

Salvation within Reach

EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW WITH
DR. RYBAK
BY RMA NEW JERSEY
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28 / THE NUMBERS THAT I KNOW • 51 / IN THE CLOSET OR OUT?



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A TIME was founded in memory of:

ר' ירמיה' ב"ר אהרן ע"ה • ר' מרדכי ע"ה ב"ר אפרים רוזן נ"י

Dear Readers,

Sometimes things feel endless and deliverance seems out of reach. New prospects offer hope, and then are so long in coming to fruition. Hope is so hard to hold onto.

Yetzias Mitzrayim has a message for us.

A story is told of a king who challenged his constituents to scale a mountain of thousands of steps, promising a great reward to anyone who reaches the summit. Most were discouraged just by taking in the sight of the staircase reaching heavenward, of an endless trot. A few courageous individuals started out, but it didn't take long for them to turn around and admit defeat as well, for even as they climbed ever further, the daunting sight of what lay ahead made them realize what an impossible mission they were up against.

There was only one person who kept going. Step by painstaking step, he trotted on, climbing flight after flight, aiming for the top. What was his secret? How did he work up the gumption to aim for a feat that seemed impossible? How could he sweat his way up when the past hours of exhausting toil was almost insignificant next to what he still had to accomplish to reach his goal?

His secret was that his focus was on what was behind him and not on what lay ahead. He kept looking back, cheering himself on. Behind him, down in the valley, were hundreds of steps, each of which he had already climbed. "Look how far I've come!" he said, stoking his confidence. "I can surely reach the top." He averted his eyes from the top of the mountain and the many, many steps he still had to climb, and instead celebrated his accomplishments.

He was not even halfway up when, mid-flight, he saw a door off to the side. The king was standing there, beckoning him to enter. The door led to an elevator, and in no time, they were at the summit,

mission accomplished. The reward was his.

"All I wanted from you was to do your part, your best," the king told him, his smile wide. "I wanted you to show me that you want to do my will. And once you proved that, I stepped in to finish. I had never intended for you to do something impossible."

Yetzias Mitzrayim was a spectacular display of "*Yeshuas Hashem k'heref ayin.*" In one swift moment, bondage was reversed to liberation. An oppressed and downtrodden nation was transformed to an exalted one, to one of celebrities! The 400-year *galus* Hashem had told Avraham about had been shortened to 210 years. And Bnei Yisroel were free. The time for redemption had come, and nothing could stand in its way.

This is a message for us when things we face seem insurmountable, impossible. When the path that lies ahead seems too difficult for us to traverse. When the thought of what the future will bring makes us cower in trepidation.

Don't forget that the King is waiting in the wings. He wants us only to do our part. It is not His intention for us to do the impossible; we don't have to figure things out, do the calculations, ponder the statistics. We just have to take it step by step.

Salute your accomplishments. Look back at what you've done: the challenges you've triumphed, the hurdles you've overcome, the heights you've risen to. Look at how far you've come, and cheer yourself on.

Take one step at a time, and let Hashem take care of the future.

Wishing you all an easy yom tov and personal and communal salvation,

The Editors



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Regarding your reproductive health

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or overwhelmed and in search of expert
medical information

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A TIME is the premier internationally acclaimed organization that offers its many programs and services to Jewish men, women, and couples struggling with infertility. Speak with experts that can guide you with:

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Mail Box



Dear A TIME,

We just wanted to thank you for this past A TIME Shabbaton. We really felt Klal Yisroel's helping hand and got so much *chizuk* from the speakers and people who attended the Shabbaton. The Motzei Shabbos dancing felt like *gan eden*... despite everyone's personal challenges, the room was glowing with *simcha*. It was as if everyone's challenges were washed away. The tools and *chizuk* that were given over the Shabbaton are helping us face the *nisayon* with more *emunah* and *bitachon*. We truly thank you for all the little details that were put into making the Shabbaton so relaxing and fun, and most of all worry-free!

A Grateful Couple



Dear Brany,

Many thanks for a beautiful Shabbos. We really enjoyed ourselves (even my husband :). We appreciate all the hard work that went into preparing an event of such magnitude. From the stunning floral arrangements, elegant catering and lighting, to the attentive ATIME staff and volunteers, to the magazines and books, and of course the inspirational speeches — no detail went unnoticed. I really got a lot of *chizuk* from the event. The inspiration we received should carry us a long way.

*All the best,
B.B.*



Dear Henny,

I just wanted to let you know how thankful we have been to A TIME and the wonderful staff throughout this process thus far. Never once did we feel like we were bothering you — but on the

contrary! You all were and are so willing to help and do it so graciously.

When you offered supper I was blown away and all I was thinking was, "Wow, how do they manage to be so thoughtful?"

When the nurse came with the care bag while I was waiting to be wheeled in, I almost started crying. As you (evidently!) know, this process is draining both physically and emotionally and you really make us feel cared for.

Since this is so private and not shared with many people, it can be very hard and lonely. We sincerely felt taken care of on all levels. I feel like I had no clue what to expect but you, in a way, prepared me for it by offering supper and sending that care bag.

I really can't thank you all enough and hope you all are *zoche* to do the special and amazing work you do (without anyone knowing!).

An A TIMER

P.S. I'm sure you hear this all the time, but the women sent to be *mashgichos* are such great women. They explained everything, schmoozed and reassured us.

incredible patience and the medical advice he shared with us and without all the friends we have made through A TIME; we have even done several "mini shabbatons" with these amazing couples we have gotten to know. The support you and your incredible organization have given us was the push, the sanity and most importantly the hope with which we continued pushing forward, and even though our doctors couldn't explain exactly what was going on or going to be... *yeshuas Hashem keheref ayin*.

Tizku l'mitzvos and may you continue to witness *yeshua* after *yeshua* from everyone!

R and S



Dear A TIME Staff,

I can't begin to thank you enough for what you're doing.

I had my retrieval yesterday. The *mashgicha* was so caring and compassionate and was there at every step, making sure I don't feel alone... Thanks so much for the food package and for the dinner offer. I truly feel fortunate to be part of such a special organization!

Thanks again!
Name Withheld



Hi Rabbi and Mrs. Rosen,

We wanted to share with both of you that we are, *baruch Hashem*, expecting... we want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all that A TIME has given us over these amazing yet hard years. We attended our first Shabbaton a few days after our first failed IVF. Since then we've come to three Shabbatons and two Shasathons (and gearing up for our third, *im yirtzeh Hashem*). We would not have been able to make it through without Rabbi Koenig's time,



Dear Chumi,

Thank you. I received the HUG package. It is so appreciated. Just what I needed.

The *chizuk* letters, Embracing Hope pamphlet, and the rest, are the HUGs I need.

Tizku lmitzvos to all involved.

Y.B.



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T · I · M · E · L · I · N · E

Dear Friends,

We begin the Seder by inviting the hungry and the homeless to join with us. We conclude the Seder by opening the door for Eliyahu Hanavi. The message here is so powerful. We need community. We need family, we need friends in our lives.

Pesach, and especially the Seder, can be a very hard time to spend with family or friends. There may be many painful reminders of our difficult *nisayon*.

But Pesach is also a *yom tov* of liberation. Mitzrayim (or *tzimtzum*) isn't the only option. We were freed.

Here, at A TIME, we completely understand the Mitzrayim you are experiencing. Know that we would do anything we can to help make this journey shorter and easier for you. Reach out to us. Call us.

The magazine you are holding is a reminder of how much we feel and understand. Before you read even one word, internalize the feeling of caring that is

brought to you by the A TIME family. Remember how much you are thought about and understood.

Also, know that Hashem is with you. That is the message of Pesach.

When notifying Moshe that He will be taking the Yidden out of Mitzrayim, Hashem introduced Himself by name to Moshe (Shemos 3: 14) signifying that He was present with the Yidden in Mitzrayim — and that He will always be present in future generation through difficult times.

It is our wish and hope that this Pesach we should clearly see that Hashem is with us and that we should share many *simchos*.

Here for you wherever you may be on *yom tov*, with all my heart.

*Gut Yom Tov,
Brany Rosen
Founder/Director of Member Services*

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A TIME AROUND THE WORLD

HISTORICAL ASIFAS RABBANIM WITH A TIME ANTWERP

Wednesday Parshas Toldos saw a historical meeting taking place for all *rabbanim* and *dayanim* of Antwerp. This meeting was personally called for by the Moro D'Asre of Antwerp, Harav Aharon Schiff *shlit"a* in aid of couples struggling with fertility.

It is already over a year since A TIME launched its branch in Antwerp to provide assistance to local couples. Harav Schiff *shlit"a* called this meeting in order to create awareness of the services that A TIME offers and especially to bring to light to various *halachic* aspects within the medical area.

Harav Shaul Rosen *shlit"a*, Founder of A TIME, Harav Naftali Elimelech Weiss *shlit"a*, as

well as Harav Chaim Aron Unger *shlit"a*, Dayan of A TIME flew in from New York to grace the event with their presence.

Harav Naftali Elimelech Weiss *shlit"a*, who chaired the event, explained the wide range of assistance and the importance of the activities which A TIME makes available for the couples.

He then called up Harav Schiff *shlit"a* by foretelling the following story: A person once came to a *rebbe* with a very challenging situation. The *rebbe*, wanting to truly understand the Yid's pain and suffering, went to a doctor and described what the person related and asked the doctor what pain would be likened to this suffering. The doctor



answered that it would be the pain of extracting a tooth. The Rebbe immediately asked the doctor to extract a tooth from him so that he will be able to truly comprehend the pain of another Yid. Right thereafter the good news came through that the Yid experienced a miraculous salvation.

Harav Weiss *shlit"á* expounded that the Gaavad Harav Schiff *shlit"á* is an example of this story. Harav Schiff *shlit"á* personally dedicates himself to the Antwerp community with great devotion and personally called this meeting in order to further the support for couples requiring A TIME's services.

Thereafter, Harav Shual Rosen *shlit"á* greeted the assembled and thanked the *rabbanim* for attending this vital meeting.

Harav Chaim Aron Unger *shlit"á* was the main speaker of the

event and spoke on the subject of *halacha* in the medical field. His speech was accompanied by a live slide presentation in order to provide a clearer picture for those gathered and was listened to by the *rabbanim* with great interest.

Harav Weiss *shlit"á* concluded the event by thanking Harav Schiff *shlit"á* for being a bulwark of support to A TIME in his position as president of the organization, as well as to the *rabbanim* of A TIME Belgium, Harav Asher Sternbuch *shlit"á*, Rav of Beis Medrash Ohel Yaakov ; Harav Yaakov Yosef Breuer *shlit"á*, Dayan of Skver; and Harav Eluzor Friedman, Rav of Yetev Lev Satmar. ●



Broken but Whole – In Pieces but in Peace

By: Y. Roitenbarg

Seasonal Thoughts - Pesach 5778

Since Pesach is the *yom tov* of questions, I should not have been surprised, when shortly before Pesach, a neighbor asked me whether we would be joining my parents for *yom tov*. After telling her that my *ka"h* elderly parents no longer make Pesach at home, and that they would be spending Pesach with one of my siblings in Yerushalayim, she continued, "So what will you do? You'll stay home on your own for Seder Nacht?"

Pesach is perhaps the most family-oriented of all *yomim tovim*. Families assemble, fathers and grandfathers enthusiastically fulfill the *mitzvah* of *v'higadetah l'vinchah*: recalling miracles

**MATZAH DELIVERS
A SUBTLE YET POW-
ERFUL MESSAGE,
DEMONSTRATING
THAT EVEN WHEN
BROKEN-HEARTED,
WE CAN DISPLAY
WHOLEHEARTED
FAITH.**

of the past while transmitting the torch of faith on to the future. The *mitzvos* pertaining to other *yomim tovim*, such as *shofar*, *arba minim*, *sukkah* or *menorah*, can be fulfilled independently; there is no communication, interaction or relationship required for any of those *mitzvos*. However, a central part of the Seder is Haggadah — a dialogue, predominantly between fathers and sons. Perhaps that is why at Pesach time we hear people asking, "Who is joining you for Pesach?" or "Who will be you with you for the Seder?" or "How many people were at your Seder?"

In the 28 years we have been married, we have sometimes spent Pesach with our parents overseas but

WHEN LIFE'S PATHS ARE BUMPY, WITH OBSTACLES STREWN ALONG THE WAY, WE STRENGTHEN OUR FAITH AND COURAGEOUSLY SING THE SONG OF V'EMUNASCHA BALEILOS.

we have mostly spent Pesach at home in Eretz Yisroel. Some years we have been the guests and other years we have been the hosts. There were the years we were seated at full tables, filled with siblings and their children, and there were years we stayed home seated at a table, not full of children, but certainly full of faith. How I wish my neighbor would know that even the years we didn't have company, I was not home on my own; I was home with my husband who is so happy to lead our Seder. Our Seder table might not look like anything this neighbor can fathom, nor like anything we once envisioned for ourselves, but it is uplifting, fortifying and meaningful. My neighbor need not worry about us being on our own because we are never alone — **ד' לי ולא אירא**. In all circumstances and situations, in joy and in sorrow, through ecstasy and adversity, Yidden hold onto Hashem with stalwart faith. This is always a Yid's approach to life, especially on Pesach when *emunah* is a dominant theme and focal point of the Haggadah and Sedarim.

After the Second World War in year 5706, the Bais Yisroel (who later became the Gerrer Rebbe) approached a young man called Mottel Meirantz and said to him, "I am alone and you are alone, so let's make our Seder together." Both were brokenhearted Yidden, whose lives had been saved but whose hearts were torn asunder in the terrors and atrocities of Europe. The Bais Yisroel had escaped the fiery furnaces of World War II, but he had lost his wife and all of his children in the ashes of Europe. Mottel Meirantz, a young Gerrer *chassid*, was an orphan and sole survivor of his family. Two heartbroken, lonely Yidden, left and bereft, now joined together to try and celebrate Zman Cheiruseinu. In the aftermath of a most horrendous destruction, their Seder night was unlike anything either of them had ever experienced. It began as usual with Kadash,

Urchatz and proceeded on to Maggid. Though it is well-known that "*kol hamarbeh lesaper harei zeh meshubach*," in the aftermath of such unspeakable horrors, the Bais Yisroel did not expound or explain anything. He merely recited the Haggadah — until they came to the passage of *Yachol Merosh Chodesh*, at which point he turned to Reb Mottel and shared a remarkable explanation on the words "*yachol miba'od yom*."

"We might think recalling Hashem's miracles, singing songs of faith, can only be "*miba'od yom*" in the bright of day. Perhaps we think that when it is light — when everything is clear and good — then we can praise Hashem, but here the Haggadah is telling us what true *emunah* is."

He continued explaining, "*B'sha'ah sheyeish matzah umaror munachim lefanecha* — even when it is hard and bitter, even after the war, when we have lost our precious families and are sitting on our own, broken, dispirited, in a state of *maror munachim lefanecha* — we still recognize Hashem's miracles, express our gratitude and jubilantly sing Hallel."

Yachol miba'od yom — when it is bright and rosy — anyone can sing. It is easy to sing the song of *l'hagid baboker chasdecha*, but as Yidden we hold onto our faith even when *maror munachim lefanecha*. In sorrowful, bitter times we melodiously sing the song of *v'emunascha baleilos*.

Even in the face of



agonizing hardships, we sing in harmony with the Master Orchestrator and recognize that He conducts our lives with love and precision. Therefore no matter the circumstances, even if a Yid is on his own, he is never alone — **כי אתה עמדי**.

This is a central theme of Seder night and the way a faithful Jew leads and lives his entire life. Pesach is Zman Cheiruseinu, the time to commemorate and celebrate our miraculous liberation from Mitzrayim. We sit regally like kings, at a royal table that is beautifully laid with shining silverware. Leaning back, we drink from silver goblets, all the while drinking in the profound and meaningful lessons that Pesach imparts. The centerpiece of the table is the *ke'arah* and a pivotal and integral part of the Haggadah is;

Pesach: the Korban Pesach

Matzah: the unleavened bread

Maror: the bitter herbs.

Rabbon Gamliel says whoever has not explained these three things on Pesach has not fulfilled his duty.

PESACH: One of the symbolic items placed on the *ke'arah* is a burnt bone. It reminds us of the Korban Pesach and it reminds us that as we sit here reminiscing about our redemption from Mitzrayim, we await another *geulah* and long to have a

Bais Hamikdash so that we can once again offer sacrifices and eat from the Korban Pesach.

One of the stipulations for Korban Pesach was that it had to be eaten together with a large crowd so as to be completely eaten and finished by *chatzos*. The *pasuk* states;

וְאִם יִמְעַט הַבַּיִת מֵהֵיטֵר מִשָּׁה וְלֶקַח הוּא וּשְׂכָנוֹ הַקָּרֵב אֶל בְּיָתוֹ בְּמִכְסֵת גְּפֻשֵׁת אִישׁ. (שמות יב:ד)

In the time of the Bais Hamikdash, when a Korban Pesach was offered, it was impossible to sit on one's own for Leil HaSeder.

Pesach presents struggles and difficult scenarios for those of us in the situation of **וְאִם יִמְעַט** "הַבַּיִת". Though we might be few in number, we can display great faith. We might be sitting in the dark of night, disappointed and disillusioned, but we look

at the burnt bone which conveys a powerful message of faith and hope. The name "Pesach" refers to when Hashem jumped over the houses of the Yidden in Mitzrayim and redeemed Klal Yisroel. Pesach is in the month of Nissan, a time of tremendous salvation and miracles. The very name "Nissan" alludes to this. The Hebrew word "*nes*" refers to a single miracle, whereas the word "Nissan" indicates it is a time of continued miracles.

Nissan is a month ripe with redemption. It was on Pesach when *malachim* visited Avraham and Sarah and brought them the good tidings that they would have a child the following year. Yitzchak Avinu was born exactly one year later on Pesach.

Just as in the past Hashem performed miracles and jumped over the homes of Bnei Yisroel, so

IF A YID IS SUFFERING AND KNOWS THE TASTE OF KARPAS — SALT-WATER AND TEARS; IF HIS FRAGILE HEART IS BROKEN LIKE THE MATZAH OF YAGHATZ, HE SHOULD NOT DESPAIR.



too now He can deliver salvations. He can bring anyone out from the darkest of places and from the most confining circumstances. As we look at to the bone on the *ke'arah* it is an auspicious time to plead for *yeshuos*. While we recall the miracles of the past, we can beg for future salvations and the final Redemption.

MATZAH: At the beginning of the Seder, three *matzos* are placed inside the *ke'arah*. The very first thing we do to one of the *matzos* is *Yachatz*; we take a *matzah* and break it in half. *Matzos* are the bread of faith, and they teach us an extremely important life-lesson. There are broken parts to life. Sometimes, just like the *matzos*, there are broken hearts and shattered, immaterialized dreams. We are instructed to eat *matzos* on Pesach which is *Zman Cheiruseinu*, and *matzos* transmit a very profound lesson about freedom and liberation. The broken *matzah* demonstrates that there will be hurdles to overcome in life. We will encounter challenges and sometimes things will not transpire according to our dreams and expectations. This *matzah*, broken toward the beginning of the Seder, teaches us to work on our faith right from the very outset. It delivers a subtle yet powerful message, demonstrating that even when broken-hearted, we can display wholehearted faith. When we internalize and accept that broken pieces are part of the order of life, there is nothing more liberating than that.

Can we really have broken hearts and shattered dreams and still feel liberated and unshackled?

Matzah zu she'anu ochlim, the *matzah* we ingest injects us with faith and clarifies how this level of *emunah* is attainable. One of the specifications for the *matzah* is that it has to be eaten while leaning. This comes to teach us that if we lean on Hashem and trust in Him, there is nothing more liberating than that. The Hebrew word for leaning is *haseivah* (הסיבה) which is connected to the word *vayasev* (ויסב). When Hashem took the Yidden out of Mitzrayim it says; ויסב אלוקים את העם — He took us on the round-about way, on an indirect route with detours. In life there are always detours, immaterialized dreams, fragmented pieces and broken hearts, but from the *matzah* we learn that if we lean totally and completely on Hashem, if we put our full trust in Hashem and rely on Him for support, there is no greater freedom than that.

MAROR: bitter herbs. When the Yidden were in Mitzrayim their lives were embittered. We eat *maror* to remind us of those long, harsh years of bitter slavery that the Yidden had to endure in Mitzrayim. We hold up the *maror* questioningly, “*Maror zeh she'anu ochlim al shum mah?*” We ask why we eat these bitter herbs and maybe we also ask about the bitter herbs and difficulties in our own lives.

The Gemara brings five types of bitter vegetables that are acceptable as *maror*, one of which is תמכא — *tamcha*. We are not sure exactly what each bitter vegetable is, but the one which the Gemara calls תמכא is what we know as horseradish. Horseradish has a very sharp, bitter taste and odor. Our eyes tear and we choke as we swallow it. Sometimes in life we are choked. Just as in Mitzrayim *vayemoreru es chayahem*, so too there are times when we experience bitterness and shed copious tears. It is agonizingly painful to sit at a Seder table with no one to ask us the *Mah Nishtanah*. We turn to our Father and ask, “*Maror zeh she'anu ochlim al shum mah?*” We wonder, what is the purpose of all this agony and grief? The answer we are looking for lies right there in the *maror*. The Chasam Sofer brings a fantastic abbreviation. He states that the word תמכא is an acronym for; תמיד מספרים כבוד א-ל.

We cannot understand why we have to traverse such challenging, arduous routes in life, but we point to the *maror* acknowledging that there is point and purpose for the detours of life. When life's paths are bumpy, with obstacles strewn along the way, we strengthen our faith and courageously sing the song of *v'emunascha baleilos*. Even when “*maror munachim lefanecha*” — when there are sorrows and we are sorely disappointed — we raise our spirits, raise our voices and announce Hashem's praises; תמיד מספרים כבוד א-ל.

There is a story told of a non-Jewish house-help who worked for a Jewish family. Before Pesach he saw how their home had to be immaculately clean and how stringent and particular they were to get rid of every last crumb of *chametz*. He was on call to help when the crates of wine and boxes of *matzos* were delivered. He assisted with the preparations of the huge quantities of food. He saw their table beautifully laid, with goblets and fine silverware. Intrigued, he decided to stay for *yom tov* and partake in



the Seder. He could not conceal his excitement when they poured the first cup of wine and was already waiting for the sumptuous meal that he assumed was about to follow. However, he was given only a measly piece of salty radish, which was followed by hours of questions, storytelling, rituals and prayers. He was pleased when it was finally time for another cup of wine and starving, he licked his parched lips in anticipation for the meal. All he was given though was hard, dry matzah and then some bitter horseradish. The *maror* burned his mouth, stung his throat, and tears welled in his eyes and he began to choke. Angrily he left the table and ran out of the house. Later, he told a friend about his terrible experience, only to learn that he had left just before the delicious festive meal was served; if only he would have had just a little more patience.

This was *his* reaction, but we are Yidden with firm resolve, and when difficulties strike we do not just run away. We hold on even tighter with steadfast faith, and the tighter we hold, the more beautiful and triumphant is our song of *v'emunascha baleilos*. If a Yid is suffering and knows the taste of Karpas — salt-water and tears; if his fragile heart is broken like the matzah of Yachatz, he should not despair. A troubled Yid could have questions for his *Tatte in Himmel*, as he reads *Maggid* and relives the story of Jewish suffering and exile. When we see the pages of Jewish history soaked with our tears and drenched with our blood, we remember Hashem's promise — *ואומר לך בדמך חיי*. When Yidden are in a situation of *maror* — in bitter times, jammed somewhere like Korech — in some kind of sandwich, between a rock and a hard place, we exercise patience and understand that we must hold on just a little tighter and a little longer. True; right now, like *Tzafun* — which means hidden — Hashem's full picture is concealed, but we know with certainty that He has an

intricate masterplan and runs this world with order and precision. At times, with our very limited vision, there appears to be confusion, but we observe the stages and the order of this night. When there are broken pieces and bitter challenges, we hold onto our belief and trustingly lean on Hashem Who supports us. We believe we are almost coming to the songs of Hallel and Nirtzah and that Hashem will ultimately bring us to the final *Geulah*; *ונודה לך שיר על גאולתנו*. But how do we continue and what do we do until the *yeshuah* and *geulah* arrive? If we can't sing the song of *l'hagid baboker chasdecha*, we sing the song of *ve'emunascha baleilos*. What do we do when our hearts are burning with pain, when we feel like our lives are in pieces and we are being tested with unrelenting adversities? We look at the burnt bone, hold the broken piece of, point at the bitter herbs and then we unearth deep inner resolve that allows us to sing even *b'sha'ah sheyesh matzah umaror munachim lefanecha*. The matzah and *maror* — the broken pieces and the bitter parts of our lives do not prevent us from singing; actually they infuse us with phenomenal strength and imbue us with remarkable faith, enabling us to sing throughout the long, dark night of *galus*.

In *galus* we can prepare salt-water from our burning, streaming tears, but we live with the firm unshakable belief that there will be a time when we will prepare our salt-water from tears of joy. We have a Father Who performed miracles in the past; *אני ד' אלוקיכם אשר הוצאתי אתכם מארץ מצרים*, and He can devise more magnificent miracles and will wondrously take us out from all of our dire straits; ●

**הוא אָבִינוּ, הוּא מְלַכְנוּ, הוּא מוֹשִׁיעֵנו,
וְהוּא יוֹשִׁיעֵנו וְיִגְאֹלֵנו שְׁנִית**

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RIDE OF A LIFETIME

By: F. Mozes

I climb into the cart,
Look ahead at the track,
The roller coaster ride of a lifetime.
The cart lurches forward,
I endure sharp twists and turns,
Bounce along the highs and lows,
Sometimes, lengthy darkness in a black tunnel,
Often, it seems like I'm heading upward,
When suddenly the cart quickly reverses,
And I plunge downward once again.
Slowly, I climb up an incline,
Reach a high peak,
Pause,
Then a zooming rush,
Oh no, the cart is going too fast,

I will fall,
I grab the handlebar,
But then I feel a tug at the waist,
My seatbelt,
Designed to hold me in place,
The One who designed this course,
Created the means to make it through,
I will not fall.
As I sail through the tracks,
I relax,
And even remember to smile.
When the camera takes a snapshot,
I can release my tight grip on the bar
And raise my arms Heavenward,
And enjoy the ride of a lifetime. ●



WARRIOR

I am a warrior,
Confronting adversity,
Overcoming obstacles,
Standing tall to challenges,
Trudging through the elements,
Navigating uncertainties,
Raising my flag,
Carrying out my exalted mission,
Of bringing glory to His Honor,
I am proud to be a warrior •

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PESACH MATZAH AND MAROR

THE POWERFUL GIFTS OF GRATITUDE HOPE AND GRIT

What's the most important part of the Pesach Seder? I'll receive many different answers. My great grandfather would have said singing the Haggadah in the tune that his own grandfather sang the words. My Uncle Leo would have said the delicious food. All the youngsters

would have said running around the house trying to find the Afikomen. And my grandmother would have said having the whole family together around the table.

But there is actually one part of the Seder that is the most important for all of us, and we are all obligated

to recite it when it comes up in the Haggadah and understand it.

"Rabban Gamliel used to say: Whoever has not explained the following three things on Pesach has not fulfilled his duty: Pesach, Matzah and Maror."

SINCE HE CAN
TURN EVERY
THING AROUND
IN A MOMENT
WE SHOULD
NEVER GIVE UP
HOPE

What do each of these symbols mean?

Pesach. The shank bone symbolizes the sacrifice that the Yidden in Mitzrayim gave to thank Hashem for the miracle of passing over their houses during the tenth plague in which all the Mitzriyim's firstborns died. What can we learn from this sacrifice of gratitude? Just as the Yidden thanked Hashem for passing over their houses in Mitzrayim and protecting them from the fate of the Mitzriyim, we can learn to thank Hashem for the everyday miracles when we are spared from harm in the first place. Driving somewhere and arriving safely. Not getting sick. Not being hungry.

This Pesach, think about all the hidden and open miracles that Hashem has done for you in the past year and thank Him for the incalculable number of "ordinary" moments in which He saved you from harm without you even realizing it.

Matzah is the unleavened bread that the Yidden brought with them when they left Mitzrayim. Matzah

teaches that Hashem doesn't need any time to prepare; He can save us in an instant. Since He can turn everything around in a moment, we should never give up hope. And when things are going well, we should remind ourselves that this too is an ongoing miracle. Hashem is with us in this moment even when it seems like everything is just proceeding as "it should."

When we look at the matzah, think about the times in your life when everything turned around in a moment, seemingly without any warning or effort on your part and how Hashem can do the same for you today, no matter what your challenges may be.

Maror is the bitter herb that reminds us of the tears that the

Jewish people cried when they were slaves in Mitzrayim. It teaches that when we are going through challenging, seemingly bitter times, sweetness and light and hope are just around the corner. Maror reminds us not to avoid obstacles but to, instead, recognize that they are a necessary part of the process of success. Without our tears and our prayers, the Jewish nation would not have been able to leave Mitzrayim. Without the bitterness and the struggle, we don't reach our full potential.

When you look at the maror, think of a struggle you have gone through in the past year and how it helped you become who you are today.

Pesach, matzah, maror symbolize gratitude, hope and grit. With these three powerful gifts we sit around our Seder tables and thank Hashem for the miracle of our freedom.

