

The Jewish Weekly

In Loving memory of
Mendy Klein
 ר' מנחם משה ז"ל
 בן ר' נפתלי הירצקא
 נפטר ל"ג בעומר
 י"ח אייר תשע"ח
 ת.נ.צ.ב.ה

A Shabbat in the Park

By Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles

In the early part of the 20th century, before WWI, a young girl stood near her father, on the quay of a Polish harbor, a steamer trunk at her feet. Out of her nine siblings, twelve-year-old Rose was the child chosen to be sent to the "golden land," America. Life in Poland was hard, hunger a constant visitor in her home. After much scraping and pinching, her family saved enough for a single one-way ticket to the United States. And Rose, the youngest of the nine, was the lucky one chosen to go.

Her father hoisted the trunk on his shoulder and walked silently, his coattails flapping behind him. Rose could see the effort he was making, to keep his emotions in check. The weight of living was apparent on the lines of his face, in the burning sadness of his wise eyes, and in the gray in his beard. His back, however, was ramrod straight, in seeming defiance of his tribulations.

With an involuntary sigh, her father dropped the trunk on the deck and turned to his daughter. A gray head, bent over an upturned innocent face, as the father gazed deep into his daughter's unclouded eyes. He felt an urge to scream, to protest the cruelty of fate. How he longed to snatch Rose back home, to hold her as he had held her when she was a mere infant. Instead, he laid a trembling hand on her cheek.

"Rose, my child, remember: G-d is watching over you every step of the way. Remember His laws and keep them well. Never forget that more than the Jews have kept the Shabbat, the Shabbat has kept the Jews. It will be hard in the new land. Don't forget who you are. Keep the Shabbat - no matter what sacrifice you must make."

Rose buried her face in the scratchiness of her father's coat, her slender arms wrapped tightly around him, as if to anchor herself to all that was familiar in Poland. Tatte gave another heaving sigh. His straight shoulders bent over his daughter, as his tears mingled with hers. A blast from the ship tore the two apart. Tatte bent down and hugged Rose again, squeezing the breath out of her in a hug meant to last a lifetime. Then he turned and walked down the gangplank, a stooped man, finally defeated by life's hardships. As the ship steamed away from the shtetl life of Poland, a fresh sea wind blew on the passengers preparing to start life anew.

For Rose, the journey was crammed with questions and uncertainty. Would her relatives really extend a welcome to her, or was she to be all alone in the new land? How frightening was the thought of a new life,

without her loved ones. As the ship made its entrance into New York harbor, the passengers stood plastered against the railing, shouting and clapping as they saw the "new land." Rose stood aside, shy and unsure. Would the new land fulfill its promise of hope, freedom, and riches? Would her relatives meet her here - or was she now homeless?

Rose did not have long to worry. Her relatives were waiting for her, solicitous of their "greenhorn" cousin. She was soon safely ensconced in their home.

Life in America was new and strange. Polish mannerisms were quickly shed - along with religion. Modesty, keeping kosher, and Torah were abandoned, together with the outmoded clothing and accent. Rose's relatives insisted religion was "old-fashioned": an unnecessary accessory in America. Rose, however, never forgot her father's parting words. She put on the new clothes her relatives gave her, cut her hair to suit the fashion, but never gave up on the Shabbat.

With her mature appearance and demeanor, it was not long before Rose found a job as a sewing machine operator. But what would she do about Shabbat?

Every week without fail, Rose devised a new excuse for her boss, to explain why she did not come to work on Saturday. One week she had a toothache, another week her stomach bothered her. After three weeks, the foreman grew wise. He called her over. "Rose," he said in a tone that indicated he had only her welfare in mind. "I like your work, and I like you. But this Shabbat business has got to stop. Either you come in this Saturday, or you can look for a new job."

Upon hearing this development, Rose's relatives were adamant. Work on Shabbat, she must. They applied pressure; they cajoled, pleaded, and enticed. Rose felt like a leaf caught between heavy gusts of wind, pushed and pulled, with no weight or life of its own. She was so young and vulnerable. She wanted to please her relatives. But her father's words kept echoing in her head. What should she do?

The week passed in a daze for Rose. Her emotions were in turmoil. On the one hand, Tatte is not here to help me be strong. I do want to please my new friends. I want friends. I want to fit into this new land, she reasoned. And then just as quickly came another thought: On the other hand, how can I forget Shabbat? How can I give up the beauty Tatte taught me?

"Rose, sweetheart, listen to us. It's for your own good." On and on went her relatives, until Rose's determination wavered.

On Friday, Rose walked to work, lunch bag in hand, and head stooped in thought. She sat at her machine throughout the day, listening to the humming of the other machines, as she absentmindedly went about her job of mass-producing. Would it be so awful to do this tomorrow as well? Decision time was nearing.

