

Bringing the Farbrengen Home

1939 GPS

by Tzipah Wertheimer

In July of 2013, I met a beautiful automobile from 1939. Brown down the center with cream colored panels on the sides. This beauty was made for strolling country roads and was not meant to be pushed along the PA Turnpike. It seems she demanded her driver to allow her a rest and some cool water at one of the rest stops for commoners – like Hondas full of Chassidic kids, pretzels and crushed water bottles.

The first thing that I noticed about the prima donna to the right of our SUV was the unsightly GPS suctioned to her pristine windshield – a faux pas, totally out of time and place. It seems that her driver had worked tirelessly for two years to restore her grandeur back in Norway. He then bid her farewell and sent her on a cruise to the States. She was greeted on the shore by her driver and three other friends and will be escorting the party of four across the United States on Rt. 30 – Lincoln Highway, which is apparently the oldest highway in the United States. Her GPS will guide the way as road maps become more and more obsolete.

My children had been collecting road maps at rest stops and my husband had big plans to return home and purchase an atlas, but I must confess, the guiding light of our trip is the bright pink path – otherwise known as “the highlighted route” – on our GPS. Practical, for sure. Would I travel without it? Definitely not. Authentic? I’m not sure.

The problem with the GPS is its myopic scope. The GPS will tell you exactly where to turn, but you’ll never understand the bigger picture of where you are located and more significantly, where you are



headed. It’s great for getting from point A to point B, although sometimes we need more than just making it through the upcoming intersection.

One of the first Chassidic teachings that I learned was the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s commentary on Rashi about cedar trees.

When our forefather Jacob went down to Egypt, he brought along cedar trees, which he planted in Egypt. 210 years later, when the Jews escaped from their bitter servitude, they took along those trees and used them as wood for building the Mishkan (the travelling sanctuary in the desert).

Yaakov’s cedars stood strong and tall throughout the treacherous years of servitude. When the Jewish people were living their miserable existence they would be able to look up at those trees and gain assurance that a day would come when they would be more than free – they would be a strong nation in their own right. The trees were brought down into Egypt so that they could become a source of hope for the future.

I can still picture the dark brown trunks that I envisioned the first time I heard this idea. The cedars quite literally stood tall. They were not a mere metaphor – they were actually used to create the holy mishkan. It’s a phenomenal concept!

The GPS tells you where to turn – the cedar

speaks of life perspective, a broader reality and has confidence in what you can become.

I was recently at a forest of cedars, otherwise known as the Chabad Convention. While the convention touches on personal development, laughter, friendships, professional and intellectual development, the driving force is the simple desire to reach as many Jewish people as possible around the world with ahavat yisroel [love of a fellow Jew]. It’s powerful. It’s humbling and I feel so blessed and fortunate to call such holy people my colleagues.

Each one of us is even more beautiful than a restored 1939 automobile and we need so much more than a GPS on our foreheads! May we all be blessed to find the people in our lives who stand with love and strength and guide us along the path.

Just שו"ת Me A Question

Q: I was eating something and realized that I forgot to say a bracha... what should I do?

A: If one forgot to say the blessing on food and realized when the food is in one’s mouth, then:

1. If the food can be removed from your mouth and not be disgusting, then you should spit it into your hand, recite the bracha, and then eat it.
2. If the food will be disgusting if you spit it out, then you should push it to the side of your mouth, recite the bracha, and continue eating.

continued on other side 🤔

Potato or Yerushalmi?

Kugel Recipe

by Rabbi Shaul Wertheimer

Rabbi Yaakov Yosef of Polnoye once went to visit the Baal Shem Tov, bringing his wife along.

When they returned home, people asked R. Yaakov Yosef's wife what she learned from the Baal Shem Tov's wife.

She replied that she learned that while making the kugel for Shabbos, she should have the same *kavana* (spiritual intent) as the burning of the incense in the Beis HaMikdash.

Perhaps the precedent for this story can be found in the Zohar (Book I, p. 176a):

One day, Rabbi Chizkiya happened upon Rabbi Yosei. As Rabbi Yosei was cooking, some food spilled over the edge of the pot, landing on the coals and going up in smoke. Rabbi Yosei said that this smoke alludes to the smoke of the incense in the Beis HaMikdash; at such a time, anger will not be found in the world, and the Jewish people will not be exiled upon the earth.

