



*Tzippy
Remembers
When...*

MITZVOS DO GROW ON TREES!

TZIPPY CLAPMAN



When life is difficult (and sometimes it really is), we can focus only on ourselves and our problems, or we can keep ourselves upright and march like soldiers to do as many *mitzvos* as possible. The irony is that helping others helps us, too. It helps us avoid being self-absorbed (what kind of life is that?), and it gives us a higher purpose and happiness. Yes, there is actually a documented Giver's High! Giving releases endorphins that give us a feeling of wellbeing.

Doing *mitzvos* will light up the world during these darkest days of *galus*, and while keeping busy doing good for others, we will lose the fear and anxiety that can haunt us in these difficult times before the most miraculous of times.

Now where do I find all these *mitzvah* trees, filled with ripe, juicy, delicious fruits begging to be picked? I guarantee that all readers of this magazine have a multitude of these trees, right in their homes, alleys, buildings, and hallways. All you have to do is open your eyes and look closely, and you will see so many *mitzvos* you will not know which to choose first.

If you only want to, you will see them every single day of the week, on Shabbos and Yom Tov, on happy days and on sad days. The kind of *mitzvos* I am talking about are never *muktzah*, or *chametz*; they are waiting for you every day and in every place.

Now you may be asking yourself, did Tzippy lose her mind?! Or is she becoming a poet or talking in metaphors?

Allow me to explain.

Wherever you live, you will always find neighbors who are elderly, without relatives nearby, possibly living alone. Do they need a regular visit or phone call to keep them feeling cared for? Could they use a kind word, a *Gut Shabbos* call or visit, or perhaps a Shabbos treat, or even a flower? Very likely, they have an errand that needs to be done. Maybe your children or grandchildren would go over to entertain them if they would enjoy it. If they're over 80, I bet they know "*Oiften Pripitchik*," and "*Ah Sukkeleh Ah Kleine*," and would love to sing along. At any age, they know "*Oseh Shalom*" and "*Shalom Aleichem*"! Invite them to hear *Kiddush* or *Havdalah*; better yet, invite them to eat with you on Shabbos and Yom Tov. (Just in case you think you found an excuse—that you don't remember the words to "*Oiften Pripitchik*"—here they are in the sidebar.)

Years ago, I was walking down the street, and an elderly woman met me and we started talking. She informed me that she had just lost her husband, and they were childless, and she had no siblings or family. I immediately invited her for Shabbos, and for the next ten years she became our adopted bubby. She was not religious when we first met, but gradually over the years she became *shomer Torah umitzvos* and ultimately we were *zocheh* to bring her at an old age to a kosher *taharah*, *levayah*, and *kvurah* with a *minyán*. A few months later I received a call from the *matzeivah* company that they had never received payment to engrave her name and date of death on the monument she now shared with

These organizations are located in Crown Heights.

Call 718.467.1661 to volunteer for the **Chaya Mushka Bikur Cholim** which I had the *zchus* of starting with Phyllis Mintz over 55 years ago!



Call 917.753.1148 to talk to the **Shifra and Puah** organization that cares for new mothers with doula subsidy, breakfasts, baby clothing, cleaning, babysitting, and *kimpetorn heim* subsidy.



Visit **thekindnesshubch.org** to find out more about how you can cook and then pack and deliver, together with other volunteers, food for those in need of meals, especially single parents.



Visit **jnet.org** or email info@jnet.org to set up a weekly *chavrusa* to learn with a fellow Jew over the phone on a regular basis. Don't be surprised if it becomes the highlight of your week!



Visit **cssy.org** to get in touch with Chevra Simchas Shabbos and Yom Tov, founded by Shimshon and Martha Stock with the Rebbe's *brachos* and support, if you know someone who needs help buying food.



Visit **mothersofcrownheights.com** or call 347.770.2009 if you know of a family that needs baby furniture or other kinds of support for mothers.

her predeceased husband. They said that her second cousin who had received her inheritance was not reachable or not willing or not able to send payment. My husband and I simply covered the payment in her memory, which we were very happy to do. (She had offered to put us in her will, but we declined because we didn't want her to think we were being good to her for the money. We wanted her to know we had no ulterior motives.)

