reflect on the sea change in Australian Jewish life.

“It causes me a certain satisfaction,” he remarked. “But by the same token, it causes me a certain feeling that it wasn’t accomplished enough, and we have to go ahead.

“The Rebbe was never satisfied to rest on his laurels,” he continued. “He always pushed for more and more.” He added that he felt the most satisfaction when he could help other people. “If I can help them both in a spiritual way and in an educational way, and in a moral way and in a physical way,” he said, “that’s my greatest satisfaction.”

At his request, Rabbi Groner will be buried in Israel. He is survived by eight children, as well as dozens of grandchildren and great-grandchildren...

From an article by Shmuley Boteach

... More than anything else, he was a larger-than-life personality with the most tender heart one could find. And I say larger-than-life not only because he was a towering physical presence, but because he had an outsize personality which he used to make everyone he met feel outsized as well. Rarely have I met a man who had the capacity to use sarcasm, wit, religious conviction, scholarship, and down-to-earth decency to make others feel like they infinitely mattered.

His house was open to all. You could just stroll in at any time during the day and he would immediately engage you in stimulating conversation. He had a phenomenal memory for detail and would rib you about your religious and personal shortcomings and where he wanted you to improve.

Whenever I saw him he asked me if I was studying enough. When I would answer in the negative, he would wag his enormous finger at me and remind me that a Chassid dare never be an ignoramus. He could criticize me, yet I would never even feel defensive. First, I would be laughing through most of it because his sense of humor was infectious. But more importantly, I felt his love for me in every word. He oozed fatherly affection from every pore of his being. I never doubted that he loved me and I am sure that everyone who met never doubted the same.

... Although he was a man whom all of Australian Jewry deeply revered, you would never have known it from his surroundings. He lived in the most modest home, wore the simplest clothing, his only indulgence being the massive library that filled his home...

And finally, an excerpt from a piece penned by my father, may he be well, for the Groner family...

...In 1947 there was not the same Jewish infrastructure in Melbourne as we have today. There was an afternoon Talmud Torah but no day schools or yeshivahs. My recollection of a chassidic Jew was of three very respected Chassidim... Although I could speak Yiddish, they could not understand or relate to a young Jew born in Australia, as they were still of the old European mold and not particularly worldly.

Into this scene Rabbi Groner O.B.M arrived in Melbourne on a mission from Lubavitch World Headquarters. He was like a breath of fresh air; young, tall and handsome with a fascinating American accent. He could discuss Talmud and at the same time had a broad knowledge of what was going on in the world, and very important to us - sports. He certainly knew how to relate to us teenagers. We were all immediately attracted to this chossid and admired him as to how a young Jew should conduct himself.

He captivated both the young and the older members of the community. We had never seen such a Jew.

An example of his influence: At that time the only Orthodox organisation for young people was Young Mizrachi. It was summertime and we organised a camp in Dromana, using disposal army tents, sleeping stretchers etc. and cooked our own meals. We invited Rabbi Groner to spend Shabbos with us, which was a most unforgettable experience: learning, singing and discussions. Before leaving on Sunday he wanted to go for a stroll on the beach. He went at five a.m. walking down from the top of a hill where the camp was situated and we were all excited to follow him on the beach leading us like the Pied Piper. I shall never forget that Shabbos and the beach walk.

...I had the honor and privilege to be the honorary secretary of the Yeshivah and Beth Rivkah Colleges serving Rabbi Groner for over fifty years. The most precious compliment he ever gave me was to say that the Groner and New families are mishpochoh...

Over the course of time since Rabbi Groner’s passing, I have come to realize how deeply he influenced my life; even the manner in which I address my own congregation. Clearly, he ignited a spark in me that continues to burn, one that I hope will never dim and will contribute, if ever in small measure, to the luminescence of his place on high.

Nechama, Itchy and Zelda join me in wishing you and yours a good, sweet, happy and healthy year. May we merit, without delay, lasting peace in Israel in a world perfected and redeemed.

Shana Tova,

Rabbi Moishe New
MTC gratefully salutes our devoted 'Sponsors of the Day' 

All MTC activities and programs on that particular day are attributed to the day’s sponsor. Each sponsorship is recognized on our website; in our weekly Mosaic Express and in this magazine. The sponsorship amount is $1800 per day and is billed annually, creating a consistent form of annuity contributing to MTC’s financial stability.

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<td>in honour of the birthday of Alexa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 8</td>
<td>Joey Adler</td>
<td>in honour of her birthday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 15</td>
<td>Joey Adler</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Lou Adler, of blessed memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>Lee and Vickie Karls</td>
<td>in honour of Lee's birthday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>Joey Adler</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Jarrod Adler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 28</td>
<td>Robert and Shari Kahan</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Zachary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>Shaya and Tuky Treitel</td>
<td>in honour of the yartzeit of Menashe ben Yitzchok Mayer, of blessed memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 11</td>
<td>Cons Families</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Olivia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>Shmuel and Chani Gniwisch</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Chaya Mushka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>David and Laurie Puterman</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Yisroel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 24</td>
<td>Ronald Pearl</td>
<td>in honour of the yartzeit of Mrs. Goldie Pearl, of blessed memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 18</td>
<td>Mark Lazar</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Shira Lazar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 5</td>
<td>Cola families</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Jeremy Samuel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 8</td>
<td>Joey Adler</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Sary Berdugo</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 15</td>
<td>Robert and Shari Kahan</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Alexander</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 18</td>
<td>Steven and Leslie Sonnenstein</td>
<td>in honour of the yartzeit of Mrs. Katy Sonnenstein, of blessed memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 5</td>
<td>Cola Families</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Mandy Sara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 8</td>
<td>Lee and Vickie Karls</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Evan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elul 3</td>
<td>Hershel Zelman</td>
<td>in honour of the yartzeit of Mrs. Minnie Zelman, of blessed memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elul 10</td>
<td>Henri Bybelezer</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Peggy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elul 12</td>
<td>Cons Families</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Samuel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 18</td>
<td>Cola Families</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Mandy Sara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 15</td>
<td>Kevin and Rozana Ross</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Peter and Paul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 22</td>
<td>Cons Families</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Joshua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 9</td>
<td>Shaya and Tuky Treitel</td>
<td>in honour of the yartzeit of Tzivia bas Yekuel Yehuda, of blessed memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 15</td>
<td>Stanley and Carole Satov</td>
<td>in honour of the yartzeit of Mr. Richard Satov, of blessed memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 15</td>
<td>Cons Families</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Stephen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 26</td>
<td>David and Laurie Puterman</td>
<td>in honour of David's birthday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 15</td>
<td>Joey Adler</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Mitchell Adler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 26</td>
<td>Lee and Vickie Karls</td>
<td>in honour of the birthday of Spencer</td>
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S
o who would have thought that MTC’s youth director, Rabbi Shimi Uhlman served in the Israeli army, trained, saw active duty in the settlements and served as a chaplain. And now, he, along with his wife Leah, are directing care MTC’s children’s programs!

Shimi and Leah Uhlman, the parents of three young children, both come from backgrounds richly steeped in Yiddishkeit and connected to the land of Israel.

Shimi was born in Israel, and when he was a young child his parents moved to Brooklyn, New York. When he was ten years old, his parents made aliyah, moving to the heart of Jerusalem. Shimi’s father, Oded, was no stranger to Israel. Orphaned at five years old, he grew up in Bialik, Israel. He served in the IDF as an elite paratrooper, fighting in the Six-Day War, the Yom Kippur War and the first war in Lebanon.

Oded’s mother came to Israel during the Second World War on one of the boats that were turned away from the port in Haifa by the British. Instead of remaining on the boat with the other passengers and returning to war-torn Europe, she and a friend jumped off the boat into the ocean and somehow swam to shore. Everyone else on that boat perished in the camps.

Leah parents and grandparents have a colorful and rich background. One of the more famous stories is of her grandfather, the famous chassid, Elchanan Marozov, affectionately known as Choni. He was the right-hand man of the previous Rebbe, Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn. When the previous Rebbe was arrested in 1928, Choni Marozov was taken to Spalerno prison with him. The story is long, but in a nutshell, when the Communist officials realized who Choni Marozov was, they fanned out all over Moscow to try and capture his sons. They succeeded in arresting his oldest son. Although the previous Rebbe was miraculously freed from prison, Choni Marozov and his son were murdered by their Russians captors.

Before Shimi was married he worked for Chabad in Florida. Leah was in Israel at the time, worked in a preschool where Shimi’s sister learned and met his mother. When Leah returned to New York, Shimi’s mother thought about Leah as a shidduch for her son Shimi and the two were introduced. They dated and were married soon afterward.

They lived in New York for about five months and then moved to Israel, living in Rehovot. Shimi learned in kollel, a yeshiva for married men, for one year and was then drafted into the army. He did the requisite two month basic training program and then became an army chaplain. In Israel, even chaplains get called to fight on the front lines. A few months after entering the army he was called to active duty to guard the West Bank settlement Beth-El, near Ramallah. While he was in the army Shimi and Leah’s first child was born.

