



# The World of Lubavitch

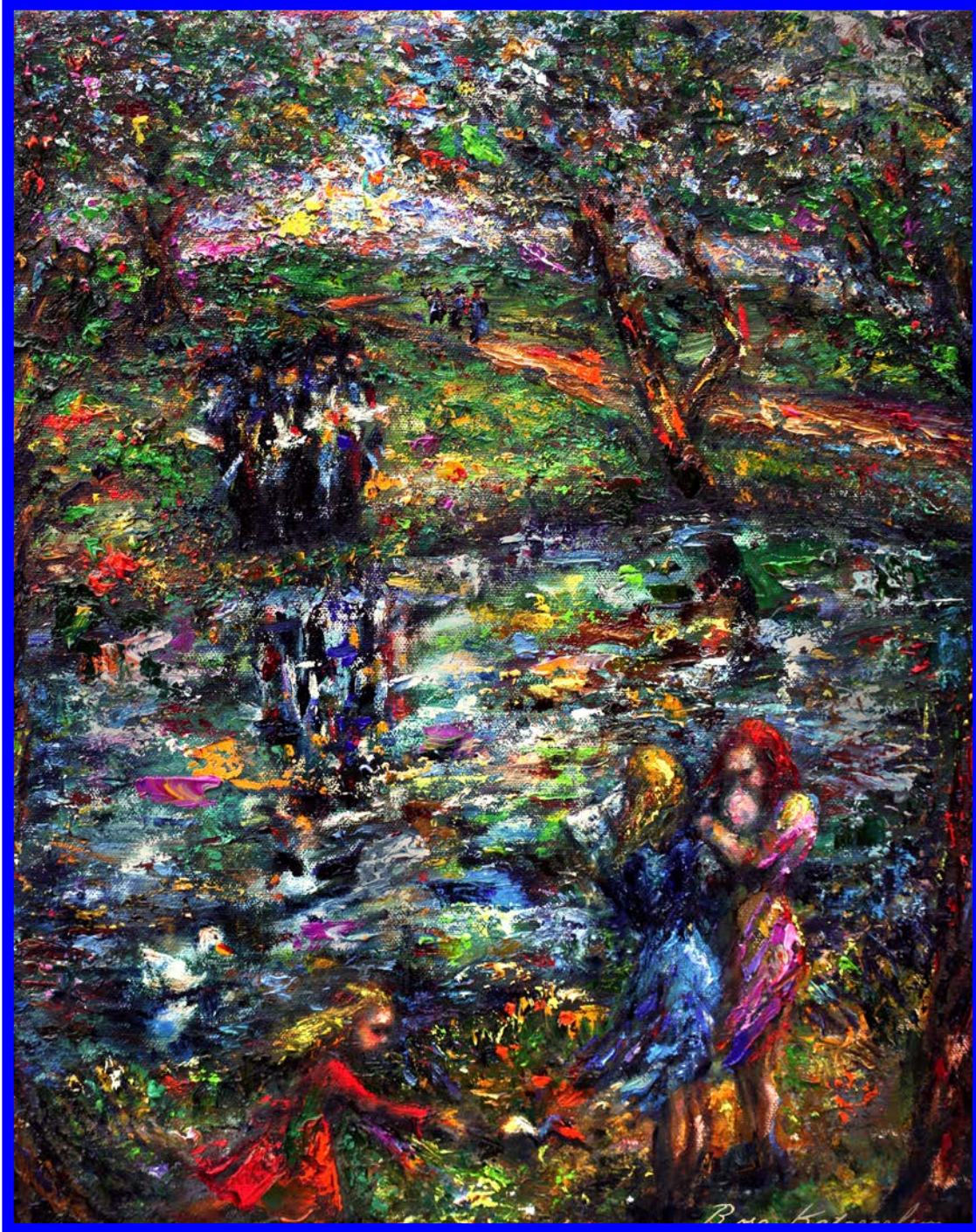
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## Chabad Lubavitch to Honour Warren Kimel

Plans are in full swing for the upcoming annual dinner of Chabad Lubavitch. The gala celebration to be held Thursday, November 22, 2016, will honour Warren Kimel. "This event is an opportunity for the entire community to pay tribute to a most deserving guardian of Jewish life," said Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum, Regional Director of Chabad Lubavitch. "The honouree has taken a leading role in numerous community agencies and the upcoming event will give us the opportunity to recognize Warren's long

standing affiliation with Chabad Lubavitch." Rabbi Grossbaum further pointed out that Warren's character traits earn him a seat amongst the disciples of



Abraham who personified the attributes of "kindness, humility, and modesty," as noted in the celebrated Mishna. Indeed, his casual disposition and unassuming nature are truly commendable.

Warren Kimel is CEO of Fabricland, the largest retail chain of fabric stores across Canada. He has been on the Board and Executive of UJA Federation, served as President of the Boards of Baycrest Foundation, B'nai Brith Toronto Freedom Lodge, and Beth Sholom Synagogue. War-

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## We Used to Call it a Mitzvah

By Baila Olidort - New York

There is no remembrance of former things . . . And I hated all my labor wherein I labored under the sun, seeing that I must leave it unto the man that shall be after me. And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Ecclesiastes 2:18

The other day I heard someone say Chabad was "a humanitarian Jewish organization." I cringed. She had just come from an event promoting a "groundswell of transformative social good." One of the stage props was a larger-than-life photo of the Rebbe.

The Rebbe was being honored on a platform of social goodness. Many know his emissaries as the rabbis who run "relief centers" around the world. Who hasn't seen photos of them wading through floodwaters, throwing out lifelines and handing out water bottles when tornadoes and tsunamis strike. Why carp?

It's true that among everything else they do, the Rebbe's shluchim do these things too. The preponderance of goodness and kindness that Chabad has generated around the world cannot be gainsaid. It's made Chabad a household name, and its representatives the go-to people for anyone who needs help anywhere in the world.

Maybe it rankles because those of us who experienced the Rebbe in his lifetime feel protective of his vision, and to think Chabad a humanitarian organization seems a misunderstanding of his legacy. It's now 22 years since the Rebbe's passing, and as Chabad evolves its model to meet Jewish life in the 21st century, we want to ensure its integrity and prevent misconceptions about our core identity.

When I was growing up in the 1960s, most of the Chasidim were Russian immigrants. (Back then we all called it "Lubavitch" after the town in Russia where the movement had begun. We called ourselves "Lubavitchers," and the first centers that opened—in London, Melbourne, and Minnesota—were named "Lubavitch Houses." Chabad-Lubavitch World Headquarters was simply "770.")

The people in our neighborhood were mostly survivors. We could see that their suffering and loss were personal to the Rebbe. When he alluded to the world that had gone up in flames, his Chasidim felt his pained breath. We sensed pathos in his desire to revive from the smoldering ashes. Things would get better for the Jewish people, he promised. He would stop at nothing so that Jews no longer hide in fear. We will be proud. We will even sing.

As the second generation adapted, it lost some and gained some. But the Rebbe taught us to hold fast to our Yiddishkeit—a word that had precious resonance. He made us proud to live as Jews. He even taught us to sing about it. As Elie Wiesel said in an interview (Lubavitch International June/July 2012), the Rebbe did more than anyone else to make it better for the Jews.

Today we speak of social good and humanitarian causes as if they are millennial values. We are uneasy talking about things that aren't politically correct, like G-d, chosenness, intermarriage, or the rituals and practices that identify us as Jews. And now, with the possibility of reaching so many so quickly—a dream come true for Chabad—we have to be careful not to sanitize our mission statement.

Because for all the Rebbe's universal appeal, it needs to be said that his agenda was to strengthen Jewish observance among Jews and to refine the world for all humankind through the dissemination of the seven Noahide Laws. In his words, our objective is "To make our world a dwelling place for the Divine."

For all its success adapting to modernity and the new communications, Chabad is not a New Age invention. It grows out of a long tradition of Jewish piety that sought to deepen our spiritual experience and elevate our existence. It spans more than two hundred years, and thousands before that, going back to Sinai. Trends will come and trends will go, but this, we believe, will remain forever.

On the third of Tammuz (June 12) 1994, many thought Chabad's best days were behind it. But today, a different story unfolds. It's a story about the Rebbe's inventive project that hit its stride in the last two decades. It's a story about the Rebbe's shluchim, the carriers of his vision, and the mitzvahs they do to make the world better. More holy. More G-dly.

Baila Olidort is Director of Communications at Chabad-Lubavitch



# The 4 Mysteries of King Solomon

Three things are wondrous to me, and four I do not know  
Proverbs 30:18

Despite all the wisdom granted to [King] Solomon... he was mystified by the Four Kinds. As it is written: "Three things are wondrous to me"--these are the Passover offering, matzah and maror [eaten at the Passover seder]; "and four I do not know"--these are the Four Kinds [taken on Sukkot]

Midrash Rabbah, Vayikra 30:14

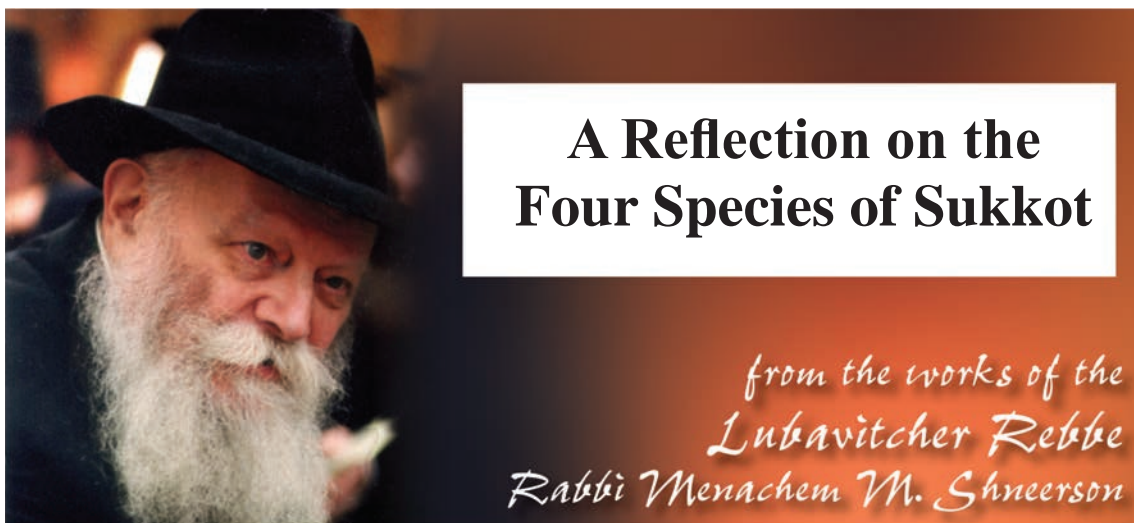
On Sukkot, the Torah commands us to take the "Four Kinds"--the etrog (citron), lulav (an unopened frond of a date palm), hadas (myrtle twig) and aravah (willow twig).

As is often the case with the Torah's commandments, the "Written Torah" (the Pentateuch or "Five Books of Moses") conveys this mitzvah in a few cryptic words, leaving it to the "Oral Torah" (the traditional interpretation of the Written Torah taught by Moses and handed down through the generations) to decipher their meaning. In the Written Torah, the verse regarding the Four Kinds reads:

And you shall take for yourselves ... the splendid fruit of a tree, fronds of dates, the branch of the thick-leaved tree and aravot of the river...

King Solomon, the Midrash tells us, was mystified by this verse. "Who says that 'the splendid fruit of a tree' is the etrog?" he queried. "All fruit trees produce splendid fruit! [As for] 'fronds of dates,' the Torah tells us to take fronds, in the plural ... yet we take a lulav, the unopened heart of the palm. And who says that 'the branch of the thick-leaved tree' is the myrtle? ... And concerning the 'aravot of the river'--all trees tend to grow near water."

How, indeed, do we know that "the splendid fruit of a tree, fronds of dates, the branch of the thick-leaved tree and aravot of the river" are the etrog, lulav, myrtle and willow? The Talmud, which summarizes forty generations of the oral



## A Reflection on the Four Species of Sukkot

from the works of the  
Lubavitcher Rebbe  
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

tradition of Torah interpretation, identifies the Four Kinds through a series of homiletic exegeses of the Hebrew words employed by the verse. The clue to the identity of "the splendid fruit of a tree" lies in the word hadar ("splendid"), which can also be read as ha-dar--"that which dwells." The etrog is unique in that while other fruits each have a particular season in which they grow, the etrog "dwells in its tree all year round," continuing to grow and develop under a variety of climatic conditions.