(The Pesach and matzah explanations are based on Rav Moshe Feinstein ztz"l explanations found in The Reb Moshe Haggada) •

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DON'T TELL ME THAT YOU UNDERSTAND

By: Joannetta Hendel

Don't tell me that you understand
Don't tell me that you know
Don't tell me that I will survive
Or how I will surely grow.

Don't tell me that this is just a test
That I am truly blessed
That I am chosen for this task
Apart from all the rest.

Don't come at me with answers
That can only come from me
Don't tell me how my grief will pass
That I will soon be free.

Don't stand in pious judgment
Of the bounds I must untie
Don't tell me how to suffer
And don't tell me how to cry!

My life is filled with selfishness
My pain is all I see
But, I need you now
I need your love, unconditionally.

Accept me in my ups and downs
I need someone to share
Just hold my hand and let me cry
And say, "My friend, I care." •



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MAINTAINING THE SPARK:

4 TIPS ON KEEPING YOUR RUCHNIYUS IN CHECK

What is it about infertility that pushes us to the edge of the battlefield in all areas? Be it emotional, physical, financial or spiritual, infertility seems to have its nose just about everywhere we turn. And while it's hard to stay focused on the spiritual struggle specifically when we're already being pulled in so many different ways, allow me to say that perhaps this is the front that is most important of all. Because ultimately, it's what we're left with at the end of the day.

Let me be clear — it's more than just *halacha*. It's that hard-to-define *something* that gets quietly lost among the blunt medical jargon, invasive procedures and your tightly scheduled monthly planner that every receptionist in your clinic can

peruse at her viewing pleasure. It's hard to keep your awareness inline, when so many areas are out of your control. Somehow, somewhere, that spark of refinement gets lost.

**BUT THE LITTLE THAT
IS IN MY HANDS? IT'S
THERE, AND I'LL BE
HOLDING IT TIGHT.**

No, there's nothing I can do at the moment to prevent most of this. My situation requires that I share the details of my most intimate life with complete strangers. I need to be open and honest about my physical state, or I'll be risking hospitalization

or worse. So little is in my hands.

But the little that is in my hands? It's there, and I'll be holding it tight.

Whatever refinement, whatever privacy, whatever spark I can hold on to, I'll be holding close.

Kedusha is the byproduct of our ability to follow through with *ratzon Hashem*. In that sense, even procedures that make me squirm, are in fact, a vehicle for *kedusha* — because it's what He wants. On the other hand, I know that wherever the choice arises, I'll be opting for the high road. When it's His will, I'll follow through willingly without question. And when the choice is mine, I'll be choosing right. It's these little areas, where the process is up to us, that make all the difference.

Here's
how: **1** **SELF
TALK**

Remind yourself just how precious you are. You are more than any procedure, more than any result. You are Hashem's daughter, and your worth is intrinsic and unchanging. It's easy to feel invaded and stepped on, but never doubt your self-worth. Say the words out loud (or quietly if you must!) — "I am a daughter of Hashem, and my *kedusha* is untouchable." It's gotten me through more than one icky situation; it just may do the same for you...

LIMIT YOUR EXPOSURE.

2 Like most of us, I find online sites and forums to be one of the best ways of learning about medical advances, the treatment process or even simple things like what to expect from certain meds. The downside? Too often these important tidbits of information are interspersed among unrefined talk and trashy imagery. There's only so much you can do to prevent these ideas from penetrating once you've already seen them. A simple way to combat this is by limiting the sites you view to those of recognized medical institutions. As an added plus, the info on these sites are generally more reliable and accurate than any gossip or news-oriented forum. Of course, there's a place for forums, too, but at the very least, search those as a last resort and ensure that your filter is working at its maximum capacity.

3 LEARN TO RECHARGE.

While at times, that which I learned as a *kallah* seems to be a far-off dream, I find that taking out my notes from back then helps reframe my perception of the process. It can even be a *shiur* on the topic, or a particularly meaningful *halacha-hashkafa sefer* that somehow breathes life and beauty back into a time that otherwise feels so regimented and pre-planned. It may seem ironic (I mean, who knows the *halacha* better than we?), but realize that recapturing the meaning you'd acquired when it all began may just be the key to elevating the entire process.

4 DAVEN.

In all areas, and especially with *ruchniyus*-related challenges, there's nothing we need more than *siyata diShmaya*. If you feel up to reciting a full *tefillah*, *ashrecha!* But know that even a whispered "Hashem, please be with me" may very well be enough to power up your inner reserves — and your day. ●

THE TASTE OF MEANING

Just the other day, I bumped into one of my classmates. (She, of course, was pushing a stroller with two little babies in it, and three more kids were holding onto it at the sides...) As I mumbled some polite greeting, I couldn't help but think to myself that she has gotten so much farther in life compared to me. She has purpose — a family of children to look after — and I... well... I'm busy, true, but I don't have that central purpose in my life just yet.

I quickly caught myself as the feelings of self-pity began creeping into my mind, and redirected my

thoughts. I wondered: What makes life pleasurable? And then I realized — life is pleasurable if you live it the way you are meant to live it; if you achieve your *tafkid*, your given purpose. As long as you know that your days are being lived for a reason, that you are doing the best you can within the situation Hashem has given you, then your life does not have any less purpose than those around you — it may very well have more. So what if I don't yet have the specific *tafkid* of raising a family? I have my own purpose — to fill my days with the very best service to Hashem possible.

Suddenly, I realized once again how my very life was indeed infused with meaning. And the following idea that I once learned hit me again in a powerful way.

The word טעם can be defined in two ways:

1. taste
2. reason

What's the connection between the two?

The more you know the *reason* behind something, the more *tasty* it is; the more you find purpose in what your doing, the more



SO WHAT IF I DON'T YET HAVE THE SPECIFIC TAFKID OF RAISING A FAMILY? I HAVE MY OWN PURPOSE.

pleasurable it is. The more טעם, the more טעם.

We all can be doing the same mundane things — going to work, shopping, taking care of our needs, but it is only when we focus on our end-goal of living a life in service to Hashem, that our humdrum tasks take on an entirely new dimension. If there is a goal, a reason and a focus, then there is taste — and it is pleasurable.

It is said that once, three men were doing the same work on a construction project. A visitor to the construction site asked the first man

what he was doing. The worker said that he was hammering nails in boards. The visitor then asked the second worker what he was doing. This worker said that he was constructing the frame for a building. The visitor then asked the third worker what he was doing. The third worker said that he was constructing a *shul* for the glory of Hashem.

If you live your life in a manner in which everything you do is with an end-goal in mind, then every moment you have will be filled with meaning and pleasure. You will feel the טעם of life, knowing that

whatever you are doing is a manifestation of *ratzon Hashem*. You are part of a bigger picture, and the small things you do help bring about כבוד שמים.

And so — yes, whatever stage I may be in, I too can infuse my life with meaning. I am here to bring about כבוד שמים, just like everybody else. I am building a world for the glory of Hashem in my own special way.

If you stay in touch with the purpose of life, you will feel pleasure in everything you do. Enjoy the taste! •

By: Sarah Schoen

THE NUMBERS THAT I KNOW

WHO KNOWS ONE? I KNOW ONE!

I know the One Who put me in this situation, which He customized for me. Everything is from Him, and nothing happens without His command. From Him are my challenges, and from Him will be my deliverance. He holds me tight throughout this journey and I strive to reach ever closer to Him.

WHO KNOWS TWO? I KNOW TWO!

I know the two-week-wait, when I wait. And wait. And wait. Forget about math; it doesn't necessarily mean 14 days. It's something like 11 days or 9 days, depending if I make it to Day 5 or not. But two weeks it is considered, and it feels even longer!

WHO KNOWS THREE? I KNOW THREE!

I know the three partners in the creation of a child. Hakadosh Baruch Hu, the father and the mother.

But in my life, there's a fourth partner — my good ol' doc, who is privy to every little detail of our intimate lives (and by extension, the embryologist, phlebotomist, and the on-site psychologist), and who's the one to decide the wheres, the whats and the whens.

WHO KNOWS FOUR? I KNOW FOUR!

I know the four questions that I'll ultimately be asked when I get up in *Shamayim*. And I know how proudly and confidently I'll be able to answer, "Yes!" to "*Asakta b'priyah v'revijeh?*" The pricks and surgeries and lack of sleep; the pain and the stress; I'll be taking it all with me.

WHO KNOWS FIVE? I KNOW FIVE!

I know the five-digit price tag hanging on an attempt at conception. No free rides here and no getting away with the 20-dollar *mikvah* fee! We do things in style and shop only upscale.

WHO KNOWS SIX? I KNOW SIX!

I know that too-dark, too-murky, unearthly hour when the rest of the world slumbers sweetly, while I, bleary-eyed, guide my car down the highway. A sunrise watcher I've become, and a coffee addict too!

WHO KNOWS SEVEN? I KNOW SEVEN!

I know the seven days I count. After all, I do it month after month after month, often holding my breath that my body shouldn't rush ahead, and the timing should work out so we can proceed with protocol as planned. My Jamaican nurse has learned to count it too.

WHO KNOWS EIGHT? I KNOW EIGHT!

I know the eighth day; *bris milah* is a central theme in our lives. Sometimes honor wins, and we go. And sometimes horror wins, resulting in a no-show.

WHO KNOWS NINE? I KNOW NINE!

I know the nine-month count well. I still count them at the beginning of each treatment cycle, deep down letting hope come alive as I check where the lucky number lands. Alas, those marked dates have become days of remembrance instead of celebration, but a new cycle brings new hope.

WHO KNOWS TEN? I KNOW TEN!

I know those elusive ten little fingers that I yearn to count and count again. And caress. And hold in my hand. And then the ten little toes...

WHO KNOWS ELEVEN? I KNOW ELEVEN!

I know Yosef's dreams. And I know my dreams. His were of stars. Mine are of pink and blue twinkling lights. His were bundles of wheat. And mine have a bundle of pure joy. Just like his dreams came true, I hope, I pray and I yearn, that mine do too.

WHO KNOWS TWELVE? I KNOW TWELVE!

I know the tribe that I was hoping for way back when I still took for granted that families come in dozens. And now, all I'm asking is for one. One lasting pregnancy. One healthy child. One miracle...

WHO KNOWS THIRTEEN? I KNOW THIRTEEN!

I know the Middos Harachamim of Hashem. I know that His mercy is infinite, His kindness immeasurable, His goodness boundless. The number thirteen, too, is unrestrained and signifies infinity.

I'm banking on Your *rachmanus*, Hashem. ●

By: Shevy Levine

DREAM A DREAM

Honeysuckle scented breath,
Baby powdered toes,
Tiny fingers, rosebud lips,
And eyes that twinkle so.
The charm and joy that wash away,
The pain, those tear-filled days,
Snuggled warm, safe and pure,
At last, mine – here to stay...
Sweet dream of mine, I hold you close,
Securely tucked within,
I clutch you through the hardest times,
While battered by the winds.
And trudging through a sea of “no”s
While fighting the despair,
I sometimes think I almost hear,
Your giggles in the air...
Apart of me throughout it all,
The light that beckons “come,”
Who says to me “keep trying, still”
My child, you’re the one.
One day you’ll live inside my arms,
Not just my heart and mind,
And then we’ll laugh, together say,
“We knew it, all this time”
Till then I carry you inside,
My to-be-dream-come-true,
From your mother – who wishes, waits and loves,
And won’t ever stop dreaming of you.

*Postscript: B”H we recently welcomed our beautiful
“little dream”... this poem says it all. - Shevy ●*



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The Division of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility at Mount Sinai Hospital



My Winter Project

By: Henny G.

November 28, '17

So it has arrived, after all.

The winter of IVF.

You see, I like to give each year or season in my infertility journey a “theme.” So there was the summer of initial visits and diagnoses, the winter of SAs, the spring of Meron, the summer of Maca Magic and zinc, the year of IUI’s — and still no baby in sight.

But it was NEVER going to end with IVF. Uh, uh — not we.

When my friend, a veteran IVFer, gently suggested, after yet another failed IUI cycle, that I take the prospect of IVF into the picture, my immediate reaction was, “Stop! Why are you saying this?!”

“Well, I hope it never comes to it, but you have to be prepared for the possibility,” she explained.

“Listen, it’s so not me. Not us. I...I...don’t want to have babies born

through IVF!” I protested.

“Why not?”

“Why not?!” I nearly shrieked. “Because...because I don’t want to have artificial babies!”

There. I had said it. And I chose to believe that if I repeated the statement often and vehemently enough, the dreaded three-letter word would never mean me.

Oh, well.

Seems like “artificial babies” it shall be. Um—I *hope* it shall be. The

once-dreaded three-letter word is now very much a presence in my life. Come January, we will *im yirtzeh Hashem* start our IVF cycle.

Just like we embark on any project with goals and intentions in mind, I set some awesome goals of my own for our “winter project.” Some loftier than others, but good intentions nonetheless.

Before I share them with you, please note: These goals were not made while under the influence of any fertility drugs which send your hormones reeling. Right now I am





Sushi-K Bar,
my local
butcher's
takeout, my
local pizzeria —
here I come!

me teary-eyed. So much for trying to laugh through EVERY step.

2) I intend to neither get bloated, nor nauseous or irritable from the various injections. Not I. My body will remain intact. (Wishful thinking?)

3) I intend to take it *very* easy during the cycle and drop as many of the balls I usually juggle as possible to minimize the stress somewhat. Sushi-K Bar, my local butcher's takeout, my local pizzeria — here I come! Irena, my faithful Irena — please you no be sick or go back Poland in January. Cleaners — hubby likes extra-heavy starch on his shirt collars. Thank you.

4) I intend to keep this “project” a secret from my friends, workmates and most family members. I want to have the thrill of shocking them with my news. I want to savor that smug feeling of surprising them.

5) I intend to accept the outcome of every part of this cycle with the knowledge that Hashem is in control and He knows what's best for us. Without His hand holding ours, we cannot take a single step toward anything.

very much my perky, lucid self. I cannot vouch for that during the cycle! Based on all the IVF literature I consumed and according to the infamous Dr. Google, there's potential for me becoming an impossible person to be around during those four weeks. But at least for now, setting these intentions feels nice. So here goes.

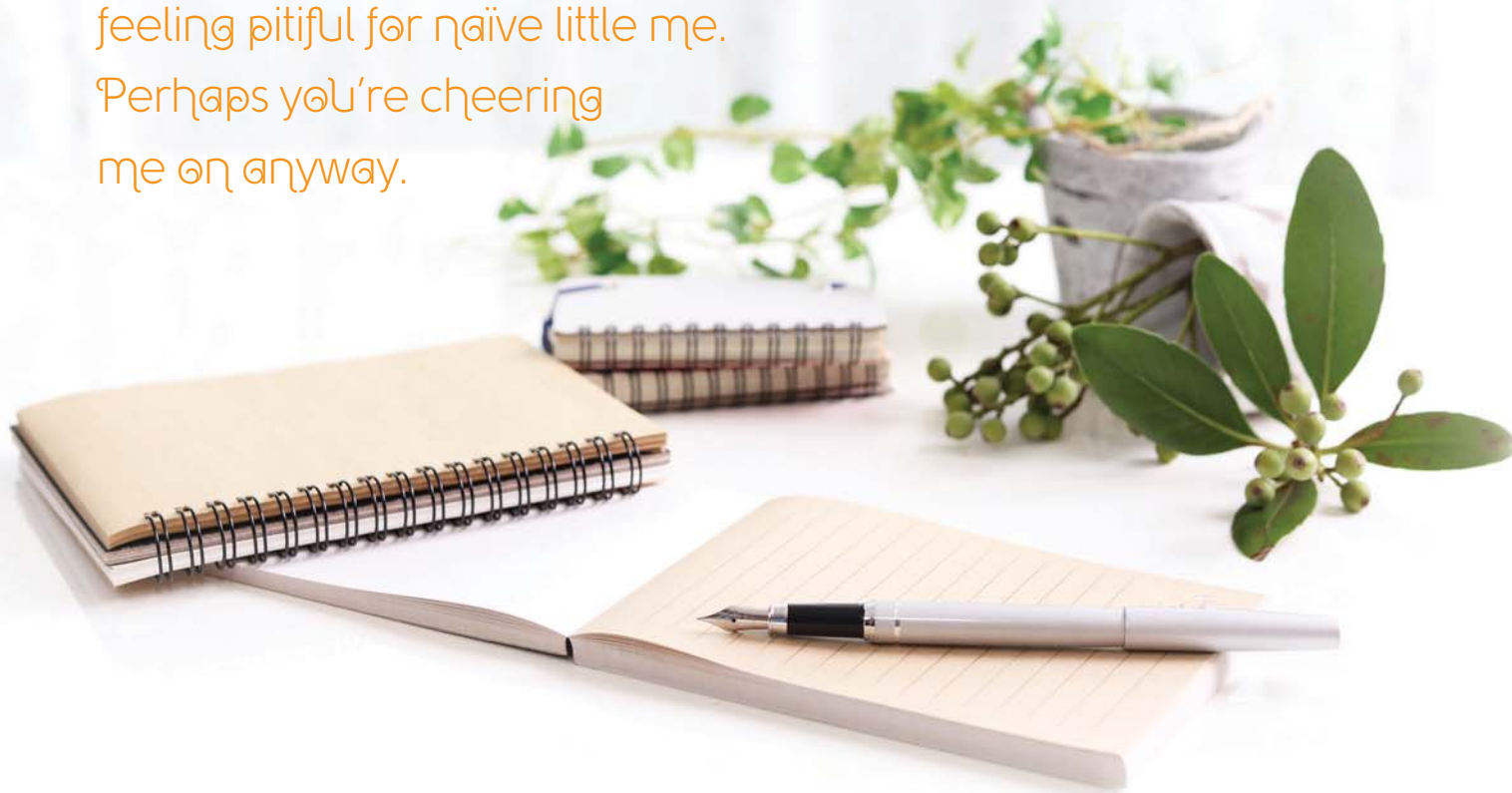
1) I intend to laugh through this cycle. I will try to find the humor in every step. We'll make it a “fun” experience. Ahem.

We already tried our hands at this

first goal a bit in prep to the cycle. The questions on some of the thirty-something consent forms we spent two hours signing had us giggling at the absurdity. *If you and your partner divorce, who has ownership of the embryos?* Really now?! We quarreled over this for a bit, until my husband won with a very rational explanation. You see, we are dealing with male factor. I can get pregnant easily. Good point, DH!

I'm not going to expose you to the other, less-exciting questions we were posed. Suffice it to say some left

Perhaps some of you reading this
who've been in the trenches are
feeling pitiful for naïve little me.
Perhaps you're cheering
me on anyway.



Perhaps some of you reading this who've been in the trenches are feeling pitiful for naïve little me. Perhaps you're cheering me on anyway.

Either way, this is the *cheshbon* I made: Having a baby through IVF costs a lot of money. Hoping, planning, dreaming — those don't cost a cent. So I'll keep going on the ride that's free.

A gezunten vinter!

February 15, '18

They say "Time flies when you're having fun." I venture to say that the antithesis of this cliché is "Time drags

on when you're pursuing fertility treatment."

Especially when you're doing IVF.

Who! What a long, busy, HEAVY two months it's been! The constant monitoring, daily injections, waiting for "the phone call" from the IVF nurse, always waiting for the next step in the cycle — waiting, waiting, waiting — all the while trying desperately to maintain some sense of normalcy in my daily life. And all that while being at the mercy of hormones. I can't believe I'm writing a postscript to this winter project of mine!

Let me fill you in on some of

the fine (and some not-such-fine) details of my experience and if and how I made good on my November resolutions.

My commitment to try to find the hilarity in every step proved to be far from simple. I actually shed a significant amount of H²O's from my eyes over the past few weeks. Still worth some points, though, 'cuz they do say that laughing and crying come from the same place within you, right? What brought me to tears (of laughter or sorrow, you decide) most often was the initial figuring out and administering of the various injections. My initial foray into the injectable medicine field left me utterly drained and weeping in my

laboratory, a.k.a bedroom. Eventually I got better at it. (Note: I didn't say accustomed to it, just better. Could you ever feel nonchalant when stabbing yourself??)

I had intended not to get bloated, nauseous or irritable from the various injections and medications. I'm not ashamed to admit failure here, because deep down I know these symptoms are not in my control. I was just hoping I'd magically be asymptomatic! Well, well, suffice it to say that none of my skirts would close properly on me pre- and post-retrieval! The bloating was very much there, as were various other aches, pains and moods. *But*, the symptoms I experienced were all tolerable and not half as bad as many forums on Google had warned! (Perhaps some people have it worse than others. I wish upon anyone going through IVF that their symptoms fall into the category of bearable!)

I did try combating the irritability, really, I did. I tried very hard to get up for early-morning monitoring with a smile and not to be grouchy. Leaving with a cup of coffee and Grab1 bar enhanced things a bit, and I made things more comfortable for myself (and my bloated tummy) by wearing a long, slinky skirt with knee-socks under my boots to these appointments. While I was at it I became aware of something I had never known: There are hundreds of

My first foray into the injectable medicine field left me utterly drained and weeping in my laboratory, a.k.a my room

New Yorkers who start their day *very* early! I'd stare bleary-eyed through the window of the car service trying to fathom how these construction workers have the energy to schlep bricks at 7:30 a.m.!

My third goal had been to take it easy with housework, and indeed, we enjoyed sushi and pastrami sandwiches for supper quite often, especially post-retrieval and transfer. On some days, though, I'd make the extra effort to cook dinner myself as it provided that sense of normalcy and routine I craved.

Letting things go in terms of housekeeping was a bit harder for me as I'm a huge perfectionist. I had to do lots of self-talk, particularly post-transfer for I was feeling quite fine physically.

Keeping this whole thing hidden from friends and some family members took creativity. Murphy's Law is really a force to reckon with. My husband's family planned a fun overnight trip just around the time I was using injections which required refrigeration, and I just had to plainly say it's not going to work for me that week. And no, not for the next few

weeks either... To quote something I read in A TIME's IVF guide, baby showers do tend to pop up just in the "right" times! A workmate of mine with whom I'm really close finally came back after her maternity leave and I was home on my couch, post transfer. While I was on that very same couch for the very same reason, a really dear friend of mine was here from Eretz Yisrael for a short visit and insisted we go out for ice cream... but for the most part my excuses passed! (Though they sometimes raised eyebrows, coming from me — the woman who should always be available.)

Finally, my resolution to accept the outcome of it all with the knowledge that it's all Hashem's doing and for my good is one I sincerely hope I have invested, and continue to invest, enough effort in. Not just for these few weeks, but iyH for all the years to come.

Wherever the road of life takes me from here, I forever remain a proud IFer. Proud, because Hashem gives this challenge to those He knows will weather it and come out stronger.

Chazak V'emetz!●



MY WORLD, MY MOON

I click the cordless off with a niggling sense of *un-validated-ness*.

“How are you?” My friend had asked. That ubiquitous phrase, more of a sidekick to “hello” than anything else.

I couldn’t in all honesty have shot a breezy “fine.” I was feeling pretty lousy after my IVF procedure, so I decided to share. But sharing hadn’t made me feel any lighter — or understood — after I put the phone down.

To be fair, my friend had her kids real fast and real close, so there’s no way she really could get me, but hey, aren’t feelings universal? Can’t experiences be

**BUT HEY,
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taken out of context a little, be felt at the experience level?

After quite a long haul I had finally gotten to the first stage of the treatment, the retrieval. And though the actual procedure went well, I was miserable; the anesthesia made a wreck of me, I was at the clinic all day instead of the requisite three hours, and couldn’t stand a minute without retching from sheer weakness. The clock was ticking toward Shabbos and that probably stoked my panic too. Finally I was pronounced good to go and weakly signed the discharge letter. It had been very close to Shabbos when my husband bundled me into the car and home. It was an okay-ish,

low-key sort of Shabbos, and that was really all I had wanted to share with my friend; perhaps get a little sympathy for the procedure experience too...

I didn't want to be made into a martyr. No siree. But somehow before I knew it my friend was going on about how "amaaaazing" I was.

As a close-knit society with such similar-on-the-outside lives, we've come to expect certain reactions to challenges of each other. In a way, having to come to the IVF juncture pushes me into this *nebach box*, where the fact that I am going to work, writing, having a life (and a blast sometimes) catapults me into amaaazingness...

I don't feel amaaaaazing, I had complained, griped, let loose, alright. What she was saying didn't validate me at all. I wanted a wee bit of sympathy, that's it. And this was all before I told her the next little bit.

So the thing is, I was scheduled to have the IVF transfer the week after the retrieval, but because it had been pretty intense and my body needed some time to recover, they were going to go for the "freeze" option with transfer to be taking place in another month, maybe two. Not exactly the news I wanted to hear still groggy and half-sedated, but still, not bad. Really I was grateful to have gotten here, to have passed this

capricious, invasive stage. Another month or two was just that to me.

Somehow my friend is fixated on that detail — that the transfer's not taking place immediately.

"You must be so upset about that," she says.

Actually I'm not, I just want my body to recover.

"You must be on *shpilkes*, waiting to hear when it's gonna be, all that not knowing, like all plans

AM I ALLOWED TO WANT A HOLIDAY MORE THAN A BABY JUST FOR NOW?

are on hold..."

I didn't even think of that. And hey, that means I get to go on a holiday in the summer before the transfer...

I dare to say that, mention the holiday.

Am I allowed to want a holiday more than a baby *just for now*?

I can hear from her response that it's totally unacceptable, more than that, unbelievable, just a story I am telling myself...

"Ach, we all know what you want deep down, you just want a baby. Hashem should help..."

Yes He should, but hello, do *you* know what I want *just now*? I'm totally okay with having a holiday first...

So it's back to explaining that my life is good *baruch Hashem*, how happy and fulfilled I am... and it's back to her amaaaaazing rhetoric.

I've had it. I've had enough. I cook up an excuse and put the phone down.

I breathe out in a huff, and push open the porch door — into a mist of moonshine.

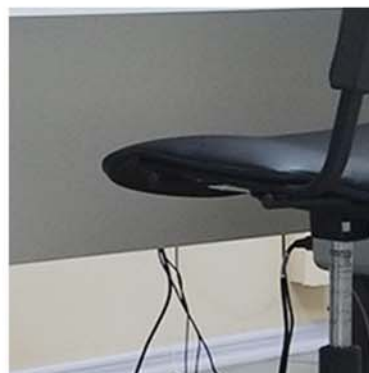
I wonder if I too do that to others. Do I thrust my assumptions of what they're feeling onto them when all they need is the validation of whatever they are feelings — that it's normal, that all feelings are valid and okay?

I gaze up and out. We're a world unto ourselves really, with our own moons and suns to make that world brighter, our own stars to make it sparkle, and rules of when it turns, how it turns and why.

If I could remember that...

Overhead, the mist clears for a moment and the moon winks in agreement. ●

By: Shira Zemer



TESTING, TESTING 1 2 3

You can classify it as another cliché; if you tell me you could write a book, you're boring. Seems we could all write volumes about our experiences. Or else we're making the common mistake of thinking that everything that happens to us is fascinating. Definitely a possibility.

But it's always in the details. It's the details that make our experiences seem so remarkable, so complex and layered, and at times, so much more painful or difficult. It's the details that make it seem worth writing home about, details that we know are calculated and customized to make our journey that much brighter, or sometimes, that much more challenging.

I started my year that way. I had a bunch of tests scheduled for

Aseres Yemei Teshuva, the first being on the morning after Rosh Hashana, prior to which I had to be awake for three hours. I had spent *yom tov* at my in-laws' while my husband traveled to Yerushalayim to spend the days with his Rebbe. The clinic is closer to my in-laws' home and I was debating whether

**TOMORROW. TOMORROW
I'D GET UP REAL EARLY, TAKE
A BRISK WALK, SHOWER
AND DAVEN BEFORE MY
APPOINTMENT AND WORK.**

to go home on *motzei yom tov* or sleep over and go straight to the clinic the next morning. In the end, I chose to stay and made a deal with my pre-wedding sister-in-law that I would help her with invitations

on condition that we wake up for a pre-dawn brisk walk. Well past midnight, we dropped into bed with me being too exhausted to shower. Tomorrow. Tomorrow I'd get up real early, take a brisk walk, shower and *daven* before my appointment and work.

At 7:53, my little sister-in-law woke us up. I panicked. My appointment was at 7:55 and having just woken up, I was not going to be awake for the requisite three hours before the lab would close. Like a thieving maniac, I dashed out of the house. I ran the entire way (it was too close to be worth a car's wait) and arrived with a messed-up *shaitel* and no breath.

I was mortified that I'd not managed to shower after a two-day *yom tov*. I ended up waiting for the ultrasound. That done, I faxed



I SHOULD HAVE COME AROUND TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DESK TO KICK HER, BUT I WAS PROBABLY TOO SCARED TO LOSE MY APPOINTMENT.

the results to my clinic and went back to the lab (I'd managed a 20-min stroke at work in between). There was a waiting list longer than I am accustomed to, but in this case I was pleased. By the time I was called in, it was 10:25 and I asked the technician if it was okay that I was up for only two and a half hours. She said it was better if I'd wait but began the process by printing out all the stickers in preparation for the bloodwork. I waited outside for what ended up being more than half an hour.

The nurse who was going to draw my blood appeared tired and faint. I was a little concerned about that, particularly since she had prepared eight tubes. *Baruch Hashem*, she asked for a drink and her colleague, not only brought her a drink, but took over. The second nurse was efficient, but oh my goodness, to see all those little tubes of blood filling up one after the next! And I thought my blood must be blue...

