

PROJECT
INSPIRE Presents:

Shabbos INSPIRE.

PARSHA SHEET

Parshas Teruma
פרשת תרומה
2010 / 5770
Volume 1
Issue #3

PURIM The Mitzvah of the Day

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
As we approach the holy holiday of Purim, I reminisce over the past four years of being involved with **Project Inspire**. There are many lessons Hashem has taught us, but I would like to focus on two that relate directly to the essence of Purim.

R' Shlomo Alkabetz, z'l, explains in his commentary on Megilas Esther (Manos Halevi), the reason for the mitzvah of Mishloach Manos. The Megilah says "עם אחד מפוזר ומפורד" – "There is one nation that is scattered and separated amongst the nations". Our sages understood that the root cause of Amalek attacking the Jews was the dissension found among the Jewish people. When the Jewish people are united, no one can overcome us (see Yerushalmi Peah that relates this fact historically to the time of King Achav – even if the Jews are worshiping idols, if they are united they will be invincible). R' Alkabetz explains that based on the above, Mordechai and Esther and the rest of the wise men of that generation instituted the mitzvah that every Jew should give Mishloach Manos on Purim in order to raise the level of Reus (friendship).

There is something very special about the word *reus*. Firstly, it relates to the word Teruah, the sounding of the shofar (see Rashi on the words "ותרועת מלך בו", "the king's friendship is with him"). Secondly, it is the highest level on the list of descriptions of a Chasan and Kallah. "שלום ורעות... אשר ברא ששון ושמחה" אהבה ואחור. The Vilna Gaon's brother explains that *reus* means a broken sound, like the sound of the Teruah. *Reus* describes a level of intense connection, that a Chasan feels broken without his Kallah.



This feeling is what our sages want every one of us to reach on the holiday of Purim; without an intense connection to every other Jew we feel like a broken nation.

Therefore, it is logical that the later Poskim discuss the obligation to give Mishloach Manos not only to someone with whom we are friendly, but also and especially to someone with whom we do not have a great connection, or for that matter, any connection at all.

Those who have been involved with **Project Inspire** can certainly appreciate the feeling of going over to another Jew who might not know much about Purim and giving them a Mishloach Manos. At first there is a feeling of dread and uncertainty, but it is usually followed by a true sense of happiness and fulfillment. I remember the first few times I drove over to a house with a mezuzah, feeling so scared and nervous (especially wearing my silly costume). But when someone would open the door and I said "Happy Purim!", I would see not only their shock, but also that they were so deeply touched. Then all the nervousness and fear transformed into transcendent joy and gratitude to Hashem for opening the doors and our hearts.

I was fondly remembering some stories I had written, and with the

help of the computer search, I found this story in my files. It was written last year, but it still brings tears to my eyes.

"Send your bread upon the water for after many days you will find it" (Koheles)

Today was the 18th of Av. Last year, my son Azarya was accidentally placed in a pool that was above his height. B"H, we were able to spot him early enough and pull him out of the water. He threw up water, etc. but was ok. I accepted upon myself different things to thank Hashem for saving him. This afternoon I was driving home and asking myself how I could really express my gratitude to Hashem, and I realized I must show how much I care about His endangered children. So as pressed as I was for time, I decided I would stop to visit one of my neighbors. I was thinking of stopping

at the house of a doctor whom I had tried to befriend a few months before. Each time I had tried to visit and speak to him, he would basically speak to me through the screen door, being very suspicious. My stomach had the clear signs that I should visit him. (If you're nervous you know it's going to bring good results!) I knocked on the door – he was on the phone and asked that I wait. When he came back, to my surprise, he immediately led me into his house! I was so shocked. We sat and schmoozed for more than an hour. The doctor is brilliant, but has no knowledge about Judaism,
CONTINUED ON BACK...

When he came back, to my surprise, he immediately led me into his house!