As for the lulav, the Torah

indeed writes, "fronds of dates," but the word kapot ("fronds of") is spelled without the letter vav, meaning that it can also be read kapat, "the frond of," in the singular. In addition, the word kapot also means "bound," implying that we are to take a closed frond ("the heart of the palm"). By these means, the Oral Torah identifies the second of the Four Kinds as the lulav.

There are many "thick-leaved trees" in whose branches "the leaves completely cover the stem"; but the Hebrew word avot ("thick") also means "plaited"

and "rope-like." Hence the "branch of the thick-leaved tree" (anafeitz avot) is identified as the myrtle twig, whose overlapping leaves grow in knots of three, giving it the appearance of a plaited rope. There is another plant that meets this description--the hirduf (nerium oleander)--but the Talmud rejects that possibility as inconsistent with the rule the "[the Torah's] ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its pathways are peace" (the hirduf is a thorny and poisonous plant).

The aravot of the verse are

identified as willow branches because of the willow's tendency to grow near water and the elongated shape of its leaves (like a river). Another identifying mark of the aravah is that willow bushes tend to grow in close-knit groups (aravah is related to the word achavah, "brotherhood").

So what was it about the identity of the Four Kinds that so mystified King Solomon? Surely "the wisest of men" was as proficient in the ways of Torah exegesis as the Talmudic sages whose analysis is summarized above. In any case, there are many cryptic passages in the Torah where laws are derived from double meanings and variant spellings of its words. Solomon's dramatic declaration regarding the etrog, lulav, myrtle and willow--"[Three are wondrous to me] and four I do not know"--must bode a deeper meaning--a meaning that relates to the inner significance of the Four Kinds taken on Sukkot.

Four Species of Man

The Four Kinds, says the Midrash, represent four types of people.

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## The Fifty-Sixth Century

In the six hundredth year in the life of Noah... all wellsprings of the great deep burst open, and the windows of heaven were opened...

Genesis 7:11

The Zohar interprets this verse as a prediction that

"in the sixth century of the sixth millennium, the gates of supernal wisdom will be opened, as will the springs of earthly wisdom, preparing the world to be elevated in the seventh millennium."

Indeed, the fifty-sixth century from creation (1740-1840 in the secular calendar) was a time of great discovery and accelerated development, both in the supernal wisdom of Torah and in the earthly wisdom of secular science. This was the century in which the teachings of Chassidism were revealed and disseminated by Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov and his disciples. The inner soul of Torah, which until then had been the province of a select number of mystics in each generation, was made accessible to all, imparting a new depth to our understanding of the divine wisdom and infusing vitality and joy into our observance of the mitzvot.

As these supernal revelations poured forth from the windows of heaven, the earthly wellsprings answered in kind. The same century saw an unprecedented eruption of knowledge in

all fields of secular science -- in mathematics, physics, medicine, technology and the social sciences -- revolutionizing all areas of human life.

According to the Zohar, this dual revolution came to prepare the world for the "seventh millennium" -- the era of Moshiach, when the six "workday" millennia of history will culminate in an age "that is wholly Shabbat

and tranquillity for life everlasting."

The Trickle Before the Flood

The redemption by Moshiach is many things. It is the gathering of the dispersed people of Israel to the Holy Land, the rebuilding of the Beit HaMikdash (Holy Temple) in Jerusalem and the re-establishment of the Temple service. It is mankind's return

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### ON OUR COVER



"The Eye of the Fish"  
Oil on Linen By Rosa Katzenelson

About the author: "Rosa Katzenelson's paintings celebrate the concept of the Pintele Yid, the Jewish spark ... Her broken brushwork lends itself to a unique form of abstract realism.

Her colors are bright and intense, which give her subjects a feeling of mystic joy." -- from text by Joshua Stulman, Hadas Gallery "Mystery is at the heart of every good painting. The Eye of the Fish

is no exception. Set around a bucolic pond we slowly make out four or five male figures tightly clustered on the far side of the pond, each holding what may be a prayer book. Immediately Tashlich comes to mind. But what of the two beautifully painted ladies in the foreground? They too have a prayer book, but it seems one is holding an infant even as a young girl playfully runs alongside them. Men on one side, women on the other, a shimmering pond between them in fading hours of Rosh Hashanah. This artwork, in its lush brushwork, evocative setting and characters is a beautiful pastoral that contemplates the complexity and quiet delights of a year about to unfold. The image is evocative, charming, playful and yet wonderfully serious about the joys of living in a Jewish world. Out of Rosa Katzenelson's passion for Yiddishkeit and making art comes flashes of insights and mystery that make returning to the paintings over and over a pure delight"-- Curator statement by R. McBee, The Jewish Press

Contact information:  
[www.rosakatenelson.com](http://www.rosakatenelson.com)

### The World of Lubavitch Chabad Lubavitch of Ontario

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## Camp Gan Israel Completes Fifth Season

“Time flies when you’re having fun,” is a well worn cliché which certainly applies to Gan Israel, our overnight camp in Haliburton. “It seems like just yesterday

the growing demand and enrollment which has increased year after year. In fact this past summer Gan Israel reached its targeted capacity enrollment for both the girls’

and boys’ session. their toe into the water to get acclimatized, for that there is a new 12’ giant slide drops one in the “deep end,” whether you are ready or not.

But, ultimately it is the counsellors and staff that are the “secret sauce” that has earned Gan Israel international recognition, and a stellar reputation. Their creativity and enthusiasm is truly remarkable and they succeed to keep the campers on a “high” all summer long.

Still, for an action packed day the campers need to be well fed. From a spacious spotless kitchen, and following a creative menu, the camp family are served nutritious meals that satisfy even the most discerning pallet.

On numerous occasions the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Schneerson, obm, underscored, that the camping experience is not a break from the learning but rather a bridge. He noted that during the school year the emphasis is on accumulating knowledge and in camp the emphasis is on performance. Indeed, the open expanse, the lush greenery, and casual atmosphere, provide the perfect setting to strengthen the body and nurture the soul.



we launched this vibrant initiative,” said Rabbi Yitzchak Grossbaum, camp director, “yet we just completed our fifth season.” Although the campers attend for just one month, the administration is busy and active all year long. From registration in January to planning, building, and ordering, the work goes on all year long. Indeed, from the moment the camp family of campers, counsellors, and staff hug and say good bye, the administration is already planning and adding features to make the next season bigger and better. No doubt the predominant factor is

and boys’ session. So too, the growth was noticeable on the ground and at the waterfront. Currently a second staff house is in the throes of completion to accommodate the managerial faculty who spend the entire summer on site together with their family. The six self contained units are spacious and laden with amenities. At the waterfront, over the course of the five seasons we have acquired a full assortment of pleasure crafts that include sail boats, surf boards, kayaks, paddleboats, canoes, and rowboats. And no longer do campers (or counsellors) need to dip



## Chabad Lubavitch to Honour Warren Kimel

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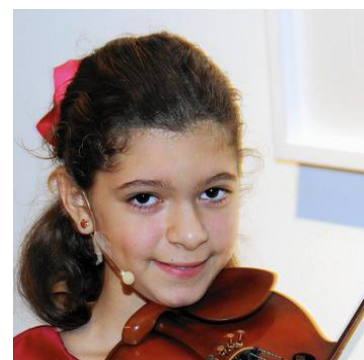
ren and his family have made significant gifts to the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, the Baycrest Hospital, and other city wide institutions improving the health, welfare, education, and religious life of our dynamic and ever growing community.

The guest speaker will be Rabbi Yoseph Y. Jacobson, from New York, one of the most sought-after Jewish personalities in the world today, who has the unique talent to keep his audience spellbound as he successfully weaves a timely message with cutting edge humour. Brilliant, charming, and an exceptional orator, he has touched thousands around the world with his deep, intuitive grasp of the human condition. He has the keen ability to distil the depth of Talmudic scholarship and highlight its relevance to contemporary society.

To round out the evening Biana Pinchuk a thirteen year old musical prodigy has been invited to enthrall the guests with a musical interlude on the violin. The young promising star who hails from Florida has appeared on America’s Got talent and performed around the world. A composer, singer and violinist, Biana wrote her first professional piece at the tender age of six. Having performed at numerous fund raisers, she cultivated a passion for philanthropy and has since graciously raised funds for numerous worthy causes.

This year the theme of our campaign is “What’s the Point.” The cliché is presented in large type and

followed by an oversized period. Beneath the “got your attention” zinger is a short narrative underscoring the indestructible soul imbedded within each person. “Der pintelev Yid,” may sometimes lay dormant or even buried beneath a façade of indifference, still, the sleeping giant is prone to be awoken by fanning its dormant embers with a dosage of Torah study or by the performance of Mitzvot. All of the promotional material highlight this core principle of faith which we have all witnessed amongst peers, family, friends, or associates.



*13 year-old musical prodigy Biana Pinchuk will perform at the event*

This summer over 1200 youngsters enjoyed a meaningful summer attending either the Lubavitch Day Camp or Gan Israel our recently established overnight camp in Haliburton. Being sensitive to the financial hardship of many families, both programs made provisions for campers to attend on a scholarship basis. These endeavours were facilitated by some 300 teenagers who were offered employment in a most rewarding environment. Notwithstanding the financial burden, Rabbi Grossbaum noted, “we feel we get excellent value by providing a meaningful summer for over 1000 children and teenagers, either as campers or counselors!

From our flagship centre in Thornhill, the Chabad Lubavitch Organization continues to reach out to the entire Jewish community with programs that continue to educate and promote traditional values. These objectives are further augmented by some 15 satellite centres, strategically established throughout the GTA and beyond. So too, there are Chabad House student centres at all major universities along the southern rim of Ontario.

Dinner reservations may be arranged by calling Chabad Lubavitch at 905.731.7000 ext.222

The Talmudic Sage, Choni Hamagle once noticed a man planting a carob tree and inquired: “It will take seventy years to mature and bear fruit, do you think you will live long enough to enjoy its fruit?” The man replied: “I found carob trees in existence when I entered the world, just like my father planted for me, so too I will plant for my children”.

When planning for the future or writing a Will please consider the Chabad Lubavitch Organization of Southern Ontario. For further information and to arrange for special bequests.

Please call:  
Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum at  
905-731-7000.  
All information will be kept strictly confidential.

Plan for  
the Future



## Lubavitch Day Camp “Goes Cruisin’”

The red PT Cruiser pulled up in front of a Thornhill home one evening in July and Jason came barreling out of the front door of the house, his face all smiles and unable to contain his excitement. “We’re Cruisin’” he shouted as he ran back inside to share the news with his family.

Jason had been waiting and hoping for this moment since he began attending Lubavitch Day Camp (LDC) two summers ago.

“We were thinking about how to bring the phenomenal Lubavitch Day Camp spirit, which the children experience every day, home to the parents” explains Rabbi Shua Goldstein, assistant director of LDC. “Parents are always telling us how excited the children are to go to camp every morning, but the parents don’t get to see the LDC spirit for themselves”.



Then someone donated a used PT Cruiser to the camp and an idea was born.

Every evening of the camping season a few counselors from the boys division squeeze into the Cruiser and go for a home visit with one of the campers and their families. They come equipped with kosher supper for the family – pizza or hot dogs, and spend an hour or two just hangin’.

Activities include playing the children’s favorite games, schmoozing or even putting on Tefilin before dark.

“The Cruiser has become somewhat of an LDC mascot. Just the sight of it coming down the street has the children weak kneed and hyperventilating” says Mrs. Estee Steinmetz, the camp director. “A home visit from the Cruiser confers “star status” on that child the next day in camp.”

Another special program designed to bring the parents in on the LDC fun and inspiration is the Family

Shabbat Dinner held this year on Friday night August 12.

A delectable four course meal, cooked by the LDC staff, camper performances, spirited songs and late night conversations between the counselors and LDC families was an event that will not be forgotten.

True to its mandate, the Lubavitch Day Camp continues to go way beyond the norm in order to maximize the summer experience for some 700 campers. The high enrollment necessitates to divide the children who age from age 2 to 14 into seven distinct divisions.

Our core staff consists of Yeshiva boys and girls that are selected for their enthusiasm, commitment, and experience. Under the able leadership of Mrs. Estee Steinmetz, every detail from transportation, program, lunch, and

field trips, is carefully examine and evaluated for efficiency, execution, and value. Although for the participants the program is a fleeting summer experience, for Mrs. Steinmetz the Lubavitch Day Camp is a labour of love which continues throughout the year.