I went from there straight to work, where I stayed until close to 4:00 p.m. I was feeling shaky by then; all I'd eaten was rice cakes

and some cookies. Unless you count gum as food.

When my co-worker asked to come to work a little late the next day, my boss agreed on condition that I would be there on time. I had an HSG set for the next morning but was planning to be back in town on time, and confirmed so. My husband had to stay in Yerushalayim for the night since my father and brothers had flown in for the holiday and were to celebrate my brother's *bar mitzvah* on Tzom Gedaliah evening (the true date) with the Israeli relatives before flying home for the full affair. Their departure the next morning and *selichos* made it impossible for my husband to accompany me to the procedure. But I was going to be brave and do it alone. Better yet, I was probably not even going to feel sorry for myself. *I'm okay. I'm a positive and undramatic person. I could do this.*

I had gotten my way in to the day's calendar at the center via external assistance and was told to be there between 7:00 and 9:00 a.m. on Thursday morning with no fixed appointment time. Nervous

about waking up on time, I set two alarms on my husband's sonic boom — full volume and vibrate, one for 5:55 and one for 6:05. My husband called me at 7:00, and that was when I woke up. When I had adjusted the alarms, at some point I turned them off and neglected to activate them again. At that moment, it was hard for me to be happy that Hashem wanted me to sleep an extra hour. I was close to tears as I rushed myself together and out of the house. I couldn't believe this was happening to me! I had already gone through this the previous day. It was all I could do not to sob the whole way on the train — make that my first time on the Israeli train system alone. I sat there in a miserable mixture of pride and dejection. Fortunately, I had no more trouble in locating the place.

I walked in before 9:00, praying that I not be sent back home. But it seemed no one was bothered by my late arrival. The woman at the front desk registered my details. She asked for my age. I should have said 21, after all, it was but three weeks from my birthday, but my

obsessive accuracy wouldn't have it. "So young," she crooned in a manner that sounded like she was attending my funeral. "Probably just married." I corrected that notion. "And here yourself?" she asked/commented with sickening sympathy. In retrospect (you see, I am, like, more than two years wiser since), I should have come around to the other side of the desk to kick her, but I was probably too scared to lose my appointment.



I did a pregnancy test (yeah, apparently their place in fertility treatment is just as legitimate as BC) and settled down to wait. I couldn't help looking around at the couples that sat around the place. As I said, I was trying not to feel sorry for myself. But it got harder as I read the consent form awaiting my signature. I was almost happy my husband was spared that doomsday piece of literature. Too desperate to be inhibited by social expectations, I walked around so I could see those on the other side of the wall and sat down with relief for having sighted another woman on her own.

My husband called just when I was going to call to ask what to do about work. My boss had only let my coworker go on account of me being in the office between 9 and 11. We spoke a while and I intended to call my boss upon putting down. But I never got to. The call was interrupted by me being called in.

I went into a kind of antechamber where an attendant checked my paper and test. I signed. I changed into a gown as per her instructions

and then entered. On the one hand, the test hurt more than I thought. On the other, I was kind of expecting it not to hurt, so...

It was like a period all at once. I wanted to lie on my stomach or at least put my hand on my stomach but I had the machine down on my ribs. It didn't take long.

As I waited outside for my results, I updated my husband. I called my boss too — it was not too bad. On my way to the station I had some more cramping. Nothing too terrible.

Craving the comfort of a hot coffee I'd not yet had, but unfamiliar with the various *hechsherim*, I called my husband from the station to ask if I could buy a coffee from a shop with a *hechsher* we otherwise don't use. Back home, I was used to the idea of getting the hot brew; albeit sans milk, at any gas station. He was unsure and then said I could. While he commended me for my bravery and explained the value of our efforts, I remembered that I was already fasting for a kidney

ultrasound set for that afternoon. I got the bitterness in my mouth, without drinking.

I arrived to my appointment ten minutes early, as instructed, but had to wait more than half an hour — all that while not being

IT GOT HARDER AS I READ THE CONSENT FORM AWAITING MY SIGNATURE. I WAS ALMOST HAPPY MY HUSBAND WAS SPARED THAT DOOMSDAY PIECE OF LITERATURE.

allowed to break my fast or use the bathroom. The technician pushed and poked and told me just how to breathe or not breathe. Once I was all covered in jelly, she told me to go to relieve myself and then return for more. On my way out I told her, "Thank you. That was simply breathtaking." She started and then she laughed.

Results were in by evening and I sent them off. That marked the last of this round of tests.

Besides for all that, there was also other life. There was *kapparos*, cooking a whole Shabbos for my brother in *yeshivah* and a two hours of training in a new worker in the evening. All the while, I was just bursting with the conflict of this dual existence. When I called home to talk to Mummy, there was no answer. On the cell phone, too.

Then I remembered.

A continent away, my family was celebrating my brother's *bar mitzvah*. ●

MASKED LIFE



By: T.E.

My life
Is upside-down.
The world
Has come to an abrupt halt.

Passersby
Raise eyebrows in wonder
And move on.
I am
An injured bird
Watching its friends fly.

It hurts
The helplessness
The choking loneliness
The waiting
The paralyzing fears.
Oh, the fear!
Of the unknown.

I smile,
A bit too wide

And in my little corner
I silently cry
As no one understands.

I am
Like my pretty handbag
Crossed over my shoulders.
Charming, pleasant
Sealed with a neat bow.

And deep inside
Is buried
A vial, a syringe,
And crumpled tissues
Saturated with tears.

Tears of disappointment,
Of worry
Of shame.
Tears of prayer,
Of hope
And faith. ●

Dear Teacher,

You have transformed my life. You taught me not to take things for granted and to appreciate the miracles hidden in nature. You taught me how to be more compassionate to other people's pain. From you I learned never to judge before you're in a person's place – and that you never will be. You taught me how to talk to Hashem as a daughter to her Father. You taught me how to have patience and wait with grace. You introduced me to a different kind of beauty that I was never exposed to. You invited into my life people who are higher, better and loftier than anyone I met before. You had more faith in me than I had in myself – when I felt that I can't go on anymore, you showed me that the impossible is possible. Infertility – you are my best teacher. (I think I'm ready to graduate.) •

– Dassy F.

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Misc

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“Just to rule out any other possible problems.” Those were the words of the doctor as he explained why he wanted me to undergo an HSG. For the past year, we had been taking care of many little “issues” that continued to come up on our journey to fertility. Being a person with low pain tolerance, I was distinctly unexcited for this procedure. I know by now that “a little uncomfortable” is code for “really painful.”

Luckily, there was only one week from appointment to procedure; I was spared interminable waiting and worrying. My husband picked me up early on the day of the appointment. We signed in at the front desk and sat down to wait. As we sat in the busy waiting room, loyal Tehillim in hand, we said “*L'sheim mitzvas peru u'revu,*” as we do at each appointment. Eventually, we got called up to register. Apparently that also includes the

indignity of many personal questions in public. We sat back down for some more waiting which clarified why they said to set aside an hour and a half for the entire thing.

Finally, we were taken to the back where a sweet attendant greeted us. She was so pleasant and clear as she explained the procedure, I felt a lot calmer. The best words were: “The whole thing will take less than ten minutes.” Phew!

I KNOW BY NOW THAT A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE IS CODE FOR REALLY PAINFUL.

She prepped me and took an initial x-ray before leaving for the doctor. I used those few minutes to focus and daven and practice relaxed breath-

ing before they appeared. The doctor was extremely kind and understanding of my anxiety for the upcoming experience.

And then we began! The initial cramping was indeed painful, but *baruch Hashem* receded quickly, just like they said it would. As the machine was pulled over my abdomen and the doctor began watching the screen, I squeezed my eyes shut, despite the invitation to watch. Through a haze of *tefillos*, I heard them discussing what they saw. I let out the breath I was holding when I heard the doctor say, “There it goes; it’s going to spill over.” Seconds later, the second tubes had spilled in as well. When the doctor told me that both ovaries looked extremely clear, it dawned on me that he doesn’t always see clear tubes. Many people come for this test because there is a known or suspected problem. Despite feeling weak, I felt heady with gratitude to *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* for this gift, not to be taken for granted for a moment.

I continue *davening* for *siyata d'Shimaya* and that I never forget the feeling of overwhelming *hakaras hatov* I experienced when I heard that my tubes were clear. Now that this procedure is over, we continue our *hishtadlus*. In the meantime, until our *yeshuah*, I am Happy, So Grateful... HSG! ●



A PEN & AN OVERSIZED PIECE OF PAPER

By: S.L.M.

My wall calendar used to be
Pretty neat and clean
A *chasunah*, party or *shiur*
Appointments few and far between

I discovered over the years
My calendar was too small
To fit so many scheduled doctors
An inch and a half was not enough at all

It was on to a "to-do" list
Which always grew and grew
Getting lost in stacks of papers
Where it was, I never knew

Now I have a yellow notebook
Wide-ruled with plenty room
For numbers, doctors, medications
I could be a medical secretary soon

I *daven* fervently *b'ezras Hashem b'karov*
To look back at the full pages and smile
And see that all the *hishtadlus* we did
Was worth it all the while! ●



WARNING

**ENTER
AT YOUR
OWN RISK**



AND THEN I PANICKED.... WHAT IF SOMEONE WERE TO TRY TO GET MY OPINION HERE?

By: E.Z.

I walked into the store.

There was no sign proclaiming that only select individuals are allowed entry. So I innocently swung the door open and entered.

Big mistake.

Thing is, it was a children's store. And it just so happens to be that I've got no children. So maybe that's where I went wrong.

But I pledge innocence. I only intended to buy a baby gift for a friend who'd given birth. I just wasn't aware of the cardinal rule, that one shouldn't walk into a store that sells layette if one doesn't have children.

Especially if the person in question could very well have had several children at that point, technically speaking.

The gravity of my oversight hit me when I took in the other shoppers. For some reason it gave me the goosebumps. And it made me shiver. And it forced my eyes to stay wide open, blink rapidly and rein in any moisture seeking to escape.

And it created a big, hearty, lumpy *something* in my throat.

Rummaging through the aisles of baby stretchies, pjs, blankets and more, were women I recognized from high school. Most of their skirts were being pulled by some toddler, some were sporting unflattering maternity clothing, and *all* were pushing their way through, carriage and all...

What exactly was going on? They are all way younger than I! I had been their G.O. president!

Initial reaction: Flight!

Pause: *I do need to get the gift...*

Okay, relax. Pretend your kids are all at the babysitter.

Or still in school. Oh, it's Sunday... Okay, ummm well, they're all boys, then. Just feign nonchalance and ooze confidence and nobody will dream that you're an intruder here.

So I forged ahead in search of the ideal gift. I brushed through the stretchies,

partly clueless. They all looked nerdy to me. *I don't know how to do this.*

A smug part of me willed itself to approach one woman whom I recognized from high school, and to ask her, "What do you say to *this one* for my six-month-old?"

And then I panicked... What if someone were to try to get *my* opinion here?

I don't know the first thing about baby clothing...

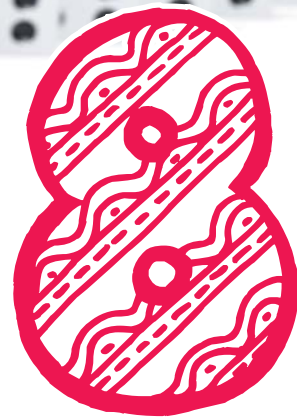
I do not belong here.

I sighted another woman, once three years behind me in school and some five stages ahead of me now.

I'd better be on my way, before my status is revealed, right here in public.

I grabbed a onesie, snatched a matching blanket and hat, tossed it onto the counter, silently hoping it's partially decent, and fled the store!

Moral of the story? Have a baby prior to visiting a baby store. ●



THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN EVERYTHING GOES WRONG

By: Marc Chernoff



PAIN IS PART OF GROWING.

Sometimes life closes doors because it's time to move forward. And that's a good thing, because we often won't move unless circumstances force us to. When times are tough, remind yourself that no pain comes without a purpose. Move on from what hurt you, but never forget what it taught you. Just because you're struggling doesn't mean you're failing. Every great success requires some type of worthy struggle to get there. Good things take time. Stay patient and stay positive. Everything is going to come together; maybe not immediately, but eventually.

Remember that there are two kinds of pain: pain that hurts and pain that changes you. When you roll with life, instead of resisting it, both kinds help you grow.



EVERYTHING IN LIFE IS TEMPORARY.

Every time it rains, it stops raining. Every time you get hurt, you heal. After darkness there is always light – you are reminded of this every morning, but still you often forget, and instead choose to believe that the night will last forever. It won't. Nothing lasts forever.

So if things are good right now, enjoy it. If things are bad, don't worry because it won't last forever. Just because life isn't easy at the moment, doesn't mean you can't laugh. Just because something is bothering you, doesn't mean you can't smile. Every moment gives you a new beginning and a new ending. You get a second chance, every second. You just have to take it and make the best of it.



WORRYING AND COMPLAINING CHANGES NOTHING.

Those who complain the most, accomplish the least. It's always better to attempt to do something great and fail than to attempt to do nothing and succeed. It's not over if you've lost; it's over when you do nothing but complain about it. If you believe in something, keep trying. Don't let the shadows of the past darken the doorstep of your future. Spending today complaining about yesterday won't make tomorrow any brighter. Take action instead. Let what you've learned improve how you live. Make a change and never look back.

And regardless of what happens in the long run, remember that true happiness begins to arrive only when you stop complaining about your problems and you start being grateful for all the problems you don't have.

EVERYTHING IS GOING TO COME TOGETHER; MAYBE NOT IMMEDIATELY, BUT EVENTUALLY.



EVERY LITTLE STRUGGLE IS A STEP FORWARD.

In life, patience is not about waiting; it's the ability to keep a good attitude while working hard on your dreams, knowing that the work is worth it. So if you're going to try, put in the time and go all the way. Otherwise, there's no point in starting. This could mean losing stability and comfort for a while, and maybe even your mind on occasion. It could mean not eating what, or sleeping where, you're used to, for weeks on end. It could mean stretching your comfort zone so thin it gives you a nonstop case of the chills. It could mean sacrificing relationships and all that's familiar. It could mean accepting ridicule from your peers. It could mean lots of time

alone in solitude. Solitude, though, is the gift that makes great things possible. It gives you the space you need. Everything else is a test of your determination, of how much you really want it.

And if you want it, you'll do it, despite failure and rejection and the odds. And every step will feel better than anything else you can imagine. You will realize that the struggle is not found on the path, it *is* the path. And it's worth it. So if you're going to try, go all the way. There's no better feeling in the world... there's no better feeling than knowing what it means to be ALIVE.



YOUR SCARS ARE SYMBOLS OF YOUR STRENGTH.

Don't ever be ashamed of the scars life has left you with. A scar means the hurt is over and the wound is closed. It means you conquered the pain, learned a lesson, grew stronger and moved forward. A scar is the tattoo of a triumph to be proud of. Don't allow your scars to hold you hostage. Don't allow them to make you live your life in fear. You can't make the scars in your life disappear, but you can change the way you see them. You can start seeing your scars as a sign of strength and not pain.

Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most powerful characters in this great world are seared with scars. See your scars as a sign of "Yes! I made it! I survived and I have my scars to prove it! And now I have a chance to grow even stronger."



OTHER PEOPLE'S NEGATIVITY IS NOT YOUR PROBLEM.

Be positive when negativity surrounds you. Smile when others try to bring you down. It's an easy way to maintain your enthusiasm and focus. When other people treat you poorly, keep being you. Don't ever let someone else's bitterness change the person you are. You can't take things too personally, even if it seems personal. Rarely do people do things because of you. They do things

because of them.

Above all, don't ever change just to impress someone who says you're not good enough. Change because it makes you a better person and leads you to a brighter future. People are going to talk regardless of what you do or how well you do it. So worry about yourself before you worry about what others think. If you believe strongly in something, don't be afraid to fight for it. Great strength comes from overcoming what others think is impossible.

All jokes aside, your life only comes around once. This is IT. So do what makes you happy and be with whoever makes you smile, often.



WHAT'S MEANT TO BE WILL EVENTUALLY, BE.

True strength comes when you have so much to cry and complain about, but you prefer to smile and appreciate your life instead. There are blessings hidden in every struggle you face, but you have to be willing to open your heart and mind to see them. You can't force things to happen. You can only drive yourself crazy trying. At some point you have to let go and let what's meant to be, BE.

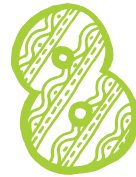
In the end, loving your life is about trusting your intuition, taking chances, losing and finding happiness, cherishing the memories and learning through

**TRUE STRENGTH
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experience. It's a long-term journey. You have to stop worrying, wondering, and doubting every step of the way. Laugh at the confusion, live consciously in the moment, and enjoy your life as it unfolds. You might not end up exactly where you intended to go, but you will eventually arrive precisely where you need to be.

THE BEST THING YOU CAN DO IS TO KEEP

GOING.



Don't be afraid to get back up – to try again, to live again, and to dream again. Don't let a hard lesson harden your heart. Life's best lessons are often learned at the worst times and from the worst mistakes. There will be times when it seems like everything that could possibly go wrong is going wrong. And you might feel like you will be stuck in this rut forever, but you won't. When you feel like quitting, remember that sometimes things have to go very wrong before they can be right. Sometimes you have to go through the worst, to arrive at your best.

Yes, life is tough, but you are tougher. Find the strength to laugh every day. Find the courage to feel different, yet beautiful. Find it in your heart to make others smile too. Don't stress over things you can't change. Live simply. Speak truthfully. Work diligently. And even if you fall short, keep going. Keep growing.

AWAKE EVERY MORNING AND DO YOUR BEST TO FOLLOW THIS DAILY TO-DO LIST:

1. Think positively.
2. Eat healthy.
3. Exercise today.
4. Worry less.
5. Work hard.
6. Laugh often.
7. Sleep well. ●

Marcandangel.com

A hand is shown gripping a wooden door handle, with the door slightly ajar. The background is a dark, textured wood grain.

**IN THE
CLOSET**

**OR
OUT?**

**Being in the
infertility
closet is HARD.**

**Being out of the
infertility closet
is HARD.**

**Sensing a theme
here? Infertility
is HARD.**

WHY DO SOME PEOPLE CHOSE TO KEEP IT PRIVATE?

Infertility is so, so personal. It's an all-up-in-your-face, physically taxing, financially draining and emotionally exhausting experience. You get your hopes up only to have them crash way down. And it's dealing with your body and things that aren't functioning quite right. It might pick at your insecurities. It picks perhaps at your lifelong dream of parenthood. It challenges your faith. It may challenge your relationship with your spouse. It challenges everything you know. *It completely changes the person you are.* Mind you, sometimes it's a wonder any of us share any of our deepest, darkest challenges at all.

When sharing, you worry people will bug you about your issues all the time. You worry about intrusive questions. You worry people will look at you differently, that you will get pitied or judged. You worry people will say insensitive things. You worry people will just blow it off as not a big deal. You worry, you worry, you worry. And rightfully so, because you have seen others have all these negative experiences. And you may have experienced them, too!

I know many people who have experienced infertility. I know people who are super open with every single test, treatment and diagnosis. I know people who don't tell anyone until years later or who don't ever tell family. There is no wrong way.

It's totally understandable not to want to tell people what you are struggling with, what's not working quite right within you, what is causing

you to cry every day for years. Infertility is actually considered a trauma. So it makes sense that a lot of people don't want to talk about it.

It also makes sense why for some, talking is therapeutic. They want to share their challenges with others, to inform and maybe shed some light on infertility and help it to not be taboo.

AS FOR ME...

I consider myself somewhere in the middle here. I always considered myself an open book. But then I got slammed with some really hard things, including infertility, all at once. And I changed. I'm still changing and trying to figure it out.

There were many times, about six or seven months ago when we got our diagnosis in the spring, where I wanted to tell friends and family. But my spouse wasn't ready, and of course I was going to wait until we both were on the same page. And then there were a few months where my spouse was ready, but I wasn't. As you can tell, we are pretty indecisive!

A few months ago, in the summer, I was on a phone call with my mother and just blurted it out. It definitely wasn't planned, but it helped to get the ball rolling. Soon after, we told other family members and started telling a few friends. We're still pretty nervous and sometimes hesitant about sharing it so publicly, but it kind of happened.

Why did we want to share? To not feel so alone. To get some more support. To maybe help others understand. I've talked to many, many women suffering with infertility, either through friends,

Everybody has
to do what they
feel comfortable
with, since
infertility is
so incredibly
uncomfortable
as it is.

family or support groups, and every time I talk with them, I feel a little less alone. I feel a bit happier, like I can have people to relate to. And that's why I want to share.

But the thing is, we want to share our story on our own terms, without sharing it all. We don't care to be asked about the gory details, and so we aren't sharing our medical diagnosis. As of now, we're also not 100% comfortable telling people when we're undergoing treatment, because we want to share the outcome on our own terms. It's a personal decision, and some don't understand, but that's what we feel comfortable with.

Everybody has to do what makes them feel

Kindness and friendship is the cure to everything.

comfortable, since infertility is so incredibly uncomfortable as it is. Sharing, not sharing, sharing only some, whatever helps you along in this journey. One thing I do feel strongly about is: I've heard that some people feel like they can't or shouldn't discuss infertility because it's too taboo or just a "no-no." To that I say, NO. If you want to share details about your life and it will make you happy, go for it. Don't let the close-mindedness of others hold you back.

We all are just trying to figure out how to make the sting of infertility hurt a little less. Whether you openly share your struggles with others or not, I urge everyone to find a good friend or a good outlet to add some semblance of comfort to life. Talk about things other than infertility and have fun to get your minds off of it. Allow yourself to be surrounded by those who genuinely care. Enjoy the warmth of feeling understood. Kindness and friendship is the cure to everything. ●

By Shelley B. on birdsandthebees.blog

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Mommy in the Mirror

I put up the gefilte fish on one of my two gas burners. There's a knock on the door. It's my neighbor, Michal. Probably just the usual, she's looking for a schmooze or a carrot for her soup.

"Your father-in-law is on the phone."

Not the usual.

This is Migdal HaEmek in the 1980s. A forgotten Israeli town populated by impoverished Russians, poor Sephardim and a small, idealistic (some would call us crazy) group of Americans learning in *kollel*.

A phone call is quite an event here, where the wait for a telephone can take up to five years. We, of course, don't

have one, but lucky Michal owns a clunky, ivory-colored instrument with manual dialing and an earphone that picks up tinny voices, and she allows all her neighbors to use it. What with the inconvenience, and international phone rates that are daunting even for Americans, a call from the United States is a rarity.

I can feel my heart racing as I follow her to her apartment.

I hope everything is all right...

I hope no one is sick...

I hope...

No, I will not allow myself that hope. Too often, it has



been followed by disappointment.

I hear my father-in-law's voice, the faint burr of his "r's", souvenir of his Brazilian childhood.

"The lawyer called."

If life is a journey, as all clichés tell us, then thank G-d, mine has been, for the most part, a very pleasant road trip, on broad boulevards, fast-moving highways, tree-lined streets. I passed all the *frum*-girl milestones easily, on schedule: successful school years, college, and part-time job (sem in those days was for the chosen few). I met the right guy at the right time, was the glowing *kallah*, radiant bride, ecstatic newlywed.

And then we came to a new road sign.

"Do Not Enter."

There were no hesitant hopes, no morning sickness or new wardrobe or self-conscious waddling. No contractions, no labor and no wrinkled, red-faced, bawling and beautiful newborn.

Instead, on this dusty, rarely traveled path we'd found ourselves on, there were consultations. With doctors. With *rabbanim*. With lawyers.

There was bureaucracy. Social workers. Home visits. Endless paperwork.

And now...

The lawyer had called.

My first stop is to race to the *beis medrash* to tell my husband. One look at my face and he knows. He quietly shuts his Gemara and kisses it, saying goodbye to his life as a carefree *kollel yungerman* in Eretz Yisrael.

We race up to the home of Rav and Rebbetzin Bulman *tz"l*, our downstairs neighbors, the reason we'd come to live in this unlikely place.

"The adoption lawyer called. They've got a baby for us!"

As always, their reaction is perfect. The Rav carefully takes down four small cups and a bottle of liquor.

"Mazel tov! First let's make a *l'chaim*."

My mind, racing with plans and excitement and trepidation, slows down.

Mazel tov. It's a simcha.

Here, in the Bulman living room, wearing my apron and with my fingers smelling of carp, I have just kind of, sort of, had a baby.

Which makes me kind of, sort of, a mommy.

For the first (and hopefully last) time in my life, I burn the gefilte fish.

Four mad, action-packed days follow, and we're back in New York, filling out more forms, binge shopping for baby clothes. I stare at tiny undershirts and think about a baby — my baby! — little enough to fit into them.

I have a baby. I am a mother.

It doesn't feel real.

And then it's finally time to meet our little guy.

I hardly see the woman carrying him, the woman who has made her lifework finding loving homes for homeless babies. I only have eyes for this boy, with his deep black eyes and perfect features.

I put out my arms. I feel something deeper than joy, more profound than connection.

I feel myself transforming.

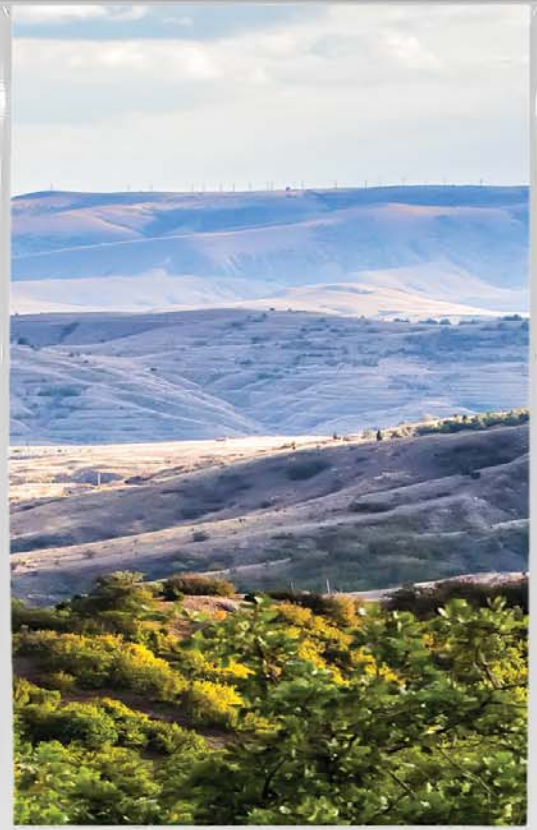
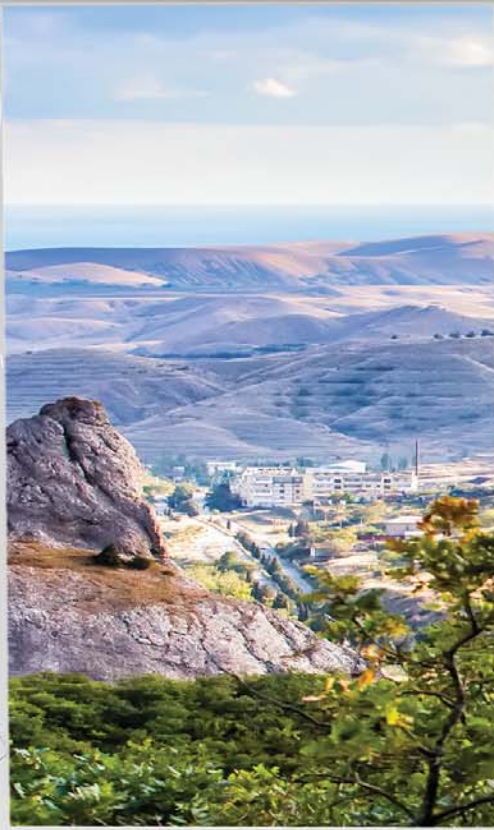
We head home, the baby tucked cozily next to me in his bright red front-pack, right where he belongs. On the way out we pass a mirror.

I see myself.

I see a mommy. ●

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 Mishpacha



IT GETS BETTER. YOU GET BETTER. RIGHT NOW, WHERE YOU ARE, IS THE MOST PAINFUL PART. BECAUSE YOU CAN'T SEE THE FUTURE AND YOU CAN'T SEE A WAY AROUND ALL THE HURDLES.

Seven years ago, the word “infertile” was used to describe me for the very first time. I was only 26 years old, and still living under the delusion that if nothing could solve our infertility, IVF surely would.

Until the day I was told my fertility had become a “now or never” proposition.

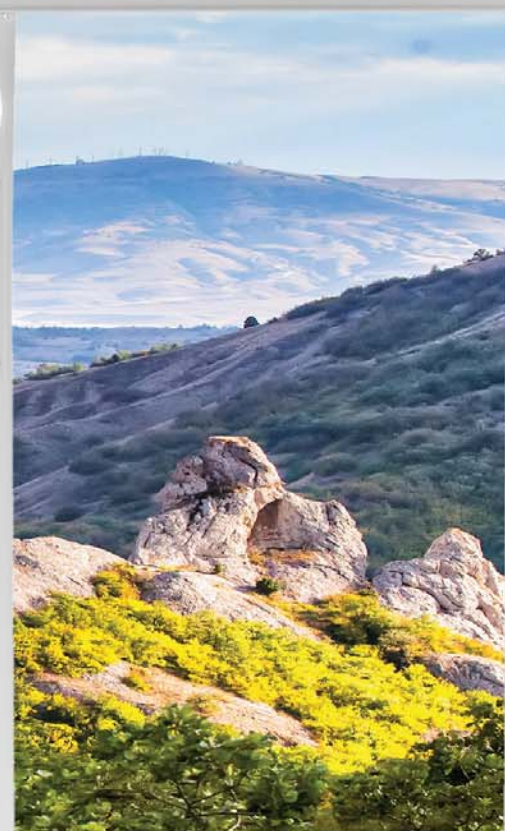
In the year that followed, we pursued two rounds of IVF, banking on the hope offered by the doctors we had chosen with care. Both rounds failed, and by the time I was 27, we were broke, heartsick and facing the painful reality that we had very few options left.