Whirr, bzz, whirr, bzz. The machine kept tune to Rose's troubled thoughts. What should she do - or was the question, what could she do? As the sun

It Once Happened..

slipped over the parapets of the Lower East Side, Rose knew there was really no question. She was Jewish, and she would keep the Shabbat.

Shabbat in America was not the warm day Rose had known at home. This week was the worst yet. She lacked the courage to face her relatives and tell them of her resolve. Instead, she left the house in the morning, pretending to be headed for work. Back and forth through the streets of Manhattan she paced.

Later in the day, she rested in Tompkin's Square Park, together with the city pigeons. "Tatte, this song is for you," she whispered. The pigeons ruffled their feathers. "Yonah matza bo manoch" ("On it [the Shabbat] the dove found rest."). There she sat among the pigeons, singing the traditional Shabbat songs, with tears in her eyes and sobs between the verses.

When three stars finally peeked out from the black sky, announcing the end of Shabbat, the moon shone down on a weary girl and bathed her face in its glow. Rose had triumphed, but her victory would cost her dearly. She had no job and had alienated her family.

"Baruch HaMavdil..." (the blessing said upon the departure of the Shabbat). It was the time to face the hardness of the world. Rose trudged homeward, dreading the nasty scene to come, when her relatives learned that she hadn't been at work.

As she neared home, a shout broke into her reverie. "Rose! What...what...I mean, how are you here? Where were you?"

Rose looked at her cousin Joe, her expression woebegone.

"Joe, what will become of me? I kept Shabbat and lost my job. Now everyone will be angry and disappointed with me, and oh, Joe, what will I do?" The words tumbled out together with her tears.

Joe looked at her strangely. "Rose, didn't you hear?" he asked gently.

"Hear what?"

"There was an awful fire in the factory. Only forty people survived. There was no way out of the building. People even jumped to their deaths." Joe's voice was hushed, and he was crying openly. "Rose, don't you see? Because you kept Shabbat, you are alive. Because of your Shabbat, you survived."

Out of 190 workers, Rose Goldstein was among the minority of those who survived. The infamous Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, on Saturday, March 25, 1911, claimed the lives of 146 immigrant workers present. Because it had been Shabbat, Rose Goldstein was not there. As her father had said, more than the Jews keep the Shabbat, the Shabbat keeps the Jews.

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.



Y-GRAPHICS

Shabbat Times - Yitro

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	4:49	6:02	6:42
Tel Aviv	5:03	6:04	
Haifa	4:53	6:03	
Be'er Sheva	5:07	6:05	



Two is Better Than One

By Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles.

Mr. Amichai Liani is a wealthy New York business man. As such, he often helps to sponsor worthwhile Torah & Mitzvot projects. Once, a few years ago, he was invited to the Chabad Center for Russian Jewry, in Queens, NY, to receive the high honor of being the sandak (the one who holds the baby on his lap) at a brit mila circumcision event. Twin boys had been born to a Jewish couple from Russia, after many years of childlessness. The Chabad rabbi was designated to be sandak for the "older" baby, and since it is written in Jewish Law, that being a sandak is such a great honor and merit, no father should offer it twice to the same person, the rabbi recommended to the happy parents, that Mr Liani be invited to be sandak for the "younger" baby.

After both ceremonies were completed, one right after the other, all the guests took seats around the laden table, to participate in the celebratory meal. After everyone had eaten a bit, the father of the twins jumped up and started to speak excitedly...in rapid Russian. As he was the only non-Russian speaker present, Mr Liani decided that he could leave, without being considered rude. He discreetly presented the rabbi, with a check to cover the expenses of the meal, in gratitude for the special merit of being sandak, and made his way quietly to the exit.

Before he could leave, however, the mother of the twins ran over to intercept him. She thanked him, and asked him in good English, to please stay a bit longer; she would like to tell him a story. He agreed and she began.

"My husband and I married, while we still lived in Russia. Soon thereafter, we emigrated to the USA. We decided that we would not have children, until we had saved enough money. After we both worked hard for ten years, developed a steady, good income, and acquired a nice home here in Queens, we agreed that it was time to start a family. But, I didn't get pregnant. We went to a variety of doctors, but none of them were able to help us.

"As we grew up in the Soviet Union, under Communism, we had no exposure to Judaism whatsoever. A year or so ago, my husband developed an interest, and began sporadically attending events, and Shabbat services, at this Chabad House for Russian-speaking Jews, which is near where we live. When he started to participate on a regular basis, I became upset. As Russians, and as modern, educated people, this is not part of our culture, and I wanted nothing to do with it. I complained about this to my husband many times, but he didn't stop. If anything, he increased. Finally, one night I delivered an ultimatum: 'You have to choose between the synagogue and me. If you go again tonight, then don't come back!'

יתרו

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ויצא

"He stayed home.

"That night, I had a dream. A petite, elderly woman spoke to me. 'I know that you are suffering, because you very much desire to have children. If you let your husband continue to go to synagogue, I promise you, that you will have a child. And...if you will go with him, I promise you two!'