Having a newborn and no family near her, Leah felt very much alone. She called the Chabad shlichim near where Shimi was stationed, and through their kindness they found her a place to stay for one week to be near her husband.

One night during her stay there, Shimi was called to do a perilous mission. Together with another soldier, they were told that there was an Arab just outside the settlement who had information to give to the Israelis. As Shimi explained, this happens quite often but it is always dangerous, for there is always the possibility that the encounter is a trap. Thankfully, the mission was a success.

Shimi and Leah remained in Israel for about six years, always looking for a position in shlichus – Chabad outreach work. During that time Leah studied for her BA in Educational Counselling at Bar Ilan University.

Rabbi Zalman Kaplan, Shimi’s first cousin, knew that MTC was looking for youth directors and that Shimi and Leah were looking for a posting and brought everyone together. Shimi and Leah visited MTC last fall.

Thank G-d MTC has grown very rapidly in the past four years, with many young families joining. Shimi and Leah are an energetic, imaginative and competent young couple, ready for the fun and excitement of the new programs they are initiating.
## LOU AND JOEY ADLER LEARNING INSTITUTE FALL AND WINTER COURSE SCHEDULE

### SHABBOS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One hour before Shacharis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chassidus</td>
<td>In-depth, textual study, selected from the broad-based array of Chassidic writings. Instructor: Rabbi New</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forty-five minutes before Mincha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women's Torah Class</td>
<td>A discussion on the Torah portion of the week. For women. Instructor: Rabbi New</td>
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<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forty-five minutes before Mincha</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halacha</td>
<td>Textual study of Jewish law. For men. Instructor: Rabbi Kaplan</td>
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</table>

### SUNDAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:15 – 9:00 am</td>
<td>Rashi Sichos In-depth textual study of the Rebbe's Rashi sicha. Instructor: Rabbi New</td>
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</tbody>
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### MONDAY THRU FRIDAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:50 - 7:10 am</td>
<td>Daily Tanya The daily portion of Tanya. Instructor: Rabbi Kaplan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:10 – 8:50 am</td>
<td>Talmud One of MTC's most popular courses. This exciting class makes accessible the Talmud's endless riches and provides an upbeat start for your day. Instructor: Rabbi Kaplan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### MONDAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00 – 6:25 am</td>
<td>Likutei Torah Classic chassidic discourses by the Alter Rebbe, founder of Chabad. Instructor: Rabbi New</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:30 – 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Lunch &amp; Learn SP DIAMENT A discussion on: the Torah portion of the week, current events or holidays. Instructor: Rabbi Zalman Kaplan</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### TUESDAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:30 – 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Lunch &amp; Learn MARTINI PRODUCTIONS A discussion on: the Torah portion of the week, current events or holidays. Instructor: Rabbi Zalman Kaplan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### WEDNESDAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00 – 6:25 am</td>
<td>Likutei Torah Classic chassidic discourses by the Alter Rebbe, founder of Chabad. Instructor: Rabbi New</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:30 – 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Lunch &amp; Learn SEYMOUR ALPER INC. / SURPLUS A discussion on: the Torah portion of the week, current events or holidays. Instructor: Rabbi New</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### THURSDAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00 - 6:25 am</td>
<td>Chassidus In-depth, textual study, selected from the broad-based array of Chassidic writings. Instructor: Rabbi New</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### FRIDAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

### New Women's Torah Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday’s 11:30 – 12:30 am</td>
<td>Jewish Ethics and Laws - a blend of mysticism, philosophy &amp; psychology. For men. Instructor: Rabbi Kaplan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Jewish Ethics and Laws

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</tbody>
</table>
Shabbat and Holiday Programs for Kids

All new exciting schedule divided into different age groups.
Puppet show entertainment every Shabbos!
Prize system for each child!

Kids collect cool Shabbos coupons and redeem them in our special store once a month!

Simchat Torah Celebration for Children

Tuesday Evening, October 21
6:45 pm

The first ‘Hakafo’/dancing with the Torah will be especially for children.

Each child will receive a gift of a beautiful plush Torah.

6:30 pm Maariv Services
6:45 pm Children’s ‘Hakafo’
7:30 pm Grand Kiddush/Dinner
8:30 pm Continuation of the ‘Hakafo’

Sunday, December 14
Pre-Chanukah Carnival for the whole family
donuts, latkes
At the MTC
10:00 am – noon

Chanukah
Hey kids
JOIN IN THE FUN!

Sunday Funday
CRAFTS, STORIES, SNACKS AND FUN!

Sunday mornings 10:15 - 11:30 am
Ages 2 ½ - 5

$50 per session or $150 yearly package (4 sessions)
Individual Sundays $10

First Session, September 7 thru October 12
Theme: High Holidays & the Five Senses

Session 2: November 2 – December 7
Session 3: January 11 – February 8
Session 4: March 1 – 29

for all programs and events register online:
www.themtc.com

Info: Shimi and Leah 514.739.0770 #228 or shimi@themtc.com
(rsvp at least 5 days before events is a must)
Excerpts from an address delivered in honour of the Rebbe’s Yarzeit a community event held in the Gelber Conference Centre last July.

Ambassador Yehuda Avner has been a distinguished member of the Israeli Government for more than four decades. He began his illustrious career in 1960 when he joined Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He subsequently served as an advisor and personal staff member for Prime Ministers Levi Eshkol, Golda Meir, Yitzchak Rabin, Menachem Begin and Shimon Peres. His Foreign Service appointments included Consul General in New York, First Secretary and Political Counselor in Washington DC, as well as Ambassador to England, non-resident Ambassador to Ireland and Ambassador to Australia. Between 1989 and 1992 he served as Inspector General of the Foreign Service and was responsible for all overseas missions. In 1995 Bar Ilan University recognized his outstanding service with the establishment of the Yehuda Avner Chair on Religion and Politics. Ambassador Avner is currently a member of the ambassadorial appointments committee.

Rabin was a straight-as-a-die agnostic, and shy to a fault. So, when on a spring day in 1972 he was kept waiting at 770 Eastern Parkway in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, for his appointment with the Lubavitcher Rebbe, he became fidgety.

He was distinctly uncomfortable among the multitude of bearded men bustling to and fro around him, all identically clad in dark suits and fedoras, and all seemingly indifferent to the peeling paint, cracked linoleum, and indefinable odor of the Tudor-style edifice that housed the headquarters of the world Lubavitch movement.

Yitzhak Rabin was then Israel’s ambassador to Washington, and his president, Zalman Shazar, had asked him to convey his greetings personally to the Lubavitcher Rebbe – Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson – on the occasion of the Rebbe’s 70th birthday. So there Rabin sat, a blue and gold velvet bar-mitzvah yarmulke perched precariously on his head, like an alien in a foreign land.

When he was finally ushered into the inner sanctum, the Rebbe’s face beamed. It was an angelic face, half curtained by a square gray beard, and topped by the trademark black fedora, with the effect of a bastion that protected the mind from iniquitous invasions.

But what lured Rabin most were the eyes. They were wide apart, sheltered under heavy brows and arched over by fine eyebrows. Their hue was the azure of the deep sea, intense and compelling, exuding wisdom, awareness, kindness, and good fellowship. Yet, as I was later to learn, when the Rebbe’s soul turned turbulent, they could dim into an ominous gray, like a leaden sky.

These were the eyes of one who could see mystery in the obvious, poetry in the mundane, and large issues in small things; eyes that enthralled believers until captivated in gladness, and joy, and sacrifice — all of which was wacky to the no-nonsense, secular diehard, Yitzhak Rabin.

He and the Rebbe spoke mainly of Washington affairs; but when the sage turned to things celestial, like Torah, eternity, and spiritual destiny, the ambassador’s eyes glazed over. Dogmas of this sort were too inscrutable for this Palmach-bred, austere old soldier to whom reality was a physical phenomenon, not a metaphorical marvel.

Nonetheless, he was impressed. Exiting, he confided to me, “That man knows more about what’s going on in Israel and the Middle East than most members of the Knesset.”

President Shazar was pleased to hear of the encounter. As a youngster, Shazar had been nurtured in Lubavitch lore; and now, in the twilight of his life, he was elated to rediscover its enchantment, like some forgotten bead from a broken thread.
On his rare visits to New York he would abjure diplomatic protocol, choosing to call on the Rebbe in Brooklyn as a disciple, rather than solicit the Rebbe to call on him at the Waldorf as a head of state. This aroused the ire of members of the Israeli government and press, prompting an exasperated Shazar to exclaim one Purim eve en route to 770, while lolling in a limousine escorted by siren-shrieking NYPD outriders, "What do they want of me back home? I may be the president of Israel, but I'm also a simple hasid going to meet his rebbe. Who can object to that?"

Some time later, on a balmy July day in 1977, Menachem Begin was similarly confronted. A bushy-haired reporter in a baggy suit asked him with Village Voice effrontery, "You are the newly elected prime minister of Israel, so why have you come to see Rabbi Schneerson? Surely, protocol requires he come to you."

This altercation took place on the steps of the Lubavitch headquarters, where the Rebbe was welcoming Mr. Begin amid a blaze of photo flashes. "Why, indeed?" the prime minister began with easy rapport. "A good question."