You may live in a building with lots of adorable *Yiddishe kinderlach* playing in the hallways or courtyard, especially on Shabbos when they are home and bored, and you may notice one or two who are terrorizing the other kids. Instead of punishing these children, consider that they may need someone to give them the love and attention that their frustrated, exhausted, maybe absentee parents are not capable of giving them. As a neighbor who has time and patience, you may just be the savior and (of course with their parents' permission) have them come over to you to get some extra love and attention from you and your family.

You may notice children or adults who appear unkempt and possibly in tattered or unlaundered clothing! Without embarrassing the family, you may want to offer to lend a hand with housekeeping or get them resources which provide new clothing as needed, or get the children bathed on a regular basis. (Please see list of organizations in sidebar.) You may find out that there is no *parnassah* and help refer them to the organizations that help with food and other necessities.

You may also notice single young women and *bachurim* who are finding it challenging to find the

right *shidduch*. Here is where you may be able to introduce yourself and your family, have them over for a Shabbos meal, get to know more about them, and then think of suggestions. You can share the profile with your extended family and work on it together. Every *shidduch* is compared to the splitting of the Yam Suf, and we ALL need to be proactive in this very crucial *inyan*.

A neighbor just had a new baby, and they may not have any family to give them a hand at this very beautiful but exhausting time. You can assess their needs and get them resources that deal with this great *mitzvah*. *Baruch Hashem* there are organizations that provide meals for the family for one to two weeks, plus cleaning help, and they also help cater a *bris*. There is also an organization that provides baby clothing and baby furniture and even carriages for the new baby.

I know people who are older and find it difficult or impossible to go out most days, but they use the parts of their bodies that are in good working order to do wonderful things for their fellow Yidden. I am thinking of one person in particular (may she be well!) who has a long list of homebound people, names and phone numbers, who need to hear another person's voice, to talk a little, to receive a *Gut Shabbos brachah*, share some good cheer and perhaps hear a special *parshah* story or funny personal experience.

If you can't get out easily, you can still join JNet and learn with someone once a week over the phone or over zoom! The *N'shei Chabad Newsletter* had an article in the recent Pesach issue about JNet. You can read it on the website nsheichabadnewsletter.com, if you

don't remember it. Many people I know who belong to it say it's the highlight of their week. Interesting, right? It looks like they are *giving*, and yet they are receiving much more than they are giving.

If you can get out, and you have the time, there are organizations in our community that will give you names and addresses of homebound people who need visitors, or you may be able and willing to accompany a sick person to the hospital for treatment. Even if you can only go one way, the organization finds another volunteer to escort the patient the other way.

For those who are good cooks and who like to cook, there are organizations looking for volunteers who can help cook and prepare meals for people or families in need.

Mitzvah goreres mitzvah. Each good deed brings about another one, and the more we

accomplish, the more new *mitzvah* opportunities appear.

One of the remarkable things about our Rebbe was that he expressed his frustration about there not being enough time in the day to accomplish all that needs to be done. As long as Hashem returns our *neshamos* to us each day, there is more that we can accomplish. Let's not waste a single second of our precious time on this earth! ❧

TZIPPY CLAPMAN, RN, MS, FNP, lives in Crown Heights with her husband, Rabbi Yehuda Clapman, a certified *sofer*. Formerly a NICU nurse and now a provider in family medicine and women's health in Parcare of Boro Park, Tzippy has written extensively for the N'shei Chabad Newsletter, always with the goal of convincing parents of the supreme importance of creating warm, happy, Yiddishe memories for their children. Tzippy's sense of humor, her sincerity, and her clarity about Yiddishe values have changed lives for the better in the gentlest way possible. This is the 55th installment of "Tzippy Remembers When..." See the ad in this issue for Tzippy's book!

OIFFEN PRIPITCHIK

אויפן פריפעטשיק ברענט א פייערל
און אין שטוב איז הייס
און דער רבי לערנט קליינע קינדערלעך
דעם אלף בית
זאגט זשע קינדערלעך געדענקט
זשע טייערע
וואס איר לערנט דא
זאגט זשע נאך א מאל און טאקע
נאך א מאל
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לערנט קינדערלעך האט ניט מורא
יעדער אנהייב איז שווער
גליקלעך איז דער איד וואס לערנט תורה
וואס דארפן מיר נאך מער
אז איר וועט, קינדערלעך, עלטער ווערן
וועט איר אליין פארשטיין
וויפל אין די אותיות ליגן טרערן
און וויפל געוויין

B"H

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