Numerous technological initiatives have been employed to keep parents up to date on what happened, what’s happening, and what’s going to happen, on a daily basis. This year’s initiative was the bus monitoring technology, which gave staff and parents the ability to track the children’s progress as they made their way to and from camp each day. The minute to minute tracking of the buses gave much needed peace-of-mind especially when there was a delay, traffic or bad weather.

“We have more plans for constant improvements to our camp,” says Mrs. Steinmetz. “Stay tuned for an even better season next year.”

## Jewish Life Grows at McGill University

By Rena Greenberg - Montreal

After being displaced from their campus Chabad House digs for some three years, hundreds of Jewish students who find a haven at Chabad of McGill University are finally settling back into their newly remodeled Chabad House. A former row house, the 100 year-old building underwent an intensive \$2.2 million renovation and expansion and was finally rededicated in early April 2016.

An historic part of the local Chabad infrastructure established in 1973 to serve Jewish students at McGill University, the building took on various uses, at one time even headquartering all the activities of Chabad of Montreal until it fell into serious disrepair. When Rabbi Shmuly Weiss of Los Angeles and his wife, Rashi, a Montreal native, arrived at Chabad of McGill in 2007, the building was few years away from being condemned.

“We needed to gut the interior of the three-story structure and expand the building to meet our current needs,” Weiss says, recalling the slow-going process and the many setbacks along the way. With the help of Mr. George Rohr, the project’s primary benefactor, the Rohr Jewish Center at McGill University now boasts a modern and state-of-the-art facility conducive to the continued growth of Jewish student life on this campus.

An International Crowd

If you drop into the dining room at Chabad of McGill on a Friday night, you’ll be greeted by a cacophony of languages. Nearly 150 students from around the world are celebrating Shabbat, speaking English, French, Hebrew, Spanish, German, Russian and more. The students come from McGill and other downtown campuses.

McGill’s large international student body is especially apparent among its 5,000 Jewish students, with roughly half from Canada and the rest from countries around the world. The Weisses—an American and Canadian duo, serve this diverse demographic skillfully, interfacing with students in English and French, and a few other languages.

Chabad’s diverse activities on campus offer students different points of entry, engaging an average of 500 every week. Mitzvah McGill, a program that connects students with charitable pursuits around the city appeals to the humanitarian minded; Sinai Scholars, a text-based study of the 10 commandments, draws the intellectual student seeking additional learning opportunities.

A recent innovative program matched students with

laypersons in the community to learn various Jewish subjects one-on-one. Kosher Cooking, hosted by Rashi Weiss, teaches first time cooks living on campus for the first year or two of university the basics of kosher observance. Special holiday events draw greater numbers. “Our goal,” says Rabbi Weiss, “is to give every student a positive Jewish experience.”

Room for Learning, Room for Growth

The large multi purpose social hall which doubles as the Chabad House Shul, a beautiful café/lounge, a hospitality suite and an extensive two-level library and study area for students, have been thoughtfully outfitted to meet the students needs. The commercial kitchen will also be linked to a kosher restaurant scheduled to open in September—a welcome development at this downtown Montreal campus that doesn’t have a kosher meal plan.

Rebecca Dales, immediate past president of Chabad at McGill’s student group, is looking forward to the new space and the new opportunities it presents. “There are so many exciting programs and classes going on, and with the new building we are really seeing them catch on,” the Industrial Studies major continues.

Catering to the intellectually inclined McGill student is an important facet of Weiss’s approach. “Students here are very serious and very focused on their studies. By offering a challenging class about Judaism we reach

the student who wouldn’t otherwise get involved but is interested in the learning, in the challenge of Judaism.”

Dales agrees. “Rabbi Shmuly and Rashi always encouraged us to learn the subjects in Torah that most pertain to us.” The recent one-on-one learning program, she says, allowed students to explore topics that interested them as they related to their studies. “A business major could learn business Torah law, or someone can learn Talmudic case studies.”

Judaism 101 or advanced Talmud classes offer Jewish students at all levels the opportunity to study. Students also lead their own learning groups, create their own one-on-one study sessions, and regularly present on topics of study or even teach classes.

“When students participate in the classes, they are able to create their own curriculums and build their own leadership skills,” says Jesse Tepperman, a McGill alumnus who graduated three years ago but maintains a close relationship with the Weiss family and Chabad of McGill.

Tepperman, who majored in Jewish studies with a double minor in education and communication, looks back fondly on his time at Chabad of McGill “an international Chabad house.” He explains that the multicultural learning environment exposed him to Jews from all walks of life. “It instilled in me a value that [no matter our differences] we are all Jews and we all unite towards a common goal.”





## *Well Over 1000 Join Chabad on Campus Shabbat Dinner 1st Week Back*

With a mixture of excitement and apprehension, Jewish parents across Canada sent their children off to university earlier this month. Echoing the High Holiday prayers, they often think to themselves “Will he succeed, will he flunk? Will she make friends, will she be alone? Most importantly, will the Jewish identity we toiled to inculcate in them remain strong, or will they assimilate into the dominant culture on campus?”

The good news is that welcome back BBQs, Shabbat dinners and Torah classes organized by Chabad on Campus branches at every major university in Ontario are confronting this challenge head on, with well over 1000 Jewish students

attending the first weeks Shabbat dinner on campus.

The challenge of university life to Jewish identity is also an incredible opportunity. Students are beginning to spread their wings in a declaration of independence, and when they decide – on their own – to embrace their Jewish identity and make choices that align with it, the effects last a lifetime.

Noah, a first year student at Wilfrid Laurier University summed it up well: “It’s hard to be away from home, but being at Chabad feels like home”. With Chabad’s trademark loving warmth inspiring them to make wise Jewish choices, the future is bright for the next generation of Canadian Jews.



*Welcome Back BBQ at the Rohr Chabad Centre for Jewish Life, Waterloo*

## *Oslo’s Jews Dance in the Streets Hoping for Better Days Ahead*

Mr. Chaim Hirsch (Hermann) Kahn, one of the oldest Jews in Oslo, rubbed his eyes in disbelief last week. “I have been living here for

city’s Chabad House, they saw opportunity. The Chabad representatives would invite the community to celebrate it with all the pomp and cir-

Rabbi Wilhelm reflected on the dramatic turn of events: 70 years earlier, he noted, ships departing Jews to Auschwitz left from the harbor at the Oslo Fjord that lies only a few minutes away from the Grand Hotel.

“The Lubavitcher Rebbe emphasized the importance of being comfortable in one’s own skin and showing no fear. We took this message to heart and displayed our Jewish pride boldly, showing that we can live as Jews no matter where we are,” declared Rabbi Wilhelm.

One donor, who asked to remain anonymous, expressed a similar sentiment. “It was the biggest



kiddush Hashem I’ve ever seen,” he shared. “It really changed the community. Ever since the war, people have been afraid to express Yiddishkeit in Oslo. Now, to see Jewish people walking the street so proud and fearless . . . it’s an amazing thing.”

The event was followed by an elegant sit-down dinner for 450 at the Grand Hotel’s ballroom, where the annual Nobel Peace Prize banquet takes place. Rabbi Wilhelm

supervised the koshering of the hotel’s kitchens for the occasion, and a team of chefs was flown in from New York.

Capping the drama, the Wilhelms announced the purchase of a new property for the Chabad House. The dedication of a Torah scroll, a fitting introduction to the establishment of Oslo’s new Chabad House, seemed to beckon better times for the city’s Jewish community.



the last 70 years and never believed that in my lifetime I would witness what I saw today.”

Life experience taught the Hungarian-born Holocaust survivor to keep a low profile. Especially in places like Norway where, as is true in many Scandinavian countries, Jews have not found a comfort level allowing them open expressions of their identity. To dance with a Torah in the streets of Oslo seemed more than far-fetched.

It’s a vibe that Rabbi Shaul and Esther Wilhelm have been working hard to change, and when they got word that a new Torah would be donated to their

cumstance typical of Torah dedication ceremonies in the U.S. For Oslo’s very small Jewish community, the event was happy evidence that, thanks to the bold efforts of their Chabad representatives, positive change is afoot.

On August 30th, as locals looked on in anticipation, the scribe filled in the last letters of the Torah. Carried under the traditional chuppah canopy, the new Torah was hoisted up as 250 Jews brandishing flags and balloons danced down Oslo’s main street to lively Jewish music.

The procession marched past Parliament’s Storting building and ended outside the Grand Hotel, where

# Simchas Bais Hашoevah

Wednesday, October 19

5:30 PM - Rides, Food & Lots of fun!  
8:00 PM - Live Music, Dancing & Fireworks

Chabad Lubavitch Community Center



## Chabad Opens First Center in East Africa. as Couple Heads to Nairobi, Kenya

Sternie Super never thought moving to Sub-Saharan Africa was very realistic. Sure, she had dreamed of establishing a Chabad-Lubavitch outpost together with her husband, Rabbi Avromy Super, and moving to some place, near or far, to service the area's Jewish population. But

occurred had it not been for Rabbi Super's previous experiences in Africa. As a rabbinical student, he spent nearly six months at the Chabad yeshivah hosted at Bentolila's Jewish center in Kinshasa, the Congo. Kinshasa has become the capital for all things Jewish throughout most of this vast continent since Bentolila's ar-

and after independence in 1963—and Jewish life has remained stable throughout.

The 40th anniversary of Israel's successful and miraculous rescue operation in Entebbe, Uganda, has also revived memories of the crucial role played by Kenya during the affair. At the time, Israel's planes were unable to make the roundtrip flight to Uganda without a refueling stop. President Jomo Kenyatta approved Israel's request to do so, but not without serious repercussions; Ugandan dictator Idi Amin directed reprisals against Kenyan citizens and had Kenya's Minister of Agriculture Bruce Mackenzie assassinated (Mackenzie helped convince Kenyatta to agree to Israel's request.) Suspicions that influential Jews in Kenyan society played a role as well, in particular the hotel-owning Block family, led to the 1980 Palestinian terrorist bombing of the Block-owned Norfolk Hotel in Nairobi.



Rabbi Avromy and Sternie Super will move to Nairobi, Kenya, this fall to lead the Nairobi Hebrew Congregation and establish Chabad-Lubavitch of Kenya. They are seen here at an elephant orphanage in Nairobi's National Park.

Nairobi, Kenya? That seemed like a pipe dream for the Iowa native—perhaps a bit too far, a little too exotic.

Until she got there.

Just before Passover, Super and her husband traveled to Nairobi to spend the holiday with the city's Jewish community. The 112-year-old Nairobi Hebrew Congregation had reached out to co-director of Chabad of Central Africa Rabbi Shlomo Bentolila asking for assistance in finding a rabbi, and Bentolila had connected them with the Supers. After the community had the chance to meet the couple in person over Passover, where the Supers ran a seder for 50 people, the match was made.

The visit sealed the deal for the couple as well, particularly for Sternie (née Brook). Like so many other foreigners who initially come to Kenya for just a short time, she discovered Nairobi to be prettier than she had thought—and more Western, too. Come High Holiday time this year, Rabbi Avromy and Sternie Super will be leading the Nairobi Hebrew Congregation and establishing the first Chabad center in East Africa, Chabad-Lubavitch of Kenya, under the auspices of Chabad of Central Africa.

"Once I got here, I realized that it was an actual option," says Sternie. She was particularly surprised by the amount of Jewish children involved in the community. "The first thing I'm planning to work on is creating a vibrant Hebrew school."

**'People Looking to Connect'**

The move might not have

rival in the Congo 25 years ago, and he regularly sends rabbinical students, Jewish materials and holiday aid to its disparate Jewish communities. During his first stint in Africa, Super spent Chanukah in Accra, Ghana; other young rabbis were sent to, among other countries, Ethiopia, Namibia and Zambia.

In all, Chabad of Central Africa reaches 17 countries.

The Chabad center in Kenya will be the fifth permanent Chabad presence in Sub-Saharan Africa, excluding South Africa. Aside from Bentolila in Kinshasa, who first arrived in 1991, there are now centers in Abuja, Nigeria; Accra, Ghana; and Luanda, Angola.

"In Nairobi, this is a union between Chabad and the community," says Bentolila. "The Supers will work within the community and at the same time direct Chabad of Kenya."

"I loved Africa from the first time that I got there," Rabbi Super says of his initial enthusiasm for the idea. "In other parts of the world, you might have rabbis chasing after Jews trying to convince them to come to an event. What I've found in Africa is that people are looking to connect with their heritage; they call you. To me, that's incredible."

**Of Locals and Expats**

The first Jews arrived in Kenya at the turn of the 20th century, and shortly afterwards, the Nairobi Hebrew Congregation was formed. Although their numbers never ballooned to anything substantial, Jews did play pivotal roles in Kenyan society—both before



Although its Jewish history is old and ingrained, the majority of Kenya's Jews today are expatriates from Israel (which has been involved in building Kenya's infrastructure for decades), the United Kingdom, South Africa and the United States. Many work for the United Nations or international NGOs.

