

LUBAVITCH OF N. C.

Thoughts From The Lubavitcher Rebbe

Lag B'omer

By Rabbi Yossi Groner

The festival of Lag B'omer, which occurs during this month, celebrates the Yahrzeit of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai of whom his teacher Rabbi Akiva said: "Only I and your Creator appreciate your powers."

The powers of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, his saintliness and strength of character were inestimable, but one particular episode has wide ranging significance for each of us:

Rabbi Shimon was forced to hide in a cave for twelve years, then again for an additional year, because of his insistence on perpetuating Judaism despite the harsh decrees of the Roman rulers of Israel. When he was finally able to leave the cave, one of the first things he asked was, "Is there anything that needs rectifying?" He was told of a bothersome circuitous path that kohanim (priests) had to use because the boundaries of a grave-site had been lost at that place [and kohanim are prohibited from stepping over human bones, which would impart tuma (impurity) to them].

Rabbi Shimon immediately began to rectify the situation — and succeeded. He did not seek a momentous project of global import "worthy" of his attention; any stress or dis-

comfort suffered by his fellowman affected Rabbi Shimon deeply, and he spent time and effort to put the problem right.

The above incident does not seem to be an outstanding highlight in the life of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai; yet the lesson for us is invaluable. One of the greatest of Israel's sages through history, author of the Zohar, had just spent thirteen years in a sandy cave, suffering intense bodily afflictions. What is his first act upon reaching freedom? — to inquire if there is anything to rectify. And not to be satisfied with the lip-service of mere inquiry but to take immediate down-to-earth action to correct and repair the fault.

No one can compare themselves to Rabbi Shimon; but the story is part of Torah and Torah is the lesson and guide to life: it follows that each of us can act in a similar spirit, particularly since the great Rabbi Shimon has "broken through" and shown us the way. If doing a material favor to another — no more than merely saving him the bother of a round-about path — is so important, how much more merit is there in showing our brothers the correct spiritual path, saving them from circuitous routes, from "going the wrong (and long) way around."

It Was An Evening Of Contrast: Blitz, Serenity

Molly Resnick remembers the time she was searching for purpose in life. It was at a successful point in her life, being a producer for NBC-TV. She met everybody on the "Who's Who" list.

Leading an exciting life does not necessarily produce a meaningful life. So Molly asked for time off and left for the open wide world. While visiting Rio de Janeiro, she discovered her own roots through Lubavitch in Rio.

On April 1, Ms. Resnick came to Charlotte to share her story, and the story of other women like her.

This was a special project sponsored by Lubavitch of North Carolina in honor of the National Week of the Jewish Woman. The program was arranged by Mariashi Groner.

The audience at the Adams Mark Hotel was treated to a touching slide show produced by Molly Resnick. The show revealed the inner feelings of Chassidic women living in to-

day's world. The women ranged from a professional New York fashion designer to a Lubavitch high school girl.

They described their commitments to Judaism and how it affected their life styles. The designer said that the big test came soon after her decision to observe the Shabbat. She had received a call from one of her clients, Diana Ross, who was scheduling an appointment for Friday night. The designer explained that due to her commitment to the Sabbath, she would be unable to take her. Ross's reaction was full of admiration.

The evening was also reserved for a deep lecture on the serenity of the Shabbos. The discussion was led by Fruma Rosenberg, founder of Jewish Women's University in Pittsburgh, Pa. She also codirects the Chabad House there. Fruma shared her thoughts on the experience of observing Shabbos. She believes in taking one step at a time.



Mariashi Groner

"Shabbos is a time for the family to unite," Fruma said. "You get totally involved in the experience and nothing can interfere."

The atmosphere was one of learning and discussion. The spirit was very positive and enjoyable to the over 75 participants. Delicious cakes and fruits were served before and after the program.

"Purim Blast" Still Resounds

Purim is the most joyous time of the year, and so it was in Charlotte on March 16 when a tremendous Purim blast occurred at the Children's Theatre. The blast lasted about three hours and the affects are still felt today.

Over 350 children and adults crowded in the Children's Theatre to celebrate this joyous holiday. There were such things as face-painting, helium balloons and Hamantaschen. Steaming hot potato knishes with genuine sour pickles and hot dogs really added to the spirit of the day.

The major part of the blast occurred when "Chaim the Magician" took the stage with his Chassidic band. The crowd responded with lots of enthusiasm to his wonderful Purim songs. Many were seen dancing on stage and in their seats. "Chaim the Magician" really had the crowd on the edge of their seats with his original Purim tricks. The group was led by Chaim Fogelman, Yosef Lipsker and Aharon Groner all from Brooklyn, N.Y.

A splendid puppet show was presented by the Lynch Puppettheatre which held the audience captivated with their lovely story.

The event attracted children from as far away as Raleigh, Winston-Salem, Boone and Columbia.

Mariashi Groner presented prizes to the winner of the Purim Basket contest. The beautiful basket was displayed in the lobby for all to see.

Each child received a free Purim kit which contained delicious goodies and a packet of coins which enabled them to observe the Purim holiday in the most beautiful manner.



Rebecca Spangenthal receives first prize in Purim Blast Basket Contest from Mariashi and Rabbi Yossi Groner.



The children enjoyed having their faces painted.



(Back, L to R): Tami, Elliot & Karen Bernat; (front, L To R): Chanit, Erela & Luba Kleinman.



Children and parents dancing as the Chassidic band played.

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