

The Weekly *Farbrengens*



THE FOUNDATION OF THE HOME (I)

A MOTHER'S DEVOTION

There was a couple in Vilednik who simply could not get along. In fact things reached the point where the woman left her husband. Later, facing pressure to be reunited, she told Reb Yisroel of Vilednik that if the *tzaddik* promised that she would be blessed with children as great as he was, she would return to her husband.

"Is that so?" asked the *tzaddik*. "Very well. If you will be like my mother, you will no doubt have children like she did."

And with that he shared two stories of his righteous mother:

Once while lighting the *Shabbos licht* she cried so much over the candles that they extinguished. When she opened her eyes and saw what had happened she was so pained that she broke down into further sobs. A miracle occurred and the candles were relit.

The second story:

His mother was widowed at a young age and had to toil laboriously to support her five children. Soon the work caught up with her and she fell ill. As she lay in bed, distraught over how she would now feed her children, she asked young Yisroel to hand her a huge *sefer* from the shelf. The book was a Rif, a classic compendium of all the *halachos* in the *Gemara*. She had no understanding of its contents or what it was at all, but she knew it was a holy *sefer*. She took the book in her hands and said, "Holy letters! Rise up before the *Ribbono shel Olam* and *daven* for me, that I should recover and be able to feed my little children!"

And she soon recovered.

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"ב מעשה קי"ב)

In a talk addressed to *Nshei U'Bnos Chabad*, the Rebbe once pointed out that the task of establishing the home as a *Mishkan for HaShem* begins in the heart of the woman of the home.

When a home is run by an *akeres habayis* whose heart is a *Mishkan for HaShem*, and her conduct follows the directives of the Torah, this is reflected in the conduct of her husband, sons, and daughters. Their

thought, speech, and action are likewise permeated with the goal of creating a *Mishkan for HaShem*.

When that happens, even the mundane vessels in the home become permeated with *kedushah* and *Elokus*, just like the *Mishkan* in which *HaShem* dwells. And this brings peace and *achdus* in the home, amongst all the family members.

(ת"מ תשמ"ז ח"ג ע' 345)

CONSIDER

What makes a woman the main component of the home?

Like the daughters of Tzafchad, the women and girls of every generation are entrusted with the task of endearing *Eretz Yisroel* to themselves and to their families, and to create "*Eretz Yisroel*" wherever they live. This is accomplished through a lifestyle of Torah and *mitzvos*, practiced with *chassidish* liveliness.

Doing so does not require miraculous feats. One only needs to reflect every day on whether her conduct is in harmony with the way a *Yiddishe* home and a *chassidish* home should be conducted, and whether it is appropriate for *Yiddishe* daughters, all of whom are likened to Sarah, Rivkah, Rochel and Leah.

When a woman begins to think in this direction, she will be able to establish a new home for *HaShem*.

(ת"מ ח"י"ז ע' 66)

The Rebbe once explained that a woman is called the *akeres habayis* since she is the *ikar* (the main component) of the home. It is clearly observable that the primary education of young children and even infants is accomplished not by the father, *melamed*, *rosh yeshiva*, or the *rov* - but by the child's own mother.

(ת"מ תשמ"ח ח"ד ע' 341)

TENDER LOVING CARE

In a *yechidus* in תשי"ג (1953) with the leadership of the Chabad women of Worcester, Massachusetts,

the Rebbe likened the tender care given by a mother to that given by a nurse:

When a person is ill, he consults a doctor. The doctor, who understands the physical workings of the body, diagnoses the nature of the illness and prescribes treatment. If the case warrants it, he recommends care in a hospital, where it is the doctor who prescribes the treatment, but the nurse is the one who usually administers it. The nurse, who is generally a woman, can with tender patience sweeten a bitter-tasting medicine and make a most difficult medical procedure more tolerable.

Similarly, to secure a remedy for spiritual ills, one must consult the person who, like the doctor, the expert for the body's needs, knows and understands the needs of the soul, as explained in the Torah.

However, the expert who diagnoses and prescribes the treatment is not necessarily the one who is best suited to administer it. Thus we come to the role of the spiritual "nurse"—an individual with the compassion, sensitivity and patience that the task requires.

As is the case regarding physical medicine, the woman has been blessed with a character that makes her optimally suited to serve as a spiritual "nurse"—one who draws her fellow Jews close to Torah with kindness, gentle benevolence, and love. A woman's strength is such that she can prevail upon others to fulfill the precepts, including those which, on the surface, might seem difficult or "bitter-tasting"—with willing acceptance and joy.

(מרשימת היחידות)

The *Zohar* writes: A woman should light *Shabbos* candles joyfully and willingly, for it is a great honor for her. Moreover, it brings her the *zechus* of having holy sons who will light up the world with Torah, *yiras Shamayim* and peace, and grants her husband long life.

Rabbeinu Bachaye explains that the time of lighting the *Shabbos licht* is opportune for women to *daven* and ask to be blessed with sons who will shine in Torah, for the Torah is also called "light."

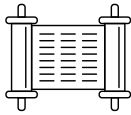
(זהר בראשית מ"ח ע"ב, רבינו בחיי יתרו י"ט)

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SOUS VIDE FOR SHABBOS

May I keep food hot for Shabbos with sous vide?

In the sous vide method of cooking, food in a sealed bag, placed in a water bath kept at a precise temperature by a heat element submerged in the water. Two potential issues must be addressed before setting up hot food for Shabbos in this manner.