And then, with an air of deep reverence, "I have come here because I am en route to Washington to meet president Jimmy Carter for the first time. So it is most natural for me to want to seek the blessings of this great sage of the Jewish people. Rabbi Schneerson is one of the paramount Jewish personalities of our time. His status is unique among our people. So yes, certainly, his blessings will strengthen me as I embark on a mission of acute importance for our future."

"Would the rabbi care to comment on that?" asked the reporter.

He said, "Only to reiterate my fullest blessings. And to add, I accept the honor of the prime minister's visit to me not on my own account but in recognition of the Lubavitch movement's dedicated work in spreading the love of God and His Torah among our fellow Jews, wherever they be."

The two men had been friends for years, and they closeted themselves for a good hour, at the end of which Mr. Begin informed Rabbi Schneerson that I would return to New York from Washington to brief him on the White House talks.

Thus it was that five days later I found myself ensconced alone with the Rebbe in his wood-paneled chamber, its simple furnishings antique with time-worn distinction. Dog-eared Talmud tomes and other heavy, well-thumbed volumes lined his bookshelves, redolent of centuries of scholarship and disputations conducted by generations of swaying, chanting, thumb-stabbing, skull-capped learners, inhabiting an academic world in which students don't study and teachers don't teach. Everybody learns.

We spoke in Hebrew – the Rebbe's classic, mine modern. And as he dissected my Washington report, his air of authority deepened. It came of something beyond knowledge. It was in his state of being, something he possessed in his soul, something given to him under the chestnut and maple trees of Brooklyn rather than under the poplars and pines of Jerusalem – to which, mysteriously, he had neverjourneyed.

The presentation, interrogation, and clarification had taken close to three hours. It was now after two in the morning, and I was exhausted. The Rebbe, full of vim and vigor, asked me to communicate the following message to Mr. Begin: "By maintaining your firm stand on Eretz Yisroel in the White House, you have given strength to the whole of the Jewish people. You have succeeded in safeguarding the integrity of Eretz Yisroel while avoiding a confrontation with the United States. That is true Jewish statesmanship: forthright, bold, without pretense, or apology. Be strong and of good courage."

He dictated this in a voice that was soft but touched with fire.

And now relaxing, he made a tent of his slender fingers, fixed me with his eyes, and said with a
surprisingly sweet smile, "How come you visit us so often and appear to be so close to us, yet you never became a Lubavitcher? Why?"

I sat back stunned at the directness of the question. It was true. This probably was my third or fourth meeting with the Rebbe. Over the years I had become a sort of unofficial liaison between various Israeli prime ministers and the Lubavitch court.

Swallowing thickly, I muttered, "Maybe it is because I have met so many people who ascribe to the Rebbe powers which the Rebbe does not ascribe to himself."

Even as I spoke, I realized I had presumed too much. I could hear my voice trailing away.

The Rebbe’s brows knitted, and his deep blue eyes grayed into sadness. Softly, he said, "Yesh knireh anoshim hazekukim l’kobayim – There are evidently people who need crutches."

A long and pregnant pause followed. Perhaps his secret threads of perception and communication were tracking my thoughts, for what he said next answered my unspoken question.

Raising his palm in a gesture of reassurance, and with an encouraging smile, he said, "Let me tell you what I try to do. Imagine you’re looking at a candle. What you are really seeing is a mere lump of wax with a thread down its middle. So when do the thread and wax become a candle? Or, in other words, when do they fulfill the purpose for which they were created? When you put a flame to the thread, then the candle becomes a candle."

As he was speaking, a rhythmic cadence crept into his voice in the manner of a talmudist poring over his text, so that what he said next came out as a chant: "The wax is the body, and the wick the soul. Ignite the soul with the fire of Torah and a person will then fulfill the purpose for which he or she was created. And that is what I try to do – to ignite the soul of our people with the fire of Torah."

A buzzer had been sounding periodically, indicating that others were awaiting their audience. So I rose and took my leave, pausing at the door to ask, "My candle – has the Rebbe lit it?"

“No,” he said, clasping my hand. “I have given you the match. Only you can light your candle.”
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Boys and Girls grades 1 - 6

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- Oct 16 Sukkot Market Place followed by MTC Party
- Nov 13 Rock climbing
- Dec 11 Pre-Chanukah Olive factory
- Jan 8 Mezuzah workshop
- Feb 5 Mitzvah Scavenger
- Mar 5 Annual Stretch-Limo ride
- Apr 2 Matzah bakery
- May 7 Laser shooting
- June 4 Surprise event

😊 Sign up today!

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Info: Shimi and Leah 514.739.0770 #228
or shimi@themtc.com
(rsvp at least 5 days before events is a must)

$180 yearly package (10 programs)
or $20 per program

Monthly,
Thursday afternoons
4:30 – 6:30 pm
First Event, September 18
Over $400,000 was raised through the combination of the sale of all 3,770 tickets plus corporate and event sponsorships.

A heartfelt ‘Yasher Koach’ to the entire team of captains, canvassers, corporate and event sponsors, whose combined efforts and dedication made the MTC DRAW 2008 an outstanding success.

The Team:

Mark Strohl, CA of Perrault, Wolman, Grzywacz audited the draw and oversaw the legalities.

Ricky and David Merovitz and Avi Sochaczewski split the 2nd prize of $3600 and the grand prize of $18,000. Michael Touch won 3rd prize of $1800, Boris Levitas won 4th prize of $1000. There were three winners of $500: Jeffrey Birenbaum, Sol Zuckermand and Michael Hollinger.
Ours thanks & appreciation to Omega Photo.
It was Simchas Torah and the excitement of the congregation was felt by all. The jovial spirit was even more enhanced by the l’chaims and the dancing and singing as the Hakofot continued to circle. I, too, found myself on a spiritual high, my mood heightening with each completed turn.

But this night was different than other years, my feelings more intense. I had a new found connection which exploded with a tingling sensation in every part of my body. I couldn’t pinpoint the source, but the waves were real and unique. I knew was heading for what felt like a spiritual climax. With each greeting and embrace it became stronger and more powerful, almost controlling. I tried to keep my composure but the emotions were far too intoxicating.

A family friend, Marilyn, had successfully bid on the third Hakafa, and Eddie, our gabbai, signaled to me that she would like for me to take one of the Torahs. My eyes welled with tears and I had a difficult time hiding my emotions. I stepped up to the Bimah to take one of the two Torahs left and my throat choked up. As Eddie went to give me a Torah with a white mantle I found my voice and said quietly, “No, I want the burgundy one… my grandfather’s.”

Eddie handed me the Torah and I felt my hands and legs trembling, tears streaming down my face. I started walking with the Torah clutching it as close to my heart as possible, cradling it as if it were a newborn child. My thoughts wandered and I felt like I was in another place and time. I was reflecting on the history and the journey of the Torah I was embracing.

This Torah belonged to my great-great grandfather, who lived in a small shtetl near Debrecen Hungary some time in the late 1700’s or early 1800’s. Its actual origin and completion date is not known, but has been in our family for close to two hundred years.

As I walked I tried to piece together the history of this precious Torah as best I could from the bits and pieces of the stories I have heard over the years. I thought about how it has survived many years, seen many wars and revolutions all the while the guiding link for my forefathers and their faith. This Torah, the one that I was now holding in my arms, is truly ‘L’dor va dor’, linking one generation to the next.

The custodian of this Torah was traditionally the eldest male child. My great-grandfather, Yitzok (Ignatz) Finkelstein, obm, gave it to his only child, my grandfather, Mashulem (Erno) Finkelstein, obm. During the Holocaust the Torah was hidden from the Nazis. After the war my father, Menachum (Jeno) Finkelstein obm, returned from a labor camp to find that the Torah was with a cousin from his maternal side. My father repurchased the Torah for a pack of cigarettes and returned it to his father.

In 1972 my grandfather passed away and my uncle, my father’s eldest brother, Eleazer (Lacsi) Finkelstein obm, travelled to Debrecen and risked his freedom smuggling the Torah to Canada, as at that time it was a crime to take any religious artifacts out of Hungary. My uncle placed the Sefer Torah with a small synagogue in the Ekers area. When that shul closed, the Torah was transferred to another small shul located in Hebrew Academy.

My uncle passed away a few years ago and my cousin Sandor became the custodian of the Torah. Shortly after that, he found out that the shul where the Torah was housed was closing and he needed to find a new home. Sandor discussed the various choices with me and felt that my shul, the...
Montreal Torah Center, would be the ideal home for this Torah.

Now, here I was walking with the Torah and the family ties it carries, celebrating Simchas Torah. I truly felt the hand of Hashem on my shoulder.

For the rest of the evening, right through Rabbi New’s farbrengen, I had an inner glow.

The next morning after Shacharis we had a Simchas Torah Kiddush and from out of nowhere an elderly gentleman introduced himself to Shaya Treitel. He said his name was Mr. Soer and that he was born in Debrecen. My ears perked up and I introduced myself. After a few minutes he told me that he left Hungary in 1938 and went to Israel, recalling part of his journey. I then asked him what shul he belonged to in Debrecen and was amazed to learn it was the same small shul near the Aran Bikar Hotel that held my family’s Torah.

