

THE PIKESVILLE TIMES



Lshana Tovah!

Best wishes to
our readers for a
**Healthy, Happy, Peaceful
and Sweet New Year 5782!**

The Director

Rochel Kaplan

Dear Reader,

It is at this time of year that we are all focused on forgiveness. Of course, the word "Forgiveness" lends itself to broad interpretation. However, Torah teaches us step by step the art of forgiveness.

The first documented fight is between Cain and Abel and culminates in murder. In a fit of jealousy of Abel, who is of superior character, Cain resorts to murder. This incident ends without attaining forgiveness. A second conflict takes place between Isaac and Ishmael. Each competes for their father's affection and his estate. Finally, however, having learned from history not to kill one another, they go separate ways and live apart. The third duel takes place in the next generation. Esau and Jacob are unable to co-exist peacefully. Nevertheless, they advanced the art of forgiveness a step forward, and their rivalry ends more harmoniously. After years of separation, they reunite. Esau even invites Jacob to live with him in the land of Seir. However, others opine that the feud remained and peace was merely an act. Finally, the fourth family fight broke out between Joseph and his brothers. It is here that forgiveness reaches its most complete form. Joseph endures years of abuse and hostility from his brothers, culminating in selling him into slavery. His response is unique. He ushers them into the land of Egypt, providing their every need for the rest of their days.

In general, the Jewish concept of forgiveness is rooted in the character of our forefather Abraham and his extraordinary graciousness. Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Teshuvah 2:10: It is forbidden for a person to be cruel and refuse appeasement. When the one who wronged him asks for forgiveness, he should forgive with a whole heart and a willing spirit. This stance is the path of the seed of Israel and its good spirit. When Abimelech (Genesis 20:9,17) admitted that he sinned against Abraham taking his wife Sarah, Abraham forgave him summarily. He prayed to G-d, and G-d healed Abimelech and his family.

The Zohar goes a step further (Tanya ch.12): In matters affecting a person's relationship with his neighbor, as soon as there arises from his heart to his mind some animosity or hatred, G-d forbid, or jealousy or anger, or a grudge; he allows no entrance into his mind and his will (to be angry is to punish oneself) instead, to repay the offenders with favors. As taught in the Zohar, one should learn from the example of Joseph towards his brothers. The Biblical Joseph achieved an altruistic level of forgiveness that we can only hope to follow. The million-dollar question is, "How should we find it within ourselves to achieve that gold standard of forgiveness to erase the past and seek out the welfare of the offending party, as Joseph did?"

In Joseph's words, Genesis 45:5-8: *"But now do not be sad, and let it not trouble you that you sold me here, for it was to preserve life that G-d sent me before you. For already two years of famine have passed in the midst of the land, and for another five years, there will be neither plowing nor harvest. G-d sent me before you to make for you a remnant in the land, and to preserve it for you for a great deliverance. Now, you did not send me here, but G-d, and He made me a father to Pharaoh, a lord over all his household, and a ruler over the entire land of Egypt."*

Joseph told his brothers two fundamental truths:

When they sold him, they were bringing about the fulfillment of the Divine Plan, as His agents. So, why get angry at the stick used to prod. On the contrary, examine why G-d wanted to prod with this stick. Secondly, Joseph told

his brothers that what they did to him was the ultimate good, leading him to become viceroy of Egypt. Therefore, they deserved thanks for the sale. In effect, this whole turn of events was ordained by G-d and G-d is the ultimate good.

With words of comfort, Joseph was looking at the actions of his brothers and not their malicious intentions (liability is theirs), thereby teaching us that nothing in this world happens without G-d. When one causes distress or harm to another, it is with G-d's *permission* unknown to us. Rabbi Aharon Halevi of Barcelona, a Talmudist and authority on Jewish law: A person must realize that everything good and evil comes from G-d. There is nothing that man does which is not willed by G-d. That is why David said about Shimi ben Geira, "Let him curse me." G-d told him to.