Ashley Myers is president of the Nairobi Hebrew Congregation. A British native, he first came to Kenya 13 years ago to manage a popular beach hotel in the coastal city of Mombasa. For the last five years, he's lived in Nairobi, where he's taken an active role in the city's Jewish communal life. He notes that Kenya has long had a fruitful relationship with Bentolila, and after the community parted ways with its previous rabbi (who filled a 17-year gap in permanent

rabbis), it felt natural to turn to Chabad of Central Africa in their search for a new rabbi.

"We've had a relationship with Chabad in Africa for a very long time," says Myers. "We always got rabbinical students for Jewish holidays, but never someone full-time. We were looking for someone who could fulfill both the religious side, but more importantly, someone who could work to draw Jews together of all backgrounds. There's a wide range of Jews here in Nairobi, and we wanted someone who could bring us together."

When the Supers visited, affirms Myers, the community was impressed. "They have English and Hebrew language; they're young and enthusiastic. They fit our requirements exactly."

## Tanya Printed on Mount Everest

*Yehuda Shlezinger*

A Chabad emissary took Judaism to new heights recently when he climbed Mount Everest to print a copy of the Chabad book of mysticism, "The Tanya," on the world's highest mountain.

Meir Elfassy, 30, who works as a "wandering emissary," set out on a two-week adventure with two Sherpas, 10 cans of tuna, matzot, a package of paper and a printer.

"The Lubavitcher rebbe instructed us to print 'The Tanya' in every place where there are Jews, even if it's only one Jew," Elfassy said.

He has already printed a copy of the sacred book in Antarctica, but said he had "a dream that I couldn't shake off to print 'The Tanya' on Mount Everest."

The hiking team bundled up in thermal clothes, but Elfassy insisted on wearing traditional Hassidic dress as well, especially the black hat associated with Chabad.

"It was so the Jews would see me and know that I am Jewish," he said. "One of the Israelis [traveling there] told me that it was nice to see a yarmulke on the mountain."

Elfassy managed to

survive the harsh weather conditions with minimal food.

"You walk 18 hours a day," he said. "I lost 10 kilograms [22 pounds] during the trek, so now I need to switch out my entire wardrobe."

His efforts paid off when he reached the upper Everest Base Camp, where he achieved his goal.

"We went to the base there and asked them for electricity so we could print 'The Tanya,'" he said. "They agreed and helped us print the book for the first time ever on the highest mountain on earth."



Chabad emissary Meir Elfassy takes Judaism to new heights by trekking to Everest Base Camp in Hassidic garb, equipped with paper and a printer • "The Lubavitcher rebbe instructed us to print 'The Tanya' in every place where there are Jews," he says.





## Children of Prison Inmates Go Camping

Anna Katz was at a loss. June was fast approaching and the mother of three from northern California didn't know what she would do with her kids all summer. After a bad business decision that landed her husband in prison in February 2014, life as she knew it came to an abrupt end. Her meager income was barely enough to pay for the basics, and financing summer camp for her kids was out of the question.

That's when the Aleph Institute stepped in. The Chabad organization based out of Florida serves the needs of Jewish prisoners and their families throughout the US prison system. In 2011, they established the Aleph Institute Jonathan Stamper Camp Fund, giving children of incarcerated parents the chance to attend Jewish summer camp by offering

riching summer experience.

"The benefits of camp are many," explains Brook. "First, it provides a much needed respite for the parent at home. It also creates a fun and meaningful experience for the kids, providing them with the opportunity to make new friends and explore essential Jewish values. It helps the entire family have a positive Jewish experience and become more involved with their local Jewish community."

The Katz children are among 96 others who've benefited from summer camping experience this year thanks to Aleph, and among hundreds that Aleph has sent to Jewish camps in the US and abroad over the past five years. The impact this experience has had on the children and their families is immeasurable say their families.



generous subsidies and scholarships. In addition to providing the funds, Aleph also helps with the logistics and planning.

Last summer, when Aleph's family services director, Rabbi Shua Brook, realized that the Katz children had no summer plans and had never attended a Jewish camp, he found donors willing to pay for their camp tuition. Jodi and Ryan, ages thirteen and eleven respectively, flew to overnight camps in the northeast while John, aged nine, stayed in a local Jewish day camp. This summer, all three children have returned to those overnight camps for another en-

"Camp has made Judaism come alive for my children, especially for my teenage girl," Katz says. "It taught her good values. When she came home last year, she wanted to dress more modestly. Now, she works at the local Hebrew School and is giving back to others."

Among the overnight camps selected by Aleph are CTeen Heritage Quest, CTeen Xtreme, Camp L'man Achai, and CGI Poconos, among others.

To reach out to Aleph family services department for someone in need, please email [family@aleph-institute.org](mailto:family@aleph-institute.org)

by Baila Olidort - Moscow  
AUGUST 2016

When in July 1991, fresh after the collapse of the Soviet Union, 150 Chabad-Lubavitch emissaries representing Europe and Russia convened in Russia, local Jews were still afraid. In the annals of Chabad-Lubavitch, which had been operating under the radar during more than seven brutal decades of communist persecution, it was a watershed moment.

Communism's fall was presaged by the Lubavitcher Rebbe who was deeply invested in Russia's Jews, and in honor of the euphoric occasion, Lubavitch News Service, now [lubavitch.com](http://lubavitch.com), issued a press release that was reviewed by the Rebbe and marked with his handwritten editorial changes before it was released to the media.

A quarter of a century later, 500 Chabad representatives

1915, the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Sholom Dovber, fleeing the German army during WWI, evacuated his family from Lubavitch, and resettled the movement's center in Rostov.

For Chabad Chasidim whose leaders, parents and grandparents suffered and died under the stranglehold of communism, the conference in Lubavitch in 2016 still rings surreal, the sense of triumph prompting spontaneous outbursts of dance and song. Further underscoring the changed attitude of once fearsome authorities, Belarus's top brass rolled out the red carpet for the rabbis at a welcoming event.

Speaking for the President of Belarus, a government official reflected on the positive impact of Chabad and its activities in Belarus and beyond. A representative for the ministry of religious

Russia's Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar spoke to [lubavitch.com](http://lubavitch.com) during the conference, reflecting on the change that has transpired over the last quarter century.

"Back in 1991 when, inspired by the Rebbe, we met for the first conference in Russia, Jews had yet to shake off the fear that they had known for so many years. The communist mindset still prevailed and people were absolutely incredulous to see such an open celebration of Jewish identity.

"Today, after 25 years of Chabad's activities in the FSU, the sense of fear that has so gripped our people for 70 years here has given way to Jewish pride. Today, Jews in Russia enjoy a quality of life that is often better, and safer than in many European countries."

On Wednesday, the *yahrzeit* of the Rebbe's

## A Home Coming: 500 Chabad Rabbis Convene in Russia



A tour of the city of Lubavitch, center of the Chabad movement for one and a half centuries

from former Soviet countries and Europe convene in Russia once again. A homecoming to the Rebbe's shlichim, the conference's itinerary which began Monday in Moscow, takes participants on a trip down memory lane to the cities in Russia and Belarus where Chabad was born: Liozna, Liadi, Lubavitch.

"This is a day of true joy," said Rabbi Yitzchak Kogan, a legendary Soviet refusenik, speaking from Lubavitch. "It is now 100 years since Chabad-Lubavitch left this small town and became a powerful force of Jewish life worldwide. It is our great privilege as Chabad Chasidim to bear witness to this."

Indeed, as Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky, Vice Chairman of Chabad's educational division who was instrumental in facilitating this conference, noted, this would indeed be the first time in 100 years that Lubavitch would see such a large gathering of Jews. In

affairs spoke with emotion, moved by the rabbis who came to Liozna, "the place where the Alter Rebbe [referring to Rabbi Schneur Zalman as Chabad Chasidim do] founded Chabad Chasidism."

father, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak, the delegation visited Almaty, in Kazakhstan, where they prayed at his resting place. They concluded the conference in Moscow before returning to their respective cities.

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## New York Father of Three Receives Kidney, Thanks to Rabbis

By Faygie Levy Holt

By the time most people on the East Coast had finished lunch and returned to work, Jack Hananya of Long Island, N.Y., was in recovery in a Manhattan hospital room, having just received a life-saving gift thanks to two Chabad-Lubavitch emissaries and a little matchmaking.

Hananya, who is originally from Israel but has lived in the United States for many years, was put on the National Kidney Registry in June 2014—joining nearly 100,000 others who are in need of a kidney transplant, according to the National Kidney Foundation. By February 2015, he was on dialysis several times a week.

my existing Chabad was a niche Chabad at the Medical Centers, it was made-to-order for me to get involved. It was actually my witnessing people in my day-to-day encounters who were suffering from this disease and not being adequately helped—who were resigned to their fate of death—that drove me to start my kidney work.”



Jack Hananya of Long Island, N.Y., underwent a kidney transplant at Weill Cornell Medical Center after battling kidney disease for two decades. His donor was a Chabad rabbi. Hananya, a native Israeli, stands with his three sons, from left: Yuval, Guy and Tomer.

Hananya, 56, a married father of three boys, underwent a kidney transplant at Weill Cornell Medical Center after battling kidney disease for nearly two decades.

“I was diagnosed with kidney disease when I was 32,” Hananya said on Monday, less than 24 hours before the surgery. “At that stage, it was just beginning, and I was under treatment to maintain it, so that it wouldn’t hurt me for a long time. About two, two-and-a-half years ago, things got worse.”

During this time, he met Rabbi Boruch Sholom Wolf, co-director of Chabad at the Medical Centers in New Hyde Park, N.Y. Wolf—who donated a kidney when he was 25—began searching for someone who would be a match for Hananya.

“It’s important when one sees death, especially a slow miserable death, and one has the ability to do something about it, to do something. I was in a unique position to contribute to the solution,” says Wolf. “And being that

Thanks to Wolf’s efforts and those of some other individuals, a donor for Hananya was found in June 2015.

But complications arose, and the surgery had to be postponed. Nevertheless, the donor remained committed to helping the Hananya family.

“I think he is an angel. He waited for me for a year, and now we are going to go for the transplant,” said Hananya. “It is the ultimate gift that someone can give without expecting to get something back.



Rabbi Zalman Sandhaus, co-director of the Pardes Chabad Center for Jewish Life in Fishkill, N.Y.

There are no words to express how I feel.”

Rabbi Zalman Sandhaus, co-director of the Pardes Chabad Center for Jewish Life in Fishkill, N.Y., acknowledged that he has long admired those who have donated their kidneys to others. When he learned that he himself was a match, he said: “How can I not give it if a guy’s life is on the line?”

**Hoping to Inspire Others**

According to the National Kidney Foundation, most people with one normally functioning kidney have few (if any) related physical issues, meaning donors can go on to live a normal life.

The transplant surgery lasted a little more than three hours. Doctors told Hananya

beforehand that he should be back to his old self in no time. In a show of appreciation, Hananya said he is determined to help others in similar situations by telling them about Wolf’s efforts.

“Living with dialysis three times a week—where you have to sit in a machine for four hours every time—is not pleasant. But this is the least of the problems. You feel bad, feel as if you are choking because you have too much fluid in your body,” explained Hananya. “Those who come forward to donate are angels. They help not only one person, but everybody—family, friends, everybody.”

Added Sandhaus: “I hope it serves as inspiration for other people to donate their kidney.”

## The Rohr Brit Milah Clinic of Russia Opens

Moscow, Russia

At Marina Roscha—Moscow’s Jewish Community Center—men and women make life changes on a daily basis as they discover their Jewish traditions.

“Today there will be five circumcisions here,” noted Rabbi Berel Lazar, the country’s chief rabbi, Monday afternoon.

Remarkably, they are young and not-so young men who, having learned about the fundamentals of Judaism, are choosing to have a brit mila.

Lazar greeted a group of visitors, board and staff members of Avi Chai on a tour of Moscow, who accompanied Mr. George Rohr at the ribbon cutting of The Shmuel Rohr Brit Mila Clinic of Russia, named for Mr. Rohr’s father.

“The idea is to do what we can so that the brit does occur on the eighth day,” said Rabbi Lazar. Until then five circumcisions a day, on average—many for adults, not babies—is all in a day’s work at the Brit Mila Clinic, which now has its own dedicated facilities.



Board members of the Avi Chai Foundation cut the ribbon to the new clinic.



