

לזכות  
החיילת בצבאות ה'  
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לרגל יום הולדתה י"ט חשוון

נדפס ע"י הוריה  
הרה"ת ר' חיים אפרים וזוגתו  
מרת חיל' מושקא שיחיו  
גאלדשטיין

# LET HASHEM DO THE “PLANNING”

THE MISTAKENLY TERMED  
“FAMILY PLANNING” IS A  
RECIPE FOR CHAOS

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## THE WEEK THE WORLD WAITED FOR A WOMAN<sup>1</sup>

Sunday passes under the desert sun. Monday goes by, and the people remain encamped amid the endless sand and heat. All Tuesday and Wednesday, the vast nation waits: millions of souls, tents pitched neatly around the Mishkan, flags of the Shevatim fluttering overhead. Thursday comes, Friday and Shabbos pass. Still, the cloud rests. Still, they wait.

And then, finally, after a full week of stillness, the trumpets sound, the cloud lifts, and the signal is given: it's time to move on, to continue toward the Promised Land.

Why the delay?

Far beyond the encampment, apart from her family and her people, a woman sat alone. A *metzora's*, afflicted with leprosy for speaking negatively about another. In her merit, the nation waited. For seven days, the entire camp of Israel, including the holy *Aron* and the *Shechina* itself, paused its march through destiny, all because of her.

What was so extraordinary about this woman that she merited such honor?

The woman in question was Miriam

HaNeviah, and the subject of her misjudged words was her youngest brother, Moshe Rabbeinu, leader of the Jewish people.

How could she make this mistake, speaking ill of another Jew, any Jew, let alone her revered brother?

It had been just a week earlier when Miriam had a conversation with her brother, Aharon HaKohen. She had observed something Moshe did that seemed to her to be a poor choice, as it would prevent future children from being born to him.

Miriam's complaint about her brother was, on some level, justified. She reasoned—and rightfully so—that the Jewish people are sustained by having sons and daughters who observe Torah and *mitzvos*, thereby fortifying and enlivening *Am Yisroel* and hastening the coming of Moshiach.

Knowing especially the unique virtue of her holy brother, the leader of the Jewish people, and of his wife Tziporah, also known for her exceptional *tzidkus*, Miriam wanted to ensure that they would continue to bear children; who, with such special parents, would bring great benefit to all of *Klal Yisroel*.

Her complaint was righteous enough to merit that the entire nation delay its travels

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for a week. Under different circumstances, she would have been entirely correct. Only in this specific case and due to her exalted level was there an element of misjudgment, as she didn't entirely appreciate the loftiness of Moshe Rabbeinu's qualities.



In telling this story to girls graduating high school, the Rebbe points out that only Moshe Rabbeinu himself could have a reason to act differently. For the rest of us, our mission is to fulfill the very first mitzvah in the Torah: to bring more Jewish boys and girls into the world and pave the way for the *geulah*.

This is no peripheral matter, no side aspect of

Yiddishkeit. It is the mitzvah that will bring the *geulah* to the entire Jewish people, the redemption from this bitter *galus*. As the Gemara<sup>2</sup> teaches, Moshiach will not come until all *neshamos* have been brought down into bodies.

This most essential mitzvah was entrusted to Jewish women and girls: to literally bring new Jewish lives into the world, and to "rebirth" them by teaching and raising them. In doing so, we build homes worthy for Hashem to dwell in and raise soldiers of Hashem in large numbers, echoing the *passuk*, "And the people multiplied and became very strong."<sup>3</sup> Along with this sacred mission, Hashem surely grants the energy and resources needed to fulfill it.<sup>4</sup>

## THE MESSAGE OF TRUE MOTHERHOOD

*The translation of this sicha, evidently intended for a wider audience, was edited by the Rebbe and published as a standalone booklet. We have reproduced it here exactly as the Rebbe approved and edited it for publication. Although some of the English may feel dated, the message, of course, remains as relevant as ever. We hope it will be enlightening for the Derher readership and will encourage, as the Rebbe requested, "to take the initiative...to bring the message of true motherhood into every home."*

## THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE שליט"א ON "FAMILY PLANNING"

*(Excerpts - abbreviated and freely translated - from his address to the Nshei uBnos Chabad Convention, 17 Sivan, 5740)*

Children are the most cherished Divine blessing known to mankind. "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28) is the first precept and blessing in the Torah. It teaches us that the world was created for the sake of mankind, and that it is a Divine obligation to marry and raise a family, and bring up the children in accordance with the will of the Creator, so that the world will be populated by a human race worthy and capable of "subduing it" — not only physically and materially, but also spiritually; a humanity committed to the Divine laws of justice and morality and mutual concern, under the tutelage of our Heavenly Father.