When someone acts badly towards another, he may be tempted to think that since the person was destined to suffer anyway, he need not ask his forgiveness. The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Likutei Sichot vol. 7, pg. 16: The answer is that by asking forgiveness, one lessens the other's pain. A person does not have the right to inflict even greater pain by not asking forgiveness for there is no proof that the other person was decreed to suffer that much. One must do all he can to lessen the pain of others.

To rise to the occasion is part of the Jewish DNA. There are three essential Jewish character traits; merciful, modest, kind. When one sincerely asks for forgiveness, he should not be tough, especially when asked three times. Instead, one should allow his innate Jewishness to come forth and forgive. When we take offense and do not forgive, we miss the forest for the trees; we are shooting the messenger and ignoring the message. G-d's message may be oddly wrapped, but it is a message nonetheless, and we should try to decipher it.

As is common in chassidic custom, chassidim meet to speak with their Rebbe (spiritual leader) for guidance. A particular individual was awaiting his turn to beseech his Rebbe for a blessing for children. Suddenly the Rebbe's assistant announced that the Rebbe would not continue with the audiences for another three days. The childless chassid was devastated. He had traveled for weeks to get there, and his heart was full of hope. He lost control and began remonstrating loudly with the assistant. In the heat of the argument, he slapped the assistant across the cheek. The Rebbe heard the commotion and inquired as to what had taken place. The Rebbe stated that he refused to meet a person who lifted his hands against his fellow. The chassid broke down in tears, terrified that he had just lost a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for a child.

Upon observing the chassid's grief, the assistant took pity and interceded with the Rebbe. He said that he was willing to forgive the chassid wholeheartedly, but with one condition. The Rebbe had to give him a blessing for children.

The Rebbe was very pleased with this generosity of spirit and happily gave his blessing. A year later, a healthy baby boy was born.

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Gavi Rosenbloom obm,

לע"נ גבריאל מרדכי בן בלחט"א ר' אפרים ישורון ז"ל



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Details of an Artist

by Ruti Rosenbloom

Gavi Rosenbloom obm

A dichotomy played constant throughout Gavi's life. Raised in a Chabad home while receiving primarily an education focused on the teachings of the Chofetz Chaim in Talmudical Academy, you may think he would choose one over the other. Instead, he fused the two. He saw no separation, only sought to combine. This attitude was felt at home, as Gavi would love each of us for our uniqueness and fully accept us. The only thing asked in return was an effort to follow his lead and love unconditionally. Gavi greatly admired and respected Rabbi Yossi Klein and shared this with me throughout his teenage years. Relating to Rabbi Yossi Klein's story of an artist, it is funny to see the Hashgacha Pratit, divine providence that unbeknown to Klein, Gavi's playroom growing up had only one art picture in the room, a print of a painting by Feter Hendel Lieberman.

As told by Rabbi Yossi Klein:

You may think bochurim (Torah students) exaggerate, those who knew Gavi, understand he came from "salt." My first encounter with Gavi was on Simchat Torah, by Bais Lubavitch on Clarks Lane. We farbrenged (Chassidic gathering) by sharing stories and dancing with the Torah. This moment initiated a weekly shiur (class) which I led, and Gavi gathered friends: Yehuda Rosenbloom, Mendel Orkin, Hillel Goodman, and the Rosenblatt brothers to join. It went on for years until the boys left for yeshiva gedola (higher education). Gavi was special.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe gave a story about Chanoch Hendel Lieberman. He lost his wife and daughters in the war. The Rebbe wrote to him after his tragedy like a father to a son. He explained the following: "You are an artist. An artist is not someone with talented hands, or even an ability to duplicate. An artist has a different eye. He sees an inner depth to the world and transmits this onto his paper. You are a *pnimi* who searches to overcome exteriors and reach inner dimensions of our world and purpose. The true inner dimension is the neshoma. As an artist you have a deep life and the outer layers of facade *chitzoniot* will not distract you from your purpose. The strength of an artist is to see not just the outer person but also the neshoma. Therefore you will constantly find the essence." Reb Hendel Lieberman always kept this message close to him.