# Hungarian Yeshiva Desecrated by Nazis Restored to Jewish Community

*By Rena Udkoff - Hungary*  
Hungarian-born Jewish children may not appreciate the rich background to their summer camp experience. An old synagogue in Mád that has stood empty and dilapidated for over seven decades, served as their camp base this summer. Mád is a picturesque town 130 miles east of Budapest.

In 1944, hundreds of local Jews were locked up in that synagogue without bread or water for three days by German soldiers and local militiamen. The town's community of 800 Jews, constituting nearly 30% of its total population, was wiped out. Its men, women and children were deported to Auschwitz.

Built in the 1770s, the Baroque style synagogue is one of the oldest surviving synagogues in the country, and one of the finest surviving examples of the unique Hungarian synagogue architecture. Attached to the synagogue is a three-story complex that once housed the rabbi's home

adjacent rabbi's residence and yeshiva were finally renovated as well, reviving their role as a center of Jewish learning.

The remodeled building pays homage to its long history of vibrant Jewish life within this synagogue while serving the needs of a new generation of Jews seeking to connect. The building also includes a commercial kosher kitchen, guest rooms, lounge areas and a dining hall.

Beginning July 26, dozens of Hungarian-born Jewish children once again ran through the historic hallways of the former yeshiva. They attended Shabbat service in a synagogue with a plaque commemorating its local Holocaust victims and sang songs of Jewish pride that the Nazis hoped to silence.

Devorah Hurwitz, Chabad emissary to Hungary and the Director of the Alef Kids camp, says that hosting a Jewish camp on the historic campus is particularly important.



and yeshiva in Mád, where for over 150 years, hundreds of prominent Torah scholars pursued their studies in peace.

The Nazi Holocaust eliminated two-thirds of the nearly 1 million Jews who lived in Hungary on the eve of World War II. Today, there are fewer than 100,000 Jews among Hungary's 10 million people. With 90% of the Jewish residents of Mád having perished in the war, the synagogue, the rabbi's house and the land were appropriated by the state in 1952. While the synagogue building was left to deteriorate, the rabbi's house was converted into apartments, which housed residents until the early 1990s.

Unused for 25 years, the synagogue was finally restored in 2004, and transformed into a cultural center showcasing Jewish life before the war. This year, through the efforts of Lubavitch of Hungary, the

"Openly identifying as Jewish is crucial for Jewish continuity, especially in Hungary where so many families hid their identity for so long," Hurwitz explains. In the decades after the war many Jewish families destroyed their paperwork, and she has met dozens of Jews who first discover their Jewish identity in their 20s or even older.

Hurwitz looked forward to relocating the camp, previously on the shores of Lake Balaton--to what she calls a holy place. The camp, now in its fourth year, welcomed more than 60 campers.

"With our identity as Jews remaining such an important subject, it's important for us to be able to go back to a place that was a vital part of the Jewish-Hungarian legacy."

Giving the children the chance to connect to a place where Judaism was once so strong, "was very meaningful for our campers."



# New Synagogue Opens in Moscow's Domodedovo International Airport



SEPTEMBER 15, 2016  
A new synagogue serving Jewish travelers who pass through Russia's busiest airport opened this September. More than twenty two million passengers make their way through Moscow's Domodedovo International Airport every year. Chief Rabbi of Russia Berel Lazar, and the Bareli family, who sponsored the synagogue, joined the lively opening and dedication of a new Torah scroll.



HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES

R O S H H A S H A N A H	<b>Sunday, October 2</b>	Candlelighting 6:35 p.m.	Y O M K I P P U R	<b>Tuesday, October 11</b>
		Mincha 6:45 p.m.		Mincha 3:15 & 4:15 p.m.
		Maariv 7:25 p.m.		Candlelighting 6:22 p.m.
				Kol Nidre 6:35 p.m.
	<b>Monday, October 3</b>			<b>Wednesday, October 12</b>
		Shacharis 9:00 a.m.		Shachris 9:00 a.m.
		Shofar approx. 11:30 a.m.		Yizkor 12:00 p.m.
		Mincha 5:30 p.m.		Mincha 4:50 p.m.
		Tashlich 6:00 p.m.		Neilah 6:10 p.m.
		Maariv 7:30 p.m.		Maariv 7:20 p.m.
		Light Candles after 7:36 p.m.		<b>Yom Tov &amp; Shabbos Services</b>
				Shacharis 10:00 a.m.
	<b>Tuesday, October 4</b>			
	Shachris 9:00 a.m.			
	Shofar approx 11:30 a.m.			
	Mincha 6:20 p.m.			
	Maariv 8:35 p.m.			

# SIMCHAT TORAH HAKAFOT



All are welcome to come & join the Celebration SHMINI ATZERET

<b>Sunday, October 23</b>		<b>Monday, October 24</b>	
Candlelighting	6:02 p.m.	Shacharis	10:00 a.m.
Mincha	6:05 p.m.	Yizkor approx.	11:30 a.m.
Maariv	6:50 p.m.	Mincha	6:00 p.m.
Hakafot (followed by)	7:10 p.m.	Candlelighting after	7:02 p.m.
Kiddush			

## SIMCHAT TORAH

<b>Monday, October 24</b>		<b>Tuesday, October 25</b>	
Maariv	6:50 p.m.	Shacharis	10:00 a.m.
Kiddush	7:10 p.m.	Hakafot	11:30 a.m.
Hakafot	8:00 p.m.	Grand Kiddush	1:00 p.m.
		Torah Reading	12:00 p.m.



# Dear Rebbby

By Rabbi Aron Moss



## Honey Can Buy Me Love

**I always associated going to shul on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur with heaviness, guilt and a somber atmosphere. I guess that's what I grew up with. But last year I came to your services and found them to be happy, light, musical and joyous. I enjoyed that much more than my childhood experience of shul, but was wondering, is it fitting to be so upbeat on days when we are seeking forgiveness for our sins? Sorry for being direct, but is what you are doing authentic or just feel good?**

**Answer:**

There is a curious discussion in Jewish law about bee's legs.

What happens if a bee's leg falls off and gets stuck in a vat of honey? Bees are not kosher, and dislocated bee's legs can't always be extracted from honey. So is the whole vat rendered unkosher due to the bee legs submerged in it?

One opinion says no. The honey is kosher and you can eat it, bee legs and all. Because one of the fascinating properties of honey is that bits that fall into honey eventually become honey. The bee legs dissolve in the honey and lose their distinct identity, so there is nothing non-kosher left, just honey.

What is unique about honey is that it doesn't overpower with brute force, like a fire that violently consumes whatever it touches. Honey overpowers with sweetness. The sweetness of honey is so intense, everything it touches gets overwhelmed and allows itself to be swallowed up in its sweet embrace.

This represents a deeper approach to the High Holy days. The introspection and return to G-d that

these days inspire need not come from a place of guilt. We don't repent for our sins out of fear of fire and brimstone. Rather when we feel the sweetness of divine love, when we feel how close G-d is to us and what a blessing it is to be a Jew, this joy can melt away our evil and purify us from our less than kosher ways.

This is why we start the High Holydays by dipping our challah and apple in honey. Only a Judaism infused with sweetness and joy has the power to dissolve away our negativity, cynicism and indifference, and make us all kosher again. Sadness and heaviness will not cleanse our soul. The sweetness of being Jewish will.

So don't just dip your apple in honey, immerse yourself in joyful Judaism. It's the bee's knees.

## Am I Being Ignored?

**I am feeling on a high from Yom Kippur. I was truly moved by the prayers and the songs. But the little skeptic within me has one niggling question. There is something very important to me that for many years I have been praying for, and it has still not materialized. Are my tears wasted? Can I believe in the power of prayer when in my experience it hasn't worked?**

**Answer:**

No prayer is ignored and no tear goes unnoticed. But the response is not always in the form we expect it to be.

At the high point of Yom Kippur, toward the end of the day in the Neilah prayer, we address G-d with the following plea:

"You who hears the sound of weeping, store our tears in Your flask, and save us from all cruel decrees."

This seems to be a

strange expression. Why would G-d store our tears? It doesn't seem to be of any use to keep our tears in a flask.

The meaning behind this is profound. Not always are our prayers answered in the way we want them to be. Sometimes G-d in His wisdom does not grant us our wishes at the time we demand them. Instead, He stores away our tears and files away our prayers, to be taken out and answered at another time.

We are not privy to G-d's timetable and we don't get His system. But every word and every tear is accounted for, and makes an impact. When and how that impact is felt by us is up to G-d. A prayer said today for someone's health may only take effect many years later, or it may be redirected to another person who needs that blessing more urgently. We are depositing our request, but we don't know when it will be withdrawn.

In physics, the first law of thermodynamics says that energy can never be destroyed, it just changes from one form to another. There is a similar law in metaphysics. No prayer is ever lost, no tear is ever wasted. Your request will be granted, it just may be in an unexpected form. So keep praying, because every word is stored away. It will rebound back to you when you need it most.

## Best Joke of the Year

**I am trying to convince my brother and his family to come to shul for the celebrations on Simchas Torah. I told him it is the best party in town and so much fun. But he insists they are "once a year Jews" and only go to shul for Yom Kippur. Any tips on what I can say to help change his mind?**

**Answer:**

Tell your brother this joke:

There was once an Englishman, a Japanese, an American and an Israeli cruising together on a luxury ocean liner. In the middle of the voyage the captain announced that the ship was sinking and they were all doomed.

As they had each paid a fortune to be on the cruise, the passengers were offered to choose any dish they wanted from the ship's kitchen as a last meal.

They first asked the Englishman what he wanted to eat. He thought for a moment, and then said, "I would like fish and chips please."

They went to the Japanese and asked him what he wanted for his final meal. "Sushi please," was his immediate reply.

When they asked the American what he would like, he said, "A burger with onion rings."

Then they asked the Israeli.

## Missing the Punch line

Sorry, did you miss the punch line?

Wasn't that annoying?

I bet you wouldn't be willing to listen to a joke if you knew you would not get to hear the end of it.

Well, going to shul on Yom Kippur and then skipping Simchas Torah is like hearing the build up to a joke and missing the punchline. It makes no sense.

On Yom Kippur we express our Jewishness. On Simchas Torah we celebrate it.

On Yom Kippur we fast with humility. On Simchas Torah we eat and drink with joy.

Yom Kippur is the day our soul shines. Simchas Torah is the day our soul

dances.

So you want to hear the punchline? See you in shul on Monday night...

## My Wife refuses to Talk to Me

**This is a totally hypothetical situation that would never really happen. My wife is angry at me. She thinks she told me to pick her up from the train station, and I never showed up. She waited in the rain for half an hour, couldn't find a taxi and in the end had to call a friend because my phone was off. I am absolutely sure she did not ask me to pick her up. Now she won't speak to me until I give her an apology. Can I apologize when I don't believe I did anything wrong?**

**Answer:**

I don't usually answer such far-fetched made-up scenarios. But this time I will make an exception.

When we say, "I am sorry," we are making a statement about ourselves - I am remorseful, I regret my actions, and I hope not to repeat them.

But an apology is not just about you and your feelings. It is about the person you hurt. You don't apologize just to absolve yourself from guilt, but more to acknowledge that you are the cause of someone else's pain, and take responsibility for it.

This means that even if you are completely in the right and really did nothing wrong, even if the other person misinterpreted your words or actions, even if you did nothing to regret, nevertheless if someone else is hurting you need to apologize for that.

Only G-d knows who is right and who is wrong in your case. But we all know who is hurting. So you need to be big enough to apologize.

But beware. If you say, "I am sorry for any pain you felt," it will come across as empty words, as if she has a problem and you feel sorry



# Dear Rebbby

By Rabbi Aron Moss



for her. You need to arouse true feelings of empathy for her, and real regret for your part in what happened.

Just imagine her standing in the rain, drenched and dejected, calling your unresponsive phone and not knowing what to do. And in her mind, you caused all this. You owe her a sincere apology. Hypothetically.

## Foul Mouths and Dirty Toothbrushes

**It seems that obscenity and foul language are becoming more and more acceptable. Swear words are used by politicians, sportsmen and even teachers, as if they have become a part of common speech. People don't even bother to write %\*#! any more. What is the Jewish view of dirty language?**

**Answer:**

Foul language is spiritually unhygienic. It is like scrubbing the toilet with your toothbrush, and then using it as a toothbrush. If you wouldn't do that, then you shouldn't use the same mouth for profanity that you use for words of friendship, love and prayer. Like pure water flowing through rusty pipes, even words of love, when coming from a dirty mouth, cannot help but become stained.