As a rule, Chazal prohibit leaving food on a source of heat at the start of Shabbos (shehiya) out of concern that you may increase the heat to quicken the cooking. Three permissible options are: (1) Placing a blech over the source of heat, demonstrating that you don't need so much heat; (2) Adding raw meat right before Shabbos which can't be expected to be ready for the night meal, precluding concern for adjusting the heat; (3) If the food is already at least halfway ready (maachal ben drusai) before Shabbos, thus it will be ready in any case for the meal without any adjustment. The Alter Rebbe rules that this is sufficient to permit shehiya, but leaves room for stringency like the opinion that the food must be fully ready to the point that adjusting the heat will ruin it.

Though a blech is not an option for sous vide, the other two options would theoretically be applicable. An additional Shabbos issue, however, must be addressed.

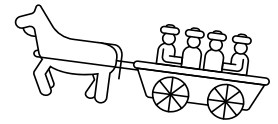
Chazal forbade insulating food (hatmana) in a heat increasing substance (mosif hevel) even if you set it up before Shabbos, as a safeguard to prevent you from insulating the food with burning embers (remetz). This prohibition is stricter and none of the leniencies of shehiya apply. Since food is generally insulated to keep it hot for the next day, there is greater need to increase the heat, and even a slight addition of heat would be effective due to the insulation which preserves the temperature.

A classic example of prohibited insulation is wrapping pots that are on the blech with a towel before Shabbos. Although the towel itself doesn't increase heat, the pots are on a source of heat and insulating them is prohibited, even if set up before Shabbos. (If the majority of the pot's walls are exposed, it is permitted to cover them on top with a towel.)

By sous vide, the bag of food is completely surrounded by water that is being heated by an element. The food in the bag is a distinct entity in the water, and is considered to be insulated with a heat increasing substance. This is analogous to the Talmud's discussion of having cold water run through a channel of hot water from the hot springs of Tverya. It would therefore be prohibited to keep food hot for Shabbos in this manner, unless the heater is set to shut off before Shabbos starts, and the food is just kept hot by the previously heated water.

The implication of the poskim is that a sous vide should not be set up on Friday even to keep food hot for motzei Shabbos.

1. ראה שוע"ר אורח סי' רנ"ג ס"א.
2. ראה פרמ"ג אורח סי' רנ"ז א"א סק"ב ובהגהות
3. ראה שוע"ר אורח סי' רנ"ג ס"ט (ודא"ג יש אומרים
4. ראה שוע"ר אורח סי' רנ"ג ס"א. וראה שם ב"ד קו"א
5. ראה שוע"ר אורח סי' רנ"ג ס"א. וראה שם כמה דיעות
6. ראה שוע"ר אורח סי' רנ"ג ס"א. וראה שם כמה דיעות
7. ראה פרמ"ג אורח סי' רנ"ז א"א סק"ב ובהגהות



REB NOCHUM

Reb Menachem Nochum, the oldest son of the Mittlerer Rebbe, was born around the year 5547 (1787) and resided in Lubavitch. Later on, he moved to Niezhin, making frequent extended visits to the kever of his grandfather the Alter Rebbe in Haditch. He passed away around eighty-years-old, and is buried in Niezhin.

During the time of the Alter Rebbe, a new fashion in Russia dictated that jackets should henceforth have collars. When his grandson Reb Nochum, son of the Mittlerer Rebbe, was preparing for his chassuna, the Alter Rebbe called for him and asked him about his silk kapota: would it be made in the traditional way, or would it conform to the new fashion? "It'll have a collar, of course," Reb Nochum replied.

The Alter Rebbe requested that he have it made without one, but Reb Nochum, then still a young bochur, argued, "Everyone else will have one, and I'll be embarrassed." The Alter Rebbe then promised him that if he wore a kapota without a collar, he would be together with his grandfather in Gan Eden. He then asked Reb Nochum that when his

kapota was ready, he should come to him dressed in it. Reb Nochum asked if he must do it wholeheartedly or kabolos ol would be sufficient. The Alter Rebbe replied, "Of course it must be truthfully, and with the truth of the 'yechida.'" Reb Nochum was silent and nothing more was said.

Before the chassuna, the young man entered the Alter Rebbe's room, dressed in his new kapota... which had a collar. The Alter Rebbe then tore off a small piece of fur from the inside of the coat and promised him long life for that. Years later Reb Nochum commented, "I was young and didn't appreciate how great was the promise I had been given." To correct this incident, Reb Nochum would spend much time in Haditch by the Ohel of the Alter Rebbe.

The Rebbe explained that at that time and place, the challenge of fashions was extremely difficult. Had the Alter Rebbe been successful, that challenge would have been removed for generations to come. And that explains why he offered his grandson such a rich reward.

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א עמוד 29, רשימו"ד חדש ע' 97, תר"מ חל"ה ע' 278)

A Moment with The Rebbe



PATERNAL INVOLVEMENT

When Rebbetzin Shula Kazen a"h of Cleveland, Ohio was yechidus in 5719 (1959), she reported that her husband had begun a trial period at a local shul. However, he couldn't accept the position due to the mechitza being lowered by the president, who maintained that it didn't befit the 20th Century.

The Rebbe suggested to talk with the president, but Mrs. Kazen insisted that it wouldn't help. When the Rebbe proposed to approach his wife, Mrs. Kazen again shared her doubts. Eventually the Rebbe advised that a ruling from the local Young Israel shul would be influential.

Suddenly, the Rebbe fell silent. The Rebbe leaned his head forward for a few minutes, while Mrs. Kazen waited in awe.

The Rebbe raised his head, and while facing the window began, "If nothing helps, his father from the other world will have to see to it..."

Indeed, the president unexpectedly conceded. Years later, when he became closer to the Kazens, he related that his father had come to him in a dream, on his yahrtzeit, and warned him that if he didn't cooperate with the rov, his end would be bitter...

(Kotlarsky Teshurah, Cheshvan 5774)