Gavi loved learning because he wanted knowledge learning new ideas and he appreciated

the process of thinking. He did not learn for acceptance or awards. In our shiur, the bochurim would pick a topic and search for answers in the book of Tanya and explore. Gavi would surprise everyone with his questions that were years ahead of a fifteen year old. He was inquisitive for the content asking, "Why we exist and do we exist? What is a Jew?" He really wanted to know. Gavi would not wait for a class to start, he would find friends and learn wherever and whenever he could find a time and place. He would learn with focus and with many kinds of people, from his peers to grandfathers.

He never worried about outside appearances and did not see any friction. I remember he learned with friends in a room for Yud Tes Kislev (chassidic festival), with a picture of the Chofetz Chaim behind him. Gavi loved learning alongside his little brother so why should they be apart? One time I saw him shopping at the grocery store with his little brother going up and down the aisles. He even came, sometimes, to shiur with his little brother because while Gavi was sixteen and his brother was just over a year old, he did not make compromises with what he loved. Gavi was a *Pnimi* and loved the essence. The way he loved learning and life was the way his attitude was, regarding people.

A bochur, Barry Wolosow, led Torah classes and was involved in making arrangements for the classes. I remember Barry speaking to me about something he noticed in Gavi. He related how Gavi was humorous and sharp, but never directed to hurt anyone. His sense of humor was terrific. It could be jarring and shocking yet related sharply in context to the moment and this could "crack up" a room in seconds. While everyone was laughing, he sometimes was surprised because he was simply sharing the essence of how he related to the world. Many times all he did was share his artist view of the world with his intrinsic detailed story. He could engage and slice a topic offered by anyone around the table, but he never took matters personally and added anecdotes of self deprecation and humor. He saw the good in others easily because he related to their inner essence and did not have to overcome status, looks, knowledge or anything of the existential physical world. He came from a different angle.

I was outside the old yeshiva with Gavi one night. He explained to me his wanting to study medicine and I asked him why he was interested in this field. At eighteen he impressed me with his answer. You might expect a response relating to academic achievement, financial stability, or social standing but his answer was unusual. Gavi never reached for the treats offered by learning or desired the latest gadgets, and he did not even get excited about the larger Gemara learning prizes. The physical nature of the world never

excited him. He did not in any way walk around as if he was a tzaddik or righteous person. So, his answer did not reflect a lofty cause in saving the world, rather it is interesting, it is about people. Medicine is about the person. He was fascinated to know what "is" the person in all our details. The way he was with serving G-d, learning, relating to people, was uniquely his own; his inner detailed principles.

The bochurim and I traveled for Yud Alef Nissan (chassidic holiday) to the ohel (resting place of The Lubavitcher Rebbe). These teenage boys were laughing and Gavi was the life of the party. Suddenly, we reached Queens, New York, and Gavi fell silent. With great simplicity he approached as a young boy going to visit his Rebbe, Chassidic leader of the generation. Often, on ordinary days, Gavi would beg his father to take a trip and visit the ohel. Four hours there and back without any additional visits, even into Crown Heights or the city, because he cared for his relationship with the Rebbe.

Gavi once asked what "is" the neshoma. I referenced writings from the Lubavitcher Rebbe addressing the neshoma. In the letter he explained, a bullet can cut through flesh and even bone, yet it is irrational to think this bullet would cut into the neshoma. How could a bullet cut through the love and pain of the whole person. How could a physical cut take away the personality of the nefesh? Obviously, the neshoma is spiritual and not physical. When a person expires it does not take away the person. The soul is eternal.

