

LUBAVITCH OF N. C.

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Thoughts From The Lubavitcher Rebbe

Tu B'Shvat

By Rabbi Yossi Groner

During this month we celebrate an important holiday, which happens to be essential in Jewish life. This holiday is Tu B'Shvat which corresponds to the fifteenth day of the Hebrew month of Shvat. Tu B'Shvat is the New Year for trees as mentioned in the Talmud.

The reason this holiday is so important is that it is linked to a biblical statement we find in Deuteronomy: "For man is like a tree in the field." Since this is the new year for trees, and people and trees are alike to a certain extent, it is celebrated by man as well.

When we examine the character and function of a tree, we recognize their similarity to people and we conclude that there is much to learn from a tree.

The unique character of a tree is its growth; in fact, growth is the very symbol of a healthy tree. The function of a tree is to produce fruit, and such fruit, which in turn could produce more fruit.

The above mentioned is indeed applicable to humans in a direct and clear way. A person must constantly grow, in a spiritual sense, never to be satisfied with the present level of accomplishment. One should always strive to improve his level of observance

and commitment.

Growth alone, however, is insufficient to a healthy tree or person. A person ought to produce fruit from which others could benefit. Fruits that are sweet and delicious are also a good sign. In a practical manner, fruits translate to good deeds and Mitzvot from which G-d and people benefit.

Ultimately the goal is to produce fruits which could multiply to many more fruits. The Talmud claims that the ultimate of charity is to help the needy become self sufficient, to the level where they could help others. Your one good deed could multiply to an infinite amount of good deeds.

The customs of this day include eating from the fruit of a tree, especially from those trees which are unique to the land of Israel. This symbolizes the practical application of the holiday.

When a person makes a deep resolution to grow in all matters of Torah and its commandments, in personal and public matters, he is bound to succeed. As we find King David's statement in the first chapter of Psalms: "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season; its leaf also shall not wither; whatever he does shall prosper."

Chanukah Production Presented at Preschool

Drama has always been a favorite learning tool at schools. Even more so when drama actually teaches the child authentic history and allows the child to express his/her feelings in the joy of a holiday.

This is what the large audience of students, teachers, parents and guests at the Lubavitch preschool experienced on the second day of Chanukah with a spectacular Chanukah presentation of "Chanukah Players," produced by Chanie Weiss, Judaica teacher at the school.

At the appointed time, the children took their positions in the main room. Dressed in their colorful costumes, some played Chanukah candles, others were Maccabees and some were latke makers. Gradually each group began to sing their assigned parts, accentuating the miracle of Chanukah in a most creative manner. The Maccabees sang about the victory of few over many. The candle players told of their role during each night of Chanukah. The bakers did a stunt by displaying a huge frying pan with latkes hopping in and out of the pan. It was really a sight once all the children joined in the main theme song of Chanukah, all of them giving their best.



The Bakers: (L to R) Rachel Groner, Michal Telem, Gali Beer, Ruthie Warshenbrot.



The Chanukah Candles.

After the performance the children and parents were treated to delicious Chanukah treats, which included a dreidle cake and hot sizzling latkes.

In other Chanukah activities, the Lubavitch preschool children were lucky recipients of "Chanukah Gelt" every day

of Chanukah on school days. This also served as a friendly reminder to children and parents about the joy and responsibilities of this happy holiday. The children also received their own dreidle and were encouraged to kindle their own Menorah.

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Chanukah Family Evening Held

It was an evening of fun and games on the last night of Chanukah. First was the story by Rabbi Yossi Groner about a daring escape from a POW camp with the help of the flickering Chanukah candles. Then came the exciting fun activities.

About 150 parents and children crowded the Chabad House on Tuesday, December 23, to celebrate a Chanukah family night. Rabbi Binyomin Weiss hosted a game show entitled "Dreidlerama." Whoever sang the loudest was chosen to spin the giant size dreidle. There were four large pockets, each marked with one of the four letters from the dreidle. The letter on the pocket, corresponding to the letter on the dreidle, was picked with a question for the lucky child. When answered correctly, a valuable prize was produced.

Chanie Weiss led the children in special Chanukah arts and crafts projects, like Chanukah shrinky dinks, etc. The children were divided into groups according to age. Parents looked on and enjoyed the fun.

The most exciting part of the evening was the kindling of the grand Menorah in front



Large enthusiastic audience at the "Dreidlerama."



Daniel Goldberg (L) and Micah Cooper making Chanukah shrinky dinks.



Rabbi Weiss with giant dreidle.

of the Chabad House. Everyone joined Rabbi Weiss in singing Chanukah songs as he lit all eight candles plus the "Shamesh" on the 12-foot Menorah.

There was plenty of food, traditional Chanukah latkes, hot dogs and many other delights. The last night of Chanukah was a night to remember.

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