I proceeded to tell him the story of the Torah. As I spoke I could see his mind slowly going back in time, his eyes welling with tears. Mr. Soer asked if it would be alright if he could carry this Torah at the next Hakafa. Minutes later, as he was clutching the Torah and we were walking arm in arm, we both felt the ‘light’ within our souls explode.

The rest of Simchas Torah, Mr. Soer and I spent together enjoying our new found friendship and unusual bond.

That Simchas Torah is one that will forever stand out in my heart and mind, and I dare say for Mr. Soer as well. Having had this great experience is clearly a blessing and I feel honored to have been able to share these moments with my MTC family.

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MTC wishes a hearty Mazeltov to

Leonardo and Tally Bursztyn on the birth of their daughter Michaela Eliza
Ronnie and Debbie Cons on the birth of their son Isaac Akiva
Ron and Norma Elkin on the birth of a grandson Aiden Elijah
David and Sandy Fine on the birth of their son Nathaniel
Hillel and Kim Gamal on their birth of their twin boys, Ezra Shalom and Menashe
Ilan and Kelly Gurevitch on the birth of their son Jake Noah
Michael and Elza Hirsch on the birth of their daughter Rochel Malka
Frances and Gerald Kessner on the birth of their grandson Aidan Walter
Ryan and Elanna Lewis on the birth of their daughter Lauren Nicole
Lipa and Aleksandra Lieberman on the birth of their daughter Sara Mayna
David and Karen Merovitz on the birth of their son William Alexander
Velvel and Baila Minkowitz on the birth of their son Yehuda Aryeh Leib
Avi and Jessica Oppenheimer on the birth of their son Pesach Aryeh
Michoel and Chana Refson on the birth of their daughter Bluma
Chanoch and Shaina Rosenfeld on the birth of their daughter Goldie
Levy and Kreina Staal on the birth of their son Moshe

Aron and Terry Steinman of their granddaughter, Eve
Avi and Estie Tansky on the birth of their son Shmuel Leib
Rabbi and Nechama New on the birth of their grandson, Binyomin Leib to Mendel & Chana Kaplan
Stewart and Chana Diament on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Zemach
Corey and Karen Eisenberg on the Bas Mitzvot of their daughters Kayla and Riley
The Flinker & Burdman families on the Bar Mitzvah of their daughters Jessy Burdman & Julie Flinker
The Puterman and Chochran families on Yehuda’s Bar Mitzvah
Fred Zweig on the Bar Mitzvah of his son Jake
The Akady, Eldor & Nahari families on the engagement of Tania Eldor & Mark Karachinsky
The Sztern, Brownstein and Medali families on the marriage of Lorne and Faygie
The Tansky family on the marriage of Benjamin and Lindsay
The Vineberg family on the engagement of Lianne to Matthew Finkelstein
Fraida Malka Yarmush on her marriage to Kushi Shusterman
The Adler, Irgang and London families on the passing of Mrs. Loti Hosat

The Akady, Eldor, Nahari and families on the passing of Mr. David Akady

The Albert family on the passing of Mrs. Anne Albert

The Avayou Family on the passing of Mr. David Avayou

The Brownstein Family on the passing of Mrs. Fanny Brownstein

Ilana Fine on the passing of her mother Mrs. Lola Horn

The Fine family on the passing of Mrs. Mildred (Minzie) Fine

The Finkelstein family on the passing of Mr. Jeno Finkelstein

The Gurevitch family on the passing of Mr. Norman Gurevitch

The Herscovitch family on the passing of Mr. Jack Dubrow

The Langleben family on the passing of Mr. Carl Langleben

The Lapkovsky family on the passing of Mrs. Evelyn Lapkovsky

The Mendel family on the passing of Mrs. Toby Mendel

The Messer, Morganstein & Kimmel families on the passing of Mrs. Genia Messer

The Seal and Tevel families on the passing of Mrs. Kay Schultz

The Shvil family on the passing of Mrs. Fay (Feigy) Shvil

The Suss and Lewis families on the passing of Mrs. Lily Lewis

The Tucker family on the passing of Mr. Barney Tucker

The Raskin family on the passing of Mrs. Chana (Raskin) Wolvovsky

May they be spared further sorrow and know only of simchas.

MTC cemetery plots

“Securing a cemetery plot is a ‘segulah’ – good amon – for long life...”

MTC has recently purchased a section of the Kehal Israel Cemetery in Dollard des Ormeaux. Plots are available through our office.
In writing this article I learned that I still have a lot to learn. I discovered that one may hear concepts and teachings many, many times, but it can take years until the ideas become internalized. Writing this piece gave me a much clearer picture, a new depth and understanding of my role as a Jewish woman. It was a humbling and inspiring experience.

Prayer. The word itself encompasses a myriad of definitions: entreaty, appeal, request, desire, hope. Even if one never learned how to formally pray, everyone, at one time or another has prayed to G-d. There are, as the saying goes, no atheists in a foxhole.

Women and Prayer

Significantly, both men and women learned how to pray from our matriarch Chana. The story in short, which is read during the haftorah on Rosh Hashana, is that Chana was one of the two wives of Elkanah, and she was childless. Silently she suffered many humiliations at the hands of the more fortunate Peninah, his other wife (at that time men had more than one wife) who did have children. On one of the annual pilgrimages to Shiloh (one of the places where the Tabernacle was temporarily erected before its permanent home in Jerusalem), Chana stood in the Sanctuary and poured out her heart before G-d. She prayed that G-d bless her with a son and vowed that she would consecrate his whole life to G-d. Silently she prayed, swaying slightly. Eli, the High Priest saw her and thought she was drunk. He rebuked her for entering the Sanctuary in a state of drunkenness. But Chana answered with dignity, "No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before G-d."

Eli realized the deep piety and grief which had moved this woman, and he said to her, "Go in peace, and may the G-d of Israel grant you the petition that you have asked of Him." Chana thanked him graciously and went away with happiness in her heart, feeling certain that her prayer was accepted.

In due time a son was born to her, whom she named Samuel-Shmuel, meaning, as she said, "I have asked him (borrowed him) of G-d." 1

Chana prayed spontaneously, from her heart. There was no book, no one around her. She simply spoke to G-d.

For women, prayer is a much more spontaneous and soul-full expression that comes from within. The story of Chana reflects this exactly. She wanted a child and from the depths of her soul she spoke to G-d. The Sages of the Talmud taught us what to say, Chana taught how. She gave prayer its wings.

In Torah law, haftorah, women are not obligated to pray in the manner and at certain times of the day as men are. Nonetheless the law stipulates that women pray, however briefly, at least twice a day.

In his deep and insightful treatise entitled 'Who Has Not Made Me a Woman', 2 Rabbi New gently weaves a thread between the practical and the ethereal male and female dynamic of prayer. It is replete with deep, rich, kabalistic teachings. Quoting an excerpt here may leave you, the reader, wanting, but it gets to the heart of the issue being addressed in this article: 3...Her relationship with G-d is outside of, higher than, the system of Divinity which the siddur reflects. This is the
reason that a woman is not obligated to pray three times a day as she is a man. And thus, we find over the centuries, women, far more than men, spontaneously authored personal prayers. These prayers bespeak of a relationship with G-d that transcends the finite and orderly.

The Discovery

The greatest discovery that I made in researching this article is the following: No, women are not part of the organized, structured, shul-going male part of Judaism. What G-d did give us I realized, is a far greater role. In absolving us of time-bound mitzvahs such as tefillin or reciting the Shema at a very specific time of day, He endowed us with that which men are constantly striving for. G-d instilled in us the ability to pray spontaneously, to connect with Him at any time, anywhere, without the need of formal prayer. In a way, this incredible bequest given to women bears a much greater responsibility than any given to men. Because we already possess that which the male strives for, we must, somehow, find a way to actualize this incredible gift. G-d implanted in us a grace, a refinement and the ability to find and reveal within ourselves and within creation that which men have to plod daily to uncover.

I slowly gleaned, in my own formative years of becoming a Baal Teshuva,3 that my home should become that which G-d desires, a dwelling place, a home for the Divine here in this world. The woman being the mainstay of the home is the primary educator of her children in their most formative years. As we get older our role does not diminish, rather it intensifies, with grown children and then, G-d willing, grandchildren. Our families watch and emulate our every move, including how we connect to the Divine, how we achieve the purpose for which G-d put us all here.

While men require the structured format of the siddur to pray, women can communicate with G-d in their own, personal way. I did that. I spoke to G-d when I lit my Shabbos candles, when I made my challah. True, women don’t need the siddur as men do. Nonetheless, we can choose to engage the siddur and its pre-authored prayers at our discretion. I chose to add some of the more formal prayers to my day-to-day life. What spoke to me and still does, what resonated with my soul along with my own personal requests, was praying from a siddur. Not three times a day, but in the morning, before retiring at night and selected passages that I learned many women have the custom of saying. I loved the holy words. It felt good, it felt right to hold the siddur. It was, after so many years of not knowing, a privilege.