This logic is sound, yet so foreign to us. We cannot imagine people without a beating heart and physical body. How do we relate to a person's emotions without a pumping heart even though the two are not really connected? Chassidic philosophy explains that the person continues to live, everything they experienced continues to be known, everyone loved is still loved by the person, and the relationship still exists to them. How a person grows bigger or shrinks in size has nothing to do with the spiritual growth of the relationship. A soul to soul connection does not go away. Gavi had an incredible face, generous smile and tremendous energy which shone from his eyes. Everything Gavi stood for is alive today. Rejecting ulterior and mundane motivations, everything he related was for the inner essence. How he was motivated to judge favorably, and work to improve himself from within can be a lesson for us. If we focus on judging others favorably and self improvement for its own sake, we will keep his lessons alive.

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ATT: Mrs. Rochel Kaplan, Director

Thank you!

A Story AN ETROG FROM THE GARDEN OF EDEN

(abridged)

It was the first day of Sukkot, and all the congregants in the *shul* of Rabbi Elimelech of Lizensk were in a festive mood. There was something unusual in his manner this Sukkot. Why did he stop so suddenly in the middle of swaying as he held the *etrog* and *lulav* in his hands to sniff the air? It was evident that something was on his mind, something rather exciting by the look on his radiant countenance.

The minute the *davening* (praying) was over, Rabbi Elimelech hurried to where his brother Rabbi Zusha (who had come to spend the festival with him) was standing, and said to him eagerly: "Come and help me find the etrog which is permeating the whole shul with the fragrance of the Garden of Eden!" And so together they went from person to person until they reached the far corner of the shul.

"This is the one," called out Rabbi Elimelech delightedly. "Please, dear friend, tell me who are you and where you obtained this wonderful etrog?"

"My name," began the quiet-looking man, "is Uri, and I come from Strelisk. I have always regarded taking the 'four kinds' on Sukkot as one of my favorite mitzvot. I am a poor man, employed as *melamed* (teacher) in the village of Yanev, which is not far from my native town. One half of my earnings I use for our needs and with the other half I buy an etrog in Lemberg. But in order not to spend any money on the journey I usually go on foot.

"This year, during the Ten Days of Repentance, I was making my way on foot as usual, with fifty gulden in my purse with which to buy an etrog. It was time for '*minchah*' so I stood in a corner to daven. I was in the middle of my prayers when I heard a terrible sound of moaning and groaning, as of one in great anguish. I hurriedly finished my davening. As I turned towards the man who was in obvious distress, I beheld a most unusual and rough looking person, dressed in peasant garb with a whip in his hands, pouring out his troubles to the innkeeper at the bar. The man was a poor Jew who earned his living as a *baal-agallah* (owner of a horse and cart for carting purposes). He had a wife and several children. And now, a terrible calamity had befallen him. His horse, had suddenly collapsed in the forest, and just lay there unable to get up."

"I felt I could not keep the money I had with me for an etrog when here was a man in such a desperate plight that his very life and that of his family depended upon his getting a horse. So I settled with the innkeeper to accept forty-five gulden. The wagon driver was just speechless with relief, and his joy was absolutely indescribable.

"I eventually reached Lemberg with the remaining five gulden in my pocket, and naturally had to content myself with buying a very ordinary looking but kosher etrog. Usually my etrog is the best in Yanev, and everyone would come and make a blessing over it, but this year I was ashamed to

return home. My wife agreed that I could come here to Lizensk, where nobody knew me."

"But my dear Rabbi Uri," cried out Rabbi Elimelech, *now that the former had finished his story*, "Yours is indeed an exceptional etrog. Now I realize why your etrog has the fragrance of the Garden of Eden in its perfume! *Let me tell you the sequel to your story.*"

"When the wagon driver whom you saved thought about his unexpected good fortune, he decided that you must have been none other than the Prophet Elijah. Having come to this conclusion the happy wagon driver looked for a way of expressing his gratitude to the Almighty, but the poor man knew not a Hebrew word, nor could he say any prayers. "Suddenly his face lit up. He took his whip and lashed it into the air with all his might, crying out with all his being: 'Dear Father in Heaven, I love you very much! What can I do to convince you of my love for you? Let me crack my whip for you as a sign that I love you!' Saying which, the wagon driver cracked his whip into the air three times."

