



THE SPOON AND THE WATCH

Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita

I'm trying to work on this article, but am being distracted by the wondrous gift of a baby great granddaughter who is rolling about in her crib speaking a wordless language of love. This sweet neshomalah is not yet a year old, yet in her childish gurgles I hear the words of Hashem's caress for His people. I'm babysitting, although its more like she is tending over my needs. Its been a hard time for us all, the war bulletins keep on seeping through the air, and everyone is a bit on edge. However, I have my little neshomahla to watch over, and her smile dissipates any fear and floods my heart with invigorating hope. As she rolls over, fighting the need to sleep, something distracts her. She reaches out with her sweet hand through the bars of the crib and grabs the glittering gold chain that rests on her Ziedy's ample girth. It is a pocket watch chain, and as she pulls on it, my eyes well up with tears. Baby doesn't notice, she is fixated on the links that glisten in the light, she pulls on it and out tumbles the large watch that the chain anchors. The watch is old, still needing to be wound by hand daily, but it has seen so much, timed so well, that even if outdated it is cherished by its owner.

Our mishpacha is like so many others. We each try to fit in to the jigsaw puzzle that is life, and hope that our service to Hashem will be found pleasant and meaningful. In these weeks, whilst we enter into the winter months, we are all learning the stories of our holy ancestors, the Avos Hakodoshim. The DNA of our spirituality can be seen through these eternal lessons, and each link in the golden chain of who we are offers answers to life's conundrums. The Jewish people were always about families and the vast canvas of our history dramatically depicts how family challenges can form the greatness of the yiedisha neshomah. Each of our forefathers had battles to wage against outside forces and even more, between their own kinfolk. Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yakov certainly had dysfunctional circumstances that

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לזכר ולעילוי נשמת
כ"ק מרן אדמו"ר מפיאסצנה
הרב קלונימוס קלמן שפירא
זצוקלה"ה



לזכר ולעילוי נשמת
הרבנית הצדקנית
חיה שרה בת הרב שלמה
יחיאל רובין ז"ל



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had to be waded through. This was the chrysalis that gave birth to the miraculous Children that Hashem chose to be His Nation. Even a casual reading of these Torah portions finds one struck by the amount of anguish our ancestors had to go through. When we delve deeper, we find the astounding humanity of their circumstances and how they withstood all the challenges that feed our lives today. Every family has its role to play in the pageantry of life, we each have a tikun to fulfil and the chemistry that makes up each family unit has a direct connection with our Avos.

The baby that has so bemused me carries the name of my late Rebbetzin A”H, the gold chain that has so fascinated her was the Rebbetzin’s gift to me. On my fiftieth birthday, she presented this watch and chain to me with a note, “It’s time for you to start writing”. That was over twenty-eight years ago, and the writing has flowed as best as I have been granted to produce. I was blessed to share fifty-five years with my Rebbetzin and she is still very much part of mine and my family’s life. Little baby has her eyes, (or so I’m convinced) and my prayers are that she has the determination and passion for The Eibishter and His people that her Bubby carried with grace and charm. This is the brilliance of the Jewish Nation, we are all the product of generations spawned from the holiness of our Avos. True we all face challenges and difficulties, but we are born with the staying power that our ancestors were empowered with from the very beginnings of time.

The Rebbetzin’s yahrzeit is this week and I write with difficulty. I miss being part of the dynamic couple that was my life for over half a century. Like the mothers of our Nation, she was the strength and guardian of everything I strived for. I am not writing an obituary here, nor could I ever articulate how much she is missed. Gazing at that sweet baby got this article started, her laugh, her smile brings it all back. The Jewish family is so holy, so meaningful and worthy to create the future.

There is a spoon, it lays in our kitchen drawer. It’s called Chaiky’s spoon, and is unique. All those years ago, it belonged to the first set of cutlery bought by a young couple who were just married. It is the sole survivor of that set, and has stirred tea and coffee on several continents. It has seen many simchas, and no small amount of tears, yet, there it is. Every Shabbos I take it in hand to stir my coffee, and with it comes a rush of thanks for what it has witnessed. Unbeknownst to me (till today) my daughter uses it for the same purpose. It seems that the grand and great grandchildren are also intrigued with it and use it when they come to spend Shabbos with me. Jewish families, sprinkled with the sweetener of yesterday. This is our history, our glory, our tikun.

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