Speech is a powerful gift. When used correctly, the spoken word can build and strengthen relationships, give comfort and support, sometimes even save a life. Our words can lift a heavy heart and inspire a lost soul. Words of prayer can reach the heavens. Words of care can go even higher.

The words we say do not just disappear. They hover around us, forming the air we breathe and the atmosphere in which we live. Holy words create an aura of holiness around us. Words that are obscene, slanderous, abusive or untrue foul the

air, like spiritual pollution. These toxic emissions are the most dangerous of all.

In your home, there are two distinct brushes, a toilet brush and a tooth brush. But you only have one mouth. Flush out profanities, and keep the air around you fresh and pure.

## Dying with Dignity

**I visit my 92 year old mother every day in her old age home, and every day I look around at the seniors there and ask myself the same question, why does G-d leave these old people to die without dignity? Every one of them needs either a diaper change, someone to feed them, wash them, or do everything for them. I have faith, but this thing really makes me angry. Why can't they die with dignity?**

**Answer:**

It is so hard to see a loved one fade after living a vibrant and active life. How we approach this painful stage will depend on our perspective. And the Jewish perspective on the end of life differs greatly to modern secular thinking. To approach life and death with faith, we need to make sure we have that perspective very clear.

It often happens that foreign, secular ideas creep into the minds of even those who have faith. Usually, the way these concepts infiltrate is via catch phrases and clichés. First they enter our vocabulary, then they become a part of our mentality.

One example is "dying with dignity."

That phrase is poison. It originates in the movement promoting euthanasia. This is a phrase that deserves to die.

True dignity comes from the soul, from living a life of goodness and holiness and meaning. Our body is a vehicle for that mission to be achieved. But the body

is not our real self, and not our source of dignity.

At the end of a good and purposeful life, the body may be frail and weak, but the soul is as bright as ever, having accomplished its mission. If people have to do some unpleasant jobs to bring comfort to that body in its final years, it should be seen as an honour. There is no greater dignity than to serve another.

I am not belittling the pain of seeing a loved one suffer. And I am not saying that the body's deterioration is easy to face. I am saying that a person's dignity comes from their soul and their moral achievements. That is living with dignity. Death is never dignified.

We end our life in the same way we started it, dependent on the love of others. Your mother is blessed to spend her final days in good care, surrounded by those who love her. That is a most dignified departure from this world to the next.

## Why do Jews Read the Credits

**Why do the Jewish people seem to loom so large on the world stage? The numbers don't add up. Here's a nation less than 0.2% of the world's population, yet**

**we command so much attention you'd think there were billions of us. That's like a room of two thousand people, with one puny guy sitting in the corner who everyone wants to talk to (or pick on).... Why do we always seem to be at the centre of history?**

**Answer:**

Jews do strange things sometimes. One example is the wide-spread practice of "credit combing."

Many Jews have a habit of combing through the credits at the end of a movie, searching for Jewish names. At each discovery they beam with pride:

Look! Assistant Gaffer.....Mo Goldstein! Catering Consultant..... Beth Cohen!

This odd practice comes from a very deep place in the Jewish psyche. Jews share a spiritual bond with each other. If I meet a Jew anywhere in the world, there is an immediate connection, a kinship, a sense of oneness. We are like one big family, and even closer than that.

When Jews are in the news, we each take it personally. When Israel is under attack, we feel the pain wherever we are. When a Jew wins a bronze medal in croquet, we all share the victory. And when we see a Jewish name in the credits, we get excited.

Maybe other nations do this too. But I don't

think so. This profound sense of connection makes the Jewish nation unique among the peoples of the world.

This is the reason why statistics cannot apply to the Jewish people. No Jew is merely an individual. We are a collective soul, a part of something bigger than ourselves. We may be a tiny blip on the census, but we don't work by the normal rules of demography. Our strength is not measured by our numbers, but by our unity.

The destiny of the Jewish people is to be a strong voice of goodness and morality among the family of nations. When we unite with our community and commit ourselves to the shared vision of our people, then we are a formidable presence. Not because we are one billion, but because we are one.

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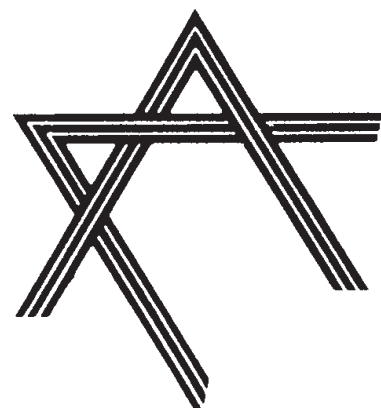
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*In this issue we interview Rabbi Mendel Nakkar of Chabad in Barrie*

**AS: Is the Jewish community in Barrie a significant one?**

**MN:** In the past ten years or so the Jewish population in Barrie has grown tremendously. The estimated number of Jews is currently 2,500 and we constantly get contacted by Jewish families who are moving up here.

**AS: Does the Jewish population swell in the summer time?**

**MN:** When I tell people that we run the Chabad in Barrie, they say, "Cottage country?"

Many people are under the impression that the Jewish community of Barrie primarily consists of cottagers. Perhaps that's the way it was for quite a while but in the past decade the full time Jewish population here has increased significantly. In fact Barrie is the third fastest growing city in Ontario and those numbers are reflected in the Jewish population as well.

**AS: What attracts Jewish families to Barrie?**

**MN:** There are many reasons why people come up here. Firstly, not only is Lake Simcoe at your doorstep but forests and hiking trails, clean air and less traffic are other perks. If you add the average, unaffordable price of a Toronto home vs. spacious lots with beautiful residences only 45 minutes away, Barrie becomes doable and practical. Add a vibrant, first Barrie Chabad, and it's almost irresistible.

**AS: How was your reception?**

**MN:** Very enthusiastic! The local Jewish families were looking for guidance and leadership and with our arrival a greater sense of community was generated immediately.

**AS: What impact has your arrival had?**

**MN:** Until three years ago, Jewish presence was sparse. Today one can go to shul and daven with a minyan on Shabbos, study



Torah, send their children to Hebrew school twice a week, celebrate all holidays and participate in other Jewish events all year long. These activities were not available until now.

**AS: Tell us about your family.**

**MN:** In every army there are various ranks of soldiers, each one having their mission to accomplish. We are thankful to Hashem for blessing us with the recent birth of a baby boy, Levy Yitzchok, to join the ranks!

**AS: Describe your most successful programs and why you think they work.**

**MN:** Chanukah is always a big hit. We have a large Menorah set up in downtown Barrie with a candle lighting at the city hall attended by the Mayor, city councilors, representatives of the MP and MPPs. We have hot latkes, sufganiot and entertainment for the kids. Last year 200 people attended. It's exhilarating for Jews to celebrate openly and enthusiastically in public.

**AS: What are your personal objectives?**

**MN:** The Torah teaches us that the world was created for Moshiach - when the world will be an abode for Hashem. Every Mitzvah we perform in any part of the globe elevates us, the object, and the place where the Mitzvah was performed thus making the world closer to achieving its goal. The Rebbe has sent out Shluchim (emissaries) to every corner of the globe to expedite this elevation process. Our objective is that Barrie not only be part of this great global mission

but help facilitate it.

**AS: What's in store for Rosh Hashanah and the High Holidays?**

**MN:** We start with a pre Rosh Hashana kids fun day where children will gather and participate in workshops learning how the Shofar is made, baking their own Challa, designing Shana Tova cards for the community and understanding how significant the chag is.

For the holiday itself, we have Synagogue services. We would like to be as accommodating as possible. Therefore there are no tickets required and everyone is welcome to join us.

One of our big hits is the Rosh Hashana dinner on the 2nd night. We begin with the blowing of the Shofar and proceed with the evening prayer and a community dinner. Over a hundred people are expected to attend the event.

**AS: Is kosher food difficult to find?**

**MN:** Thank G-d most common products sold by major supermarkets bare a Kosher symbol. Shortly after we came we started a new program where people can order Kosher poultry and meat through us, and any other Kosher item that are not available in Barrie. We arrange delivery to Barrie. Remember Thornhill is only a 45 minute drive away.

**AS: Can you tell us of some of your achievements to date?**

**MN:** There's a story about Eliyahou Hanavi: when Hashem spoke to him, He did not speak through wind or an earthquake or fire but in a whisper. This teaches us that even

without a dramatic bolt of lightning, significant changes occur. A family who sends their children to classes or a young man who's been unaffiliated since his Bar Mitzvah starts to put on Tefillin or a seven year old who exclaims while leaving a holiday program, "this was the best party I've ever been to!" are the 'achievements' that encourage us the most. There is another member's story I'd like to tell. She is a mature woman who remembers the rampant anti Jewish attitude that once existed in the neighbourhood and is so grateful we are here, she lights Shabbos candles every Friday night. She recently had problems with her vision and went to see a specialist. The prognosis was dismal and she was informed that she will never regain her vision in one eye. The next Friday while lighting candles she prayed and pleaded, "Hashem, will I ever be able to see again? Please, I beg you to restore my vision." The next week she returned for a follow up appointment. After another examination the doctor said that things look different and if they operate, there is a chance of success. They

went ahead with it and she now sees better from that eye than the other.

**AS: Now that's an inspirational story. I know fundraising is a difficult part of the job. If any of our readers want to help, what is your contact information?**

**MN:** Our website is [www.JewishBarrie.ca](http://www.JewishBarrie.ca). My email address is [Rabbi@JewishBarrie.ca](mailto:Rabbi@JewishBarrie.ca) or by phone, (705) 417 1520

**AS: It sounds like you are doing great. We look forward to hearing more great news from Chabad of Barrie.**

**MN:** The Rebbe has taught us that we should never be satisfied with our current achievements and always strive to reach greater goals. Maimonides writes that any good deed, word, and even thought that we have can be the one to tip the scale and bring about our final redemption. How then can we be satisfied with our past achievements?

**AS: Have a happy, healthy, successful Rosh Hashana.**



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## WEEKLY CLASSES - WINTER SCHEDULE

### SUNDAY

8:00 AM	CHASSIDIC THOUGHT	RABBI GANSBURG
10:00 AM	PARSHAT HASHAVUA	RABBI SCHOCHET
10:00 AM	LIKKUTEI SICHOS	RABBI GANSBURG
11:15 AM	TALMUD (MOED KATAN)	RABBI SPALTER
6:45 PM	CHASSIDIC DISCOURSES	RABBI GANSBURG
8:30 PM	SHULCHAN ARUCH	RABBI CHAIKIN

### MONDAY

6:20 AM	CHASSIDUS	RABBI A. WAGNER
11:30 AM	THE JOY OF JUDAISM	RABBI SPALTER
7:45 PM	THE WEEKLY TORAH REVIEW	RABBI GANSBURG

### TUESDAY

11:30 AM	TORAH STUDIES - PARSHA	RABBI GANSBURG
8:00 PM	TALMUD (CHULIN)	RABBI SPALTER

### WEDNESDAY

11:30 AM	THE JEWISH LEARNING INSTITUTE	RABBI GANSBURG
7:30-9:00 PM	THE JEWISH LEARNING INSTITUTE	RABBI GANSBURG
8:30 PM	TALMUD (PESUCHIM) ADVANCED	RABBI WILHELM

### THURSDAY

6:20 AM	CHASSIDUS	RABBI A. WAGNER
12:00 PM	TANYA (HEBREW)	RABBI GANSBURG
8:00 PM	IN DEPTH PARSHA STUDY	RABBI Z.A. GROSSBAUM
8:15-9:15 PM	TALMUD (BAITZA)	RABBI SPALTER

### SHABBOS

9:00 AM	CHASSIDUS	RABBI GANSBURG
1 HR BEFORE MINCHA	CHASSIDUS	RABBI GANSBURG

### DAILY CLASSES

SUN-THU	9:00 PM	RAMBAM	ALTERNATING
MON-FRI	5:00 AM	CHASSIDIC THOUGHT	RABBI YARMUSH
MON-FRI	6:30 AM	TALMUD	RABBI SCHOCHET
MON-FRI	7:10 AM	CHASSIDIC THOUGHT	RABBI GANSBURG

MON-FRI	10AM-12PM	KOLLEL TIFERES ZEKEINIM LEVI YITZCHOK TALMUD, MISHNAH, HALACHA & CHUMASH - RABBI CHAIKIN
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## The Fifty-Sixth Century

Continued from page 2

to G-d and its recommitment to a life of goodness and holiness. It is the end of hunger, war, jealousy and greed; the removal of evil from the heart of man and suffering from G-d's world. It is all of these things because of a basic transformation that our world will undergo: the human mind will comprehend the divine truth.

