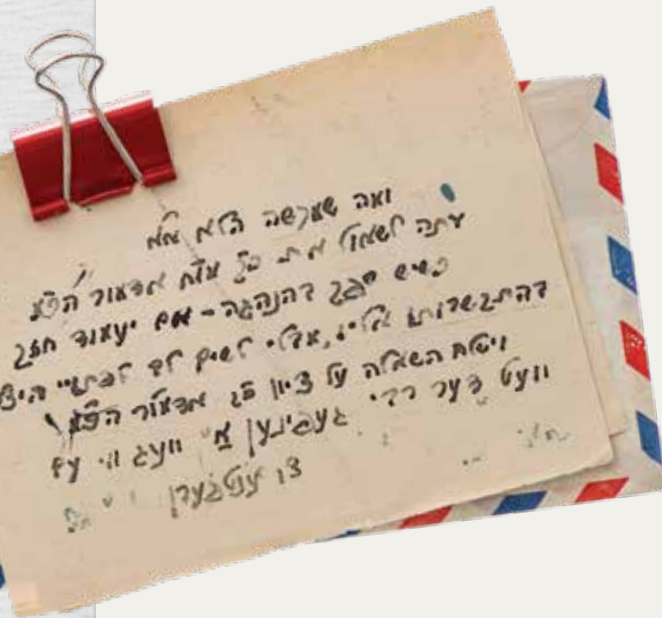




Story

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר

נדפס ע"י ולזכות
הרה"ת ר' דוד בן שיינא
וזוגתו מרת פערל גאלדא בת
לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

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Carly's Group

AS TOLD BY
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(Seine-et-Marne, France)

The first women's trip to the Rebbe from our community was in the winter of 5780. Since then, we've organized multiple women's trips every year. In Kislev of 5782, as I arrived at JFK Airport with a group, I received a WhatsApp voicenote from a woman in our community. She requested that we arrange a special group trip to the Ohel to daven for her cousin Carly, who had a severe, life-threatening illness.

Carly's family was one of the first we connected with at the start of our shlichus in Seine-et-Marne, 23 years ago. Her parents had six children, Baruch Hashem. Carly (her Jewish name is Sarah), their second child, was a young teenager then, and the youngest was barely a year old. A few months after we met them, Carly's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. Two years later, tragically, she passed away, leaving behind a devastated husband and

six young children.

We stood by the family, offering comfort and help in any way we could. Years later, Carly married, and *baruch Hashem* was blessed with four children.

In 5781, Carly was diagnosed with lung cancer. The doctors claimed there was no known cure, and they estimated that she had only six months to live. The shock was overwhelming for her, her husband, her family, and all who knew her.

When her cousin reached out to me to arrange a special trip to the Ohel for her family members to daven on her behalf, I readily agreed. In the meantime, they had found a doctor who was willing to try an experimental treatment, though with no guarantees. It was a last resort.

Two months later, at the end of Shevat, we arranged a trip for seven women to visit the Ohel together with Carly. She was in a very low mood, the atmosphere was heavy, and the davening at the Ohel was incredibly emotional and powerful.

We spent Shabbos in Crown Heights and were hosted for the day meal at the home of Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook. He said that the night before, he had been searching for something meaningful to share with us. At first, he looked through an older issue of the Kfar Chabad magazine, but did not find anything that felt right. In the current issue, he found a letter from the Rebbe addressed to someone battling lung cancer, the same illness Carly had. The Rebbe's words were: "*Why are you so sad? Strengthen your emunah and bitachon in Hashem, and you will return with good news!*"

We were emotionally overwhelmed and moved by the clear *hashgacha pratis*.

When we returned to the Ohel on Sunday, Carly resolved that if she recovered, she would return to thank

the Rebbe for the *brachos*. Indeed, the experimental treatment worked, and although she did not recover from the illness, it stabilized and stopped spreading. The next year, she asked me to arrange a special trip to the Ohel to thank Hashem for the Rebbe's blessing of another year of life and to ask for the merit to return the next year. Carly's group has become an annual tradition, in addition to other women's trips from our community.

In Shevat of 5785, 16 women joined Carly's group. For more than half of them, it was their first time participating, and one of them was Carly's sister-in-law, Stephanie. Although Carly had invited her every year, this was the first time she agreed to come.

Stephanie comes from a very secular family and was never given a Jewish name. As a child, when asked for her Jewish name, she felt embarrassed and claimed her name was Sarah, and everyone knew her as Stephanie Sarah. This was the name written in her *Kesuba*, and only after several years did she tell her husband that she had never been officially called Sarah. They consulted *rabbanim*, who advised that her husband receive an *aliya* at the Torah and officially give her the name Sarah according to Torah tradition.

When Stephanie was seven years old, her grandmother traveled to New York. Someone suggested she visit the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and she was *zoche* to have a *yechidus*—a private audience with the Rebbe. A few days later, she tragically died in a boating accident. The family was devastated. As a young child, Stephanie had felt a deep sadness and couldn't understand what had just happened with the Rebbe. How could her grandmother receive a *bracha* and then pass away so suddenly? She struggled to make sense of it.

As she grew older, her perspective matured, and she



MEMBERS OF THE GROUP
DAVEN IN THE REBBE'S ROOM.



realized that Hashem runs the world and watches over His children, and that His ways are beyond our comprehension. But despite this intellectual understanding, an emotional block remained. Every time Carly invited her to join the trip to the Rebbe, she refused, feeling that she didn't deserve the Rebbe's *brachos* because of her past feelings.

As we were about to enter the Rebbe's *yechidus* room at 770, I paused to explain the significance of the entrance room, where the Rebbe distributed dollars for blessings to so many, and I pointed out the video screen playing videos of people receiving dollars from the Rebbe. Suddenly, Stephanie started crying uncontrollably. I wondered what had triggered her strong emotional reaction, but we had to stay on schedule and continued the visit.

Later that Shabbos, during the meal, Stephanie shared what had happened. The video playing on the screen was of a woman who introduced herself as Stephanie and asked

the Rebbe which Jewish name she should choose. The Rebbe responded with "Sarah!"¹

For Stephanie, it was a moment of profound personal clarity and connection. She felt the Rebbe was affirming the name she had chosen so many years ago, and welcoming her with warmth and understanding. She no longer felt distant or unworthy of the Rebbe's *brachos*. Instead, she felt embraced, accepted, and spiritually uplifted. **T**

1. Living Torah program 328.

YOUR STORY

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