It was the most devastating time of my life. All I had ever wanted was to be a mother, and now, I wasn't

sure that dream would ever come to fruition. I felt lost and alone, convinced that I now had nothing to offer my husband. There were times when I felt so destroyed by infertility, I honestly wasn't ready to face another day.

But if I could reach across time, *this* is what I wish I could say to that girl today ...

By: Leah Campbell



Dear INFERTILE me

Dear Infertile Me,

I thought about you this morning, as my little girl leaped into my arms at daycare pickup and shouted, “You missed me!” It’s her standard greeting these days, a smile spread from cheek to cheek as she beats me to the punch.

“You missed me,” she repeats. And I can’t help but think, she has no idea how much.

You’re often on my mind during these moments of motherhood — the ones I know you once feared you’d never have. My heart breaks when I think of you, huddled in the corner of your bedroom, crying so hard that you couldn’t breathe. Sobbing alone, with

no one in arms reach to comfort you. Living a life where it seemed as though everyone around you was getting the very thing you wanted so desperately.

Growing bellies became the backdrop of your world; even as your own stomach remained unwaveringly flat.

I think of you when my daughter sits and lets me braid her hair — something I am admittedly not the best at. I think of you when she learns something new and shares it with me with glee, and when she wakes up from a nightmare and can be comforted only by me.

I think of you in both the good

times and the bad, and often wish that I could somehow reach back to you through time, and give you a preview of what’s to come.

Of the life you were so afraid you would never have.

I know this isn’t how you necessarily want it to be. You want to carry your baby beneath your heart — not because you believe in the superiority of your genetics, but because you want to be the one protecting that little life from the start. You want to feel the kicks, to watch as your body changes, and to be the one experiencing that intimate connection that comes with creating another life.

You're still deeply pained that you can't have that; so much so, that for a long time, you'll discount the idea of adoption entirely. And I get that. I understand.

But I wish you could see what your life is like today. And I wish you could know that the love you will feel for this little girl couldn't possibly be any greater than it is.

All your fears about adoption, and all your worries for the future ... they'll turn out to be unwarranted. Because this life you now lead? It is more than you ever could have dreamed it would be.

Still, I know that what you're going through is just part of the process. I know you have to cry. You have to ache. You have to mourn. Because you have every right to grieve.

If I had one wish, though, it would be for the ability to somehow reach back and show you that the place you're in now is as bad as it will ever get. It is the worst of the worst. I wish I could help you to understand that, if only because it might make these days easier to get through.

Because maybe knowing that it'll get better will help you breathe again.

Yes, there will still be times when the sight of a growing baby bump will sting. Times when you'll wish that you could have been the one to carry your girl beneath your heart. Times when

you will hurt over the fact that her other mama is hurting, or that your daughter might hurt, simply because adoption is complicated and there will be times when she struggles to process where she fits into that equation.

But even if it hadn't been adoption, I truly believe that somehow, some way, things were going to take a turn

continued to be a piece of who you are. But it isn't everything anymore. And it hasn't been the one thing capable of bringing you to your knees in grief in a very long time.

It gets better. You get better. Right now, where you are, is the most painful part. Because you can't see the future and you can't see a way around all the hurdles. So don't even force yourself to try. Accept that right now, this is the pits. And it feels so unfair. And you deserve better.

But know that with time, you'll have it. Know that the future laid out before you will make all of this seem so worth it in the end.

I wish that I could hug you. Or listen to you. I wish that I could be the person who held you and understood, and allowed you to bury all your grief in someone else. But I can't, because I'm too far removed from it now. Because I know how it all turns out.

So instead, I'll just tell you ... It gets better. You'll get better.

Until then, cry all the tears you need to cry. Because this is so, so hard. But soon, you'll be out of the tunnel. You just need to look for the light.

Sincerely,

The Me Who Now Gets Called "Mama"●

Reprinted from babble.com



YOU HAVE TO CRY. YOU HAVE TO ACHE. YOU HAVE TO MOURN. BECAUSE YOU HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO GRIEVE.

for you. You were already headed in a direction of healing, even before this little girl came along. You were redefining yourself and your life, determined to find some way around the pain. Determined to get up from off that bedroom floor.

So please know, infertility will not steal your happiness forever.

It will not destroy your life the way I know you currently fear it might.

Yes, it will always be a part of you. Even if you had gotten pregnant through IVF, infertility would have

ALCOHOL SWABS

That smell.

In fact, I haven't smelled "that smell" in a very long time — since my last IVF cycle. My last failed IVF cycle. Well, let's be real, all of my cycles have failed.....so, it equated failure, to me.

That smell is heartache and failure... wrapped up in a tiny, foil-lined package. Years and, almost, every month within those years, I smelled those alcohol swabs. When I would get my blood drawn. When I gave myself a shot. When I was getting an IV put in my arm before my 7th surgery.

All with disappointing results. All sad memories.

So yesterday, without even thinking, I needed to clean a cut. I opened one of my drawers to find a package of those alcohol swabs. It was actually a package from the pharmacy from when my IVF meds arrive through the mail. Usually, they give the alcohol swabs to you for "free." (Well, thank you since I spent \$8,000 on medication with you all for that cycle...appreciate the "gift."

So, I pulled the package out, ripped it open... and that smell brought me to write this.

Except, I didn't open it to give myself a shot, or to get my blood drawn to to have an IV inserted into my arm..... I opened it to use it on my son. My precious adopted child, the one who made me a mother.

I don't think I will ever forget those years of using alco-

hol swabs and how the memories of infertility are always looming. That's the part about infertility that most people don't understand. Even when you are finally on the other side of the fence, the effect on your body and mind and soul is everlasting. Adopting doesn't "fix" everything. There are always triggers.....and it is very real.

The sad, depressing, negative memories flooded my brain. And yet, here I was, looking into my little miracle's eyes...

He had tears because he fell.... and it hurt. I had tears because the memories it brought back hurt.... but those tears quickly turned to gratitude and an unbelievable sense of thankfulness.

I was overwhelmed, choked up, only he and I in the bathroom,

tears pouring down my face.

I grabbed him and hugged him.

It might have been one of the most thankful feelings I have ever felt in my entire life.

Gut-wrenchingly thankful.

All because of "that smell" and what it ultimately gave me. ●

THAT SMELL IS HEARTACHE AND FAILURE... WRAPPED UP IN A TINY, FOIL-LINED PACKAGE.

Revised from an article on dreamingofdiapers.com



The Scoop on Uterine Transplants in the US

By: Abbey Anderson

A New Take on the Gift of Life

November 6, 2017

Uterine Factor Infertility (UFI) is a devastating and prevalent condition that affects 5 percent of women worldwide and 50,000 women in the United States. Whether congenital or acquired, women with UFI are unable to carry and deliver babies. But, advancements in women's health and transplant surgery are helping to create new solutions for these women and their families. In 2014, a team of researchers from

Sweden published a paper in *The Lancet* on the first successful uterine transplantation with a subsequent pregnancy and live birth. Quickly, several institutions in the United States – including experts at Penn Medicine – began exploring the feasibility of uterine transplantation (UTx).

Women with the congenital form of UFI are born without a uterus. Acquired UFI occurs when women have had the uterus removed surgically (a procedure called a hysterectomy), or it can be the result of dysfunction (generally due to adhesions or lesions in the uterus which would inhibit a woman's ability to conceive).

“Uterine transplantation is an experimental therapy


that gives women with uterine factor infertility the opportunity to have a genetic child outside of surrogacy,” said Kate O’Neill, MD, MTR, an assistant professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. “Uterine transplantation has the potential to provide women suffering from UFI with a real treatment, not just an alternative, but a true opportunity for them to conceive, carry and deliver children.”

Since the 1950s, physicians and surgeons have been perfecting the field of transplantation — beginning with the first successful kidney transplant in 1954, the first successful lung transplant in the early 1980s, and eventually

standardizing heart, liver and intestinal transplants. Today, these procedures are commonplace and have saved the lives of tens of thousands of patients who would otherwise not survive their illnesses.

Recent progress in the field of transplantation has been expanding beyond lifesaving solid organ transplants to Vascularized Composite Allograft (VCA) transplants — the transplantation of multiple tissues including muscle, bone, nerve and skin, as a functional unit, such as a hand or face. VCA transplants, which include UTx, are the way of the future, providing patients with a significantly better quality of life.

L. Scott Levin, MD, FACS, director of Penn’s



Hand Transplant Program and chair of Orthopaedic Surgery, said in a 2016 interview with the Philadelphia Inquirer, “If you don’t have a functioning heart, we know you’re going to die. We know you can live without hands, a face...but your quality of life is extremely compromised. Some would say, ‘Without them, I’m not living.’”

However, improving quality of life through UTx does not come without a myriad of questions, considerations, and potential surgical, obstetric, and medical risks: Are the immunosuppressant medicines moms-to-be must take safe for their babies? Should these women put themselves at risk by undergoing such a complicated elective procedure? Is there a possibility for organ rejection while the patient is pregnant and if so, could that lead to complications with the fetus? If UTx with deceased donor organs is a viable avenue, what are the cost implications if the procedure becomes widespread? While some of these questions will remain unanswered until more is known about the procedure, as is the case with any pioneering

medical breakthrough, first comes a leap of faith, coupled with a tremendous amount of rigorous research and planning in preparation for any and all possible outcomes. And so far, things have been progressing positively in the field over the last six decades.

“We are at a pivotal point in the field where we need to determine whether VCA transplantation is going to become the standard of care,” said Levin, who pioneered the Hand Transplant Program alongside Abraham Shaked, MD, PhD, director of the Penn Transplant Institute. Levin was lead surgeon on the Philadelphia region’s first bilateral hand transplant in 2014, the world’s first pediatric bilateral hand transplant in 2015, the world’s first bilateral hand transplant on an international patient in the United States in 2016, all of which have contributed to making Penn Medicine a preeminent domestic and international VCA center. “We are moving past transplant exclusively in a lifesaving capacity and toward a future where we can give patients, those who are devastated by limb

loss, uterine infertility, or severe facial injury, a significantly improved quality of life,” Levin said.

To date, more than 30 uterine transplants have been completed across the world including Brazil, China, the Czech Republic, Germany, Sweden and at two centers in the United States (the Cleveland Clinic and Baylor Medical Center). The transplanted uterus can come from either a deceased or a living donor. In the world, the majority of the transplants have come from living donors. With living donors, a woman who has had children and does not plan to have any more can donate her uterus to another woman who has UFI. In trials across the world, this has happened for mother-to-daughter or sister-to-sister donors, and in one case, one woman’s friend donated her uterus so she could conceive.

While the field is still in its earliest stages, uterine transplantation has already proven successful for some women. Eight babies have been born in Sweden, following seven successful uterine transplants, with two of the women delivering

two healthy babies.

“Uterine transplants are at the forefront of women’s health advancements,” said Deborah Driscoll, MD, chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Penn Medicine. “There was a time when we had no answers for these women who couldn’t have children, many of whom had heartbreaking stories, and lifelong struggles. But, advancements over the years have made IVF a standard practice, and now we’re able to see uterine transplants as a promising avenue for these women who otherwise have no option to carry children. We’re thrilled to be part of these breakthrough efforts.”

While the only babies born following UTx in the world so far have been born following transplants from living donors, Penn Medicine’s newly launched UTx clinical trial — known as The Uterine Transplantation for Uterine Factor Infertility (UNTIL) trial, and led by O’Neill and a team of colleagues across Transplant Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology and Maternal Fetal Medicine — is moving forward with uterine



First Baby from a Uterine Transplant in the US Born in Dallas

By Stephanie Stahl

December 1, 2017

The ability to transplant a uterus is providing new hope to thousands of women who cannot give birth because they don't have a uterus. The technology is being studied in Philadelphia at Penn, but doctors in Texas were the first to announce an American birth.

The newborn is the first U.S. baby born to a mother with a uterine transplant.

"When you see this boy, you feel you've done something beautiful," said Dr. Giuliano Testa, transplant surgeon at Baylor University Medical Center.

He was born last month during a scheduled C-section.

"There was something about this that was so special. Sorry, I'm an emotional person — there was something so exciting about this because the patients were so excited," Dr. Robert Gunby Jr., an obstetrician/gynecologist at the center, said.

The mother, who wishes to maintain her privacy, was born without a uterus, a condition called "absolute uterine factor infertility," which affects one in every 500 women. She had the transplant more than a year ago.

"As young women 14-16 year of age, they're told [they'll] never have a chance of having [their] own babies, carrying those babies, and this is providing women hope," Dr. E. Colin Koon, an obstetrician/gynecologist at the center, said.

The transplanted womb came from a living donor who does not know the patient.

Doctors are currently monitoring the baby and say he is breathing and eating well.

The family released a statement saying, they hope their son can serve as an inspiration to those struggling with infertility.

The mother is home now and doing well.

Doctors will remove the transplanted uterus after the first or second pregnancy, because she can't stay on anti-rejection drugs indefinitely. Baylor has done a number of transplants and is hoping for more babies soon.

Doctors in Sweden were the first to deliver a baby from a transplanted uterus. ●

cbslocal.com

transplantation only from deceased donors; donors who have delivered babies of their own (i.e. proven fertility).

"We've elected to move this trial forward using organs from deceased donors for a variety of reasons," said Paige Porrett, MD, PhD, a transplant surgeon and a co-principal investigator on the UNTIL trial. "However, one of the challenges with this approach is the timing. Once we retrieve the organ, we aim to transplant the donor uterus within six to eight hours into the recipient. Although it may be possible to extend this time further, rapid transplantation will help us best attain our goal of a viable and healthy uterine transplant"

The UNTIL trial will occur in a two-phased approach — the first phase is a feasibility phase, which will encompass the patient evaluation, embryo harvesting, and the transplant itself. Importantly, following the transplant the woman will need to be on immunosuppressive medications that prevent her body from rejecting the donor uterus. The second phase, which will occur approximately



one year after successful transplantation, will include the embryo transfer, pregnancy and delivery. The team also plans to study pregnancy and the maternal immune system in this unique setting which has the potential to advance their understanding of these processes and benefit all women.

“After one year of clinical stability following uterine transplantation, the woman’s frozen embryos will be placed directly back into the uterus one at a time. Once pregnancy is achieved

the woman and her baby will be monitored closely by a team Maternal Fetal Medicine (MFM) physicians that specialize in high-risk obstetrics,” said Eileen Wang, MD, an associate professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and lead Maternal Fetal Medicine physician on the UNTIL trial. “People take for granted the complexity of normal pregnancy. If you layer the issues of transplantation and immunosuppressive medications on top of pregnancy, the pregnancy inherently becomes more complicated. MFMs have experience managing

pregnancies in women with transplanted organs such as kidney, heart and pancreas and therefore are well equipped to provide care for women and pregnancies following uterine transplantation.”

The women in the trial will undergo cesarean delivery at 37 to 39 weeks unless medically indicated to deliver sooner. Cesarean delivery is required since women cannot labor and deliver children vaginally following uterine transplantation. While the birth of a healthy baby may be the ultimate goal for these women, it’s not

the end of their road in the trial. Once the woman has had one or two live born children, the uterus will be surgically removed, thus eliminating the need for the women in the trial to be on lifelong immunosuppression medications.

O’Neill added, “We believe this procedure has the potential to provide women with the ability to choose the best option for them—whether it is carrying their children through uterine transplant or another alternative way to become a parent.” ●

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INFERTILITY FACT:

YOU
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ALONE!

Did you know that more than seven million Americans are dealing with infertility? While it may not be a subject that everyone is comfortable discussing, it's important to ask the right questions when evaluating your options. It's also important to know that there are many potential paths to parenthood.

Dr. Eli Rybak, an infertility specialist with Reproductive Medicine Associates of New Jersey (RMANJ), is also an ordained orthodox rabbi. He says that working with couples trying to become parents blends his scientific, social and spiritual expertise in a meaningful way. "This field brings together so many interesting fields: embryology, genetics, reproduction, ethics and social policy," he says. "It also allows me to provide a unique level of care with an appreciation for the spiritual needs of my patients."

Below, Dr. Rybak suggests hopeful parents consider the following questions and answers when searching for infertility care:

You can measure hope. **86%** IVF delivery rate.*



72

With an IVF delivery rate of 86%—about 20% higher than the national average— Reproductive Medicine Associates of New Jersey has helped hopeful patients from 30 US states and 40 countries around the world become parents.

Thanks to our award-winning scientific advancements and patient-centered care, supported by financial options such as our new CareShare 100% refund program, success starts here.

48

Have hope. Connect with us today:
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24



Reproductive Medicine Associates
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IVIRMA) Global

* SART 2014; Final Live Birth Per Patient. Live births of 86.7% includes all non-banking autologous cycles and banking cycles with a thaw within 12 months of banking, representing outcomes for patients who were new to a given clinic in 2014, with births realized in 2014 and 2015. Please note: a comparison of clinic success rates may not be meaningful because a patient's medical characteristics, treatment approaches and entrance criteria for assisted reproductive technology (ART) may vary from clinic to clinic. Visit www.sart.org to learn more.

When should I see an infertility specialist if I'm having trouble getting pregnant?

A: The general rule of thumb for women under 35 is that if you've been trying to conceive for more than a year of unprotected intercourse, you should seek treatment from a reproductive endocrinologist or other specialist. That timeframe changes to six months for women over 35. Visit MyFertilityChecklist.com to learn more about the best time to see a fertility specialist.

Are pregnancy rates or delivery rates more important?

A: When considering a practice, it's not enough for them to cite high pregnancy rates as many pregnancies do not progress to full term. Live delivery rates are the real goal. Reliable, independent sources, such as the Society for Assisted Reproductive Technology's website (SART.org) let you see the delivery rates of any fertility center you're researching.

Are all fertility treatments the same?

A: Treatment options often vary at different practices. That's why patients need to look for a program with the most advanced technology and practice patterns, which translate into high-delivery rates. This includes programs that complete their diagnostic work-up in 30 days or less; offers single embryo transfer with delivery rates at or above national average; routinely performs embryonic screening; accounts for endometrial synchrony during time of embryo transfer, and where embryo culture to blastocyst stage of development is standard.

Is it likely that I will have twins or multiples if I undergo fertility treatment?

A: In the past, prospective parents had a high risk of twins or multiples when undergoing in-vitro fertilization (IVF) because more than one embryo would be transferred in order to achieve a pregnancy. Today there are more advanced ways to pick a single embryo with the best chance of success, which has drastically reduced the number

of multiple births as well as the health effects and financial burdens associated with multiples. RMANJ uses genetic screening, single embryo transfer and endometrial synchrony to reduce this risk.

My partner and I learned we are carriers for a genetic disease. Can IVF treatment help avoid transferring that to a child?

A: Often infertile, as well as fertile, couples have a variety of genetic diseases. IVF practitioners, like RMANJ, conduct thorough genetic screening to accurately and safely determine which embryos are carriers for certain genetic diseases and which are not. This process happens before embryos are implanted to help parents avoid inadvertently passing those traits along.

New patient appointments are available. Learn more about RMANJ's commitment to science, success and support by speaking to a New Patient Liaison today. Call 856-267-8100 or visit www.rmanj.com •

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The Importance of Ovarian Reserve Testing

By: Dr. Al Peters, SIRM-NJ in Asbury, NJ



What is ovarian reserve, and why does it matter? Simply put, it's the number and quality of your eggs, and how well your follicles function. Both are critical to becoming pregnant.

Should you get your ovarian reserve tested? The answer is a resounding yes for anyone who is having trouble getting pregnant. There are a number of non-invasive tests you can have to determine your ovarian reserve. While there's no way to reverse diminished ovarian reserve, there are many fertility treatment options your doctor can offer you.

Ovarian Reserve Basics

Women are born with all the eggs they will ever have. When a woman starts puberty, around age 12 for most women, she has about 200,000 eggs. By the time she reaches menopause, at about 50 years old, all of her eggs are gone or nonfunctional. If ovulation proceeded steadily from puberty to menopause — without being interrupted by birth control pills or pregnancy — the majority of women would ovulate approximately 500 eggs.

The eggs that aren't ovulated all die naturally via a process called atresia. At this time, there aren't any treatments to improve ovarian reserve or restore egg numbers. Ovarian reserve is primarily determined by genetics, however some external factors such as prior ovarian surgery, some chemotherapy agents, pelvic radiation and smoking can speed egg loss.

Ovarian Reserve Testing

There are many non-invasive tests that can be performed to determine your ovarian reserve; a few are mentioned below. Your doctor will advise you as to which is right for you.

- **Day 3 FSH:** The pituitary is the area of the brain that produces follicle stimulating hormone (FSH). When ovarian function starts declining FSH values increase in an attempt to stimulate the ovary to mature eggs. Normal FSH values are below 10. If yours is above 10 on cycle day 2 or 3, it may indicate a decline in your ovarian reserve.

- **AMH:** The cells surrounding the egg produce a hormone called anti-mullerian hormone (AMH). A blood measurement of this hormone can also give us an idea of remaining egg quality. High-quality eggs give us measurement of AMH over 2. AMH can be done on any day of the menstrual cycle.

- **Clomid Challenge Test** (Clomiphene Citrate Challenge Test): An extension of the day 3 FSH test, this blood test measures levels of the hormone obtained on day 2 or 3 of your cycle. The test involves taking 100 mg of clomiphene citrate orally per day on cycle days 5 through 9. Your FSH is checked again on day 10, if it's higher than 10 on either day 3 or day 10 it's generally considered abnormal.

- **Resting (Antral) Follicle Count:** A transvaginal ultrasound is performed to count the number of resting/unstimulated ovarian follicles at the start of your period. It's important to know what's going on with your follicles as fertility medications may be less effective for those with a low number of resting follicles.

- **Ovarian Volume:** Ovarian volume may start to decline as ovarian function does. A transvaginal ultrasound is used to do a 3D study of ovarian volume.

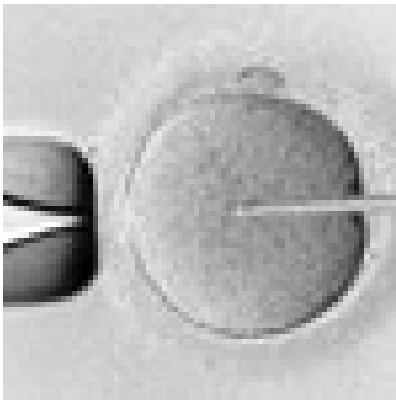
AMH is also helpful in diagnosing PCOS, as levels of AMH tend to be exaggerated in this condition. ●

INSIDE THE EMBRYOLOGY LAB

DAY-BY-DAY EMBRYO DEVELOPMENT

By: Liza Roscetti Meyer, Invia Fertility

Many fertility patients are curious about what exactly happens in the embryology lab, from the time their eggs are retrieved to the time they are transferred. When people have answers to their questions about the details of embryo development, IVF can become a less mysterious process for them. With that in mind, here is a day-by-day timeline of what happens in the embryology lab in IVF.



DAY 0:

This is known as your retrieval day. On day 0, the eggs are retrieved from the follicles that have resulted from your ovarian stimulation. At this time the retrieved eggs are counted and assessed for maturity/quality. The sperm is also prepped and readied for insemination or ICSI of the retrieved eggs. Approximately 4-6 hours after your retrieval, the eggs will be inseminated or injected with sperm (ICSI).

Mature egg (Metaphase II) at ICSI



DAY 1:

The eggs are evaluated for fertilization, the fusion or combining of the egg and sperm, approximately 16-18 hours after insemination. Normal fertilization is the presence of two pronuclei, one from the egg and one from the sperm. If there are too few or too many pronuclei, that embryo is considered abnormally fertilized. All normally fertilized embryos are put into a special media that mimics the tubal fluid found in the human body.

Normally fertilized embryo

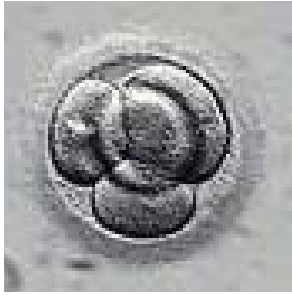


DAY 2:

The embryos are briefly looked at to assess cell division. Most embryos will have between 2-4 cells on day 2. If the embryo has not divided by this time, that embryo is considered non-viable. At this time, embryology will decide if a day 3 or a day 5 transfer will occur. This is typically based on the quality of cell division of the embryos, and the number of embryos available.

Abnormally fertilized embryo

4-celled, day 2 embryo



DAY 3:

Embryos at this stage usually have 6-8 cells. If you are having your embryo transfer, assisted zona hatching, making a breach in the shell of the embryo, might be performed. This is also the day embryo biopsy for PGD may occur. If you are not having your transfer, the embryos are placed into new media that mimics the uterine fluid of the human body.

day 3, 8-celled embryo



DAY 4:

Your embryos continue to grow and develop into a compact ball of cells, about 16 in all, known as a morula. If compaction does not start to occur on this day, blastocyst formation rates are decreased.

A compacted grade 4 morula



DAY 5:

On day 5, the embryo develops into a blastocyst. At this stage, it is usually possible to grade the Inner Cell Mass (ICM), the fetal component, and the Trophectoderm cells (TE), the placental component, of the embryo. Embryo transfers are often done on day 5, as well as cryopreservation of any fully expanded blastocysts. Any remaining viable embryos that are not fully developed are cultured on for possible freezing on day 6.

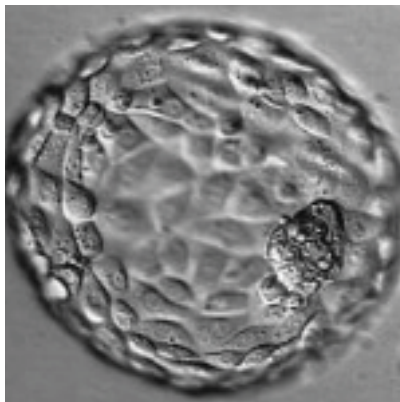
Early day 5 blastocyst



DAY 6:

Embryos on day 6 must be either transferred, if transfer was not done on day 5, or frozen.

Fully hatched day 6 blastocyst



Any non-viable embryos are discarded. Day 6 is the last day that an embryo can remain in the lab without being transferred or cryopreserved. ●



THE OTHER END OF THE CALL

A FERTILITY NURSE SHARES

By: *Monica Moore*, Nurse Practitioner at RMA CT

So, today's the day — drum roll, please — the initial pregnancy test day for some of our patients. It's a day full of nervous anticipation for all the fertility nurses I know. Today, the patient I'm waiting to hear news about had her blood drawn at a satellite office, so the results won't be back until lunch. It's going to be a long, long morning. For both of us.

WE'RE HOPING WITH YOU

Most days, I'm cautiously optimistic. And with good reason. I'm lucky and grateful to work at a fertility center with great pregnancy rates, so many of the phone calls I make are to relate the wonderful news my patients are hoping for — they're pregnant. As even the best fertility center doesn't have 100% pregnancy success rates though, the "bad" calls still exist and they haunt me long after I hang up the phone.

WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR

Regardless of how many years I have worked as a fertility nurse, I am never calm while waiting for the pregnancy results. Until they come in, there is a "PND" (which stands for pending) in the results column, and I probably hit the refresh button 100 times during the day until the moment arrives where the words become numbers. I quickly scan the bHCG level (pregnancy level column). If I see two to three digits there, I release my breath, as this is probably the start of a good outcome, and then I analyze the results more thoroughly.

EITHER WAY YOU'LL HEAR FROM ME

If the hCG column has only one digit in it, I'm concerned (and the release of breath more resembles the mumbling of a curse word). Then, I pick up the phone and as gently as I can, I deliver that news too. ●

20 Signs You Are Dealing with Infertility

1. You can book tickets for a year from now.
2. You're hiding business cards — many of them.
3. Your little siblings know more about babies than you.
4. Going away gets too complicated
5. You stop being offered Kvatter.
6. You find black bags extremely useful
7. Five A.M. is not *that* early.
8. You're the only one your age in *shul*.
9. Your bank account is shrinking at an alarming rate.
10. You've stopped disassociating BC from babies.
11. You understand more than a four-year medical student.
12. You know more letter combinations than a teen.
13. You've seen the inside of every room in every *mikvah*.
14. You realize it's the small things that count — *microscopically* small.
15. You startle with the ringing of your phone.
16. You know exactly which vein is best.
17. You own a sharps container.
18. You feel like every single other person around you is pregnant.
19. You become an expert at masking your emotions.
20. You know that you can never know what's going on in someone else's life. ●

THE MANY FACES OF IF



When you mix up your meds — and take them anyways!



When you just love the wise advice you're getting...



When your ridiculous excuse for not showing up is thankfully accepted.



When your sister is nine months pregnant and no one bothered to tell you.



When you take a deep breathe. And inject.



When it's just another early morning appointment.



When you valiantly hide your true feelings in public.



When you get offered *kvatter*. Again.



When you try out a new center, incognito.



When you know your Rav's number better than your own.



When you convince your workmate that your boss gave you special privileges to sleep in late.