A truly blessed home is one that is filled with the joy of children, boys and girls, who are reared in the ways of our first ancestors, Abraham and Sarah, "to follow in the way of G-d, practising righteousness and justice" (Gen. 18:19).

Marriage, is a sacred, Divinely ordained, institution founded on purity and sanctity of family life (*Taharas*

*Hamishpocho*), the observance of which is a precondition of true and lasting happiness, highlighted by the blessing of healthy offspring—healthy both physically and spiritually. Each child that is born into the home represents an additional Divine blessing to the parents and grandparents; there are no unwanted children, and no child is a burden, G-d forbid.

Knowing that children are a blessing from G-d, parents have no reason to be apprehensive about being able to provide for the child. Surely the Giver of the blessing will provide. And "He who feeds and sustains the whole world" is able to take care of the children as well as of the parents.

If economic considerations cannot justify the limitation of a family, what about a home where the relationship between husband and wife is in need of improvement; should they hesitate about increasing the family? We must, again, turn to the Torah for guidance. The Torah teaches us that where a wife, by reason of immodest behavior, arouses the husband's suspicion and jealousy, thus creating a serious disruption of *Sholom Bayis* (harmonious relationship), but

## ADDITIONAL INSIGHT

- » Every Jew must do all they can to fulfill the mitzvah of *pru u'rvu* and not interfere with Hashem's plans for us. This includes making the necessary preparations, even before marriage, both physically and spiritually.<sup>5</sup>
- » When Hashem wished for Noach to delay having children until a later age, He Himself took away Noach's ability to do so. Likewise, if a person truly no longer has the strength to have children, Hashem will intervene.<sup>6</sup>
- » How many children are enough? Some say that since they already have as many children as Yaakov Avinu, who had twelve *Shevatim* and a daughter, it is already enough. Or they seek justification by saying that Shulchan Aruch states they have already fulfilled their obligation of *pru u'rvu*. But even with the strongest *heterim*, and even after having many children, as long as "*mil'u es ha'aretz v'kivshuha*" has not yet been fulfilled in the literal sense, don't mix into Hashem's *cheshbonos*.<sup>7</sup>
- » What about someone who, for whatever reason, is unable to fulfill the mitzvah of *pru u'rvu*? The Friediker Rebbe already addressed this, explaining that "making a Chossid" is also a form of *pru u'rvu* on a spiritual level. By helping another Jew become a Chossid and spreading *Yiddishkeit* throughout the world, one fulfills "*mil'u es ha'aretz v'kivshuha*"—"fill the earth and conquer it."<sup>8</sup>
- » The ultimate fulfillment of *pru u'rvu* will be when Moshiach comes, when birth will take place much more quickly. The Gemara<sup>9</sup> teaches that a woman will give birth every day, and the Tzemach Tzedek<sup>10</sup> explains that the process will take nine hours instead of nine months.<sup>11</sup>

is found innocent of unfaithfulness, she will be rewarded by bearing offspring (Num. 5:29) — as a clear sign of G-d's favor and greatest blessing. For, children, more than anything else, cement the mutual relationship between husband and wife and the peace and harmony in their home.

In reality, any such argument for limiting the size of one's family on grounds of economic, or social considerations, or postponing having children until the relationship attains the highest level, and the like, is contrary to the spirit and letter of the Torah. Only in *most exceptional* cases is the use of certain contraceptives permitted by Jewish Law — and only a very competent Rabbinic authority is qualified to rule on whether such an exceptional situation does in fact exist.

The truth of the matter is, that in the overwhelming majority of cases, all the arguments to justify birth control stem from the same source — the *Yetzer Hora* (evil inclination), that inner tempter, whose function is to distract a man or a woman, from the way of the Torah and test his/her faith in G-d. This wily *Yetzer* works cleverly. He will not attempt to persuade someone to recklessly disregard the Divine laws, but will clothe vice in a garment of virtue, saying that whatever reprehension there may be in denying oneself another child, it will be more than offset by being able to devote more time and attention to worthy good causes, communal causes, and the like.