In its present state, the world conceals the face of G-d. True, the workings of nature bespeak the wisdom and majesty of the Creator, and the processes of history show the hand of divine providence in the affairs of man; yet these are but pinpoints of light penetrating the thick weave of nature's veil. Far more pronounced is the physical world's concealment of the divine truth with the regularity of its cycles, the apparent amorality of its laws and the brute immanence of its being. I am, it proclaims with every proton of its being; I am an existence unto myself, absolute and independent; whatever "higher truth" there might be to existence is just that -- a "higher" truth, abstract and immaterial, and quite apart from the "real" world.

But in the age of Moshiach, "knowledge and wisdom will increase" to the point that "the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the sea." The true essence of reality will be revealed; the physical world will be experienced as an expression, rather than an obfuscation, of the absolute, exclusive and all-pervading reality of G-d. And when the world will cease to be perceived as something apart from G-d, all other features of the messianic world will fall into place. Man will endeavor only to know G-d and obey His will; the strife and conflict-ridden existence we now know will be replaced with a perfect peace and harmony -- harmony between the various drives and forces within the human soul, harmony between men and nations, and harmony between the Creator and His creation.

This explains how the supernal wisdom that emanated from the "windows of heaven" in the fifty-sixth century served to "prepare the world to be elevated in the seventh millennium." The teachings of Chassidism offer a taste of this futuristic awareness and understanding. Employing the tools of human reason, Chassidism explains to the mind of man and implants in his heart the truth that "there is none else besides Him," that "G-dliness

is everything and everything is G-dliness"; it describes the origins, development and inner workings of the soul of man and the manner in which it finds realization and fulfillment through the knowledge of G-d and the actualization of His will; it expounds on man's role in creation and how our deeds transform the very nature of reality, making it more receptive to G-dliness.

Today, our ability to truly comprehend and assimilate these truths is limited by the present state of the human mind and the world that colors its thinking. Yet the revelation of the inner soul of Torah was the drizzle that heralds the deluge, the trickle that marks the beginnings of the great flood that will "fill the world with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the sea."

### Implement and Illustrator

Complementing the downpour of divine wisdom from the windows of heaven was an upsurge of earthly knowledge, which the Zohar also considers a prologue to and preparation for the messianic era of knowledge.

There are three basic ways in the revolutionary advances in science and technology of the recent generations prepare the world for the coming of Moshiach:

1) **As a tool:** On the most elementary level, the scientific revolution has facilitated, to an unprecedented degree, the dissemination of Torah. Three hundred years ago, a teacher could communicate directly only with those who were within range of his voice; today, his words (and even his image) can be broadcast to billions of people in all parts of the globe. In these and numerous other ways, the scientific advances of the last three centuries have aided and enabled the spread of the divine wisdom on a scale that could not even be envisioned before the "wellsprings of the great deep" burst open in the sixth century of the sixth millennium.

2) **As an analogue:** On a deeper level, the accelerated development of earthly wisdom has not only brought the knowledge of G-d farther, faster and to more people -- it has also enhanced the quality of our understanding of our Creator. The scientific revolution has actually enabled us to better appreciate and relate to the divine reality.

For example: integral to our faith is the concept of "specific divine providence" (hashgachah peratit): that G-d observes our every act, word and thought and holds us accountable for them; that He is aware and concerned with every event in the

universe, from the birth of a star in a distant galaxy to the turn of a leaf in the wind in a remote forest, and that they all figure in His master plan of creation and contribute to its realization.

In earlier generations, the concept of an all-seeing eye that simultaneously observes billions of actions thousands of miles apart from each other, and of a consciousness that is simultaneously aware of innumerable events and their effect upon each other, were beyond the realm of reason. One could believe it absolutely, for faith has the capacity to accept even the most illogical of truths; but one could not rationally relate to it and envision it with the mind's eye. Today, when we can converse with ease with someone ten thousand miles away, when we can watch a spacecraft landing on Mars and use a chip of silicon to compute millions of data a second, it requires no great "leap of faith" to understand that He who imparted such potential in His creation certainly possesses it Himself, and in a far greater measure.

This is but one example of how modern science has transformed our very vision of reality, introducing certain concepts into the lexicon of our minds which, in earlier generations, had belonged exclusively to the realm of faith.

3) **As a revelation of G-dliness:** In both examples cited above, we have seen how the "earthly wisdom" of science serves the revelation of the supernal wisdom, whether as a tool that aids its dissemination or as a model that makes tangible and real what was previously abstract and surreal.

There is, however, a third and more essential way in which the eruption of the "wellsprings of the great deep" has prepared the world for the seventh millennium. A way in which the earthly wisdom is not only a facilitator of the supernal wisdom of Torah, but itself a revelation of G-dliness.

For science is discovering the face of G-d. For the past three hundred years, it has been dissecting the veil of nature to the point that the veil has been becoming more and more transparent, more revealing of the truths it both embodies and conceals.

To cite but one example of many:

In earlier generations, the study of the nature yielded a picture of a multifarious universe. The world was perceived as being comprised of dozens of elements and driven by a number of distinct forces. But the

more science developed, the more it uncovered the unity behind the diversity. A hundred "elements" were revealed to be composed of a much smaller number of fundamental building blocks; diverse forces were shown to be but variant mutations of a single, elementary force. Even the differentiation between matter and energy was shown to be but an external distinction between two forms of the same essence. Indeed, science is rapidly approaching the point of being able to demonstrate that the entirety of existence is a singular ray emanating from a singular source.

Of course, the "windows of heaven" have already unleashed this truth -- in the language of Torah thought and Kabbalistic metaphor. Complementing this revelation, the scientist is currently formulating

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this truth in mathematical equations and demonstrating it in state-of-the-art atom smashers.

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## The 4 Mysteries of King Solomon

Continued from page 2

Man's mission in life consists of two basic challenges: learning and doing; or, as these relate to Jewish life, Torah and mitzvot. The Torah is the vehicle by which we gain knowledge of our Creator and insight into the essence of life; the mitzvot, the divine commandments, are the means by which we build a better and holier world, developing the physical creation into a "dwelling for G-d." These two endeavors define the four personalities represented in the Four Kinds.

The etrog, which has both a delicious taste and a delightful aroma, represents the perfect individual who both learns and achieves. The lulav, being the branch of the date palm, produces fruit that has a taste but no aroma; this is the prototype of the reclusive scholar who grows in wisdom but shuns the world of action. The fragrant but tasteless myrtle is the activist whose profusion of good deeds consumes all his time and energies. Finally, the tasteless, scentless willow represents the person who neither learns nor does, actualizing neither his intellectual potential nor his capacity to improve the world.

On Sukkot, concludes the Midrash, these "Four Kinds" are "all bound together in one bundle," each an integral part of the community of G-d.

### The Tormented Fruit

In light of this, we can understand the four things that

mystified the wisest of men.

If the "splendid fruit" in the Four Kinds represents the harmony of learning and accomplishment, why is this the fruit that "dwells in its tree all year round"? One would expect such perfection from a fruit maturing in tranquillity, in a climate that is singularly attuned to its nature and needs; not from one whose development is agitated by ever-shifting conditions. And yet, time and again we indeed find that the greatest lives are those beset by travail and challenge; that the most balanced personalities are forged by the need to deal with changing circumstances and to constantly adapt to new climates and environments.

### Pressed Leaves

The lulav, too, perplexed the great mind of Solomon. Is not the very nature of intellectual discourse that it produces varied opinions and conclusions? In the words of the Talmud, "Torah scholars sit in numerous groups and study the Torah. One group deems a thing impure, and another deems it pure; one group forbids a deed and another permits it; one group disqualifies

Continued on page 16





## One Tip to

# Marriage Success

By family therapist Rabbi Abraham Kass, MA, RSW, RMFT, CCHT,

After 25 years of helping couples improve their marriages, I have learned something very important.

The marriage wisdom I am about to share is very powerful. Not only will it dramatically upgrade the quality of your marriage, but it will also increase your connection to G-d.

Simply—be a “giver.” This is the best thing you can do to build your marriage and make sure you do not have problems. Being a giver will immunize your marriage in the same way a vaccine will immunize against serious illness.

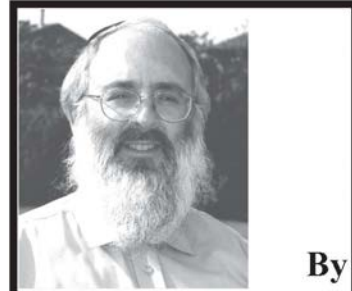
The fundamentals of giving are basic. Always put the needs of your partner before your own. When your partner does likewise, then it is a very sweet marriage indeed.

Putting your partner first does not mean enslaving yourself to your marital partner. Don’t give what you don’t have. If you try to give more than you can, you will not be able to deliver or you will be resentful, and such a gift nobody wants!

For example, if you desperately need some personal time and your partner at the same time wants you to spend time with him or her, it is perfectly alright to seek a balance in accordance with your best judgment.

You need to be emotionally healthy, and if you give up “too much” the resentment that you may feel could lead to a pushback, and this will hurt your partner. Such a situation will not be good for you or your partner.

The more you give, the more you get. By giving, you increase the likelihood that in



By Rabbi Abraham Kass, M.A., R.S.W., R.M.F.T.

turn your, partner will then give to you. And even more important, know that when you give you are scoring big points with G-d.

Only give what you can, and what you can live without! Never let pure selfishness get in the way of giving.

Selfishness is relationship poison. Giving is relationship tonic.

Giving expresses everything the Torah teaches (see Tanya, chapter 32). The Torah teaches us to prioritize the spiritual over the material—to elevate ourselves to that part of our reality where we are all connected and one—over the material world that separates and divides us.

If all of this sounds complicated, it isn’t. Giving is the simplest thing anyone can do. Here are some examples:

- \* Give your partner your time.
- \* Give your partner your attention; listen carefully to what he or she has to say.
- \* If your partner wants you to do something, do it as soon as humanly possible.
- \* If your partner asks you to do a favor, say yes.
- \* Find creative ways to communicate to your partner that you feel close with him or her.
- \* Acknowledge your partner’s importance with a “good

morning” or “good night.”

\* When it is humanly possible, don’t do anything your partner objects too.

\* Before you speak, consider how your partner will react hearing what you potentially may say. When appropriate, simply be quiet.

\* Stay calm.

\* Don’t judge your partner in a negative way which can lead to anger and criticism.

\* Seek ways to make your partner feel secure.

These are just a few samples... and with minimal effort you can think of many additional ways to make your partner feel good; to make your partner feel you care about him or her.

From the complex to the simple, it all ends at one point: Be a giver and you make both G-d and your partner happy.

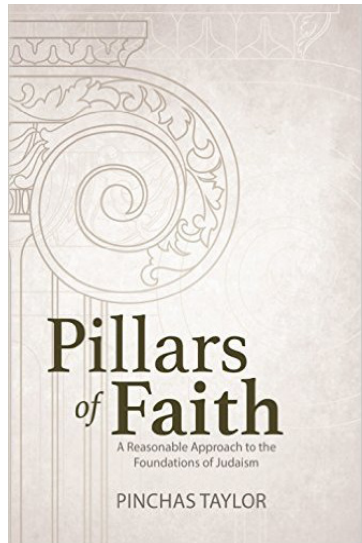
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Rabbi Abraham Kass, MA, RSW, RMFT, CCHT, is a registered Marriage and Family Therapist, Social Worker and Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist. Currently Rabbi Kass operates a successful private practice in personal, couple and family therapy.

Before working as a therapist, Rabbi Kass was successful educational Rabbi working for many years in various Yeshivas and Seminaries. The New York Jewish Board of Education has honored him for his dedication and excellence in Jewish education.

He and his wife Golda live in Thornhill, Ontario and have been blessed with children and grandchildren.

For more information or to arrange an appointment he can be reached at (905) 771-1087 or visit his websites at: [www.AbeKass.com](http://www.AbeKass.com) or [www.RabbiKass.com](http://www.RabbiKass.com).

## Apikoros or Ignoramus?



By Miri Birk  
Pillars of Faith: A Reasonable Approach To The Foundations of Judaism Pinchas Taylor Mosaica Press, 421 pp

Many years ago an apikoros (heretic) moved into a Jewish town, and word of his presence soon spread. The local Rabbi had never met an apikoros before. Intrigued, he came to the apikoros and asked him, “Are you really an apikoros?”

“Absolutely!” the apikoros responded.

“I’m interested in your perspective on a certain tractate in the Talmud,” the rabbi said earnestly.

“I don’t study Talmud,” the fellow responded.

“Oh,” said the rabbi disappointedly. “What about Mishna, can we discuss that?”