Learning to Pray

I took it upon myself to daven, or at least tried to, for quite a few years. I started out consistent and was consistently inconsistent. I davened and then I didn’t and then I started again. Much as I got pleasure from the holy words, I was just not disciplined enough, could not muster the inner fortitude to take myself in hand and get on with the task I had set for myself.

I also had to learn the fundamentals of prayer. Learn its intricacies, its nuances, when to stand, when to bow, when to sit. I slowly figured things out. First I bought my own siddur. Then, one warm summer day, I called the most wonderful, patient and kind woman and teacher and introduced myself. I asked her if she would teach me the rudiments of prayer. She came to my house and we sat together, often outside on my back porch and slowly, thoroughly, went through the daily davening and then the Shabbos and Yom Tov davening. I wrote notes in my siddur and underlined the important parts. I still daven from that same siddur which has been rebound twice.

I watched other women in shul. How they held their book, how they swayed gently from side to side, how they quietly, with dignity, mouthed the words. In the end though, the nitty gritty, open-the-book when I’m alone and say the words, well, that didn’t come so fast.

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3. A Jew from a secular background who has become Jewishly observant later in life.
Then one day I said to myself that's it. The struggle is over. What prompted this commitment was the stark realization of the incredible the blessings Hashem has bestowed upon our family. How, I asked myself, can I not pray?

High Holiday Reflections from 1997

It never really occurred to me to actually put into words some of the moments of the High Holidays. Perhaps because I did not realize until this year how precious each moment is. It takes a long time to internalize things and then articulate them.

One thing I had learned was that, notwithstanding my guilt and lurking fear, if you didn't fast, you didn't get struck by lightening.

The first observation is that even though I have no desire to wear a tallis, men have one great advantage over women because they do wear one. Private space. Men can pull that tallis right over their face and no one knows what is going on underneath. You can be all alone in your own space no matter how many other people are in the room with you. Women on the other hand are totally exposed, from their physical being to their rawest emotions. Everything is open for everyone to see. Thinking about it, this is perhaps a selfish desire, for what is more beautiful than davening in a synagogue, packed with other Jewish people. The energy level is immeasurable. But still, I need my space. I eventually found it within.

Yom Kippur Observation: Yom Kippur builds as the day goes on. This is probably not a new phenomenon for most people, but I still remember very distinctly thinking that Yom Kippur was some kind of bizarre punishment from G-d. Often, I found excuses for not fasting, the least of which was that I had small children and needed to take care of them. The lamest, now that I think about it, was that I had to taste the food I was preparing for those who were fasting. One thing I had learned was that, notwithstanding my guilt and lurking fear, if you didn't fast, you didn't get struck by lightening.

To top it off, the day was very, very boring and anti-climatic at the end of the fast. The experience was so bad that the thought of it in comparison to what I now have literally leaves me cold with fright. And so, when I say now, for me, the day builds, I know of what I speak.

Sometimes my mind wanders while I am davening. I look at people and wonder what is going on in their heads, from the ones who daven all day to the ones who never open a book. On Yom Kippur our souls get nourished for the whole year to come and so, even if one doesn't say anything, our souls are being fed.

In the last moments of Yom Kippur though, everyone had their book open. What were they thinking? Of their personal ‘peckel’ (baggage) or of the collective one? Of their children, their spouses, a sick mother or father, or G-d forbid a child? To tell you the truth at that moment I was doing two things. Thanking G-d for last year and asking again for this year. No one should ever have to suffer one more second in this world.

My aunt always tells me that my bubby would be so proud of me. Truthfully, I would love to share this part of my life with her. But I know that wherever she is, she’s well aware of what is transpiring in my life.

What is prayer?

Prayer is mystical. It is spiritual. It is mysterious. It is one of the ways we connect to an unknowable, Divine G-d. It is our daily reminder that He runs the world, not the other way around. It is humbling. I wrote once about Bluma, a woman in Atlanta who stood alone in a huge ballroom davening mincha, the afternoon prayer. I will never forget that sight. It was one of the most moving and spiritual moments I have ever witnessed.
Of all the prayers that I say during the day, the evening Shema somehow resonates more deeply than all the rest. Perhaps because this prayer is recited at night, when it’s quiet, when our little corner of the world is slowly going to sleep. It is said alone, hopefully with serious introspection.

"...The sins that I have committed erase in Your abounding mercies, but not through suffering or severe illnesses." In one sentence we are admitting that we sinned, asking G-d to forgive us not through punishment but in His mercy, through kindness.

Because we say the same words over and over one would think a dullness or boredom would set it. The truth is the contrary, for once I made the commitment to daven my entire day changed. Not that I didn’t think about G-d during the day before, but now my body and soul were somehow more in sync.

At night, after saying the bedtime shema, the very last thing one says is the Hamapil blessing, requesting a peaceful night, entrusting our soul to G-d’s faithful hands and praising Him for that which one witnessed that day, and finally that His glory illuminates the entire world.

In the morning, upon awakening I learned that a Jew doesn’t just jump out of bed. One sits up in bed, head slightly bowed, hands clasped together and says the following prayer: Modeh Ani Lefonecha Melech Chai Vikayom, Shehechezarta Bi Nishmasi Bechemlah. Rabah Emunashcho. I offer thanks to You, living and eternal King, for You have mercifully restored my soul within me; Your faithfulness is great.

So one goes to bed with G-d in their thoughts and upon awakening the first thought again is G-d. One thing that these exercises do is keep one in check as to who exactly is running this world. It’s easy to believe that we are in control, independent beings. Our job is to find G-d in our lives. To find G-d in the everyday, small things we do and say. For me, beginning to pray daily was the catalyst to discover yet another level of myself, my soul, my world. I still have to do my best, try my hardest, run the fastest race, be the nicest person I can be, but in the end, acquiesce my control to G-d.

Women and Kaddish

Perhaps it is foolhardy to broach this next subject, but when dealing with prayer it is the veritable elephant in the room. If women are not obligated by time-bound mitzvahs of which kaddish, as a part of prayer, is one, how can she honor a loved one if she is deprived of the opportunity of saying the kaddish?

(It should be noted here that if a woman wants to say kaddish in a synagogue, she may. Here at the MTC women can often be seen saying kaddish during daily services. But that does not the answer the question.)

I was personally confronted with this issue on the passing of my own father three years ago. What, I asked myself, was my role during the shiva, then the shloshim (the thirty days of mourning from burial) and finally during the year of kaddish? Surely the onus of elevating the soul during that first year did not fall solely on my brother? After all, we were both his children. Where, as a daughter, did I fit?

The first thing I did, very late on the night before the funeral, was read the kaddish and then translation.

Yis-gadal v’yis-kadash sh’mayh robo... Exalt and hallowed be His great Name throughout the world which He has created according to His will. May He establish His kingship, bring forth His redemption and hasten the coming of His Mashiach in your lifetime and your days and in the lifetime of the entire House of Israel, speedily and soon and say Amen. May His great name be blessed forever and to all eternity. Blessed and praised, glorified, exalted and exalted, honored, adored and lauded be the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He, beyond all blessings, hymns, praises...
and consolations that are uttered in the world and say, Amen. Upon Israel, and upon our sages and upon their disciples, and upon all the disciples of their disciples and upon all those who occupy themselves with the Torah, here or in any other place upon them and upon you, may there be abundant peace, grace, kindness, compassion, long life, ample substance and deliverance, from their Father in heaven and say, Amen. May there be abundant peace from heaven and a good life for us and for all Israel and say Amen. He who makes peace in His heavens, may He make peace for us and for all Israel and say, Amen.

I was stunned to read the translation. Instead of being mournful, it was beautiful, the words inspiring and uplifting, speaking of a time of eternal peace, a time when the world will acknowledge G-d’s Sovereignty. The Messianic era.

I delved further.

I read that Kaddish was an honor given to the mourner going back to Talmudic times. Why? Because our whole purpose of life is to contribute to making this world a home for G-d. The mourner is given the honor of leading the congregation, of affirming this objective of life. The reason for this I ascertained, is because it is a merit to the soul to have the congregation embrace and affirm their commitment to this ultimate ideal.

But what really brings about this objective more than anything else? What really makes this world a home for G-d, what elevates the world? The mitzvahs we do. The recitation of kaddish is intended to inspire the congregation, it is intended as a moment to embrace and commit ourselves to this goal. But if this moment of inspiration ends at the last word of kaddish, well, the whole kaddish is lost.

Public proclamations are admirable, but are secondary to mitzvahs.

Men must say the kaddish because they need the constant reminder of that which the kaddish speaks. Women were given with the ultimate task of ‘homemaker’, of making this world a dwelling place, a welcoming home for G-d and by extension a home for all humanity. The kaddish is speaking of transforming the world through bringing G-dliness into the everyday. This is precisely the unique, Divine talent of women. If a man only says kaddish but does not undertake a mitzvah, doesn’t, for example, recite the Shema, or put on tefillin, he is like the steam engine pumping up, revving up, but not connecting to the rest of the train.

And so it did not detract from honoring my father that I did not recite the kaddish. I attended more classes, I took on more mitzvahs and I left the kaddish to my brother.