When someone who waited nine long months gives you serious *chizuk*.



When you drink boiled *aravos*.



When you realize your mother-in-law opened your medicine cabinet.



When your coworkers fail to understand where their noses belong — and where they don't!



When you sit through rush hour and your appointment was...



When you attempt to sweet talk your insurance's customer rep (to no avail).



When you chug through the two-week-wait.



When you try to keep your hopeful secret just inside your mouth.



When you treat yourself to your secret ice cream stash (you deserve it!).



When you recognize her at the RE, despite the aforementioned getup.



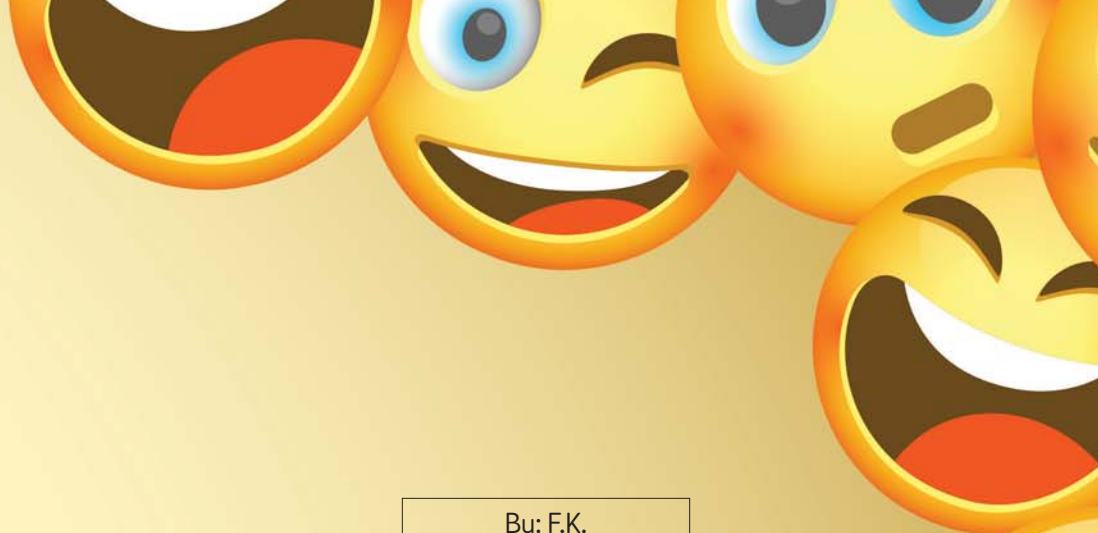
When the ouch factor kicks in.



When your cycle is canceled. Again.



When you smile through every family *simcha* till your cheeks hurt.



By: F.K.



When the conversation around you revolves around Pampers vs. Huggies.



When the bill for your cycle tops the down payment for your (non-existent) house.



When you Just. Had. Enough.



When you wait in the waiting room. And wait and wait and wait....



When good results come your way!



When you accept this *nisayon* with grace!



When you get this magazine in the mail!



When you find humor in something that's really, really not funny.



When the advice giver is too respectable to stop. Grin (or grit) and bear...



After an A TIME *shabbaton* and spending so much time being in understanding company.



When you hear the crazy stuff people actually say. (Well, so long as it wasn't said to you.)



When the clueless person is yapping between us.



When someone has just suggested/advised/commented something that branded them Royal Monarch of the Ignorant.



When you meet a fellow IFer.



When you have just the right answer ready.



When you're on BC and your husband has said something wrong.



When you're finally facing your computer after the nurse's call...

•



ADD TO CART

It's a good thing storing items in my various shopping carts across cyberspace doesn't cost money.

Or perhaps it's a pity companies don't charge for said service. Life would be so much simpler if I wouldn't add useless items according to whim to bags, carts, baskets and wish lists all over.

Here are some things that are sitting in my cart on Amazon, Etsy, Zazzle and The Children's Place (thanks

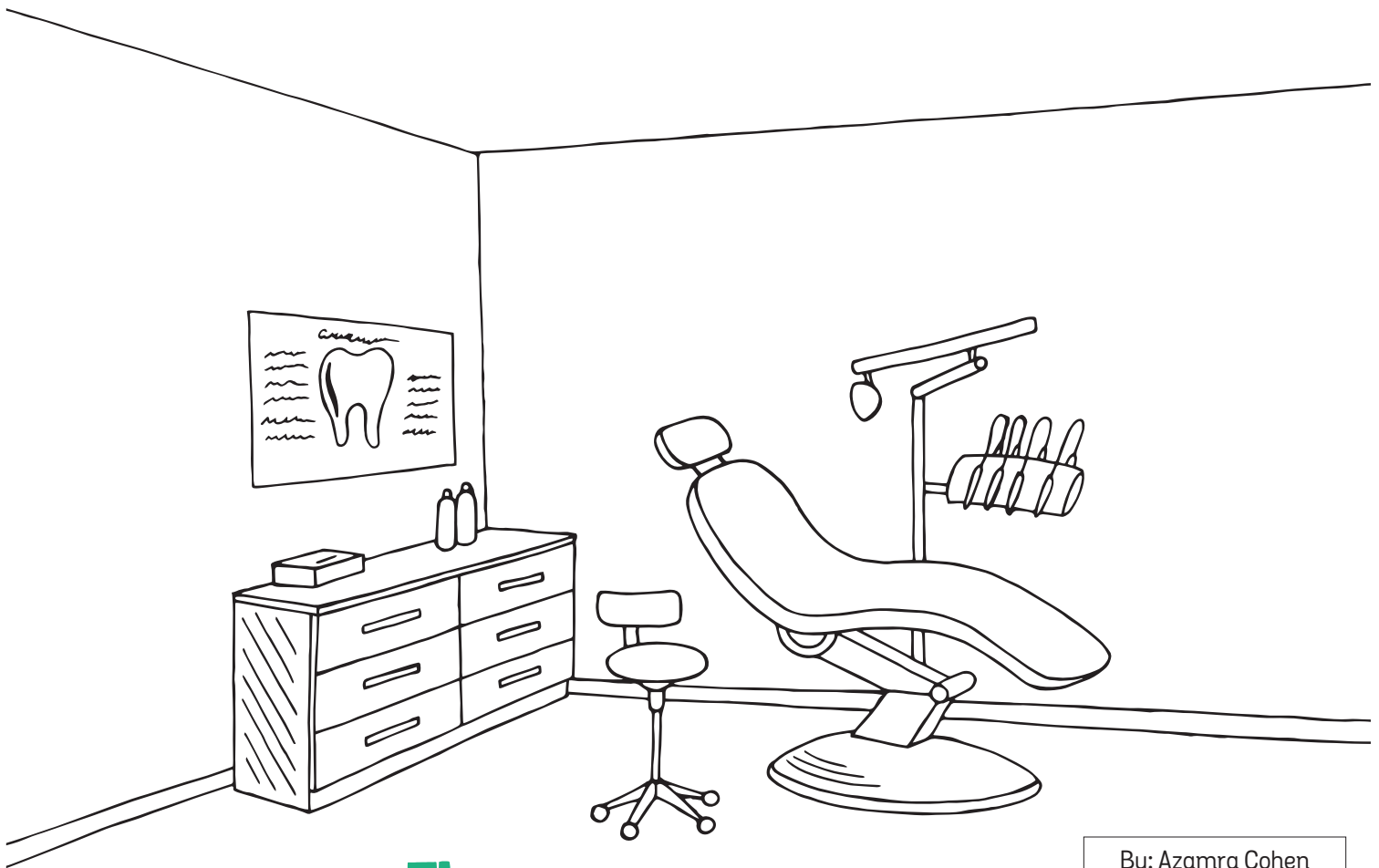
to mom2b on the A TIME forums!) in the hope that I will get to purchase and use them fast.

Use? Did I just say that? Do I actually want to advertise any of this?

I guess I may as well empty those carts, but before I do so, I'd like to share them so they don't just disappear silently into the black hole of the World Wide Web. ●







By: Azamra Cohen

The Problem with Dentists



The problem with dentists, when you're a woman with infertility issues, is that they take X-rays. This means that you are likely to divulge your pregnancy status to them. This is true even if you are in a very early stage. Even if you think that the pregnancy is not going to be viable. Even if you have already had to decline X-rays the last time for a non-viable pregnancy, and now are doing it again.

She said, "So last time you were here you were pregnant."

Now, in many cases, if you have to tell medical personnel that you are pregnant, it can be done in a very professional manner.

The trouble for me, however, is that my dentist is, shall we say, *heimishe*, part of my community, and, well, let's just say it got very awkward.

Back in June, I went for a dental

visit. I was five weeks pregnant exactly, and I knew that the beta numbers were low and the pregnancy was likely to be unviable. I'd been down this road before. Still, I was hopeful and certainly didn't want to cause any extra risk. So I had to tell the staff that I was pregnant before they took X-rays. The dentist and hygienist, predictably, responded with enthusiasm. I responded in a more cautious manner. I didn't want to disclose too many details, so I just kept saying, "It's very early." Even when dealing with people without recurrent pregnancy loss, they should know that if it's very early and you're only telling them for professional reasons, they should exercise some discretion and not highlight the pregnancy too much. It was very uncomfortable for me.

It got even worse, when the dentist said, "So what number kid is this one going to be?" I *would not* answer that question. That was unacceptable. I replied with an indirect answer, but nevertheless, he persisted. After that incident, I was so frustrated with myself. I wished I had been more direct. I wish I had said, "I don't feel comfortable talking about it until I see a heartbeat." Or, "Until after the first trimester." Or, "I don't feel comfortable answering that question so early on." I kept kicking myself for not having been firm and direct with my response. It would have been less painful for me that way.

For weeks afterward, I thought about what I would tell him the next time I saw him. How I should firmly but pointedly let him know that not all pregnancies result in adding a child to the family. Or at least, in adding a child to the earthly family. But that's just not my style. He didn't mean anything bad. But his lack of discretion, his lack of understanding the tentativeness of an early pregnancy, caused me pain. After all, if I were to count this pregnancy in terms of "what number child is this going to be (in my earthly family)," then I have to count all the others too.

Today, seven and a half months later, I had another dental appointment scheduled. It's crazy to think that if that pregnancy had stuck, I would still be pregnant with it now. It feels like forever ago. I remembered the previous incident, but it wasn't until I got into the car today, that I became very anxious and emotional about whether or not they were going to comment on my lack of large belly.

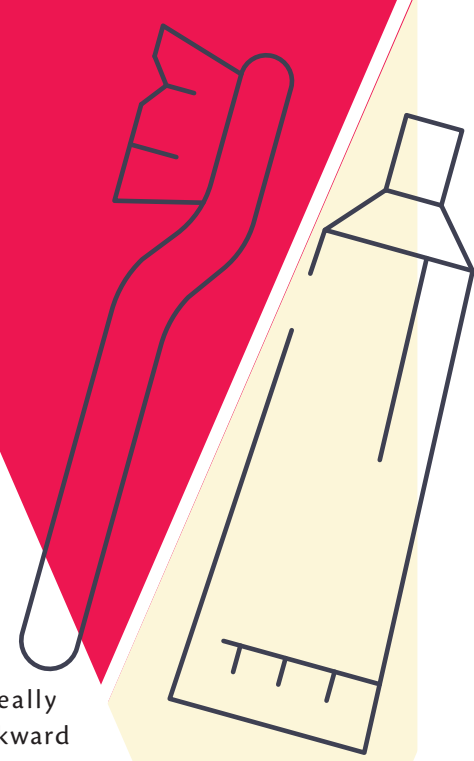
Not only that, but I could have been pregnant with a new pregnancy, if the cycle I had just done had been successful. That would have been

“Not anymore,” I said in a cheery voice.

really awkward — to have had to

announce another brand-new pregnancy. Well, at least I got to have my X-rays done!

I knew they would remember about my having been pregnant,



because they would have looked at my records and seen that I was overdue for the X-rays.

In any event, I spent the whole car ride planning what I would say. I wanted to come off in a way that would 1. Not cause them to pity me, 2. Sound accepting of what had happened and 3. Impress upon them the idea that it was not acceptable to schmooze with me about my pregnancy just because I had had to tell them.

When I arrived, I opened my coat wide, so there would be no misconceptions. Thank G-d, the receptionists didn't say anything. I kept telling myself, "It'll be over in a few minutes."

Then the hygienist called me back. She said, "So last time you were here you were pregnant."

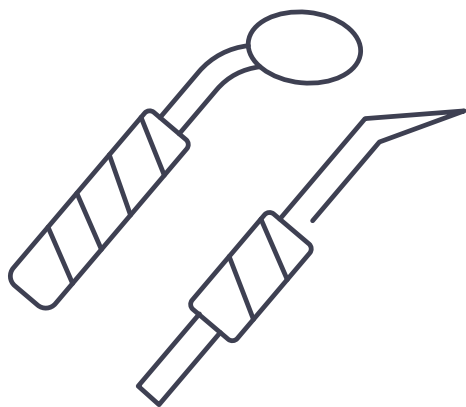
I said, "Not anymore" in a cheery voice that I thought would indicate that there was nothing else to say on the subject.

However, I had miscalculated. She had remembered that I'd been pregnant, but hadn't done the math and figured out that I would *still* have been pregnant. Which led to the question of, "Tell me, so what did you have?"

Taken aback, slightly, I said, "Oh it didn't last."

I was hanging up my coat, so I don't think I saw her face at that moment, but she said "I'm sorry."

She asked, "How far along were you?"



Perhaps the
hygienist
prepped him,
because he
only talked to
me about my
teeth, and not
my family.

I said, "Five weeks." I followed up by saying, "I knew even at the time I was here last that it probably wasn't viable."

And then she asked a question I couldn't believe, "What number kid was this if it had lasted?"

Wow! That was almost the same question that the dentist had asked me last time. How bizarre. Why not just say something like, How many kids do you have? Or better yet, just move the conversation right on. Well, I wasn't going to make the same mistake twice. I answered indirectly, like last time, and then I said, "I don't like to think of pregnancy in that way, so early." Good for me, I made my point. I don't hold anything against them, except that they should have known better.

I still had to think about whether the dentist would comment when he came in. If he had asked me, "So tell me, what did you have?" my plan was to be very blunt and say, "A miscarriage."

Maybe that would teach him a little discretion. But perhaps the hygienist prepped him because, thank G-d, he only talked to me about my teeth, and not my family. Although I get to come back soon and have a cavity filled, so I'll be spending more time with him then. If she didn't warn him off, he will most definitely be asking me questions about my family. We shall see....

As a matter of fact, this wasn't the first time this kind of thing has happened. A similar event happened during my first miscarriage six years ago. I was also in limbo at the time, with a pregnancy of questionable viability. I declined X-rays and when the hygienist got excited for me, I just said, "Well, I'm not sure, but I just want to be careful." I felt terrible denying on some level the life that *was* inside me, growing or not. But at least they didn't ask me any questions the next time...

In conclusion, I recommend that nobody go to the dentist. Well, I probably shouldn't recommend that. All I can say, is that I hope that my experiences were singular ones, and most people are able to have more professional experiences when disclosing pregnancies to medical professionals. But most important, I hope that all healthy pregnancies end with a little baby in a car seat, patiently waiting for Mommy to be finished with her dental visit. ●

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The Best Advice I Received After My Miscarriage

When I lost my child, I found so many unexpected allies and their words helped.

By: Asher Fogle

The other day, I received an email from an online registry, congratulating me on my baby's impending birth and reminding me to shop for any last-minute items. It's true, I'm supposed to have a daughter this month — but I won't, because her heart stopped beating at 16 weeks.

My dear husband has been, without my knowledge, deleting emails in our joint account each morning before I awake, but this pesky email got through and reached another address.

When we found out I was pregnant this past winter, we told everyone we knew — friends, family, Facebook. We'd done all the genetic tests and passed the first trimester, so we thought we were in the "safe zone." After the news broke, we received an unbelievable amount of well-

wishes and congratulations.

But when I miscarried a month later from an undetected chromosomal condition, though, there was no hiding. None. I felt like a social media cautionary tale. But we opted to take the same route. We told everyone about our loss just as publicly as we announced our joy — and it was the best thing that could have happened.

Less than five minutes after posting about our loss, a former coworker called me. We had talked about her children and pregnancies often over the years, but I never knew about her own miscarriage. She told me that it's a club no one ever wants to be in — but once you're in, you realize almost everybody you know was already a member. And with at least one in five pregnancies

ending in miscarriage, the odds are that she's right.

From there, I was inundated with support. Some people called right away, and some waited a month or two to send us a note. Either way, they shared stories of loss, sorrow, and later pregnancies intermingled with hope and terror.

Months later, I still have sad or angry days. And I occasionally hide newsfeed baby photos posted by friends who had similar due dates. I still have a lot of existential questions. I still miss her. But along with leaning on my husband, my family and my community, the kind words and stories of a few brave women have helped me push through.

Here are a few* that I hope can help others:

**1. You will be changed,
even for the better.**

"A year after my own miscarriage, I won't say it goes away, but the sharpness and the constancy of the grief dulls. And that grief has changed me, in many ways for the better. I'm a more empathetic person now. I listen better. There's a line from a novel I read over and over again around my due date, 'You were unsure which pain is worse — the shock of what happened or the ache for what never will.' I still mark dates and that time in my head (I would have had a nine-month-old now), but it's less sharp. And as much as the path to get there is one I wouldn't wish on anyone, there is a lovely silver lining in truly learning your own strength. You're a strong woman. And you'll keep getting stronger." — M.F.



2. Distractions are okay.

We all cope differently. After I learned about my first miscarriage, my husband came home from work and we cried together for hours. And then at 6 p.m., I got up, got dressed and went to go teach. It was my first semester teaching. My husband thought I was nuts, but I wanted to go and I'm still glad I did. It was three hours of being able

to put the grief aside, however temporarily, and it was such a relief.

H.L.

**3. Find the positive,
however small.**

"What got me through both my miscarriages was knowing there are others out there going through the same situation who later went on to have a healthy baby. It also helped discussing adoption and knowing if we can't conceive, we would eventually have a child — just maybe not the way we originally planned. The waiting has been the worst part: for a positive pregnancy test, for the first ultrasound to come back normal, for the miscarriage, and to start trying again. I've billed the time with hobbies I'd normally put off — cooking a new recipe, painting, gardening — anything that took me off the Internet and miscarriage blogs." — K.P.

4. CLOSURE COMES GRADUALLY.

"I LOST A LITTLE ONE 30 YEARS AGO. WE WERE IN OUR MID-20S AND EIGHT MONTHS ALONG. MY DOCTOR, WHOM I LOVED, TOLD ME I SHOULD HAVE HER NATURALLY, IF POSSIBLE. SO, THEY INDUCED A FEW DAYS LATER. I WASN'T SURE I WANTED TO SEE HER, BUT I'M GLAD THE DOCTOR SUGGESTED WE DO. HOWEVER, THERE WERE TWO DOCTORS AND SEVERAL NURSES STANDING AROUND THE BED, AND WE ALWAYS WISHED THAT WE WOULD HAVE HAD TIME WITH HER ALONE. LATER, I REMEMBER THINKING, WHAT DID I DO TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN? I DON'T KNOW IF YOU EVER GET OVER IT. EVEN AFTER I GOT PREGNANT AGAIN FOUR MONTHS LATER, I KNOW IT CHANGED ME." — D.C.

6. Men grieve too, but differently.

"The hardest thing is that my wife and I know that our next attempt will be fraught with concern. The wonder of the first time, the unmitigated joy, and possibility and optimism are, if not gone, then muted by the knowledge of what could be, and could have been. It's challenging to be the man. My wife has been amazing and always encouraged me to be open and allow myself to feel what is going on, and I have. At the same time, it is easy to feel at a loss. Men don't experience the hormonal changes or the physical reality of the pregnancy. We suffer our loss second hand, because we only get to live the experience by proxy. For us the pain is real, and also not real." — J.M.

5. Go easy on yourself.

"Take your time to grieve. I really beat myself up because I was 'only' seven weeks pregnant when we miscarried. But as soon as you find out you are expecting, you begin to dream. Those hopes and dreams need to be grieved, along with the loss of the child." J.H.

7. There are no easy answers.

"We went through seven miscarriages. Six years of heartache, watching other friends get pregnant and have healthy babies, and wondering, hoping, praying that some day it would be our turn. It never got easier to accept. Any time we got a positive test, it was hard to be happy. Many people said it will happen when it's supposed to. That's not what you want to hear when you ache for something so much it hurts. We kept to ourselves about it for the most part, but we could've used more love and support through it all. Once I stopped thinking about it, it magically happened and we ended up with our baby. We were excited, but it wasn't truly real until we held our son in our arms. I hope others that go through this will keep the faith that there is a plan for everyone and everything happens for a reason. That's hard to accept when you're personally dealing with it, but in hindsight, that's just how it works out." — C.T.

*These letters have been edited for clarity and privacy. •

MY PAIN, HIS PAIN

By: N.W.

December 2013

Months had passed since my recent miscarriage, and it was the day that would have been my due date. It was way past midnight and my husband was fast asleep. I was overcome with tears, emotions and yearning. In the silence of the night I penned my feelings, said some Tehillim and fell into a sweet slumber.

December 2017

We had just experienced another heartrending loss. I found the poem I had written four years earlier, and it infused me with chizuk to continue this infertility journey knowing that Hashem is always at my side. I decided to share it with the A TIME readership.

Nine months ago I so staunchly knew, my dream will come true.

That yes, in the month of December, I'll be a mommy, too.

I will hug and love and raise a precious little baby,

A long-awaited branch, the pride and joy of our family.

But no, our tiny darling will not be born this month, you see,

Hashem has other plans for our family.

Into my aching heart, I feel the emptiness seep,

With a deep longing for the faceless baby whom I didn't get to keep.

But then I stop and know, yes, this is part of Hashem's masterplan.

So I can question and ponder the purpose, even though I can't understand.

Ani Maamin, I staunchly believe, that whatever lies ahead before us,

Is truly the very best from the One Above who so loves and adores us,

He knows my feelings and understands what's best for you and me,

And will in the opportune moment send a pure *neshamela* to join our family!

My dear brethren, Hashem too is inflicted with this identical pain,

He is yearning to unite with and embrace His precious child just the same.

With affection and friendship our long-awaited dream can come true,

We just need to strengthen our relationships with each and every Jew.

Let's allow our true Ahavas Yisroel all that senseless *sinas chinam* to replace,

And Be'ezras Hashem we'll once again be, with the Shechinah face to face! ●





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	Great Neck	Betty Bandary, RN	(516) 773-6174	NF
	Great Neck	Orly Steinberg, RN	(516) 567 8221	FEE
	Lawrence	Rivky Fischer, CNA, CPT	(516) 239-0219	NF
	Lawrence	Dr. Mermelstein	(516) 371-9594	
	Woodmere	Alyssa Sacks RN	(917) 670-0390	NF
	West Hempstead	Audrey Davidowitz, MD	(516) 486-0454	NF

State	city	Name	phone	Fee
Manhattan:		Cindy Melamed, PA	(917) 445-3015	NF
		Arielle Siegel, RN	(516) 695-9744	NF
	Lower East Side	Leah Homnick PCA, CPT	(917) 554-1459	
	Upper West Side	Fabiene Rottenberg, DPM	(212) 724-4457	NF
	Upper West Side	Shevy Serhofer, RN	(718) 810-8222	NF
	Upper West Side	Shira Westreich, RN	(212) 595-5122	NF
	Washington Heights	Sharon Sommer, RN	(212) 781-4216	
Monroe:		Vickie Nowosielski, RN	(917) 743-3507	Fee (A/S)
		Rivky Sandel, CPT	(845) 629-1212	
		Dorothy Prey, RN	(845) 928-6296	Fee (A/S)
		Eileen Grimes, RN	(845) 928-8269	
Monsey:		Chaya Back, RN	(732) 267-3988	NF
		Nechama Abou, RN	(845) 352-0117	
		Sherry Broidy, RN	(845) 928-3391	Fee
		Samuel Feder	(845) 362-6080	
		Brocha Lichtenstein, RNC	(845) 356-0939	NF (D/O)
		Leah Lichstein, RN	(845) 362-0990	NF
		Leah Webster	(845) 642-4333	
		Goldy Malek	(845) 323-7718	NF
		Yossi Malek	(845) 323-7717	NF
		Miriam Schiffer, RN	(845) 918-1708 / (914) 419-2894	NF
		Malka Weinstein, RN	(845) 362-0288	NF (D/O)
	S. Monsey, Airmont	Chaya Becker, RPA	(845) 352-0969	
Spring Valley	Blimy Brill	(845) 354-1211 / (845) 558-1447	NF	
Spring Valley	Yehudis Reichman, RN	(845) 354-0682 / (845) 499-5216	NF	
Spring Valley	Chevy Unger RMA CPT	(845) 422-5400		
Wesley Hills	Wendy Schindler, RN	(845) 354-6536		
Queens:	Far Rockaway	Rena Gordon, RN	(718) 471-8985	NF
	Far Rockaway	Esty Klein, RPAC	(718) 501-3860	NF
	Far Rockaway	Rochel Lieberman, CM Pager	(718) 206-6081 #16460	NF
	Far Rockaway	Faigy Singer, RN	(718) 868-3935	NF
	Far Rockaway	Yehudis Brown, RN, BSN	(410) 522-8879	
	Far Rockaway	Sarah Schechter, RN	(718) 327-3250	NF
	Far Rockaway	Avigail Weiss, RN	(917) 841-8693	NF
	Far Rockaway	Dina Kret	(516) 375-1989	NF

State	city	Name	phone	Fee	
	Flushing	Anat Benjamin, MD	(718) 539-7736 / (917)224-8487	NF	
	Flushing	Yael Kluyov, RN	(646) 881-3111		
	Flushing	Miriam R. Heimowitz, RN	(718) 261-4373		
	Flushing	Ruty Koenig, RPAC	(718) 793-9666	NF	
	Jamaica	Esther Natanov, RN	H: (718) 380-9730 / W: (718) 283-6587	Fee	
	Woodside	Vahida Gilic, RN	(718) 578-7944		
	Kew Gardens	Irina Aronova, RN	(718) 544-0367	Fee	
	Kew Gardens	Aviva Gluck, RN	(917) 579-5427	NF	
	Kew Gardens	Dena Friedman FNP-BC	(201) 759-5761	NF	
	Kew Gardens	Sheva Turk, RN	(718) 263-6521	NF	
	Kew Gardens	Esther roman	(718) 487-3754	NF	
	Kew Gardens	Adina Berger, RN	(845) 659-5108	NF	
Staten Island:		Marcia Brathwaitte, RN	(917) 841-5273	Fee (A/S)	
		Arlene Jacobson, RN	(718) 983-0138	NF	
		Esther Kay, RN	(718) 370-3515		
Ohio:		Cleveland Heights	Aviva Kupfer, RN	(216) 932-8933	NF
		Cleveland Heights	Leah Kushner, RN	(216) 371-1265	NF
		Cleveland	Aliza Feingold, RN	(614) 239-6356	NF
CANADA:		Montreal	Mrs. Demercur, RN	(514) 739-1462	NF
		Montreal	Faigy Hershkowitz, RN	(514) 341-6399	Fee
		Montreal	Flora Sasportas, RN	(514) 735-8145	
		Toronto	Aldith Baker, RN	(416) 667-1276	Fee
		Toronto	Ruby Bailey, RN	(905) 470-7379	Fee
		Toronto	Fay Conville, RN	(905) 727-6207	Fee
		Toronto	Eve Galligan, RN	(416) 787-5154	Fee
		Toronto	Chavie Kestenbaum, RN	(416) 787-0067	
		Toronto	Joanne Lang, RN	(416) 783-8782	
		Toronto	Elisheva Lightstone, RN	(416) 256-0470	
		Toronto	Malky Meckler, RN	(416) 789-0893	
	Toronto	Rachel Ohayon, RN	(416) 781-1218		
	Toronto	Rochel Travis, RN	(416) 631-9409		
ENGLAND:		London	A TIME England office 020-8800-2153 / email: admin@atime.org.uk		

If a nurse is needed on Shabbos, call Chaya at 718-258-5002 or Vivienne at 917-783-9514

A/S=Available Shabbos, D/O =Doctor's Order, NF=No Fee

If you know of any other nurses who would be willing to provide this crucial service, especially in neighborhoods not yet covered, please let us know. And many, many thanks to all those listed above. A TIME is not responsible for any treatments administered by any of the Nurses or Nurse Practitioners listed herein. Nothing herein constitutes medical advice and all readers are recommended to consult their physician.

For More Information, Please Call (718) 686-8912 ext. 202

Dedicated to the Memory of Charlie Weiss
נתן קרפל בן משולם ע"ה

We are currently updating the names on our Labor/tehillim packet.

Since there are many distinguished Rabbonim who advocate reciting Tehillim for others whilst in the throes of childbirth, among them Rabbi Mordechai Finkelman, Rav Yosefi and Rav Nissim Yagen of Yerushalayim, we have compiled a beautiful tefilla said while in labor along with a Tehillim list of our couples upon the couples' request. We send it to OB/GYN offices, to labor coaches, doulas as well as expectant couples (upon request). If you would like to be on this list please contact A Time:

Email: admin@atime.org • Call: 718-686-8912 ext. 200 • Fax: 718-686-8927

Please make sure to include the following information:

Your First & Last Name _____ Contact Phone # _____
 Husband's Full Hebrew Name _____ Wife's Full Hebrew Name _____
 Please make sure the spelling is correct.