“I don’t do Mishnah,” said the apikoros.

The rabbi tried again. “What about the Torah? The Bible? Rashi?”

“You don’t get it,” answered the apikoros again. “I’m an apikoros, I don’t do that stuff.”

“My dear friend, forgive me,” said the rabbi. “To reject the spiritual validity of Judaism you must first be a scholar. You’re not an apikoros. You’re an ignoramus!”

And this is exactly where Pinchas Taylor’s new book Pillars of Faith: A Reasonable Approach to the Foundations of Judaism, proves useful. It gives average readers the ability to feel like they have a basic grasp in their understanding of Judaism. It takes on the wide range of modern-day challenges posed to belief in Judaism and gives readers the tools they need to feel confident in forming opinions on these topics in a way that is grounded both in Torah and rationality. If there was ever a concept that you took issue with in Judaism, you’ll probably find it dealt with in some capacity in

Taylor’s book. The titles of his chapters include Evolution, The Oral Tradition, Women in Judaism, and Resurrection of the Dead, among many others. Though the 17 topics in this book are organized under the headings of G-d, Torah, Jewish Identity, and The World to Come, each chapter succinctly deals with the topic at hand in approximately 25 pages or less and can be approached in a stand-alone fashion. Taylor’s sources range from scientific, to archeological, to sociological, to historical, to simply rational. He strives to give the reader an understanding of how, within each of these topics, belief in Judaism can be accepted on a logical basis.

Anyone with some level of involvement in Judaism will find that this book addresses topics that come up quite frequently in conversation. Over the last week, since reading this book, I have shared with a group of students a fact about the humane nature of kosher slaughter that was previously unknown to me:

“Remarkably, it has been discovered that in kosher animals, and only kosher animals, the carotid and vertebral arteries actually merge, so the shechita cuts off all blood flow to the brain, allowing the animal to die immediately and painlessly.” Ever wondered about that enigmatic claim that the resurrection from the dead that will happen through the luz bone, a small bone in the spine? Well, as Taylor points out, “In 2008 researchers sought to bring back a variety of extinct animals. . . the bulk of the discussion surrounding the question of whether to carry this out or not was not based on whether or not it was possible, but on the ethical ramifications of doing so.”

Taylor points out that bones carry the DNA necessary for rebuilding the body in the future and quotes a researcher specializing in ancient DNA as predicting, “If you can do a mammoth, you can do anything else that’s dead, including your grandmother.” Though I wouldn’t call this conclusive evidence, it frames the concept of resurrection from the dead in terms that the rational mind can appreciate.

Yet, in reading this book cover-to-cover I was struck by the sheer range of academic fields Taylor draws on for evidence. Now, without questioning his level of expertise in any one subject, I’m not sure it’s possible that he (or anyone, for that matter) is an expert in evolutionary biology, astrophysics,

history, archeology, anatomy, DNA analysis, food science, women’s studies, chemistry, ethics, and psychiatry, to name a few. And while the arguments of the book appear to be sound and evidence-based, as someone who is not an expert in any of these fields myself, it’s hard for me to assess the extent to which they accurately represent the conclusions of any particular field. The book often reads like Taylor cherry-picked those studies that proved his points, despite the fact that they may not be the most commonly held opinions of that particular field. For the scholar who is a true expert in any one of the fields discussed in the book, I imagine the superficial treatment of their area of expertise would be unsatisfying.

As much as I enjoyed the

book (and believe it will be engaging and informative for most readers), I was puzzled by the marketing techniques employed. The title, Pillars of Faith, implies a scholarly and rigorous treatment of Jewish faith that would appeal to a far more limited audience. Furthermore, such a reader would likely be disappointed at the sweeping attempt to cover such a wide range of subjects in a such a short amount of space, rather than providing a more thoughtful, serious treatment of narrowly constrained questions. As someone who works with skeptical college students, I can assure you that aside from those who are actively searching for a deeper understanding of spirituality, most would never pick up a book called Pillars of Faith. However, if this book

was called something more representative of its actual content, for example, Answers to All the Questions You Ever Had About Judaism (or something of the sort), the prospective audience would widen greatly.

That being said, Pillars of Faith certainly offers the average reader a valuable lens through which to view Judaism. The questions asked are those that come up regularly in today’s Jewish world and the answers given rest on persuasive arguments and what will likely be satisfying enough for the majority of readers. For those with an interest in engaging more in their Jewish identity, or for those who seek to help others do so, Taylor’s book offers a pathway that will give the reader valuable tools in that pursuit.



# SLICE of Life

## Soul Strings Beckon, A Conductor Follows

By Dovid Zaklikowski

When Israel Edelson, a rising conductor under the tutelage of legendary maestro Leonard Bernstein, arrived in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Crown Heights, some 30 years ago, he was searching for a something. He found it in Chasidic melodies, known as niggunim, that were sung around the Shabbat table at the home of Rabbi Yoel Kahan.

Earlier this month on the 21st yahrzeit of the Lubavitch Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, Edelson told his story in *Wandering Souls, Wandering Candles*. Produced by Chabad of Philadelphia, the show featured film clips of Edelson's life interspersed with a live piano performance in which he played the melodies that moved him in Rabbi Kahan's home and later at the Chasidic gatherings in the Rebbe's court.

Rabbi Kahan, the leading Chasidic scholar, senior teacher and mentor at the central Chabad-Lubavitch rabbinical school, took a liking to Edelson.

Born in Russia where he was educated under the communist system, Edelson considered himself for the most part an atheist. But he was aware of Jewish cantorial music "which I did not connect to," and the very basics of Jewish life.

As he tells it, his awakening came at the Kahan home where he first heard Chabad niggunim around the Shabbat table.

"The niggun is the bare melody, it is the substance that the melody has to it, that is the first element what constitutes what it is," Edelson says, some three decades later. "The power of the niggun is in the melody itself. It reaches very deeply into the soul. In classical music there is some logic; the niggun itself has a logic of its own. It's hard to describe in words."

During that first Shabbat experience, he encountered a new world: "All my rich previous musical experiences were put at once into a different perspective. None of them succeeded in such a way to simply enter into the innermost part of my being, leaving me stripped of all the external 'shells' and letting me just be there, whole and at one."

Mesmerized as he was, Edelson had to cut that memorable Shabbat experience short because of a scheduled meeting he had with Bernstein. Leonard Bernstein reportedly saw in Edelson his protégé, and the rising star was unsure how to make a graceful exit on that Friday night. He knew that according to all those singing those sweet melodies around

the table, the Shabbat was holy and they would not desecrate it by traveling by train to a meeting in the city with the conductor. Yet, when he said goodbye, no one asked him where he was going and why. "They just said, whenever you want to stop by, feel free."

No Regrets

After that first visit Edelson began frequenting the home of Rabbi Kahan conversing in He-



Israel Edelson conducts a chamber orchestra

brew. At the same time Edelson was preparing for the BBC-Rupert International Young Conductors' Competition in London. The intense competition would decide his fate: would he become the next well-known maestro?

By the time Edelson left to London, he was putting on Tefillin and studying the basics of Judaism with rabbinical students. A day before his trip to London, Rabbi Kahan gave him a taped recording of Chabad niggunim. "When you have some free time listen to it."

Once in London, Edelson was preoccupied in an emotionally draining week of preparations. "Day and night I studied the difficult and previously unfamiliar pieces on the program. Every evening after the first and second days I was told on the phone, that I was chosen to proceed to the next stage," he recalls. By the end of the week the judges announced Edelson winner of the competition.

The following morning, no longer busy with preparations, he played the tape Rabbi Kahn had given him. The Rebbe's voice, singing a niggun from the first Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, to the words of the Psalmist, "Tzama lecha nafshi," "My soul thirst for you..." stirred

Edelson to the depths of his soul. "The competition, my career, my whole life suddenly seemed so irrelevant, so illusory, compared to the truth of this niggun and all it stood for."

Those next few months, Bernstein took Edelson as his star assistant. But when Edelson, decided a few months later to not to play on the Sabbath, the famed maestro disappeared.

"Conducting on Sabbath would be your divine service," Bernstein told his protégé. "Refusing at this critical stage of your career is professional suicide."

Edelson was unshakable.

"Being in the industry, it is like the assembly line, it works 24/7, no exceptions," Edelson says about conducting. Today, he says he would never consider a lifestyle that does not have the Shabbat.

"Once you get to keeping Shabbat, it's a lifesaver. Without it, it's like slavery, you are

go without Shabbat, it's a part of my life's rhythm. One day out of the seven that removes you from the everyday life. It's

beautiful, it's a divine gift. If it was not there, you would have to invent it."

## The 4 Mysteries of King Solomon

Continued from page 14

something and another renders it fit."

So when the verse speaks of "fronds of dates," we are inclined to understand these words in their literal, plural sense. For if the second of the Four Kinds connotes the Torah scholar--the human mind enfranchised to assimilate the divine wisdom--should it not consist of two palm branches, in keeping with the plural nature of the intellect? Should not their leaves be opened and spread, pointing to the various directions that the rational examination of a concept will take when embarked on by the mind of man?

And yet, the lulav commanded by the Torah is a single, closed frond, its leaves fused to a single rod pointing in a single direction. As the above-quoted Talmudic passage concludes: "Should a person then ask: How, then, might I study Torah? But all was received from a single shepherd."

This was the second of the two mysteries pondered by King Solomon. How do the flock of opinions and perspectives of Torah relate to their "single shepherd"? How can the divine wisdom be funneled through the multifarious world of human reason and remain the singular truth of a singular G-d?

The Plaited Twig

The myrtle in the Four Kinds represents the "deed" aspect of life--the manner in which we fulfill the purpose of creation with the physical actions of the mitzvot, thereby constructing a "dwelling for G-d in the physical world." Thus, the Torah identifies the myrtle by alluding to its "plaited" appearance, given it by the fact that its leaves grow in clumps of three: the number "three" represents the realm of action, which is the third of the soul's three "garments" or vehicles of expression (thought, speech and deed).

Here lies what is perhaps the most profound mystery of all. How can the finite and mundane physical deed "house" the divine essence? Indeed, the plaited twig that comes to mind when thinking of the physical world is not the fragrant myrtle, but the barbed and poisonous hirduf!

Yet it is the material world where G-d elected to make His home. It is the physical deed to which He imparted the ability to serve as man's highest form of communion with Him. Why? To the wisest of men, this was one of the four phenomena to which he could only say: "I do not know it."

A Brotherhood of Trees

The fourth of Solomon's mysteries concerns the willow, a plant with neither fragrance nor taste, devoid of learning as well as deeds.

Why is this species counted among the Four Kinds? The verse itself answers that question

by referring to the fourth kind as "aravot of the river." The willow might not exhibit any positive qualities, but its roots are imbedded in the banks of its ancestral river and nourished by the waters of its heritage. It, too, is a child of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; in its veins, too, course the love and awe of G-d that they bequeathed to all their descendants.

Another hallmark of the willow is that "it grows in brotherhood." This alludes to a unique feature of the human "willow": taken alone, he might exhibit not a single positive trait or achievement; but when gathered in a community, the aura of holiness that suffuses each individual soul suddenly comes to light. Thus our sages tell us that the divine presence rests upon a gathering of ten individuals (the number that comprises a "community") even if they are not engaged in the study of Torah or the performance of a mitzvah. This is also the significance of the minyan (the quorum of ten required to recite certain prayers): ten individuals gathered together represent a quantum leap in holiness. Ten ignorant boors make a minyan, while nine pious scholars do not.

This is what mystified King Solomon about the willow. How does ten times nothing add up to something? If each on his own possesses no visible expression of his innate holiness, how does that change when ten of them come together? All trees grow on water, mused the wisest of men; what sets the willows apart, earning them a place among the Four Kinds? Simply the fact that they grow close together?

Impossible Truths

If we think of these mysteries, they are as enigmatic and elusive as when King Solomon pondered them thirty centuries ago. But we usually don't think of them at all--so deeply are they ingrained in our reality. Despite their logical incomprehensibility, these are obvious and ever-present truths in our lives.

Why do vacillation and hardship fuel growth? How can contradictory ideas embody a singular truth? Why does a simple physical deed elevate us to levels of holiness and G-dliness unequaled by the most transcendent spiritual experience? How are a number of ordinary human beings magically transformed when knit into a community, greatly surpassing the sum of their individual parts?

King Solomon couldn't explain these mysteries; certainly, we cannot. But we recognize these as axiomatic to our lives, as four cornerstones to our existence that bear the stamp of a Creator within whose infinite being opposites merge and paradoxical truths harmoniously reside.