A Final Prayer

I wrote this piece right after Yom Kippur in 1998:

It should be ‘why is this fast different from all other fasts?’ The entire day of Erev Yom Kippur was spent getting ready for Yom Kippur. The day builds up to a crescendo of emotions. From fear – please G-d, seal me your book, to, and this was a first for me, the understanding that one should at least have a hint to be embarrassed before G-d; That I let Him down after He entrusted me with so much.

That’s why this day is different. You have to face yourself in front of G-d. No hiding behind anything or anyone. But we are human and that is why G-d gave us Yom Kippur.
iVolunteer is a visitation program created in 2007 in New York. Due to its extraordinary success and popularity, iVolunteer is establishing branches in other locations. We are proud to announce that MTC has taken on this incredible program, with Shimi and Leah Uhlman as the directors.

Additionally, this unique program brings caring volunteers into the homes of seniors, particularly Holocaust survivors, many of them shut-ins and virtually alone in the world. The program is dedicated to awakening in youth a love and passion for giving back to their community. Connecting a young adult to communal life, particularly within the framework of one’s cultural heritage and background has proven to relate to and enrich the lives of the next generation of Jews. It is crucial to our continuity that the next generation remember the Holocaust. Speaking face to face with survivors is central to this objective. There are few outlets for Jewish teens and youth to get involved with and have the opportunity to meet each other. iVolunteer has created a way for young people to channel their spare time in a positive way.

At the outset, the volunteers will be recruited from eleventh grade high school students around the city, eventually involving young adults and families.

If you would like to get involved or know of a Holocaust survivor that would benefit from this program, please contact Shimi Uhlman at 514.739.0770 #228.

iVolunteer is dedicated to the cherished memory of R’ Dovid ben R’ Asher Lemel HaCohen and Freidel bas R’ Yitzchok, aleihem hashalom.

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MTC Pre-School open for registration 2009-2010

Ages 2 - 4 years old

Please call Nechama New, School Director, to register or for an appointment - 514.739.0770 #258
Integral to the pioneering post-war efforts of Chabad Lubavitch in stimulating the renaissance of Jewish life world-wide, is the phenomenon referred to as 'Merkos Shlichus'.

Each summer, since the late 40's, Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch, the educational arm of the Chabad–Lubavitch movement, dispatches rabbinical students to small Jewish communities around the globe. Today, hundreds of Rabbinical students and young rabbis spend their summers on the road, sharing their passion for Jewish life and bringing Jewish awareness and observance wherever they go.

These dedicated students vie for the honor of assisting the most faraway and isolated communities. These summer assignments also afford them with an invaluable on-the-ground experience and a unique appreciation for the diverse needs and colorful makeup of our people.

What follows are a selection of four dispatches received by the 'Merkos' headquarters.

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Posted from Bahia, Brazil
by MOSHE LOEBENSTEIN

In 1934 Yissachar Heller of Frankfurt, Germany met his friends at the neighborhood park for an afternoon of leisure. He was refused entry. His friends wandered off, embarrassed and unsure. The local policeman gave no explanation, just repeated himself over and over again. It was only after much pressure that he finally said it was because Yissachar was a Jew.

The young Mr. Heller immediately went to the shipping office to book passage. He did not care which language they spoke or the clothes they wore – he wanted a destination as far away from Germany as possible. The ship left the next day to Rio De Janeiro.

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We knew that Gilberto Heller, an elderly wheelchair-bound Jew lived in the poussada (a Brazilian blend of a Motel Six and a B&B) near the beach, which he owned and managed. Bahia has hundreds of beaches and thousands of poussadas. We did not have much hope of meeting this man. His very name was mysterious; soft ‘g’s and muffled ‘l’s, rolling ‘r’s and long ‘o’s. We had heard of him from a young Jewish woman we had met, whose name we got from the local nightclub baron.

The concierge (read the local yokel who knows no more than the name of his hotel and whereabouts of the nearest pub) of our hotel actually had heard of such an individual living in Praiah Do Mundai, a beach four kilometers or so north of the town center. There is just one northbound bus that stops at all the beaches – we had merely to look out for the beach sign that is invariably half-fallen, mud-splattered and hidden by overgrown palm trees. We alighted at the said beach and started looking for Gilberto. The first poussada knew no English, the second poussada knew no Gilberto, and the third poussada directed us down an unpaved road toward another cluster of motels. Once, twice and thrice we were met with blank stares and apologetic shrugs. It was fourth time lucky when we walked up a long wooden ramp and were greeted by Gilberto himself.

He was of broken body but strong of spirit. His eyes sparkled with youth, despite his white hair and aged face. He laughed loud and often and maneuvered himself like any able bodied man. His wasted legs were no obstacle to him living life to its fullest. He apologized for his almost flawless English and we apologized for our mostly flawed Portuguese.

The conversation raced from our family histories (his – German and Portuguese, mine – German, Australian, Polish and Russian. Our grandfathers never met.) to our favorite music (his – The Beatles, mine – nothing) to our thoughts on German restitution (his – take what you can, mine – forgiveness can’t be bought) to the importance of Tefillin (we both agreed). He drank thirstily of the words of Torah that we offered him and could not have been happier when he affixed a Mezuzah to his door.

The Hellers had traveled long and far; from the old world to the new; from streets that echoed the
footsteps of the Chasam Sofer and Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch to dirt roads that softly echo the slap of thongs; from a center of Yiddishkeit to a stop on the Merkos itinerary, and still the Jewish pride did not die.

Posted from Snowflake, Arizona
By RAPHI STEINER

It had been pouring rain all day.

It was already 7:30pm. We were just leaving a home after a two hour long visit. They live about 2 miles off the highway, down a dirt road; far far off the beaten track. They had warned us to drive slowly since the rain had probably reduced the road to mud during the course of our visit.

We had planned to spend the night 20 miles away in Show Low, so that we would be able to start our day bright and early. We had already called Priceline to reserve a hotel there.

It was lightening and pouring rain. Even though I was going slower than 5 miles an hour, the car was slipping and turning in all directions. I was sweating buckets in spite of the air-conditioning. To make matters worse, there was a truck behind me glaring his high beams, and I had no cell phone service. We were both muttering prayers under our breath. I don’t know if I should be publicizing this (relax mom) but the rain got even more fierce and the car slipped, turning a full 180!

After a half hour, we made it to the highway. We calmed a bit, thanked G’d and decided that we would spend the night here, even though we end up driving during precious daytime hours.

We pulled up to the closest motel and I dashed inside to check in. Before I could open my mouth the lady sitting at the desk says “A JEW, WE NEVER SEE JEWS AROUND HERE!” Taken aback, I asked her if there was a problem. She said “no, there’s no problem ‘cause I’m Jewish too.” She told me that hers was the only Jewish family in town (or so she thought). We made up to meet her parents and siblings in the morning.

They were so excited to see us! Her father put on tefillin for the first time in many years. Clearly someone up there had a plan for us.

Posted from Agia Napa, Cyprus
by ISSER NEW

Where we are...

It has almost been a week since we arrived in Aiga Napa, Cyprus. Located near the border of Turkish controlled Cyprus, Aiga Napa is a resort town famous for its pristine beaches. In recent years, apart from being a family holiday destination, it has become a ‘party capital.’ As of late, it has become especially popular with Israeli youth, who come here before beginning their army service.

What we do...

The past few years, Rabbi and Mrs. Zevi Raskin, of Chabad of Larnaca, have been operating a summer Chabad house here. The Chabad house serves as a home away from home, with free internet to contact home and cheap kosher food, as well as a chance to lay Tefillin, study Torah, or just hang with us – the Chabad rabbinical students.

What has been happening...

During the day, we go to hotels and youth hostels where the Israeli kids stay. We offer the guys a chance to lay Tefillin and give the gals candles for Shabbat. Usually, after meeting us, some of them come over to the Chabad house to hang out with us. We have made tons of new friends and exchanged contact info with dozens of Israeli teens. These past few weeks have seen over a thousand kids pass through our doors!
Hi, my name is Sholom Kass and part of our job in Northern Colorado is to cover for the rabbi who is out of town.

Monday morning, a guy named Scott calls and asks for the rabbi. I explain that the rabbi is out of town and ask if we can help.

He tells me that he has some issues he needed to discuss. He can’t come today (Monday) and wanted to see us tomorrow (Tuesday). We were a little hesitant because we were scheduled to go to a city nearby called Loveland and didn’t plan on being home. We told him that he can call us in the morning and we would make up a time to meet nonetheless.

The next morning, he called us and told us he wouldn’t be able to make it. In response to our suggestion that we go meet him, he told us he actually lives in Loveland.

Wow pretty cool!

We scheduled an appointment with him for four in the afternoon. When we arrived, we were surprised to be greeted by a person sporting a beard who we thought was either homeless or a hidden Chassid.

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We scheduled an appointment with him for four in the afternoon. When we arrived, we were surprised to be greeted by a person sporting a beard who we thought was either homeless or a hidden Chassid. After chatting for a few minutes we found out he was not Jewish but did want money. We explained to him nicely that we would not be able to be of great help.

Bummer.

We were a little disappointed to say the least.