Please note, we only accept names given by the individual couples and only the Tehillim names are printed.

Important E-mail Addresses

admin@atime.org
membership@atime.org
helpline@atime.org
supervision@atime.org
insuranceadvocacy@atime.org
events@atime.org
peersupport@atime.org
pregpacket@atime.org
library@atime.org
adoption@atime.org
monsey@atime.org
contact@atime.ca
atime.london@gmail.com
Israel@atime.org
midatlantic@atime.org
Midwest@atime.org

A TIME Library Information

Boro Park

A TIME Library and Conference Center
1310 48th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11219
Monday-Thursday 9:00 AM-5:00 PM
Appointments are available at other times.
Call Shaindy: (718) 686-8912 extension 209
library@atime.org

Lakewood

Call: (973)494-2334
or (732)370-7025,

England

By appointment
Call Henny: (208) 800-2153
admin@atime.org.uk

Israel

By appointment:
Bracha or Tzippy: 052-377-0444
Israel@atime.org

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- Fertility Preservation
- Halacha pertaining to all areas of women's health

For all questions and concerns about women's health from birth to menopause

Give us a call, we have the answers, the experience and we can help you

For the best referral and advice in women's health

718.475.1415 chava@atime.org



לשרן זיך פונעם בליי

אין יעצט איבערנעמעדיג די פלאץ פונעם בליי, לאמיר געדענקען אט די פינף זאכן, אויסצונוצן אונזער אינערליכע כוחות, דאן וועלן מיר ווערן די בעסטע מענטש וואס פאר אונז איז שייך.

(1) דו וועסט קענען אויפטוהן אסאך זאכן, אבער נאר אויב דו לאזט זיך פירן פונעם אייבערשטער'ס האנט, און דו געבסט אויך פאר אנדערע א געלעגנהייט הנאה צו האבן פון דינע טאלאנטן און גוטע כוחות וואס השי"ת האט דיר באשאנקען.

(2) דו וועסט שפירן ווייטאגן פון צייט צו צייט, וואס וועט דיר אויסשארפן און מאכן בעסער און נאך שטערקער.

(3) מ'קען אייביג פארעכטן, וואס איז געווען נעכטן.

(4) די וויכטיגסטע חלק פון דיר איז, די כוחות וואס דו האסט אינערליך אין דיר.

(5) און יעדעס פלאץ ווי דו זאלסט נאר זיין, דארפסטו לאזן א צייכן נישט קיין חילוק די מצב, שטייגן כסדר אין עבודת ה'.

יא, לערן זיך פונעם בליי, און אנערקען וואספארא חשובע פערזענליכקייט דו ביסט, און קיינער אויסער דיר אליין קען נישט אויספירן דעם תפקיד וואס דו דארפסט ערפילן, דערפאר לאז זיך קיינמאל ווערן געפאלן, און גלייב אז מ'קען אייביג פאררעכטן צו בעסערס. •

א בליי פאבריצירער האט אמאל גענומען די בליי אין א זייט, א מינוט איידער אים אריינלייגן אינעם שאכטל.

"הער זיך צו", האט ער אים געזאגט, "עס זענען דא פינף זאכן וואס דו דארפסט וויסן איידער דו גייסט ארויס צו דער וועלט, און אויב דו וועסט דאס געדענקען, וועסטו זיין דאס בעסטע בליי וואס איז נאר פארהאן.

(1) דו וועסט קענען אויפטוהן אסאך גוטע זאכן, אבער נאר אויב דו וועסט זיך לאזן שטענדיג זיין אין איינעם'ס האנט.

(2) דו וועסט פון מאל צו מאל דארפן דורכגיין ווייטאג כדי דיר צו קענען אויסשארפן, אבער דאן וועסטו ווערן א פיל בעסערע בליי.

(3) דו וועסט קענען פארעכטן אלע טעותים וואס דו וועסט נאר מאכן.

(4) די וויכטיגסטע חלק פון דיר וועט אייביג זיין, דאס וואס דו פארמאגסט אינעווענדיג.

(5) אויף יעדע זאך וואס מען וועט דיר נוצן, דארפסטו לאזן א צייכן, נישט קיין חילוק און וואספארא מצב דו ביסט, וועסטו אייביג דארפן קענען ווייטער שרייבן.

די בליי האט פארשטאנען, און ווארעם צוגעזאגט צו געדענקען די זאכן שטענדיג, און מיט א צוועקפולע בליק אריין אין זיין שאכטל.





הימלישע געשאנקען

דיינע פיס לויפן, דיינע אויערן הערן,
דיין מח זאפט איין, און טוט קלערן...
דיין מאגן פארדייט, און טוט שפירן,
און אמאל דו מיינסט, ס'טוט זיך אליין פירן...
דיין טעגליכע שפיז, ווער טוט דיר געבן?
ווער שענקט דיר דאט אטעם, יעדע רגע אין לעבן?
דיין גאנצע וועזן, דיינע אלע געדאנקען,
זיי זענען פאר דיר, הימלישע געשאנקען...
און וואס גיבסטו, פאר'ן בורא צוריק,
אלס אנערקענונג, פאר דיין לעבנס גליק?
כאטש אביסל, נעם זיך די מיה...
צו זאגן א דאנק פאר הקדוש ברוך הוא...
די צוויי ווערטער, געוואוינ זיך איין
"ברוך השם" זאג פון זיך אליין...
ווען דו וועסט געדענקען, וועט דיר זיין גוט...
דו וועסט זיך גליקליך שפירן יעדע מינוט...

קענסטו ציילן, וויפיל טראפן אין ים?
וויפיל בלעטער אויפ'ן בוים, אלעס צוזאם?
די בערג ווי גרויס, הויעך און ברייט...
די ימ'ען און טייכן, דער מדבר ווי ווייט?
די זון ווי הייס, און איר פונקטליכן גאנג...
דער האן ווען ער קרייט, און דער פויגל'ס געזאנג?
קענסטו ענטשיידן, וויפיל שטויבעלעך ביים בארטן.
די שמעקעדיגע רויזן, אין בלומען גארטן?
די רואיגע וואסערן, די מעכטיגע וואלן.
די שטאק פינסטערניש און פרימארגן שטראלן?
קענסטו עטוואס פארשטיין דיין הארץ וואס קלאפט?
דיין נאז וואס שמעקט, דיין האנט וואס טאפט?
דיין אויג וואס זעט, און קען באשיידן,
דיינע געפילן וואס פארזאגן, פריידן און ליידן?
דיין מויל וואס רעדט, רייד אן א שיעור...
האסטו געקלערט, פון וואו עט קומט צו דיר?

אויף אונזער קשר מיטן רבונו של עולם. די תפילות אונזערע זענען אנגעפולט מיט השתוקקות צו קל בורא עולם, מיר האלטן אין איין באפעסטיגן אונזער קשר מיט אים, ס'זאל ווערן שטערקער און שטערקער.

כ'האב געטראכט אז גענוי ווי סאך מאל פראבירט מען אריין צושטופן א חפץ אין אן עפענוג וואס איז אביסל קלענער פונעם ארטיקל. און אסאך מאל דארף מען זעצן און שטופן, שוויצן און זיך וויי טוהן, ביז מען שטופט עס ענדליך אדורך. אזוי אויך מיר אלע ווארטע אויף דעם יום שכולו אורה, דער טאג וואס וועט לעכטיג מאכן אונזער שטוב. ווען מיר וועלן שוין זיין אויפן אנדערן זייט טיר, אבער עפעס לאזט אונז נישט אריבער... דארפן מיר געדענקן אז יעדע ווייטאג, יעדע קאממענט וואס האט אונז געשטאכן, יעדער קוואטער צו סגולה, יעדע בילד וואס האט אויפגערודערט די סטרונגעס וואס מיר האבן שוין לאנג פארשטעקט - דאס אלעס העלפט אונז דורוכצושטופן דעם לאך צום אנדערן זייט בקרוב א"ה.

דער הייליגער אברבנאל זאגט א טעם פארוואס מיר אידן זענען געגליכען צו כוכבים - שטערן, ווייל די כוכבי לילה זענען אלעמאל ברקיע, שטענדיג זענען זיי דארט, נאר מיר זעהן זיי נישט. ביינאכט ווען ס'איז טונקל דאן בלוטשקענען זיי און זענען נראה לכל. די זעלבע זאגט ער, די שיינקייט פון א איד איז בעת צרה; ווען ס'איז טונקל דאן בליטשקעט ער מיט פראכט. צו מיט די מידת החסד וואס לייכט ארויס ווען אידן העלפן זיך ארויס בזמן ווען ס'גייט נישט אזוי גוט, צו יעדער איד פאר זיך ווען ס'גייט אים

שווער, הייבט אן ארויסצושנייען זיין אמת'ע גבורה, זיין העלדישע אמונה, און זיין אופן פון זיך ארויסהייבן העכער פונעם פלאנטער און נאר ווערן נענטער מיט זיין בורא.

אבער דאס איז זיכער, אז אויפגעבן טארן מיר קיינמאל! ס'דערציילט הרה"צ רבי יוסף יואל קאהן אדמו"ר ממבקשי אמונה (ווי באקאנט איז ער געהאלפן געווארן 32 יאר נאכן חתונה מיט צוויילינג מיידלעך ב"ה) אז ווען ער האט שוין געהאלטן דרייסיג יאר פונעם יום החופה, האבן שוין אלע דאקטורים און מקובלים אויפגעגעבן אויף זיין ישועה, אויף אזוי ווייט אז איין באבא האט אים געזאגט אז ער זעהט נישט אז ס'זאל ארויסקומען פון אים קיין דורות. ווידער א צווייטער האט געזאגט אז זיינע תלמידים קראוין בנים - זענען וואס ער לאזט דא איבער לאחר מאה ועשרים. דער איינציגסטע וואס האט זיך נישט מייאש געווען איז געווען ער אליין. ער האט ווייטער געגלייבט אז דער ישועה איז נאנט. הכלל, האלטענדיג 30 יאהר, והילד אינגו, האט ער זיך מקבל געווען צו גיין יעדן איינציג טאג קיין קבר רחל זיך אויסוויינען ביי די מאמע וואס האט אויך יארן לאנג געפילט די צער. א יאר איז אריבער און די ישועה האט מען נאך אלס נישט געזעהן, האט זיך אנגעהויבן וועבן ביי אים ספיקות אז אפשר אפשר איז צייט אויפצוגעבן, אבער ער האט זיך מחזק געווען און זיך ווידער מקבל געווען אויף נאך א יאר צו גיין מידי יום ביומו צו מאמע רחל. און דאן איז עס געשעהן, צוויי יאהר נאך זיין קבלה איז ער געבענטשט געווארן מיט צוויי לעכטיגע קינדערלעך, 32 יאר פון די חתונה!

מיר וועלן צוענדיגן מיט א שטיקל בקשה ותפילה צום אדיר במרום. כידוע דער טארנאפאלער רב בעל מחבר חבצלת השרון, איז געווען מגדולי עמודי הוראה בישראל אין גאליציע פארן קריג. האט ער אמאל געזאגט אז ווען ער ענטפערט א שאלה קלערט אריין אין דריי זאכן איידער ער גיבט דעם פסק. איינס, ווער איז דער שואל, דהיינו צו מיינט ער סתם לקנטר אדער וויל ער באמת וויסע, וואס דאן דארף מען ענטפערן. צווייטנס, צו די שאלה איז נוגע למעשה אדער סתם א היכי תימצי וואס אין אזא פאל פעלט די סיעתא דשמיא וואס קומט אראפ בהשראה צו א פוסק. און דריטנס, וואס וואלט זיין טאטע גע'פסק'נט אין אזא פאל.

טאטע אין הימל, כשם שמתירין בב"ד של מטה כך יהי' מותרין בב"ד של מעלה. מיר קומען צו דיר בלשון שאלה ובקשה, דו און נאר דו קענסט פסק'נען לזכות. קומען מיר פאר דיר מיט די דריי תנאים: מיר ווילן א קינד נישט סתם ווייל ס'איז די סטייל אדער כ'שעם מיך צו זיין קינדערלאז. ניין, ליבע טאטע, מיר ווילן קינדער כדי מיר זאלען קענען מאכען א נחת רוח פאר דיין גרויסען נאמען, מחנך צו זיין על דרך הישר והטוב. און יא, ס'אונז נוגע במציאות. און דריטנס, מיר זענען נישט די ערשטע מיט די שאלה, אונזערע אבות אברהם, יצחק און יעקב האבען שוין געהאט די שאלה, און זיי האסטו געענטפערט ברוב טובך. דערוואגן מיר זיך אויך צו בעטן אז מי שענה לאבותינו הוא יענינו, וימלא משאלותינו, ותקבל תפילותינו, זבד טוב באהלינו, ותראנה עינינו, נחת מצאצאינו, לאורך ימינו, עם הצלחה בכל מעשה ידינו, עד ביאת משיחינו.



מויל פאר די קומענדיגע זעקס שעה, באפעסטיגט ער זיין קשר מיט די תורה און מיט זיין בורא פאר נאך א וויילע און נאך א וויילע.

צדיקים האבן געזאגט אז די קללה פונעם נחש אז וואס ער וועט עסן וועט האבן א טעם פון ערד, קען לכאורה ווערן אנגעקוקט ווי א ברכה, אז ווי ער וועט נאר זיין, אין וואספארא מצב, וועט ער אלעמאל האבן זיין מאכל, וואס פעהלט אים נאך? נאר דער תירוץ איז דער באשעפער האט אים געשאלטן אז ער זאל מער נישט האבן קיין שייכות מיט אים. אנדרעש ווי אנדערע בעלי חיים וואס זענען דיפענדעט אויפן באשעפער, דער משיב ליל כל חיי, האט אבער דער נחש באקומען דער קללה אז ער דער בורא שאקלט זיך אפ פון אים. "איך גיב דיר עסן אין וועלכע פלאץ דו ווילסט נאר, אבער צו מיר זאלסטו מער קיינמאל רעדן, בעט פון מיר גארנישט!" און דאס איז די גרעסטע קללה וואס קען נאר זיין, אז מען זאל אפהאקן דעם קאנעקשען מיט באשעפער.

ברודערלעך מיינע, הערצעלעך ריינע, דער ענין פיל איך קען מען זאגן אויף אונזער מצב. יעדער איד זה בכה וזה בכה איז קאנעקטעד צו עפעס העכער, זיין מחלק אלוקי ממעל וכל המחובר לטהור טהור הוא. אבער די גרופע העלדן וואס גייען אריבער א נסיון אין לעבן האבן פיל א גרעסערע קשר מיט אים, ס'גישט א קשר פון זעקס שעה, נאר א בונד וואס האלט אן פיר און צוואנציג שעה א טאג. וויפיל מאל א טאג פילן מיר אז צער נעמט אונז איבער, צו ווען מ'הערט א בשורה טובה ביי יונגערע געשוויסטער למזל טוב, צו ווען מ'דרייט אויס שבת נאכן דאווענען און מ'זעהט די בא'ח'טע אוצרות זיך שפירן אזוי זיכער אהיים צו גיין מיט זייער טאטע... אבער מיינע ליבע פריינט, אין די מינוטן וועקט זיך

דער קעניג ווערט צוטומל'ט און זאגט, "אמת, דער איז טאקע דאס אידיש קינד, אבער פונוואנעט האט איר דאס דערשנאפט?"

האט זיך דער רבינו בחיי אויפגעשטעלט און געזאגט, "מיר אידן לעבן צוגעבינדן איינער צום צווייטן און צוגעבינדן צו אונזער טאטע אין הימל! א איד האט א מקור פון ווי ער איז יונק, דערפאר ווען איך האב געזעהן ווי ער ברעכט אראפ א צווייגל טרויבן פונעם הענגל איז ביי מיר געווען ברור אז ער איז איד, ווייל כאטש ער האט קיינמאל קיין אידישן חינוך באקומען האט ער אבער א

די שיינקייט פון א איד איז בעת צרה; ווען ס'איז טונקל דאן בליטשקעט ער מיט פראכט

נאטורליכע אינסטינקט זיך צו צושלעפן צו א מקום חיבור - צו האבן א קאנעקשען. משא"כ דער גוי לעבט פאר זיך אפגעזונדערט פון מענטשהייט און דער וואס האט אים באשאפען און דערפאר האט ער טאקע אויסגעקליבן די איינצעלע טרויבן, ווייל דאס האט גערעדט צו זיין אינערליכע געפיל."

מ'דערציילט אויף איינער פון די זקני ירושלים אז ער פלעגט זיך כסדר פארפליישן, זאגענדיג אז ער וויל זיין מקושר מיטן רבונו של עולם פאר נאך זעקס שעה! אז ער וועט נישט קענען אריינעמען קיין מילכיגס אין

אויף קיינעם פון זיי עפעס א סימן פון א אידישע צורה, עטליכע טעג איידער זייער אכצענטע געבורטסטאג רופט דער קעניג אריבער דער רבינו בחיי צום פאלאץ, און פרעגט צו ער געדענק זייער אלטע ויכיוח צו א איד ווערט געבוירן מיט אידישע סימנים צו נישט, און ער זאגט אים אין אפאר טאג וועל איך דיר איבערצייגן אז איך בין געווען גערעכט און א איד באקומט נאר זיין מהות פון די תורה. דו ביסט העפליך געלאדענט צום געבורטסטאג סעודה ווי דו וועסט קענען פראבירן מיט וועלכע מעטאדען דו ווילסט, אויף צו ווייזן דיין צד.

הונדרעטע מלכים ושרים, קלוגע וויסנשאפטליכער און געלערנטע גלחים, זענען זיך צאמגעקומען מיטהאלטן דעם איינמאליגע געשעעניש, דער קעניג האט אנגעטוהן די צוויי יוגענטליכע מיט די זעלבע מונדורן און זיי אפילו אפגעשוירן מיט זעלבן האר-שניט, אז זיי האבן כמעט אויסגעזעהן ווי צוויילינג ברודער. ער האט זיי ביידע געזעצט נעבן זיך, און מיט א שטארקע שטומע אנגעהויבן דערציילן וואס האט פאסירט מיט אכצן יאר צוריק. "און יעצט, רופט ער זיך אן צום רבינו בחיי, "לאמיר זעהן צו איר קענט אונז איבערצייגן וועלכע פון די צוויי קינדער איז פון אידישען פאלק, א זאך וואס נאר איך אליין ווייס." דער רבינו בחיי שטעלט זיך אויף און בעהט מ'זאל אריין ברענגן א שיסל טרויבן, לייגט עס אראפ אין פארנט פון די צוויי עקספערעמענטס און הייסט זיי עסן.

איינער פון זיי ברעכט אראפ א הענגל טרויבן און נעמט זיך עסן אפעטיטליך, בשעת דער צווייטער זיכט אויף אלע איינצעלע טרויבעלעך אינעם שיסל און דערקוויקט זיך. רופט זיך אן רבינו בחיי, "דער יונג וואס האט אראפ געבראכן פונעם צווייגל, דער איז א איד!"

א פּעסחן קשר

פונעם מענטש צווישן א איד און להבדיל א גוי, נאר א איד האט א תורה וואס איידלט אים אויס און איז אים מחנך לטוב, אבער אן קיין תורה וואלט ער געווען דער זעלבע מגושם ווי דער גוי. ווידער רבינו בחיי האט געהאלטן אז ניין, יעדעס אידיש קינד ווערט שוין געבוירן מיט אינערליכע ירושה שטריכן וואס זענען איידלער און ריינער פונעם המון עם. וואס אפילו ער קומט קיינמאל נישט אן צו לערנען תורה דאך האט ער אין זיך געוויסע מידות וואס פליסן אין זיינע אדערן, וואס האלט אים שטענדיג העכער ווי די בני עשוי וישמעאל.

דער קעניג האט באשלאסן אז ער וועט שוין אויסלערנען דעם אידישן רב ווער איז גערעכט, און גלייך באפוילן זיינע באדינער צו גיין צום שפיטאל און אוועק כאפן צוויי ניי-געבוירענע קינדער, מיטן תנאי אז איינער פון זיי זאל זיין א אידיש קינד און דאס אנדערע א קריסט. פארשטייט זיך אז די שפיטאל באאמטע זענען געווארן גוט באצאלט נישט אויסצוזאגן פאר קיינעם וואס דא האט פאסירט. און די צוויי בעיביס זענען אריבערגעפירט געווארען צום קעניגליכן פאלאץ גרייט פארן קעניג'ס עקספערמענט. קיינער אויסער דער מלך האט נישט געוויסט ווער איז וועלכע, מ'האט זיי ביידע אנגעטוהן די זעלבע און אויפגעצויגן מיט די זעלבע עסנווארג און שפילערייען. און אזוי זענען זיי אינאיינעם געוואקסען ביים קעניג אין הויף, ווען קיינער דערקענט נישט

ש פאניע. א לאנד וואס ברענגט ארויף אויפן געדאנק שרעקעדיגע עפיזאדן פון אינקוויזיטארן, שפאנעדיגע מאמענטען פון קידוש ה', און א פלאץ וואו א איד האט נישט

**אין די מינוטן וועקט
זיך אויף אונזער קשר
מיטן רבוננו של עולם.
די תפילות אונזערע
זענען אנגעפולט מיט
השתוקקות צו קל
בורא עולם, מיר
האלטן אין איין
באפעסטיגן אונזער
קשר מיט אים, ס'זאל
ווערן שטערקער און
שטערקער.**

געטארט באטרעטן אירע ערד פאר הונדרעטע יארן. אבער דאס לאנד שפאניע פארמאגט אויך א הערליך קאפיטאל היסטאריע פון בעפארן גירוש, ווען תורה האט געבליהט אין אירע גרעניצען. שטעט ווי קארדאווא וואס האבן פארמאגט ישיבות און צענדליגע ראשונים וואס האבן געלעבט אין יענע תקופה האבן אנגערופען שפאניע זייער היים. איינער פון די איז געווען דער רבינו בחיי, דער חכם ונבון וואס האט באלאכטן די וועלט מיט זיין פירוש על התורה, איז נישט נאר געוועהן באעהרט ביי אידן און להבדיל גוים צוגלייך, נאר אפילו די שרים און מיניסטארן פלעגן הנאה האבן פון זיין חכמה וישרות. אויך דער קעניג פון שפאניע פלעגט כסדר פארברענגן מיטן רבינו בחיי, און ווי אויך זיך כסדר מתוכה זיין אויף פארשידענע מיינוגס פארשידענהייטן צווישן זיי.

אין טאג זאגט דער קעניג פאר דעם אידישן חכם, אז בעצם איז נישט פארהאן קיין חילוק אינעם מציאות

ווילאנג איך בין אין דעם נסיון וועל איך עס מקבל זיין מיט א שטארקייט, און מיטן גוטן געפיל אז מיין בעל הבית האט געפילט פאר וויכטיג מיר צו באזוכן.

וועג, אונזערע מוסקולען וואס זענען דורכגעזאפט געווארן מיט התגברות אויף עצבות און יואש, די אמונה וואס פליסט אין אונזערע אדערן זאל נישט אויסוועפן חלילה נאר ווערן לויטערער און לעכטיגער.

ווי ס'איז באקאנט דער טייטש אויפן פיוט פון יום כיפור, אמת מה נהדר היה כהן גדול בצאתו מבית קדשי קדשים. אין קדשי קדשים ביום כיפור איז נישט קיין קונץ צו זיין א מראה הוד, אבער בצאתו, ווען מ'איז שוין ארויס פון הייליג פלאץ, דאן אנצוהאלטן די קדושה האט נאר דער כהן גדול געקענט.

ברודער'ל זיסע, המקום אשר אתה עומד עליו דער מצב ווי דו שטייסט יעצט איז א מקום קדוש, זיין אין דעם נסיון איז נישט גרינג, אבער ס'גרינג צו פילן א נאנטקייט מיט אונזער טאטע אין הימל, אונזערע תפילות האבן א תפקיד, אין דעם קאלטן דור ווערן מיר נאך נתעורר ביי דוכנ'ן, ביי א חנוכה לעכט, און אויך אין א פשוט'ע דינסטאג פארטאגס ביים סענטער. אבער זאלן מיר אויך בלייבן אזוי ווען מיר וועלן שוין שטיין בצאתו מבית קדשי הקדשים, אמן כ"ה"ר.

האט געהאט כח צו קריכן דעם שווערן וועג ארויף.

ווען ער האט אנטפלעקט זיין נייגער צום קינד, האט דאס יונגל זיך אנגערופען מיט א שמייכל, "נעה, איך בין שוין געבוירן געווארן דא אויפן בארג, מיינע עלטערן האבן שוין געטוהן די שווערע ארבעט."

"די זעלבע," האט דער שפת אמת זיך אויסגעדריקט, "אמת איך בין נאך יונג, אבער אז איך טראג דעם יחוס פון אזעלכע אבות פארמאג איך די מעלה צו זיין א געבוירענע על אדמת קודש."

מיינע ליבע פריינט, מיר גייען אלע אי"ה געהאלפן ווערן, ס'נישט קיין שאלה פון אויב, נאר א שאלה פון ווען, אבער כאטש די טרייסט האבן מיר אז אונזערע קינדער וועלן נישט ברויכן קריכן דעם שווערע בארג; מיר האבן שוין אויסגעטרויטן פאר זיי דעם וועג, מיר האבן שוין אויסגע'פועל'ט פאר זיי א גרינגערע לעבן.

אבער אזויפיהל זאלן מיר געדענקן אז נאך וואס די ישועה וועט אנקומען, זאלן מיר אנהאלטן די כוחות וואס מיר האבן באקומען דורכאויס דעם

תרעומות, דאס אז איך מאך מיט דעם צער, און איך פיל עס אביסל שטערקער ווען מיינע נאנטע האלטן שוין ווייטער ווי מיר אין לעבן, דעס איז נישט קיין ציפ חלילה פון מיין ליבע טאטע, ניין, עס איז מיר א זכ"ל אז דער בורא פילט אז כ'בין ווערד אריבער צו גיין דעם ים הגדול. אוודאי וויל איך ס'זאל זיך שוין ענדיגן און איך זאל קענען צייגן אויף די זמנים אלס א חלק פון מיין עבר, אבער ווילאנג איך בין אין דעם נסיון וועל איך עס מקבל זיין מיט א שטארקייט, און מיטן גוטן געפיל אז מיין בעל הבית האט געפילט פאר וויכטיג מיר צו באזוכן.

דער שפת אמת איז געווארן רבי ווען ער איז נאך געווען גאנץ יונג, זענען געווען אזעלכע וואס ס'איז זיי עפעס נישט געפאלן צו האבן אזא יונגן רבי'ן.

האט דער הייליגער שפת אמת דאן געזאגט א משל פון איינער וואס קריכט ארויף א שווערע בארג; נאך אפאר חדשים ווען האט ער ענדליך דעגרייכט דעם שפיץ, איז ער שאקירט געווען צו זעהן א קליין יונגעלע ארום לויפן דארט, עס איז אים געווען א חידוש אז אזא יונג קינד

נישט, צו דער פרעזידענט קען איך נישט אזוי רעדן. ער איז מיין בעל הבית, און דאס אז ער נעמט פון מיין באטל טרונקען רעגט מיר נישט אויף, נאר אדרבה ס'איז מיר א כבוד אז ער פילט זיך אזוי באקוועם דא, סוכ"ס באלאנגט דאך דער גאנצע אפיס פאר אים. ס'נישט מיין טרונק, ס'איז זיינס!"

דער נמשל, מיינע פריינט, איז אפשר נישט דומה שוה בשוה צום משל, אבער דער פונקט וואס איך וויל ארויסברענגן איז, אז אין אונזער מצב קומט אויס אסאך מאל אז מיר האבן טענות. טענות אויף די יעניגע וואס זענען נישט גענוג סענסעטיוו צו אונזער נסיון, טענות צו אונזערע יונגערע געשוויסטער וואס זענען אין גארנישט שולדיג אז זיי קענען ב"ה מאכן שמחות, טענות וואס קענען אפשר זיין גערעכט און אפשר נישט.

אבער איין זאך איז זיכער אז אויף דעם בעל הבית האבן מיר נישט קיין

צום סוף פונם טאג ברענגט אים דער מענדעזשער אריין אין זיין נייע אפיס, און צייגט אים די פיש טאנק און די אנדערע שיינע באקוועמע מעבל וואס ער האט אינסטאלירט, און דאן האט עס פאסירט, נישט מער און ווייניגער דער פרעזידענט גייט צו צום פרידזש, נעמט דאס פלעטל וואס באלאנגט צום מענדעזשער און גיסט זיך אן א גלעזל.

די ארומיגע זענען געווען זיכער אז דער מענדעזשער וועט אויספלאצן אין א גערעגטע אויסברוך כמנהגו, אבער ניין, ער בלייבט מיטן שמיכל כאילו לא היה. נאך ווי דער פרעזידענט איז אוועק פון דארט צופרידען, האט זיך איינער פון די ארבייטערס אנגערופען, "העי באס, וואס איז פשט אז דער גאסט האט נישט באקומען די פארציע וואס מיר באקומען ווען מיר טרויען צו נעמען פון דיין באטל טרונקען?"