"On the eve of *Yom Kippur*, the Almighty up above was seated on His 'Seat of judgment,' listening to the first prayers of the Day of Atonement. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, who was acting as the Counsel for Defense on behalf of his fellow Jews, was pushing a wagon full of Jewish mitzvot to the Gates of Heaven, when Satan appeared and obstructed his path with piles of Jewish sins, so that Rabbi Levi Yitzchak just got stuck there. My brother Rabbi Zusha and I added our strength to help him move his wagon forward, but all in vain. Suddenly there came the sound of the cracking of a whip which rent the air, lighting up the whole universe, right up to the very heavens! There we saw the angels and all the righteous seated in a circle, singing G-d's praise. On hearing the wagon driver's words as he cracked his whip in ecstasy, they responded: Happy is the King who is thus praised!"

"All at once, the Angel Michael appeared, leading a horse, followed by the wagon driver with whip in hand. The Angel Michael harnessed this horse to the wagon of mitzvot, and the wagon driver cracked his whip. Suddenly the wagon gave a lurch forward, flattening the piles of sins that had been obstructing the way, and drove it smoothly and easily right up to the Throne of Honor. There the King of Kings received it most graciously and, rising from the Seat of judgment, went over and seated Himself on the Seat of Mercy. A happy New Year was assured."

"And now dear Rabbi Uri" concluded Rabbi Elimelech, "You see that all this came about through your noble action. Go home, and be a leader in Israel! But before you go, permit me to hold this wonderful etrog of yours, and praise Gd with it."

By [Nissan Mindel](#) excerpted from *The Complete Story of Tishrei*, published and copyright by [Kehot Publication Society](#), Brooklyn NY

A NEW REALITY

The Messianic Era

In the days of Moshiach, Goodness will be natural; No distractions, No attention to evil which will no longer exist. Everyone will be perfect, but *there will be one tree!* The whole point is to get back to that Garden of Eden where it all began, *but with that tree, repaired.* So the era of Moshiach is dependent on our deeds in exile. We will fill the **א** of גלות (exile) to its fulfillment- the ultimate גאולה.

Messianic times will be the dawning of a new era- we will look back- with nostalgia and realize what was- it will dawn on us what we had [Similar to Fiddler on the Roof- "*Do I Love You?*"]. There will be a different flavor, a different motivation, i.e. when you brought flowers for your wife over 20 years to win points, now you will continue to bring flowers, to make her happy. So there is the same action, but something in perception has changed. *How does this happen? How do we connect to Moshiach?*

To achieve a whole new perception, we must prepare, and we must change. The Talmud relates: Two thousand years of Tohu-chaos, 2000 years of Torah, and 2,000 years of Moshiach. The new perception will result from a *new heart* (receptive and open to G-dliness) by removing a *heart of stone*.

Moshiach will teach תורה חדשה- new Torah. Of course, Torah and Mitzvot being *truth*-do not change. In exile, Mitzvot is like a tool to an end Tikun Olam, and they have limitations (as tools do). In the utopian era of Moshiach, we will demonstrate the power of absolute goodness. The reward of a mitzvah, is the mitzvah itself. In other words, in the messianic era, we will perform a mitzvah for its own sake, with no gain or ulterior motive.

Hashem will return us to our promised land and build the third Temple, במצות רצונית, where our state of Torah study and Mitzvah performance is according to His will. Essentially, the New Torah of Moshiach will be suited to the way G-d does mitzvot. We will observe mitzvot according to His will and at the peak level of our G-dly soul. Thus, Hashem, Torah, and the G-dly soul will be revealed as ONE entity- *A New Reality*.

Loosely transcribed from Chabad.org video.