Rabbi Yisroel Weinberg

Director,
Kiruv Activism
Department
Project Inspire

(646) 961-4961

yweinberg@
projectinspire.
.com

PROJECT
INSPIRE.
www.kiruv.com

CONTINUED FROM FRONT...

and is a sworn atheist. What I found really cool was that he mentioned in passing that he and his wife enjoyed our cake and wine – I wasn't sure what he meant until I remembered that I had left Mishloach Manos by his door the previous Purim. I even remember thinking to myself then that "This is a waste," – boy was I wrong! I saw that the food really melted his heart. As I was leaving he asked if he could show me something. He surprisingly pulled out two ArtScroll gemaras and asked me what they were. I

...we are truly able to see that even what we normally perceive as "bad" is really good.

first asked where he got them, and he replied that he received them from his friend Steven Hill (the actor who became frum). I explained to him what they were – it happened to be that one of them was Maseches Megilah. I asked him, "Do you want to see something fascinating?,"

and I showed him page 6a, which discusses the prediction of Germany being a descendant of Edom, etc. He was amazed. As I was going out the door he said, "You know, I'm an atheist and I am too old to change my ways." I related to him the beautiful Midrash Tanchuma on Parshas Vayera (see Mishkan Betzalel) which explains that the reason Avraham circumcised himself at the age of 99 was to show us that a person can always change – he liked that. We then worked out that I would stop by again next week to talk some more.

You never know, but you must try!

There is another valuable lesson that Purim is teaching us which relates to the peculiar custom of dressing up, particularly dressing up like Haman or Achashverosh. It is difficult enough to explain why our kids are dressing up like a chasid or a tzadik, etc., but why would we dress up like the evil Haman? The sefarim hakdoshim (see Bilvavi Mishkan, chelek 5 for a fascinating discussion on this topic) explain that the obligation to

get drunk until one cannot KNOW the difference between cursed Haman and blessed Mordechai does not mean that one should fall into a deep stupor, where we are acting silly, like a fool or a street drunkard. The knowledge that we are supposed to reach is that we are truly able to see that even what we normally perceive as "bad" is really good. In truth, we all know that nothing exists without G-d, and since רע (bad) is also emanating from G-d, in its essence it is really good. Since Hashem loves us, even what we normally perceive as bad for us is really good for us.

This is why the numerical value of Ahava (love) equals Echad (one). Purim is a time where we learn to master the ability to look beyond the mask, even the mask of evil, and realize that the source is all good. If we see evil in the world, it's a lesson and a calling to repent and ask for the redemption. It's a message that we should unite, especially as Jews, and stop judging people by the way they look. Even during my kiruv efforts to reach out, I would often find myself making assumptions and drawing conclusions without looking a little deeper. This Purim, try to look deeper and say to yourself, "I am

speaking to a neshama (soul), and not just a guf (body)."

Last year, I was trying to get a mincha minyan for my shul on Rosh Hashanah. I was knocking on the doors of some of the neighboring homes, hoping to find a Jewish neighbor. At one house, a large and muscular man opened the door. He seemed the type to be a bouncer at a local bar, not someone who you would like to see at your local minyan. His arms and trunk were filled with tattoos, and I wanted to turn around and run! He asked me what I wanted, so I explained about the minyan, and asked if he knew if any of the neighbors were Jewish. To my surprise, he said, "I am Jewish. Want proof? Just look at this Star-of-David tattoo!" No, he didn't come to my minyan, but he did make me realize that even though on the outside we seem very different, on the inside every Jew is a holy neshama. ***This Purim, take the opportunity to bring mishloach manos to someone that might be wearing a "different costume", and realize that there is a special neshama that lies within. P!***

**Rabbi Daniel A. Coren
Monsey NY**

ת"וב

How many Shaloch Manos will you get this year?
For most Jews in America, the answer is "ZERO". Or worse, "WHAT ARE SHALOCH MANOS?"

**PROJECT INSPIRE'S PURIM EASY OUTREACH
KIRUV GIFT CAMPAIGN**

WHAT YOU CAN DO.

- Identify a Jew in your daily life who doesn't know what Shaloch Manos are.
- This Purim, be the one to make sure s/he gets one!

HOW WE CAN HELP.

By offering affordable, delicious Shaloch Manos in an educational package with a built-in card. (Inside are parve fudge cookies, hamentashen and a foil-wrapped chocolate.)
Kashrus certification by Star K and CRC.

TO ORDER OR FOR MORE INFO.
Contact Cecilia Feiman
at 646-461-3339
or email: cfeiman@projectinspire.com.

Each gift costs only \$4.00. If you're reaching out to someone far away, we'll even ship it for you for an additional \$2.50.



PROJECT INSPIRE. Project Inspire's tools are highly subsidized. Please only use for kiruv purposes.

**PROJECT
INSPIRE.**
www.kiruv.com

Project Inspire is a grassroots movement inspiring the Jewish people to share the beauty and relevance of our heritage with our fellow Jews.