"אוי דו נער, וואס פארשטייסטו

ס'איז געווען אין א פאבריק ווי איינער פון די ענערעגישע און פעהיגע ארבייטער איז געשטיגען אין ראנג ביז ער איז אויפגענומען געווארן אלס הויפט מענדעזשיר אינעם פאבריק. די ערשטע זאך האט ער זיך איבערגעמאכט דעם אפיס לויט זיין געשמאק, מיט א פיש טאנק, א קליינע רעפרידזשערעטער, און טייערע מעבל. און הגם ער איז בדרך כלל געווען א צוגעלאזענע צו זיינע קאלעגע ארבייטער, האט אבער יעדער געוויסט אז ווען עס קומט צו זיין פלעטל טרינקן אינעם קליינעם פרידזש, דא איז ער שוין נישט קיין ווייעכהארציג, אך און וויי פאר דער וואס וועט זיך דערוואגען צו נעמען אפילו א קליין ביסל, דער נייע מענדעזשער וועט אים נישט מוחל זיין און עס קען אים נאך קאסטן דעם דשאב.

איין טאג איז דער פרעזידענט פונעם פירמע געקומען אויף א באזוך, צו זעהן דאס גאנצע הלוך ילך.

מיר קוקן אסאך מאל צוריק צום עבר
און טראכטן, שוין פאר איאר האב איך
פראבירט דער טריעטמענט און עס איז
נישט געלונגען, שוין געווען אין מירדון ביי
ד' שמעון'ן, און איינגעדיסן ביי זכאן
הבן שואל, און דאך האלט איך דא.

מיט עטליכע יאר צוריק האט די וועלט אויפגעריסן מיט די שרעקליכע נייעס וואס ס'האט נעבעך פאסירט אין טולוז, פראנקרייך, ווען א קאלט-בליטיגע מערדער פונעם איסלאמישען אפשטאם האט איין צופרי גע'הרג'ט אפאר אומשולדיגע נפשות, ובניהם אפאר יונגע קינדערלעך הי"ד.

געצייילטע וואכן נאך די פאסירונג איז פארגעקומען אן עצרת הספד אויף די קדושים אין ירושלים. עס איז שוין פון פאראויס געווען באשטימט א ליסטע פון מגידים און דרשנים, דעריבער איז דער עולם ביים הספד געווען אביסל איבערראשט ווען נאך די אלע דרשות האט זיך א שווארצע גוי אויפגעשטעלט רעדן אפאר ווערטער.

דער דזשענטעלמאן שטעלט זיך פאר ווי דער אמבאסאדאר צו איינע פון די אפריקאנע מדינות, און דערציילט אז ער האט געוואלט מיטהאלטן דעם עצרת צו זען דאס רעאקציע פונעם אידישן פאלק צו אזא שוידערליכע אטאקע ווייל ביי אים אין געבורטס לאנד ווען אזא מעשה פאסירט ווען וואלט שוין פון לאנג אויסגעבראכן א בליטיגע ברודער קריג צווישען די מחנה באטראפענע און די מערדער; און ווי איבערראשט איז ער צו הערן ביי דעם הספד, אנשטאט אונטערייצען די מענטשן אנטקעגן די אראבער מיט א רוף פון נקמה, איז גאר די תוכן הדרשות געווען, ווי אלעס איז שוין פון פאראויס באשטימט פון אויבן, און פארקערט גאר, די איינציגסטע זאך וואס מען קען יעצט טוהן להבא, איז נאר זיך צו פארבעסערן מיט מעשים טובים. ער איז אזוי נתפעל געווארען דערפון אז ער האט זיך געמוזט אויפשטעלן איבערגעבן זיינע הרגשים, און אויסגעפירט אז ער האט איינגעזעהן אז כלל ישראל איז א פאלק וואס וויינט נישט אויפן עבר נאר שטרעבט אויף א בעסערע עתיד.

נישט אז מיר דארפן צוקומען צו די עדות פון אן אפריקאנער דיפלאמאט, אבער דאך איז דער מעסעדזש קלאר. מיר קוקן אסאך מאל צוריק צום עבר און טראכטן, שוין פאראיאר האב איך פראבירט דער טריעטמענט און עס איז נישט געלונגען, שוין געווען אין מירון ביי ר' שמעוני', און איינגעריסן ביי וכאן הבן שואל, און דאך האלט איך דא.

אבער רבותי, קודם כל ווייסן מיר נישט וויפיל יעדע תפילה האט שוין אויפגעטוהן אין הימל פאר אונז, ס'איז גאר מעגליך אז מיר לייגן זיך אוועק זכותים פאר אונז און אונזערע נאנטע אויפן צוקנופט. אבער צווייטענס און מער וויכטיגער דארפן מיר זיך דערמאנען, אז מיר זענען נישט א פאלק וואס קוקט צוריק, נאר אדרבה מיר לעבן מיטן עתיד. אני מאמין - איך גלייב, באמונה - אין דער יסוד פון אמונה, פון האפענוג, פון קוראזש, פון פראבירן נאכאמאל און נאכאמאל, מיטן פולסטן בטחון אז איך וועל זעהן א שינוי לטובה בעזר ה'.



כלל ישראל, א פאלק וואס וויינט נישט אויפן עבר



אבער אז א פרייע מאמע קען
 דאווענען און אפילו נישט
 פארשטיין וואס אירע ליפן
 מורמעלן, און דאך האט עס
 אזא השפעה, איז זיכער אז
 אונזערע תפילות וואס זענען
 מיט אזויפיל כוונה און
 השתוקקות אוודאי געוויס
 עושה רושם אין הימל.

איינער וואס האט געהאט חזקה צו קויפן יעדעס יאר די עלי,
 האלטענדיג עס פאר א זכות צום נייעם יאר, אבער דאס יאר איז
 א פרישע קונה אריינגעשפרונגען און פראבירט צו העכערן די
 פרייז און עס קויפען פאר זיך.

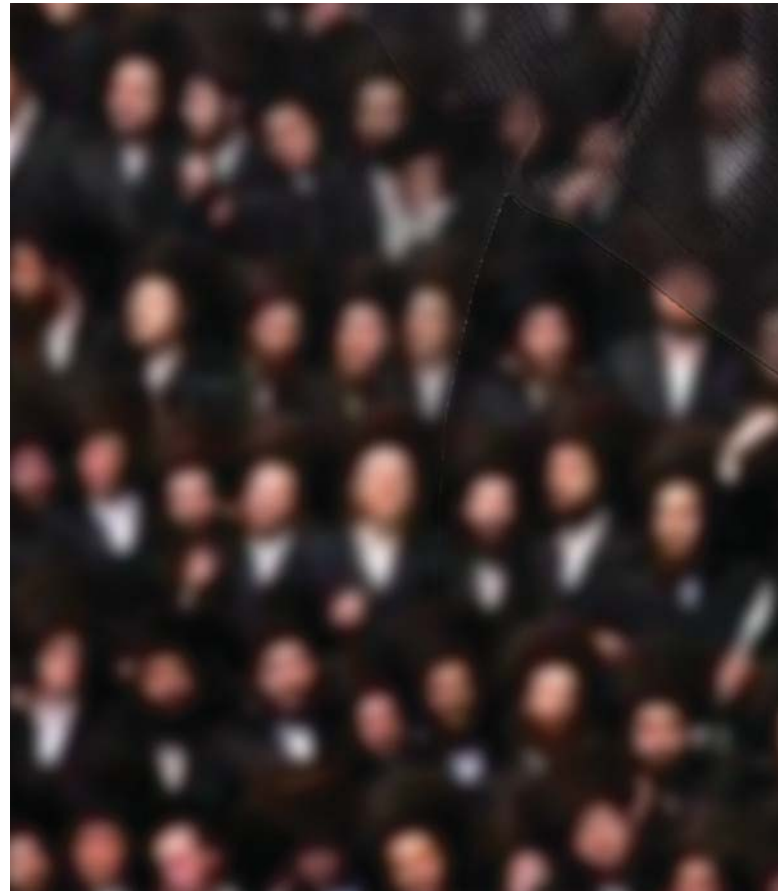
ר' ישראל יעקב איז צוגעגאנגען צו דער וואס האט געהאט די
 חזקה יאר יערליך און אים געזאגט אז אויב איז ער מוותר זאגט
 ער אים צו אז ער וועט האבן א גוט געבענטשט יאר. נו, נאך אזא
 קלארע הבטחה האט יענער מוותר געווען. ליידער עטליכע
 חדשים דעראויף איז ער ל"ע נפטר געווארן.

ביי די שבעה איז רבי ישראל יעקב געקומען מנחם אבל זיין
 די משפחה, און איינער פון די קינדער האבן זיך אנגערופען,
 "הלמאי? אונזער פאטער האט דאך מוותר געווען, און איך האט
 אים געוואונטשן א שנה טובה, טא וויאזוי האט אזאנס געקענט
 פאסירן?"

האט דער ראב"ד זיך אנגערופן, "אמת כ'האב אים געוואונטשן,
 אבער אייער פאטער האט נישט גענטפערט אמן אויף מיין
 ברכה... און איך האב שוין דאן חושש געווען אז עפעס וועט
 פאסירן."

רבותי, וויפיל מאל אין אונזער מצב באקומען מיר ברכות אן א
 שיעור פון אידן וואס מיינען נאר גוט, אבער וויבאלד מיר זענען
 ליידער אין דעם פעקל נעמען מיר עס אן מיט א שווער הארץ
 און מורמעלן קוים ארויס א האלבע אמן און אסאך מאל דאס
 אויך נישט. יא, צו גיין צו א שמחה פון יונגערע געשוויסטער
 אדער חבר וואס האלט שוין ביים פערדע קינד איז ביטער
 שווער. אבער אז די ביסט שוין געגאנגען און האסט שוין געזאגט
 מזל טוב פארן בעל שמחה, גלייב אז דער בעל שמחה האט א
 כח משפיע צו זיין שמחה, און ענטפער אמן אויף זיינע ברכות
 מיט כוונה. ווייל ווער ווייסט דען וועלכע זאך וועט צום סוף זיין
 די גורם צו אונזער ישועה. ומי יודע אם לעת כזאת הגעת
 למלכות, אפשר איז יענעם נאר באשערט א שמחה כדי דיר צו
 קענען אנווינטשען בעת שמחת לבו.

איז וואונטשן איך אייך אלע א ברכת הדיוט אז איר זאלט אויך
 אלע שוין בקרוב געהאלפן ווערן במשאלות לבכם און זעהן
 אסאך, אסאך אידיש נחת. ואמר כל העם אמן ואמן.



"ניין", ענטפערט זי, "איך האב מיט אידישקייט קיין שום
 שייכות נישט. די איינציגסטע מאל וואס איך האב געהאט עפעס
 מיט א פרומע איד איז געווען מיט איבער צוואנציג יאר צוריק,
 ווען איינער האט מיר צוגעשטופט זיך צו באטייליגן אין א
 סעמינאר דורך איינע פון די קירוב ארגאנעזאציעס, אבער דאך
 האט עס גארנישט משפיע געווען אויף מיר. די איינציגסטע זאך
 וואס איך האב מיטגענומען פון יענעם סעמינאר איז געווען
 עפעס א תפילה וואס זיי האבן דארט אויסגעטיילט, וואס דאס
 זאג איך יעדן טאג כאטש איך פארשטיי נישט קיין ווארט
 דערפון."

דער פרוי פרעגט איר צו זי קען זעהן דעם צעטל מיטן תפילה,
 און זי שלעפט עס ארויס תיכף פון טאש, דער חרדישע ווייבל
 קוקט דערויף און האט עס גלייך דערקענט אלס די תפילת
 השל"ה. נו...אלעס איז שוין פארענטפערט, איז דען א וואונדער
 אז זי האט זוכה געווען אז דריי קינדער זאלן ווערן ערליך און
 פרום, נאכן זאגן תפילת השל"ה פאר לענגערע תקופה?

טייערע אידן מיר דרייען זיך נישט אין הימל, און מיר ווייסן
 נישט וועלכע תפילה העלפט פארוואס. אבער אז א פרייע
 מאמע קען דאווענען און אפילו נישט פארשטיין וואס אירע
 ליפן מורמעלן, און דאך האט עס אזא השפעה, איז זיכער אז
 אונזערע תפילות וואס זענען מיט אזויפיל כוונה און השתוקקות
 אוודאי געוויס עושה רושם אין הימל.

ביי הגאון הגדול רבי ישראל יעקב פישער זצ"ל ראב"ד
 ירושלים אין בית מדרש, האט אמאל אויסגעבראכן א קריגעריי
 יום כיפור פאר מנחה ביים פארקויפן מפטיר יונה. עס איז געווען



עס איז געווען א בעלת תשובה וואס האט חתונה געהאט, און אפאר עסקנים האבן ארויסגעשיקט א מעסעדזש אז ווער עס קען זאל קומען משמח זיין חתן וכלה וואס האבן נישט צופיל פריינט אדער קרובים. איינער פון די פרויען וואס זענען געקומען זיך משתתף זיין, על אף וואס זי האט נישט געהאט קיין שייכות מיטן כלה אדער איר פאמיליע, האט איר אנגעכאפט עפעס א חשק צו גיין אנוואנטשען מזל טוב פאר די כלה'ס מאמע.

זיכענדיג ארום האט מען איר אנגעוויזן אויף די מחותנ'סטע וועלכע איז געזעצן אנגעבלאזן אין קאך. זי גייט אריין אהין און דערזעהט טאקע די פרייע מאמע זיצן דארטן מיט אן אויפגערעגטע מינע אויפן פנים. גייט זי צו און מיט א ווארימע שמייכל און פרעגט אויב זי קען איר העלפן מיט עפעס. די מאמע נעמט זיך אויסרעדן מיט א פארווייטאגטע הארץ, "פארוואס קומט זיך מיר דאס? פארוואס האט מיין טאכטער בוגד געווען אין מיר און אינעם חינוך וואס איך האב איר געגעבן? ווען עס וואלט נאר געווען איין טאכטער וואלט איך נאך שלום געמאכט מיטן מצב, אצינד שוין דריי פון מיינע טעכטער זענען פרום געווארן!"

דער פרוי איז געכאפט געווארן אין א סופרייז און פרעגט איר, "אפשר האט איר אמאל באקומען א ברכה פון אן אדם גדול אדער געטוהן עפעס א ספעציעלע מצוה וואס זאל גורם זיין דערצו?"

באקומען
א ברכה.
אבער
גלייבסטו
דערין?

אז ער זאל אונז אריין געבן אן אהבת התורה."

"טאטע, פרעגט דאס קינד, "איז נישט ענדערש מיר זאלן בעטן אז מיר זאלן פארשטיין די תורה?"

האט דער טאטע זיך אנגערופען, "מיין טייער קינד, וויסן זאלסטו א כלל, אז מ'האט עפעס ליב איז שוין גארנישט שווער..."

מיינע טייערע חברים, אונזער נסיון איז שווער, ביטער שווער. אן אריין גיין אין דיטעניס ווייסט יעדער ביי זיך ווי שטארק מיר לעכצן מיט געגענים, אויף א ילד שעשועים. אזויפיל תפילות האבן מיר שוין געדאווענט, און ס'בלייבט אונז שווער. ס'איז א מויער וואס מיר קענען נישט דורכברעכן, אבער ליבע פריינט, מיר מוזן געדענקן אויך צו דאווענען אויף אהבת ה', ווייל אז מיר האבן ליב דעם באשעפער, דאן כמים פנים אל פנים, שפיגלט דער אהבה אויף צוריק. און דאן איז שוין נישטא קיין קשיות, דאן איז שוין גארנישט שווער.

רבי יעקב גאלינסקי האט דערציילט, אז אז ביים אלטן פון נובהרדוק האט אמאל פאסירט א נס אינמיטן די נאכט, ווען ער האט געהאלטן אינמיטן לערנען און דאס לעכטל איז אים אויסגעגאנגען. האט מען פון הימל אראפ געשיקט א לעכט צום נובהרדוק'ער ער זאל קענען ממשיך זיין בעבודתו. אלס זכר לנס פלעגט דאס לעכטל זיצן אויפן טיש ביי אלע זיינע מוסר שמועסן בעיני אמונה בטחון, און דאס האט געדינט אלס א סעמפל אז מיט אמונה קען מען צו אלעס אנקומען. איין נאכט האט אויסגעבראכן א שריפה אין ישיבה, ומנותר קנקנים נעשה נס איז ליידער אויך פאברענט געווארן. האט דער סבא מנוברהדוק דאן געזאגט, זעהט אויס אז מיר זענען שוין אנגעקומען צו אזא הויכע דרגא אין אמונה, אז מיר ברויכן שוין נישט עפעס וואס זאל אונז דערמאנען און געבן א שטופ דערצו.

מי אנכי לדבר, אבער כ'האב געטראכט אז אסאך מאל פילן מיר אז ס'ליידער שוין נישטא קיין תקוה ח"ו. דער דאקטער שרייט און פארפירט אז ער זעהט נישט קיין וועג ארויס פון דעם נעפל וואס רופט זיך אינפערטיליטי. און מיר טראכטן אז כאטש ביז יעצט האבן מיר געהאט א שטופ צו טרייען דער אופן אדער דער טרייעמענט. אבער יעצט אז מ'נעמט אונז צו דאס לעצטע ביסל האפענונג, געוואלד! וויאזוי וועלן מיר דאס אריבער גיין?

אין די שווערע מאמענטן פון יואש, דארפן מיר זיך דערמאנען אין דעם

סיפור, און איינזעהן אז אויב דער בורא נעמט צו פון אונז אונזער לעצטע לייפועסטל, איז א סימן אז אונזער בטחון אחז אויף דעם העכסטן גראד וואס נאר מעגליך, און פון דא גייט נאר ווערן גרינגער, ווייל ה'בוטח בה' חסד יסובבנו.

דער מהר"ל (כמדומה בהקדמה שני' בגבורת ה') איז מסביר דעם ענין פון נס ומופת, אז גענוי ווי למשל צוויי מענטשן קומען אן צו א עלעגאנטע שמחה און איינער פון זיי איז א פארטי פלענער וועט ער אויפכאפן די פיצעלע דיטעילס וואס פשוטי עם זעהן נישט. יא זיי ווערן אויך באגייסטערט פונעם דיקאר, אבער דער מבין וואס ליגט דעראין פארשטייט עס בעסער. ווייל א מענטש האט א לימית ביז ווי ווייט זיינע השגות קומען

אויב דער בורא נעמט צו פון אונז אונזער לעצטע לייפועסטל, איז א סימן אז אונזער בטחון אחז אויך דעם העכסטן גראד וואס נאר מעגליך, און פון דא גייט נאר ווערן גרינגער ווייל ה'בוטח בה' חסד יסובבנו.

אן. און אפילו א מבין אין א געוויסע ענין פארשטייט טאקע מער, אבער עפעס העכער פון זיין פעיגרעיד איז אים אויך אומפארשטענדליך, די זעלבע איז מיט די מופתים בכל דור ודור. מיר קענען זיי נישט באגרייפן ווייל ס'איז גרעסער פון אונזער באקס.

די זעלבע אפשר קען זיין, א פארפאלק וואס איז זוכה צו א קינד אין שנה ראשונה כאפט ניטאמאל דעם נס, זיי לעבן אין זייער באקס און דאס לעבן פארט א גאנג, אבער איינער וואס איז אביסל אריבער אנצוקומען צו דעם שטאפל, ער איז שוין אביסל קלוגער און ער וועט ריכטיג אפרישיעטען דעם נס.

הרב שמעון שוואב ז"ל שרייבט אין זיין ספר, אז אלס קליין קינד האט ער

אמאל באקומען א מתנה עפעס א שפילצייג פון זיין טאטע'ס א חבר אן עושר, אבער ווי שאקירט איז ער געווארען ווען נאך עטליכע מינוט האט עס יענער צוגענומען פון אים. ס'איז אים אלעמאל געבליבן אין די ביינער דער געפיל וואס ער האט געשפירט ווען דער מענטש האט אוועקגענומען דעם שפילצייג. יארן שפעטער האט ער אויסגעפונען אז דער מענטש איז געשטאנען מיט א קאמערא - א נייע ערפינדונג אין יענע יארן - און געכאפט פיקטשערס פון אלע פאקסן אויף זיין פנים. סיי די פרייליכע ווען ער האט ערהאלטן די מתנה און סיי די פאר'צער'טע ווען ער האט עס פארלוירן. ער איז סך הכל געווען א חלק פון יענעם'ס photoshoot און פערזענליכע הנאה.

פירט הרב שוואב אויס, די זעלבע זענען מיר מענטשן, מיר באקומען כסדר שפילצייגן אין לעבן פון אונזער טאטען אין הימל, און אמאל נעמט ער עס צו פון אונז, אבער מיר דארפן אלעמאל געדענקן אז דער בורא וויל פשוט זעהן ווי אזוי מיר זעען אויס אין די מצבים, וואספארא פנים מיר טראגן, דערפאר דארפן מיר געדענקן צו שמייכלן תמיד צום פאטאגראפירער, דער עין רואה דארט במרום.

עס זענען לעצטענס אריין א גרופע אזויגערופענע עסקנים צום שטוב פון הגאון הרב שטיינמאן זצ"ל אין בני ברק, און זיי האבן געוואלט משפיע זיין אויפן ראש ישיבה ער זאל זיך אריין מיטן אין עפעס א פאליטישע אגענדע זייערע. הרב שטיינמאן האט זיך פראבירט ארויסצודרייען עטליכע מאל, און ווען ער האט געזעהן אז די חברה לאזן אים נישט במנוחה, האט ער זיך אנגערופען. "נו, עטס קענט שוין גיין, עטס האסט שוין גענוג בילדער ווי איך זיך ביי ענקער אסיפה..."

ליבע טאטע אין הימל, דו האסט שוין גענוג בילדער פון אונז. בילדער ווי מיר זענען זיך מחזק נאך א דורכגעפאלענע סייקל, בילדער פון א סדר טיש ביי אונזערע עלטערן. א בילד פון א חאלאקא ביי א יונגערע ברודער, און א בילד אין מירון ביי רבי שמעון. ס'איז שוין צייט טאטע, דו מעגסט אונז שוין געבן נאך שפילצייג וואס מיר וועלן קענען האלטן. דו וועסט קענען כאפן הערליכע בילדער פון אונזערע שבת סעודות און שמחות, און דו וועסט הנאה האבן צו קוקן אויף די בילדער פון אונזערע שמייכלידיגע פנים'ער וואס וועלן שוין זיין גליקליך. •



שמייכל צום קאמערע

שיף ווי מיינע ארומעגע. רבותי, איך בין נישט דער עלטערע יונגל אין דעם נסיון וואס קען קומען זאגן מוסר. אבער אז ס'איז אונז ממילא באשערט דא צו זיצן, פארוואס דארפן מיר עס דורך מאכן אין א טונקעלקייט? לאמיר נאר אויפהייבן די הענט און אנצינדען דעם סוויטש, זיך מחזק זיין און פארברענגן אינאיינעם. מיר דארפן עניוועי דא זיין, זאל עס כאטש זיין לעכטיג!

מ'דערציילט אויף איינער פון די בריסקע גזע, אז ער האט אמאל געלערנט מיט זיין זוהן און זיך געמוטשעט אויף א תוספות. נאך עטליכע שעה אן קיין וועג ארויס, זאגט דער טאטע צום קינד, "לאמיר דאווענען צו אונזער הייליגע באשעפער אין הימל

אוועק געפארן...".

דער עלטערע קינד האט רחמנות געהאט און געזאגט, "הער אויס, יעצט איז ריסעס צייט. ממילא האב איך אביסל צייט צו פארענגן מיט דיר ביז איך דארף צוריק גיין אין קלאס. אבער איין זאך פארשטיי איך נישט, דיין פלאץ איז דאך ממש אונטערן לייט סוויטש! ווילסט וויינען, געזונטערהייט. אבער למען ה' פארוואס דארפסטו זיצן אין טונקל? הייב אויף דיין האנט און צינד אן די לעקטער!"

טייערע אידן, מיר פילן אסאך מאל ווי דאס קינד וואס איבערגעבליבן אליין... יעדעמס לעבן פארט א גאנג, מ'האט חתונה און מ'הייבט אן מאכן שמחות, נאר איך בין עפעס נישט אינם זעלבן

זיצט זיך א יונגל אין כיתה ביי ריסעס מיטן קאפ אויפן טיש און וויינט. אן עלטערע יונגל גייט אריבער און הערט דאס געוויין. ער מאכט אויף די טיר פון קלאס און דערזעהט זיך אין א טונקעלע צימער, ווען גלייך ביים טיר זיצט דאס קינד ביי זיין דעסק און כליפעט. "חבר מיינע, פרעגט ער, וואס איז געשעהן? האט דיר איינער געטשעפעט אדער ווי געטאן?"

"ניין, ענטפערט דאס פארוויינטע נשמה'לע, "מיין מלמד האט גענומען אלע קינדער אויף א טריפ היינט, אבער זעהט אויס אז מיין מאמע האט נישט באקומען די צעטל אז מ'דארף היינט קומען צען מינוט פריער, און איך בין אנגעקומען נאך וואס זיי זענען שוין



איצתו חכם? האכיר את מקומו

אין קאך שטייט זי און דעם טאפ זי מיט
מעסטן, רייבן, שיילן און אמאל כאפט א שניט
א גערוך וואס אפזאגען קען קיינער נישט
געשמאקע מאכלים סערווירען מיט אפעטיט

קינד און קייט ארום דעם טיש דערקוויקן
כאטש געהאט א שווערע טאג און זי פאלט פון די קניען
איהר משפחה קען אויך עסן קעיק טרוקן
אבער דאך מיט געטריישאפט טוט זי זיך באמיהען

יעדענס טעלער שוין ליידיג, יעדענס פנים א צופרידענע
"ממש דעלישעס", "אה יאממי", און נאך קאמפלימענטן
שרייען די קינדער און אויך דער מאן צו זיין אידענע
און דאן פילט זי ווי עס באפעסטיגט אירע פונדאמענטען

ווייל כאטש אירע באליבטע האבן נישט באצאלט מיט מזומן
אויך נישט געגעבן עפעס ממשיות' דיג וואס מ'קען טאפן
איז אבער די קאמפלימענטן וואס זי האט איצטער באקומען
גענוג אז זי זאל זיך מיט פרישע כוחות דערכאפן

דעם גוטן געפיל באגלייט דורכאויס יעדע שווערע מינוט
יעדע קלאפ, יעדע שניט, און יעדע ברעקל האראוואניע לוינט
עס גיבט כח צו וועלן געבן ווייטער ברייט און גוט
ווען מיט הכרת הטוב ווערט מען באקרוינט

אונזער ליבער טאטע דער מכין מזון לכל בריותיו
האט באשאפן אזא הערליכע וועלט מיט איין מטרה
להנות בהן בני אדם, השפעות איז ער שטענדיג מוסיף
ווייל "לעולם חסדו" דערפאר "משמח עולמו אשר ברא"

ער וויל נאר פון אונז די איינצעלע געשאנק
מאימתי קוראין, זיי מקבל מלכותו משיכיר
אנערקען אז ער טוט אלעס, זאג צו אים א דאנק
איזהו חכם, דער וואס איז מקומו - דעם באשעפער - מכיר

על אף וואס בפועל טוסטו גארנישט בכלל
עפענסטו אבער אויף צינורות וואס וועלן גיסן אן אויפהער
ער וועט געבן אסאך מער ווי דו מיינסט עס קען זיין חל
פאנג אן יעצט! ס'איז בכלל נישט שווער.



א ליידדיגן גאז טאנק

מ.ד.מ.

הא הא, זאגט מיר מיין חבר און לאכט ווי א מבין די קארס זענען אויסגעשטעלט ספעשל זיי לאזן אלץ איבער אפאר מייל צו קענען דרייוון אפילו ס'ווייזט אז ס'שוין ליידדיג דאס טעשל

קלער איך ביי מיר אין מח דעם פיצעלע איז דען ביי מיר נישט די זעלבע סיסטעם ווען איך באקום פון הימל א קליין קיצעלע און איך פיהל סטאק מיט מיין פראבלעם

טאקע אנגעפילט מיט חיזוק אנפאנג נסיעה אבער צוביסלעך ווערט עס פארנוצט לצורך נאך יעדע דורכפאל ברויך מען אן עליה ביז מען דערלעבט דעם דור ישרים ומבורך

און ווען איך פיל אז כ'האלט שוין ביים גמר די כוחות הנפש קענען שוין נישט דערהייבן שוין נישטא קיין גאז צו שטופן דעם קאר דארף איך דאן אויך אזוי גלייבן

אז אין יעדע מענטש ליגט באהאלטן כח א ביסל וואס גיבט אים שטארקייט מער ווי מ'איז משיג גארנישט קען צוברעכן דאס הארטע ניסל נאר אויב פון הימל איז מען מסכים אז אזוי איז פאסיג

געב נישט אויף אפילו ווען דו מיינסט אז כלו כל הקיצין לאז די באהאלטענע זאפאסען דיר זיין צו חיזוק דיין אינערליכע גייסט פון בטחון קען קיינמאל אויסנוצן דו ביסט אסאך שטערקער ווי דו האסט אפילו א מושג.