As we were leaving, a middle aged guy walks past us and mutters under his breath something to the affect of “you guys are here too!” We asked him if he was Jewish. “With a name like David Klein what do you think!?” (That is not his real name but you get the point.) Turns out he is a nice Jewish boy from Brooklyn.

We went over to his apartment and talked for a while.

His only previous experience in a synagogue was being told by a rabbi in Maryland that he was not eligible to participate in services since he was not a member of his temple.

Well he was pretty turned off from what he thought Judaism was, joined a Lutheran church and has been going ever since.

To make a long story short, David put on tefillin for his first time in his life at 48 years old! Now, that’s what I call Divine Providence!"
Have You Seen My Chicken?
by RABBI SIMON JACOBSON

I lost my chicken the day before Yom Kippur. You may be wondering why that is a problem. But you see, this was not an ordinary chicken. On Erev (the day preceding) Yom Kippur we observe the custom of kaparot, by circling a chicken over our heads to atone for our sins (the connection between a helpless chicken and sins is another discussion). Yes, I am sorry to admit that I do have my share of sins. So off I went in search of my chicken in S. Monica.

What was I doing in S. Monica? I flew there from New York to lead a Yom Kippur service - a fascinating experience of its own.

My dear friend Peter, with whom I collaborate for the Yom Kippur service, has a chicken waiting for me. He calls me on my cell. He is waiting in an SUV filled with chicken stench. “You better get down here immediately, or else...” I hurry down. Off we go with cackling chickens in the back, some already used by Peter’s family. One chicken is particularly loud. “That must be your chicken acting up,” I tell Peter.

We finally reach the slaughterhouse, and go to retrieve my chicken from the back of his car, and... off the chicken runs, clearly aware of its impending fate. I never saw a chicken run so fast; my sins must have frightened him to death.

Finally we corner that naughty rascal. I have an allergic resistance to touching this chicken. I finally grab him under the wings, walk over to the door of the slaughterhouse, and am surprised to hear the sound within. Mexican music is blaring out the door. But as I peek inside, the smell and ambiance of the makeshift chicken factory are unmistakably Erev Yom Kippur’dik.

And so, I did kaparot to the tune of La Bamba... Yes, it was quite a scene.

This is how my Erev Yom Kippur unfolded on a cool morning on the West Coast.

You may ask, what is the metaphor and lesson in all of this? And what is this thing with a chicken anyway? Why do innocent chickens have to die for our sins?

Perhaps it is just to teach us a humble lesson. Instead of escaping on Yom Kippur into meditating on lofty concepts, the chicken forces you out of your head and into reality. Yes, this is not just some academic exercise; it is about life and death. It is about holding in your hands a chicken throbbing with life and knowing that your actions will affect the destiny of this creature.

In my case, this particular year, I needed to pursue this white rooster, no small feat, and look into its blinking eyes and acknowledge that I have some things to account for, which this chicken will not allow me to forget.

I don’t relate to the word “sin.” The guilt thing just never got to me. What is a sin after all? The word in Hebrew for “sin” is “aveira,” which means “dislocate” (“ha’avara m’reshut l’reshut - movement from on entity to another”). A sin is a mode of behavior or an action that dislocates us from our essence.

Yom Kippur is a day when each of us has the unique opportunity to return to our true being. To reconnect even after we have wandered off. To reintegrate who we really are and our preoccupations.

Yom Kippur is the birth of hope. On this day Moses returned to us after eighty arduous days of prayer, beseeching G-d to forgive the Jewish people for their iniquities.

There is no greater celebration than the ones that comes from returning and reconnecting to one’s essence.

And there I was in plastic L.A. chasing after a chicken in preparation for the holiest day of the year.
prayers, beginning with Moses at Sinai, all integrated with our struggles today created a most powerful experience. Traveling the journey of Yom Kippur’s five step prayer service, climbing the ladder from prayer to prayer, through the five levels of the soul, nefesh, ruach, neshama, chaya, yechida (the five levels of life: functional, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, the essence), was exhilarating and transforming.

Indeed, Yom Kippur is a day that allows you to leave behind for 26 hours a world of monotony and often pain into a purer world of spirit. A world that is driven not by pettiness and competition, with all the distractions and tiresome efforts of trying to make ourselves feel important. A world where you are just there and feel you belong unconditionally, with no airs and pretenses.

If you let yourself go - and that chicken in S. Monica sure loosened me up - Yom Kippur becomes the most powerful cleanser.

And that is the greatest cause of celebration, when we celebrate the awe of Yom Kippur.

Whoever said that Yom Kippur can’t be fun?

The following vignette is excerpted from the book, A Mother in Israel – the Life and Memoirs of Rebbetzin Chana Schneerson. Rebbetzin Chana was the wife of the scholar and Kabbalist, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson, and mother of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. The story took place during Rav Levi Yitzchak’s years of exile by the Soviet government in Chi’il, Kazakhstan.

On Yom Kippur, the three of us – my husband, a Roumanian Jew, and I-enclosed ourselves in our room. It is hard to set down on paper the emotions and the spiritual states that we experienced on that day.

Suddenly, we became aware of eyes peering at us through the window. Our guest and I were frightened to open the door.

Here, in exile, this young fellow worked as a wagon-driver. He related to us that while driving his wagon, he had caught a glimpse of the Rav and was struck by his appearance. Since this had occurred during the week before Yom Kippur, he had decided to find out who this person was and where he lived, so that he could try to be in his presence on the holiday. The lad felt that if he could be privileged to be with the Rav on this holiest of days, it would ease the weight of his sorrows and be a balm for his soul. Somehow, our young visitor had managed to locate us.

Half an hour later we heard a knock on the door. We opened it to find a frightened woman who, like the young wagon-driver, yearned to be in the Rav’s presence on this day. It seemed that she and her husband had been exiled here from Nikolaiev, and while her husband refused to pray anymore, she herself felt a greater need to pray now than she had ever felt in the past. Not allowing the grueling fast to deter her, she trudged a distance of four kilometers in order to reach our house.

The influx of refugees to our area brought about a severe housing shortage, and the Government responded by issuing a decree restricting each person to a specific number of square meters of living-space. According to the new law, our one room was now large enough to house five people.
The head of the Department of Housing in our area was a gentile engineer, also an exile. He had authored several books on mathematics and occasionally engaged the Rav in scholarly discussions on that subject. Because of his great respect for my husband, this man overlooked the "vacant" space in our room and did not send anyone to share our quarters.

This was a great favor to us.

One day, the daughter of our landlady arrived in the village together with her two children and immediately began dispatching a flurry of petitions to the Chief of Housing. Making great play of the scandalous fact that an exiled Jew had such a large apartment while she, a true proletarian and a loyal Communist, had no place to live at all, she insistently demanded authorization to move into Schneerson’s room, especially since it was situated so close to her mother’s place.

Having no choice, the Chief issued a permit which gave its bearer the right to move into our room. However, he did not give this permit to the landlady’s daughter but to someone else, instead. A teacher with a small child had also applied for a dwelling, and since she was a refined person, he assumed that we would get along much better with her than we would with the landlady’s daughter.

The next day, the teacher and her son arrived at our house. Waving the permit at the landlady, she crowed triumphantly, "Schneerson doesn’t want a gentile in his house? - I’ll show him!"

The day on which this happened was only a couple of weeks before Yom Kippur. With tears in his eyes, the Rav said to me, "How will I be able to pray here on the Holy Day?" Immediately he began to search his mind for a solution. And we faced yet another problem - keeping kosher - since the kitchen would have to be shared with a gentile.

We were amazed when, without explanation, the teacher left the permit with us and walked out. One week passed, and then another; she never came back! And when the landlady’s daughter came along, voicing her demands, we showed her the permit - proof that the room was already occupied to capacity.

After Yom Kippur, the teacher approached my husband on the street. "Rabbi," she inquired in Yiddish, "how was your fast? I also fasted!"

It turned out that this woman was a Jewish refugee from Poland who, in order to save her life, had forged a passport indicating that she was gentile. Subsequently, she had wandered from place to place until arriving in Chi’ili.

"As soon as I saw you," she explained, "I decided not to inconvenience you in any way. Live on in your room, alone and in peace; if anybody complains, you can show them my permit."

Similar causes for small celebrations would arise from time to time. They invariably came about as a result of the high esteem in which everyone held my husband - even those who saw him for the first time.☆
“Dear Morah Nechama,
Thank you for providing an extremely loving, safe and stimulating environment for us! We are grateful to have MTC in our life and are looking forward to camp!”
Love Yehuda and Daniel

“Dear Nechama,
Thank you for greeting us every morning with such a warm welcome! Ella had a wonderful year and we are G-d willing looking forward to next year.”
-Laurence

“Dear Nechama,
Thank you for ‘everything’! You have created an amazing home (school) for all our children. Sophie had an amazing year and it is because of you and your fantastic staff.”
-Joelle
Dear Nechama,

Thank you so much for everything you’ve done for Ashi and all of us this year. We’ve watched Ashi transform from a little boy who could speak only broken English and had trouble sharing and waiting his turn, to a bigger little boy fluent in English and who has gotten much better at sharing and waiting his turn.