"I was astonished. I said to her in my dream, 'How will I let you know what I decide?'

"She smiled and responded, 'Let me show you,' and all of a sudden we were driving through the streets of Queens. The car stopped at a house that bordered on the Springfield Cemetery.

"She told me, that when I go into the house, 'immediately on the left, you will see a video playing. Go out the door on the other side of the room, down a few stairs, and through another door, and you will be in a large room, with many hot water machines for coffee and tea on the left side. Exit through the door on the far left, into the cemetery, and walk on the path till you arrive at a small building. That's where my husband is, the Lubavitcher Rebbe. I am outside, opposite the entrance.'

"I woke up. I remembered everything in the dream clearly, and it all seemed so real. Despite my "modern" perspective, I found myself believing it. The next day, I told my husband, that the following Shabbat, he could start going to the shul again. He was surprised, and happy too, of course. Then I told him, that I would go with him, and his eyes bulged almost out of his head.

"Next, I called the Rabbi of the Chabad Russian Center. He knew well my husband's problems with me, over his increasing level of observance, yet we had never met, so he was delighted to hear from me. I told him I wanted to go to the cemetery where the Lubavitcher Rebbe is. He couldn't hold back his excitement. 'Whenever you want to go, day or night, I will be happy to take you.' Imagine his surprise, when I said. 'You don't have to take me; I already know the place. I just need to clarify the driving directions.'

I went there, and everything was exactly as described in my dream. Opposite the entrance to the Rebbe's 'Ohel,' as they call it, I saw the tombstone indicating his wife's resting place. That's when I realized, that it was the late Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, who had appeared to me in my dream.

"I approached as close as I could, and whispered, 'I want two. I agree to go to the synagogue with my husband.'

The next Shabbat, I accompanied my husband, and it wasn't so bad. There were other Russian women in their thirties there, with backgrounds similar to mine, and I enjoyed meeting them. I went back the second week, and the third week, and found myself looking forward to the next time.

"A month after I started going, I found out that I was pregnant. With twins! And this story that I just told you, is what my husband is now telling everyone in Russian."

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.

Editor's Note: Rebbetzin Chaya "Moussia" Schneerson's 32nd Yahrzeit is Monday, 22nd Shevat – February 17th of this year.



Is it possible for anyone to see sound?

As heard from Rabbi Mirvis, the Chief Rabbi of England and the Commonwealth, there are three different terms used in the Torah for 'listening'.

The first appears at the very beginning of Parashat Yitro, "וישמע יתרו" – Yitro listened." When we use the term 'שמע' it means, that we take what we hear very seriously – what we hear becomes a call for action. That is why Hashem says to us, "שמע ישראל" – Listen O' People of Israel, to the fact that I am the one G-d that you must believe in." We, in turn, call out, "שמע קולנו ה' אלוהינו" – Listen to our voices O' Lord our G-d." – appealing to Hashem to help us.

The second term is 'להאזין' – to hear. Sometimes a word can go into one ear and out through the other, and that is what happens with 'מאזין', that is 'hearing'.

But there is a third, unexpected term, which is the most powerful form of listening. It comes immediately after the Ten Commandments. When in this week's Parsha, the Torah tells us, "וכל העם רואים" – and the entire nation saw the sounds." Here we have a combination of senses, something quite extraordinary. Perhaps even close to supernatural, in which we were able to internalize the messages that reached us from Hashem, with our entire beings.

So powerful was that experience at Mount Sinai, that we believe all of our souls were there. We carry that experience with us, even today, and it gives us the incentive, to carry out the expectations of that covenantal relationship, established at Sinai.

So if 'listening' is a call for action, 'קל וחומר' – how much more so, when one sees the voices? As a result, all that transpired at Mount Sinai, continues to be a very powerful and essential call to us, through all ages, to live our lives according to the will of Hashem.

It is good when people are able to say, 'I hear what you have said'. It is even better, when they're able to say 'I have listened'. But the best of all is when somebody can tell you, 'I see what you mean'.

So let's hope Hashem sees what we mean, by praying for peace, and for our soldiers who go out to protect us, and for those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnassah, and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, happy, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual and sweet Shabbat.

The Jewish Weekly's
PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 17
MITZVOT ASEH: 3
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 14

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 75

Many Chumashim print the number of pesukim at the end of the Parsha. In Yitro's case, the number is 72 or 72 pesukim. The discrepancy is due to different ways of counting the Aseret HaDibrot. The Aseret HaDibrot consists of 13 pesukim. However, when they are read as Statements, rather than pesukim, there are only 10. Similarly, the Aseret HaDibrot is comprised of 10 parshiot. That's probably where the other 3 pesukim went.

NUMBER OF WORDS: 1104
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 4022

HAFTORA:
Ashkenazim: Yeshaya 6:1-7:6, 9:5-6
Chabad & Sephardim: Yeshaya 6:1-13