Rabbi Manis Friedman, noted author, lecturer, philosopher, Dean of Bais Chana women's Institute /in conversation with/ Michael Chighel, Ph.D. philosophy University of Toronto, taught at Lauder Business School in Vienna



By Amian Frost Kelemer

NEW BEGINNINGS



A few weeks ago, people in synagogues all over the world stood to recite in unison "Chazak Chazak V'nitchazek" (Strength, strength and be strengthened) after the completion of a book of the Torah. It is an energizing experience to feel that together as a community, we wish each other success in our never-ending study of the Torah and in our search to improve upon ourselves.

We have completed a year where we truly deserve this chizuk. As we enter the new year, we can remind ourselves, our children and our loved ones about the importance of drawing strength from learning in community. Every one of us has a unique and valuable contribution. We are much stronger together and when we truly appreciate each person's perspective, we grow individually and as a collective.

Our community's classrooms are soon to be reverberating with the full sounds of children and adults engaged in study. We can learn from this pandemic year to look up from the text and truly see and hear each other across the desks and tables. There is a beautiful circle between looking down and seeing the text we study, whose letters represent all of the souls of the Jewish people, and looking up to the people we study with, that gives us the strength we crave in this year ahead.

Amian Frost Kelemer is CEO of the Louise D. and Morton J. Macks, Center for Jewish Education



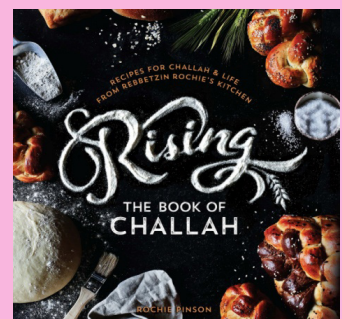
New For Kids



Rochie Pinson, teacher of all things challah, and author of Rising: The Book of Challah, is back in cookbook writing mode, but this time her cookbook aims to bring the whole family into the kitchen!

Having seen the positive impact that challah making has on the family, and after receiving many messages from people over the last few years describing their children's love for the challah making process and desire to be involved in it, Rochie decided that it was time that there was a book for the whole family to enjoy together.

The original cookbook, Rising: The Book of Challah, introduced the idea of challah as a recipe for elevated nurturing, and a way to remind us of the importance of bringing spiritual sustenance into the feeding of our families. Now, this new version of Rising, will bring the kids in on the action! The kitchen is the nerve center of the home, and when challah becomes the focus of that, the positive light filled energy reverberates throughout the family, and beyond.



Rising! The Book of Challah for KIDS (March/22, Feldheim publishers) goes beyond the basics and introduces the love of challah and Shabbat to the next generation. With a challah for each holiday, each life milestone, and every Torah portion, kids of all ages will delight in this book!

Photographed by the talented Monica Pinto, and designed and written by Rochie Pinson, this new volume promises to be an object of beauty and an invaluable tool in bringing the joy of challah to families everywhere. Look for it on Amazon and in bookstores everywhere in spring 2022!

Rochie Pinson is a rebbetzin and Chabad shluha in downtown Brooklyn. She is also a mother, artist and author of "the world's most gorgeous and comprehensive challah cookbook" Rising! The Book of Challah. (Feldheim, 2017)



Chabad of SoBo



Rabbi Yaakov & Chana Kaplan, Mendel and Peretz



July 2020, Yaakov & Chana Kaplan embarked upon their life's calling of bringing a permanent Jewish presence to South Baltimore (Federal Hill) and the Jewish student/faculty body of The University of Maryland-Baltimore.

Maryland-Baltimore.

Contemplating their move- they wondered, is now the correct time to proceed in the middle of Covid-19. Perhaps better to wait until the brunt of the pandemic passes. After going back and forth, they decided that despite the unusual circumstances of the times, setting up programming and meeting up with people, this time specifically, demanded a clarion call to be there for every Jew in any way possible.

In the brief time they have been there, they have conducted holiday programs, some in person and virtually, for an entire calendar year. Additionally, they have met many wonderful Jewish residents of South Baltimore and have made fast friends.

"We see a great future for a warm, robust, and active Jewish community in South Baltimore and at the University of Maryland-Baltimore. We extend warm welcome to join us and take in our beautiful views along the harbor promenade."



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