Ashi happily went off to school every day and thoroughly enjoyed it. We feel so fortunate to have been led to your school. It was truly a blessing.

Your choice of educators, programming, curriculum and after school activities reflects a commitment to traditional observant Judaism coupled with openness to the wider community. This reflects our values and exactly what we were looking for. Ashi’s positive experience at MTC was a significant part of our successful year in Canada.

May you continue to create an environment that enables so many children to flourish and grow as proud Jews and good people, and may you and your whole family be blessed with only good and sweet things.

With tremendous appreciation...

- Yael
had always loved visiting her home. For me, it was beauty as it was meant to be. Ever item in her home had been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed. The silver and crystal in her china closet shone in perfect arrangement, as if in symphonic harmony. Her inimitable collection of miniatures and souvenirs perched on the simple wooden ledge above her kitchen sink seemed to dance in affirmation to the love and respect of the children and grandchildren who had offered her these gifts in love and admiration. And then there were her paintings. As I grew up, the characters and places depicted in the paintings on her wall became a part of my imagination. In my mind’s eye, each of these paintings delineated a perspective of reality that evolved as I learned to see the world through her wise eyes.

Then she was gone. On that morning, it was my mother’s tear stained face that greeted me at the door, and for the first time, through my own tears, I noticed the scarcity in her home. Suddenly, I noticed the simplicity of her furnishings and the improvisation of her decor. The paintings drooped in lifelessness, and the walls that had reverberated with niggunim and Farbrengens of Shabbos meals and Yomim Tovim stood in silent mourning. The beauty was gone. The warmth had evaporated. Hashem had taken my Bubby’s Neshama, and we were left to grieve.

As I stood by her bedroom window overlooking Eastern Parkway, the sorrow of my heart overflowed through my eyes. I could not hold back the tears streaming down my cheeks. I longed for one more late night conversation at the kitchen table, one more piece of advice from a singular woman who had shaped my character while I wasn’t looking.

I wandered listlessly around the house searching for the splendor I had become accustomed to on visits to her home. It had departed, leaving behind a simple apartment and basic furnishings. There was no more grandeur, gone was the majesty. The emptiness engulfed me. I was devastated.

I was swollen with pride when I had brought my chosson to Bubby’s beautiful home, and now I sat on her old green sofa, and for the first time I noticed there were cracks in the paint on her walls. Was beauty a momentary illusion? An evanescent fantasy?

What, I wondered, was beauty? How could beauty be defined?

It cannot, and its greatness lies in our inability to define it. It is so refined, so real, it transcends us. No words can do justice to its description. It is forever intangible, leaves us in awe, and we are often hypnotized by its power. Just like Bubby.

In a world where feminism has struggled to define the individuality of women and their place in society, the Jewish woman stands alone, perpetually undefined. Hashem, Himself, does not oblige women to define and express her connection to Him with mitzvos like Tefillin and Tzitzis. He has given her the gifts of Tznius and Taharas HaMishpacha through which she safeguards a beauty so brilliant, so radiant that Hashem has entrusted her alone to bring a precious Neshama, a part of Hashem Himself, down to this world. It is she who has been given the responsibility of raising the next generation of Jews. Her secret: The Jewish Home.

The Jewish woman epitomizes and represents the strength and triumph of Jewish continuity, the Jewish home. Furniture and décor form the vessels of the house in which she builds a Jewish home, yet it is she alone who infuses her home: her husband and her children, with enough warmth and joy to be proud Jews in the outside world.
Bubby loved to talk about the lives of the rich and famous, men and women who were famous for their legendary mesiras nefesh (self-sacrifice) and ahavas Yisroel (love for their fellow Jew), and whose riches followed them to the next world, the wealth acquired by a life steadfastly dedicated to Yiddishkeit and Chassidus Chabad. Bubby had succeeded in imparting the depth and beauty of a generation shaped by struggle and self-sacrifice to an American generation of children and grandchildren spoiled by abundance and comfort. Bubby had built a Jewish home, worthy of a word used when other words are not enough...Bubby’s home was simply beautiful, but Bubby’s “beautiful” was galaxies away from simple.

As I walked through her apartment one last time, I cried bitterly, envisioning the bags and boxes that would reduce her palace to a pile of neatly piled belongings. The cry of my six month old daughter snapped me out of my reverie, and I thought of the Jewish home that Hashem was giving me the opportunity to build, and through my tears I smiled. Bubby had managed to impart the greatest lesson without even saying a word.

I never heard my Bubby say anything to anybody to try to impress them. She treated everybody like a somebody. I have never known someone more proud or more confident.

Bubby, I miss you so much, and I just want to thank you for everything you gave me. You taught me how to make the right choices, but more important, how to be proud of them. I hope I can raise a family that will make you proud. I love you Bubby! You are always in my heart and my thoughts. Thank you for everything you did for all of us!
### Meat & Vegetable Soup

**INGREDIENTS**
- 3 carrots
- 2 medium white potatoes
- 1 sweet potato
- 4 quarts water
- 2 pounds top rib, cut in stewing pieces
- 1 package dry mushrooms or 1 cup freshly sliced mushrooms
- 1/2 cup lima beans
- 1/2 cup green split peas
- 1/2 cup large whole barley
- 1/2 pound fresh string beans, diced
- 4 ribs celery, diced
- Salt and pepper to taste

**DIRECTIONS**
Grate the carrots, white potatoes, and sweet potato on the large holes of a grater, or use the grating or steel blade of a food processor.

Bring the water to a boil and add all ingredients. Cover and simmer about 2 hours, stirring occasionally. If, when finished, you prefer a thinner soup, add more water.

### Sweet Carrot Kugel

**INGREDIENTS**
- 3 large eggs, separated
- 5 tablespoons sugar, divided
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 4 medium carrots, peeled and grated (about 1 2/3 cup)
- 1 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon sweet red wine
- pinch of salt
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1/4 cup blanched ground almonds
- 1 3/4 teaspoon grated lemon rind
- 4 tablespoons flour

**DIRECTIONS**
Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 9 x 9 baking dish.

Beat egg yolks with 3 tablespoons of the sugar in large bowl about 2 minutes or until thick and light. Stir in grated carrots, almonds, flour and salt. Add wine, lemon juice and lemon rind and mix well.

In a separate bowl, beat egg whites until stiff but not dry. Add remaining 2 tablespoons of sugar and continue beating at high speed for 30 seconds or until glossy.

Fold one quarter of whites quickly into carrot mixture. Spoon this mixture over remaining whites and fold together quickly but lightly. Transfer to prepared baking dish and bake for 35-40 minutes or until firm and golden brown. Serve hot or warm.
**Mushroom & Barley Soup**

**INGREDIENTS**
- One 19oz can tomatoes, chopped, with the juice
- 2 quarts water
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 2 ribs celery with leaves, diced
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley
- 1/2 green pepper, chopped
- 1/2 cup whole barley
- 1/2 cup small dried lima beans
- 1 carrot, slices
- 1 pound mushrooms, sliced
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp snipped fresh dill

**DIRECTIONS**
In a large saucepan, combine the tomatoes, water, onion, celery, parsley, green pepper, barley, and lima beans. Bring to a boil. Simmer, covered, 1 1/2 hours.

Add the carrot, mushrooms, salt, and dill. Continue simmering until the carrot is tender (about 20 minutes).

Correct seasonings and sprinkle on additional dill, if desired.

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**Spiced Carrot and Zucchini Quinoa**

**INGREDIENTS**
- 4 cups water
- 2 cups quinoa, rinsed well, drained
- 2 tablespoons dried currants
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 medium carrots, peeled, cut into small cubes
- 2 medium zucchini, trimmed, cut into small cubes
- 1 tablespoon Hungarian sweet paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro

**DIRECTIONS**
Combine first 4 ingredients in heavy large saucepan. Bring to boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until water is absorbed and quinoa is tender, about 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add carrots; sauté until tender, about 5 minutes. Add zucchini; sauté until tender, about 3 minutes. Mix in paprika and cinnamon. Add quinoa to skillet; toss to blend. Season with salt and pepper. DO AHEAD Can be made 1 day ahead. Transfer to baking dish. Cover and chill. Rewarm, covered, in 350°F oven about 15 minutes. Mix in cilantro and serve.

*Though not technically a grain, quinoa can substitute for nearly any grain in cooking. When preparing quinoa, you should rinse it first to remove any powdery residue. The simplest way to do this is to place the grains in a strainer and rinse until the water runs clear. For a roasted flavor, toast the quinoa in a dry skillet for about five minutes.
WEDNESDAY NIGHT
KABBALAH AT MTC

7:45 – 8:30 pm
KABBALAH CLASSICS
These inspiring classes will empower you with the knowledge to illuminate and embrace life in all of its mysteries – in the here-and-now and beyond.
Instructor: Rabbi New

8:40 – 9:30 pm
THE TANYA
Authored by the founder of Chabad, Rabbi Shneur Zalman (1745-1812), the Tanya is the world’s most widely studied work of contemporary Kabbalah. A blend of mysticism, philosophy and psychology, the Tanya provides a spiritual road map to a life of meaning, joy and fulfillment.
Instructor: Rabbi Kaplan

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