איי דער יו"ט פורים, א מח' איינס אין די וועלט פארגעסן קען מען פון פראבלעמען פערזענליך יעדער איז דאך ממילא אזוי גוט פארשטעלט קיינער כאפט נישט אז כ'בין נישט ווי יעדעם געווענליך

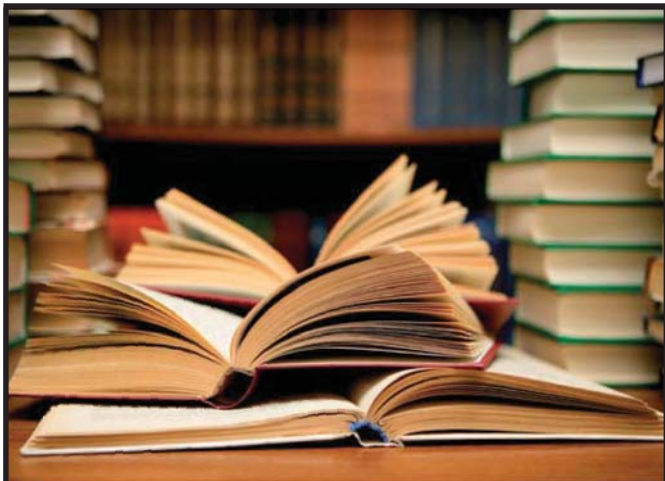
שוין געטראגן משלוח מנות צום עלטער מומע באשאנקען מיט ברכות עפעס מער ווי עווערידש שעפעלע טייערע אזויפיל תפילות זורעים בדמעה איברעס יאהר קומסטו מיט א דאבל קערידש

געטרינקען ביים שווער און אויך ביים רב'ן קונה געווען השפעות מיט יעדן טאג א מנחה אראפגעלייגט ווי ס'לעצטע אין לעבן ב"ה אלע גלידער זענען מיר נאך גאנץ

אויפן וועג אהיים מיד און ערשעפט פלוצלינג א פייעריי אויפן דעשבארד טוט בלינקען דאס בענזין אין אויטא האט אויסגעוועפט כ'האב אנגאנצען פארגעסן מיין אייזל אנצוטרינקען

דער ווייזערל ווייזט אז ס'מיר פארבליבן קוים צוויי מייל אבער דא בין איך אינמיטן דעם גארדען סטעיט דער ג.פ.ס. זאגט אז ערשט אין פופצן מייל איז דא א קוואל שוין, זאג איך צום ווייב מיר בלייבען סטאק אזוי אויסזעהט

אבער צו מיין שאק און סופרייז נישט דא קיין הסבר דער רעדליך זענען ווייטער געפארן מיטן ליידדיגע טאנק דער וואגן קומט אן צום פאקאסטאני גזבר הו, הא. האב איך שוין וואס צו דערציילן ביים תיקון באנק



וויפיל מאל גיבט א קליין שטויסעלע ביים הארץ צוקוקענדיג ווי א משפחה שפאצירט זיך פריילעך אויפן וועג אהיים פון שוהל - טאטע, מאמע און א קערידש וואס ווערט אנגעכאפט פון דריי פאר קליינטישגע הענטעלעך...?



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ס'איז מיר לעצטנס אויסגעקומען צו זיצן ביי א סעודה נעבן אן עלטערע בחור מיט דאון סינדראום; די ספעציעלע נשמות האבן א ספעציעלע חן און ליכטיגקייט, און דער בחור האלט אין איין זאגן פאר ווער ס'גרייט צו הערן אז אט אט ווערט ער שוין א חתן און ער גייט חתונה האבן אין עטרת אברהם מיט א גרויסע בענד וכו'. בקיצור, ביי ברכת המזון הער איך ווי ער זאגט הרחמן הוא יברך אותי ואת אשתי וזרעי... די ארומגע האבן זיך צושמייכלט, אבער מיר האט עס אויפגעשאקעלט. דעם תמימות פון דעם בחור, ער גלייבט באמונה שלימה אז ער גייט האבן א ווייב און קינדער, אפילו ס'איז נישט מעגליך במציאות, ווייסט ער נישט פון דעם נאר האלט באמת אז ער גייט חתונה האבן. איך טראכט צו מיר, אפשר לאכט מען פון מיר אויבן אין הימל, דער יונגערמאן וואס דאווענט און האפט אזוי אויף קינדער... אבער גלייך דערנאך הער איך ווי דער בחור זאגט פאר איינער די חברה ביים טיש, "איך בין נישט א 'דאון' איך בין 'אפ'!" איר הערט רבותי, און דאס האט מיר מחי' געווען, ווייל יעדער האט זיך זיין מצב און פעקל, און טייל מאל זעהט עס אויס פאר אונז ווי ס'נישטא קיין וועג ארויס, אבער טאקע אין די שווערע מינוטן לאמיר געדענקען אז מיר זענען נישט "דאון" נאר "אפ"!

וואספארא גדרים - צו דעם קשר בין איש לאשתו וואס ווערט אסאך מאל פארשלונגען אונטערן שאטן פון ערציען קינדער - האבן מיר יא אן אפארטוניטי צו בויען אונזער קשר ציווישן אונז, א דרייוו צום סענטנר פארטאגס קען אויסגענוצט ווערן אויף אן אפנהארציגע שמועס צווישען צוויי אדאלטס, און זיך בויען צוזאמען און איינער דעם צווייטן. איך למשל לערן א ספר מיט מיין ווייב יעדע נאכטמאל - ס'האט זיך טאקע אנגעפאנגען ווייל מיר פלעגן זיצן שטיל נאכן שוין האבן אפגערעדט אלע שטותים... אבער למעשה האלט עס שוין אן פיר א האלב יאר צום גוטן, און ס'קען זיך אייביג מאכן א שטיקל ווי איך דערמאן עפעס א מעשה אדער זי געדענקט עפעס פון סקול, און ס'ווערט שוין א דיסקאשען, און מ'מעג זיך אמאל מתוכח זיין אויך... עס בויט אונז נאר.

און לגבי די שטוב, צום הייליגען חזון איש איז אמאל געקומען א איד מיט א ניי אפגעשוירענע דריי-יעריג יונגעלע, און געפרעגט, "ילמידינו רבינו, מצות חינוך היכי דמי, ווי אזוי ברויך מען מחנך זיין דעם קינד?" האט אים דער חזון איש געענטפערט, "ר' איד, איר זענט דריי יאר צו שפעט... מצות חינוך הייבט זיך אן גלייך ביים אנהייב, א קינד כאפט אויף אין וואספארא שטוב ער קומט אריין." און דערפאר אז מיר האבן די איבעריג צייט יעצט, איז עס נישט מער ווי פאסיג שוין אראפצושטעלן די יסודות פון א שבת, הנהגת הבית וכהנה וכהנה.



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קערעלעך און טרערעלעך

וואך נאכן תנאים האט ער אנגעהויבן שיקן בריוו פארלאנגען די איינצעלע מתנה און אפילו געסטראשעט מיט צוברעכן די שידוך. בלית ברירה האט דער רב פארקויפט אביסל ספרים און צונאם געבארגט געלט פארן קייטל. ביים חתונה פרעגט דער רב פון זיין מחותן פארוואס ער האט אזוי געמוטשעט, האט דער גביר גענטפערט, "כ'האב געוויסט אז דו האסט נישט קיין געלט און כדי צו שאפן אביסל וועסטו מוזן אויפן וועג צו די חתונה אריבער פארן עטליכע שטעט און זאמלען צדקה, און דאס וואלט נישט געפאסט פאר מיינס א מחותן."

די זעלבע, זאגט די מגיד, פעהלט אונז נאך אויס היפש אביסל טרערן פאר די גאולה, אבער כביכול וואלט אונז געקענט אויסלייזן און דערנאך וועלן מיר וויינען, נאר ס'נישט קיין כבוד פארן בורא אז זיין מחותן וויינט, דערפאר וויל ער אונז שיקן די אלע פוין יעצט, און דערנאך - כי בשמחה תצאו - וועט עטס ארויסגיין פון גלות פריילעך אפגעצאלט די חובות.

אפשר איז די זעלבע ביי אונז, אז מיר ברויכן אפצאלן א געוויסע מאס טרערן און הארץ-וויי ביז כי בשמחה תצאו.

אבער וואס קענען מיר טוהן אויף דערווייל? אוודאי תפילה און נאכאמאל דאווענען אז די ישועה זאל אנקומען, אבער כ'האב לעצטנס געטראכט אז אנדרעש ווי א שנה ראשונה פארפאלק וואס האלדזן א קינד אינעם צענטן חודש, אן האבן אוועק געשטעלט וויאזוי זייער שטוב זאל געפיהרט ווערן, מיט

הקדמה! דאס נישט קיין ביכל, נאר א מוסר ספר!"

ר' פסח זעצט פאר אינעם דרשה, "איר ווייסט וואס האט מיר אזוי געכאפט אין דעם ביכל? איין שורה גאנץ אנפאנג שרייבט די פרוי אזוי: 'יעדער פשוט'ע מענטש קען ציילן און זעהן וויפיל קערענדליך ס'דא אין א עפל, אבער נאר אונזער הייליגע באשעפער ווייסט און זעהט וויפיל עפלעך ליגט אין יעדע קערנדל!"

יא, זיסע ברודער, מיר גייען יעצט אריבער א לעכטיגע יום טוב, און וויפיל מאל גיבט א קליין שטויסעלע ביים הארץ צוקוקענדיג ווי א משפחה שפאצירט זיך פריילעך אויפן וועג אהיים פון שוהל - טאטע, מאמע און א קערידש וואס ווערט אנגעכאפט פון דריי פאר קליינטישגע הענטעלעך...? און עס פרעגט זיך "ואני, אנה אני בא...?" אבער מיינע טייערע חברים, געדענקט דעם יסוד: מיר ווייסן נישט וויפיל עפלעך ליגען אין אונזערע קערנדליך און צו זיי קענען אפילו וואקסן, אבער דער גרויסע באשעפער, ער ווייסט יא, און אז ער זאגט אונז אז ס'נאכנישט די צייט, טראסטן מיר אים אז ס'ליגט אנגעגרייט פאר אונז אן עתיד וואס איז בעסער.

דער דובנא מגיד ברענגט א משל אויף "כי בשמחה תצאו": א גביר האט זיך משדך געווען מיט א רב אן עני, און זיך אונטערגענומען אלע הוצאות. חוץ איין מתנה פאר די כלה האט ער פארלאנגט פונעם מחותן, א גאלדענע קייטל. פון א

דער מגיד ר' פסח קראהן דערציילט א מורא'דיגע סיפור: ווען ער איז לעצטנס געווען אין מאנטשעסטער האט מען אים געבעטן צו גיין מחזק זיין א ווייבל וואס מוטשעט זיך נעבעך מיט עי.על. עס, שוין, ער גייט אריבער צו די פרוי אינדערהיים, און דערציילט אפאר מעשה'לעך און דברי אמונה וויפיל ס'שייך. אויפן וועג ארויס רופט זי זיך אן, "ראביי קראהן, איך וויל אייך בעטען א טובה. איך האב אנגעהויבן שרייבן א ביכל וועגן מייין לעבענס געשיכטע, און אזויווי איר זענט דאך א גרויסע שרייבער און רעדנער, וואלט איך אייך געוואלט בעטן אויב איר קענט שרייבן א הקדמה צו מייין ביכל."

ר' פסח טראכט צו זיך, רבוש"ע ווי דרייט מען זיך ארויס פון אזא זאך? ווער זאגט דער ביכל איז עפעס ווערט איך זאל פארפאטשקענען מייין נאמען דערמיט, אבער מצד שני ווי קען אפזאגן אזא צובראכן נפש? זאגט ר' פסח, "איר ווייסט וואס? שיקט עס צו מיר אהיים קיין ניו יארק, איך זאל עס קענען איבערליינען רואיגעהייט, טראכטענדיג אז פון ניו יארק אויפן טעלעפאון וועט שוין זיין גרינגער זיך ארויסצודרייען..."

אנקומענדיג אהיים האט דער ביכל שוין געווארט אין פאסט קעסטל, ער הייבט עס אן ליינען, און ער האט עס נישט געקענט אראפלייגען ביז צום ענדע, ער רופט גלייך אן די פרוי און זאגט איר: "אויב גיבט איר מיר רשות וועט עס מיר א זכ' צו שרייבען די

אלעס פאר דיר

געליינט האב איך קריאת שמע יענע אויפדערנאכט
ווען איך האב זיך צווישן די ווערטער געפונען
מיט אמאל גענומען און אכט
איך בין מקיים וואס איך האב אינזינען

ואהבת את — רבש"ע איך האב דיר ליב
אין מיין יעצטיגע מצב, אין מיין יעצטיגע זמן
כאטש עס איז נאך ליידג מיין שטוב
בכל לבבך — מיין הארץ איז דיין

ובכל נפשך — מיין גאנצע זעהל פאר דיר געווענט
מיין פארטאגס שלאף געב איך אויף פאר דיר
איך שטעך זיך מיט די אייגענע הענט
און לאז נעמען מיין בלוט אן א שיעור

ובכל מאודך — מיין גאנצע פארמעגן
טוט פאר די צוועק גיין
זוכה זיין צו קענען דערלעבן
די ערשטע מצוה פון די תורה מקיים צו זיין

שטארקע נסיונות!!

עס שטייט אין שיר השירים: 'תשירי מראש אמנה' זאגט די מדרש רבה: אמנה איז א בארג וואס שטייט ביים גרעניץ פון ארץ ישראל. ווען עס וועט זיין קיבוץ גליות די רבש"ע גייט איינזאמלען זיינע צובראכענע קינדער און ארויס נעמען פון גלות, וועלן די אידן זינגען איידער זיי וועלן אריינגיין אין ארץ ישראל. פרעגט אויף דעם דער הייליגע ר' ישכר דוב מבעלז ז"ל: אז מען שטייט שוין ביים אריינגאנג פון ארץ ישראל, פארוואס ווארטן זיי נישט נאך איין מינוט צו קענען זינגען אין ארץ ישראל?

ענטפערט ער: ווען אידישע קינדער וועלן זיין ביים ענדע פון די לאנגע גלות און זיי וועלן זעהן די תענוג נחת וואס די רבש"ע האט געהאט פון זייער מסירות נפש טראץ די שווערסטע אומשטענדן אין וואס זיי זענען געווען, און זיי וועלן זעהן די געוואלדיגע גרויסע שחר פאר יעדע קלייניגקייט; וועלן זיי ווילן אריינכאפן די לעצטע מאל צו זינגען אין גלות!

עס איז טאקע אזוי שווער. מען האט פאר אונז די שוואכסטע מענטשעלעך פון אלע דורות אויסגעקליבען צו קעמפן מיט די הייסטע פייערן! דאך לאמיר געדענקן; אז דאס דארף זיין די גרעסטע חיזוק, ווען מען באטראכט זיך און מען זעט אז כאטש אלע שוועריגקייטן זענען מיר דאך גלייביגע. מיר זוכען א טרייסט. מיר דרייען זיך ביים אייוועלע זיך צו דערווארימען. און יעצט פסח אויפדערנאכט ווען די רבש"ע קומט אריין אין יעדע אידישע שטוב מיט די פמליא של מעלה, ווייזט ער פאר די מלאכים עטס זעט'ס דארט צווישן די גאנצע געזעמל דער יונגערמאן מיט זיין ווייב; דאס זענען מיינע! די תענוג נחת וואס איך שעפ פון זיי א גאנץ יאר איז אין לשער און איך לייג צו א ספעציעלע אויער צו זייער הגדה.

יא. ווען מיר שטייען ליל התקדש חג מיט די בעכער אין די האנט, און מיר לויבן דעם אייבירשטען אשר גאלנו וגאל אבותינו. נאך די לאנגע אויסגעמאטערטע יאר: זענען מיר די לעבעדיגסטע און שטערקסטע עדות אז: עם ישראל חי לעולם! •

עס איז דא א מורא'דיגע מעשה וואס האט זיך אפגעשפילט אפאר יאר צוריק. די מעכטיגע ביזנעס ריז מייקראסאפט האט אפגעהאלטן א קאנווענשאן פאר אלע העכערע-ראנג ארבעטער און עקזעקעטיוון פון די גאנצע וועלט. פאר די עפענונגס דרשה האבן זיי געוואלט האבן א איד מיט די נאמען עקיבא ב' וואס האט ארויסגעגעבן א העכסט געלוגענע בוך איבער ביזנעס און פינאנץ. איינער פון די ארגאנאזירער האבן אים אנגערופן און אנגעטראגן די כבוד און פארשטייט זיך מיט א פעטן טשעקל. ענטפערט אים עקיבא, נאכן אריינקוקן אין די דאטום, אז ער קען בשו"א נישט קומען ווייל עס איז שבת. דער אויפן אנדערע זייט טעלעפאן האט נישט פונקטליך פארשטאנען פארוואס, אבער אזויפיל האט ער אויפגעכאפט אז ער קען נישט קומען און ער האט אראפגעלייגט די טעלעפאן. א שעה שפעטער רופט אים אן איינער פון די העכסטע עקזעקעטיווס; קיווי איך גיב דיר א דאפעלטע טשעק. און עקיבא זאגט: איך קען נישט קומען. זאגט יענער: די זאג די פרייז און איך באצאל נישט קיין חילוק וויפיל. זאגט אים עקיבא: די פארשטייסט בכלל נישט וואס דא גייט פאר. די רעדע איז בכלל נישט איבער געלט, איך בין א איד און איך היט שבת. איך קען נישט, און וועל נישט קומען פאר קיין שום געלט אין די וועלט!! אה אה איך פארשטיי. די קאנווענשאן האט מען אריבער געריקט אויף זונטאג אז דער "איד עקיבא וואס היט שבת" זאל קענען קומען!!

א צייט שפעטער רופט אים אן א סיניאר עקזעקעטיוו און טיילט אים מיט; אז ער איז יעצט געווען מיט ביל געיטס אויף זיין פרייוואטן דזשעט מיט נאך אפאר פון די סאמע גרעסטע חברה. און איינער פארציילט פאר געיטס די מעשה אז די האסט נישט געוואלט קומען און וועגן דיר האט מען געריקט די גאנצע קאנווענשאן אויף זונטאג. וואס עפעס וועגן איין איד דרייט מען אלעס איבער?? עס איז דא נאך גוטע רעדנערס!!! רופט זיך געיטס אן: יא. דאס איז ווען מען האט עפעס וואס מען קען מיט געלט נישט קויפן!! "ישמעו רחוקים ויבואו ויתנו לך כתר מלוכה"

דער גוי ווייסט אויך צו רעספעקטירן אונזער העכערקייט און איבערגעהויבענקייט איבער טבע און

**יעצט פסח
אויפדערנאכט
ווען די רבש"ע
קומט אריין אין
יעדע אידישע
שטוב מיט די
פמליא של
מעלה, ווייזט
ער פאר די
מלאכים: עטס
זעט'ס דארט
צווישן די
גאנצע געזעמל
דער יונגערמאן
מיט זיין ווייב?
דאס זענען
מיינע..!**

הייליגען יעב'ן; וויאזוי ער זעהט די גרעסטע אמונה פונקען, דווקא פון די טיפע און שווערע ענדלאז אויסזעענדע טונקעלקייט!

מיר זענען אלע עדות; זייענדיג אזוי אריינגעפלאכטן אין די גרויסע מעדעצינישע סודות פון אינפערטילעטי. ווי יעדע יאר אדער אפילו ווייניגער טוישען זיך די שטודיעס אויף ווילדע עקסטרעמען. וואס מען האט פאראיאר געזאגט אז דאס איז די סיבה נומער איינס אפצוהאלטן פון האבן קינדער איז די יאר גאר א שטארקע הילף דוקא יא. יסודות פון אלטע רעספעקטפולע שטודירער און דאקטורים וואס מען האט לאנגע יארן זיך נישט גערירט פון דעם ווערן היינט צומאלן און פארווישט, און קיינער קוקט ניטאמאל דערויף!

אבער אלעס וואס אנבאלאנגט אונזערע יסודות פון די תוה"ק הלכה און השקפה ווערט נישט גערירט קיין פינטעלע נישט. און נישט נאר דאס, נאר די גרעסטע טעכנעלאגיעס און נייעסטע ערפינדונגען ווערן צוגעשניטען צו די הלכה! אזוי ווייט, אז פארצייטנס זאגט מען אז א דאקטער האט געזאגט פאר א פאר פאלק, אויף א געוויסע צייט וואס דעמאלטס איז פאסיג... און זיי האבן געזאגט אז עס איז נישט שייך. און נישט געקענט מסביר זיין פאר דעם דאקטער אז מיר אידן היטן דיני טהרה. דער דאקטער האט אבער געקוועטשט און נישט נאכגעלאזט, נישט קענענדיג פארשטיין וואס עס גייט פאר מיט זיי. ווילן זיי קינדער צו נישט? ביז נאך לאנגע הסברים אז עס איז רעליגיעזע פרינציפן האט דער דאקטער געזאגט; טעל פאר יאר ראביי אז דער דאקטער זאגט אז מען מוז, ער וועט זיכער לאזן. גיי לערן מיט א גוי בארטנורא, פלעגן די זיידעס זאגן. היינט אבער איז גאר פארקערט; פון די פשוט'סטע נורסעס ביז די גרעסטע דאקטורים איז יעדער פארנומען צו ווייזן ווי היימיש זיי זענען מיט אונזער רעליגיעזע הלכות! און זיי ווייסן פאר פשוט אז מיט יעדע אידישע אינפארמאציע בויגן שטייט אויך ווער זייער דיין איז!

ניין! די תורה ריקט זיך נישט! און די גויים געבן רעספעקט פאר די אידעלעך וואס האלטן די תורה אונטער אלע אומשטענדן!

מה עצמו נשאו ראש הקמים עלינו מנעורינו. להשמידנו לעקרנו לשרשנו. מפני שגאה שסבתה הקנאה רבת צרונה. גם לא יכלו לנו לאבדינו ולכלותינו. כל האומות הקדומות העצומות. אבד זכרם בטל סכרם. סר צלם. ואנו הזבקים בשם כולנו חיים היום. לא נפקד ממנו בכל תוקף אריכות גלותינו אפילו אות וניקוד אחד מתורה שבכתב וכל דברי חכמים קיימים לא יטה לארץ מנלם (איוב טו, כט) לא שלט בהם יד הזמן ולא כלם. מה יענה בזה פילוסוף חריף היד המקרה עשתה כל אלה. חי נפשי כי בהתבונני בנפלאות אלה. גדלו אצלי יותר מכל ניסים ונפלאות שעשה השם יתברך לאבותינו במצרים ובמדבר ובארץ ישראל. וכל מה שארך הגלות יותר. נתאמת הנס יותר ונודע מעשה תקפו וגבורתו. בשגם כל הנביאים כבר ראו עומקו והתאונו והתלוננו על אריכותו הנפלא בטרם היו. והנה לא נפל מכל מדבריהם ארצה. איה איפה פי המכחיש כלה כעשן וכענן. הלא יתבונן וכליותיו ישתונן. כי א-לקי עולם ד' בלב שלם אליו יתחנן.

די שפיץ נקודה פון זיינע הייליגע ווערטער איז: אז דווקא פון די לאנגע פינסטערע גלות, וואס פולע פעלקער בויען זיך, און ווערן פארלוירן און פארגעסען. קיינער געדענקט זיי נישט מער. איז דא די פארלוירענע שעפעלע וואס ווערט געטריבן און געפייניגט שוין אזויפיל הונדערטע יארן; און דאך שטייט זי מיט די פולע פראכט און שטאלץ! קיין איין ווארט פון די תורה האט זיך נישט פארמעקט אדער געטוישט געווארן! איז די גרעסטע חיזוק אויף אמונה! און שטערקסטע אפ-געטפער פארן אזויגערופענע טיפסטע פילאזאף אויף זיינע הארבסטע אמונה חקירות, אז הוא אלוקיניו אין עווד! נישט דא נאך איינער! ער איז די איינציגסטע פירער פון וועלט באשאף ביז אויס!!

און ער פירט אויס: אז דאס זענען פיל גרעסערע נסים ווי יציאת מצרים, און אין די מדבר! נאכמער ווי לענגער די גלות איז, ווערט נאר מער פארשטערקערט די נס; אז די קליין צושלאגענע שעפעלע פאלט נישט און ברעכט זיך נישט פאר די שווערסטע קלעפ און דערנידערונגן!!

האבן מיר א פרעספעקטיוו פונעם

**וויפיל
שטארקייט
און מארך
קען א
מענטש האבן
נאך אזויפיל
ענדלאזע
מאטערינישן
אן זעהן די
מינדעסטע
ליכטיגקייט
ביים ברעג??**



נאר וואס דען: די רבש"ע האט געזאגט, מען דארף אז אברהם אבינו זאל מתפלל זיין ווייל איך דארף זיינע תפילות טאקע נישט אויף יעצט אבער אויף שפעטער פאר זיינע קומענדיגע דורות וואס גייען נאך זיין א גרויס פאלק ממילא וועל איך אים פארציילן וואס איך גיי טוהן מיט סדום וועט ער מתפלל זיין און איל וועל עס אוועקלייגן אין א אוצר פאר זיינע קינדער.

יא. די נסיון פון בעטן און בעטן און נאכנישט זעהן די ישועה אויפן האריזאנט איז דאך זייער שווער. מען פארלירט די מוט.. און מען ווערט נאכגעלאזט.. די טבע געזעצן נעמען אונז איין, אן לאזן פלאץ -כאטש צו געדענקען- אז נאכ-אלעם זענען מיר מאמינים בני מאמינים וואס האבן אין אונזער נפש איינגעזעצט א גלייבעדיגקייט אז: הוא בורא ומנהיג נאר דער רבש"ע זעלבסט איז וואס מאכט אפ יעדע ריר!

אונזער אמת'ע פינטעלע אמונה וואס "קען נישט ווערן אויסגעלאשן" ווערט פארזעצט און פארריקט אין א אומזעבארע ווינקל.. און מיר לאזן זיך פארקנאקן, פון וואס די טבע פארבלענדעט אונזערע אויגן.. און קלארקייט אין שכל!..

שטעלט זיך די ברענעדיגע שאלה: נאר וואס דען? וויפיל שטארקייט און מארך קען א מענטש האבן נאך אזויפיל ענדלאזע מאטערנישן אן זעהן די מינדעסטע ליכטיגקייט ביים ברעג??

קוקט עפעס אויס, ווי די לאנגע ענדלאזע קייט פון וואנדערנישן; -אין די כלליותדיגע גלות און יעדער אין זיין פרטיות'דיגע גלות און מיטמאכענישן- איז א סיבה מיר זאלן אונזער אמונה פארלירן.. און אונזער קוואל פון חיזוק און מוט זאל זיך אפטריקענען...!!!

שרייבט אבער דער הייליגער יעב"ץ זי"ע אין די הקדמה פון זיין סידור, אינמיטן די שטיקל וידע אמונה אומן:

ואיך לא יבוש הכופר בהשגחה ויעמוד נכלם. מי שיעיין ביחוד ענינו ומעמדינו בעולם. אנחנו האומה הגולה שה פזורה. אחר כל מה שעבר עלינו מהצרות והתמורות אלפים מהשנים. ואין אומה בעולם נרדפת כמונו. מה רבים היה צרינו.

צום הייליגן שר שלום פון בעלז זי"ע איז אריינגעקומען א פרוי, און מיט ביטערע טרערן געוויינט אז די רבי זאל איר אנוואונטשען אז זי זאל זוכה זיין צו א קינד. דער הייליגע שר שלום האט שטארק מתפלל געווען צום אייבירשטען, און איר אנגעוואונטשען אז זי וועט געהאלפן ווערן. ווען די פרוי איז ארויסגעגאנגען האט ער זיך אויסגעדרייט צו די ארומיגע און געזאגט: די פרוי איז שוין אזויפיל געווען ביי מיר און געמוטשעט אז איך זאל איר צוזאגן א קינד. כאטש זי איז שוין אזויפיל דא געווען און געמוטשעט, האט זי נאכאלץ נישט אויפגעגעבן און ווייטער געמוטשעט. האב איך געטראכט צו מיר, איז דאך זיכער אז מיר טארן נישט אויפגעבן ביים בעטן פונעם רבש"ע! און דאס האט מיר געגעבן א שטופ פאר איר מתפלל צו זיין.

פסח איז א יריד פון אמונה! אין אלע ספרים ווי מען קוקט; חסידישע ווי ליטווישע, קדמונים און ספרי קבלה, באבעלט ארויס שמאלציגע אמונה פון יעדע שורה.

עס איז דא גאר א טייערע און טרעפליכע ווארט פון ר' ישכר דוב מבעלז זי"ע: די ענין פון תפלה לערנען מיר ארויס ווייל עס שטייט אין פסוק וישכם אברהם בבקר אל המקום אשר עמד שם און פון די פסוק לערנט מען ארויס די חיוב פון דאווענען. פרעגט די בעלז'ע רב זי"ע דארט רעדט מען דאך אז אברהם אבינו'ס תפלה האט גארנישט אויפגעטוהן ווייל ער האט מתפלל געווען אז דער אייבישטער זאל נישט איבערדרייען סדום און ער האט יא איבערגעדרייט? וואלט דאך געווען פיל מער פאסיג ארויסצולערנען פון א פסוק ווי תפלה האט יא געהאלפן?! נאר וואס דען? עס קומט אונז צו ווייזן טאקע דאס; נישט דא אזא זאך אז א איד איז מתפלל און זיין תפלה זאל נישט אויפטוהן!! אפילו מיר זעהן עס נישט. ער לייגט נאך צו: די אייבישטער זאגט איך קען נישט פארדעקן פון אברהם וואס איך גיי טוהן מיט סדום (פסוק יז) ער גייט דאך זיין א גרויס פאלק כי ידעתיו למען אשר יצוה את בניו ואת ביתו אחריו. וואס איז די שייכות פון די צוויי זאכן איבערדרייען סדום מיט דאס אז ער גייט האבן א גרויס פאלק?

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