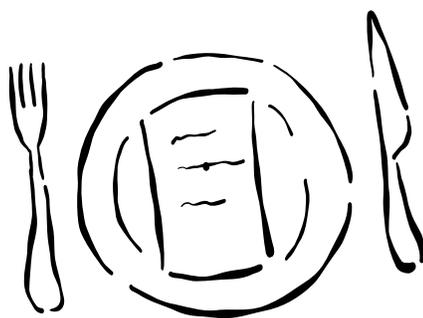
What does all this mean?

I'm not sure, but I would like to point out that the Hebrew word for incense, **קטורת**, means connection in Aramaic.

Sharing a good kugel at the Shabbos table is a part of how we connect to each other and to Hashem. A meal becomes so much more than food consumed; it's a process of elevating ourselves and the world.

Like the ascending smoke of the incense, our shared meals -- accented with words of Torah, song and friendship -- connect the Upper and Lower worlds.

* Based on Migdal Oz, by R. Yehoshua Mondshine, p.246.



Just שׁו"ת continued..

3. If it is liquid, then if you have more of that liquid, you should spit out what's in your mouth. If you don't have more liquid and you really need that drink that is currently in your mouth, you should swallow it and recite the bracha afterwards (but don't say the after-blessing unless it's wine and you drank 3.5oz).

Q: Was Moshe Rabbeinu a Kohen?

A: The "original plan" was that Moshe should be the Kohen Gadol, and Aaron would be a Levi.

However, Aaron became the Kohen Gadol (and his offspring are Kohanim), and Moshe remained a Levi.

Moshe served as the Kohen Gadol for 7 days during the "7 Days of Consecration" (the time when the Mishkan was dedicated). (See Zevachim 102a).

Q: What's a proper way to dispose of tzitzit and the strings that have ripped off?

A: If the strings have already ripped off, they should be placed in *sheimos*.

The garment itself can be disposed.

If the strings have not been detached and you no longer need the entire garment, you can cut them off (don't cut the actual strings/tzitzit, cut part of the garment to which the strings are attached) and place them in *sheimos*. As above, the garment itself can then be disposed.

Karpas Carrots?



The story was told by Rabbi Dovid of Kretschnev, regarding someone who brought a bag of carrots to Rabbi Yissochor Dov of Belz, the Belzer Rebbe, to use for karpas at the Seder. Later, at the time of biur chametz, the Belzer Rebbe instructed that they should bring him the bag of carrots; he proceeded to throw them in to burn with the Chometz. Everyone around was shocked. Why is he burning the carrots? Nobody wanted to question the motives of their Rebbe.

A few hours later, a Jew arrived in almost a panic, and he said that his gentile worker had asked him, "Do you like the carrots? They're so large and beautiful, aren't they?" And she went on to explain that she had watered them with beer. The man shook trembling. Oh no! Beer, of course, is Chametz. That means that these carrots are forbidden on Pesach, and the Rebbe is going to use them, chas v'shalom, at the Seder for his karpas.

The man immediately saddled his horse, going quickly to the town of Belz. When he arrived, they calmed him down. They told him, *Don't worry – the Rebbe burned all the carrots with the chametz.*

"Wow, an open miracle! Incredible! How did the Rebbe know that the carrots were problematic?"

The Rebbe explained: "You think I knew that the carrots had been watered with beer? How would I know such a thing?"

"The one thing I did know," the Rebbe continued, "is that we should not change from the minhagim and practices of our ancestors. And since I saw that someone brought carrots for the karpas, I said to myself, *Who has ever used carrots for karpas before? Is this something our ancestors did? So it must be that something is not right over here.*

"And therefore, I instructed that those carrots should be burned."

The Rebbe from Kretschniv concluded, "Ah, see how keeping and adhering to the practices and customs of our ancestors saves a person from the severe prohibition of Chometz on Pesach."

Sponsored by
Dayan Family
לעילוי נשמת

שמעון בן מאיר
yahrzeit 13 Adar

To sponsor a future issue:
www.qChabad.org/QF

Refuah Shleimah
Monir Malka bat Zaghi