Aside from the religious aspect, experience has shown that couples who take the path of so-called "family planning" — a catching phrase that appeals to the sense of orderliness and forethought, and purporting to give parents the right to decide if, and when, and how many children they should have, sooner or later discover to their great dismay, that it has been counter-productive in the very areas of its supposed advantages. The actual effects of family planning have been, and are, emotional upsets, frustrations, strained relationship between husband and wife, all of which inevitably taking a toll of ill health. It has caused such couples to seek psychoanalysis, psychotherapy, marriage counselling in an effort, often futile, to straighten matters out. Thus, far from bringing orderliness into family life, family planning has caused disturbances and complications in the normal family affairs, with added financial burdens in doctors' bills, reduced mental and physical efficiency, not to mention the fact that family planning has often proved irreversible, and would-be parents eventually discovered that the blessing of children, or more children, has, alas, eluded them.

It does not require special perception or insight to realize that when the normal physical and spiritual process of married life, as decreed by the Creator and Giver of life, is tampered with, distorted, or altered, the peace of the household is bound to be disturbed. It is folly to attempt to take over G-d's book-keeping and accounting to figure out how many children He is able to care for.



THE PUBLISHED SICHAS OF THE REBBE ON "FAMILY PLANNING."

Addressing the 12th Annual Convention of the Lubavitch Women's Organization, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe Shlita, called for a campaign to educate the Jewish public about the practice of Taharas Hamishpocha (the Torah's law of marital relations). He noted that his topic had been discussed by Rabbis in their sermons, in the schools, at women's groups, synagogues, etc. Noting the openness in recent years with which such matters are being discussed, the Rebbe Shlita noted that in a modest, but far-reaching manner, programs be arranged to present the Torah approach to marital relations. The Rebbe Shlita also spoke out against the practice of family planning. He emphasized that having children is the greatest blessing God has given; a couple. He explained that the public's efforts to control the birth of children directly correspond to the rise of divorce and marital friction present in today's society. Raising children is a source of great pleasure for the family and the limitation of that pleasure brings about untoward consequences on many levels.

ON THE REPORT OF THE 'RESOLUTIONS' TAKEN BY THE WOMEN, WRITTEN THE DAY AFTER THE CONVENTION, IT STATES THAT "THE REBBE SHLITA ALSO SPOKE OUT AGAINST THE PRACTICE OF FAMILY PLANNING."

ON THE WORD 'ALSO', THE REBBE WROTE ?!

ON THE WORDS 'SPOKE OUT', THE REBBE WROTE הרבה יותר מזה [MUCH MORE THAN THAT].

Proponents of family planning have concentrated their main propaganda on the female partner in marriage, since she has the task of childbearing and rearing the infants. I therefore urge every woman not to be swayed by it, but rather reflect on the great, very great Divine blessing and privilege of motherhood, with complete trust in G-d, that following the Divinely ordained way of life brings with it the three-fold blessing of children, life, and sustenance. Children — healthy children, happy children, and as many as G-d will grant; life — a life free of all those complications that unfortunately afflict the homes where family planning is practised; sustenance — in a generous measure in all needs, and more.

No wife and mother needs to feel chagrined at being dubbed "old fashioned," or at odds with modern times and modern culture. What "modern culture"? That which produced the Holocaust? The Holocaust of a million Jewish children? Indeed, the answer is: Every Jewish woman should realize, and do all she can to impress upon others, that it is a sacred duty and eternal merit of every Jewish mother to help replenish this horrible void.

Jewish women have a proud tradition and heritage of being the "Builders of the House of Israel". Even under the most abject conditions of slavery under the Pharaohs, with the horrendous decree of having their boy babies snatched from them and thrown into the Nile, they continued to bear children, and prolifically, even if it meant delivering them in the fields. It is this determination that produced the redeemer Moses, and the Divine hosts, whom he led to freedom: freedom not only from physical slavery, but also spiritual freedom with the receiving of the Torah at Sinai. Moreover, it is the children of that generation, and of all subsequent generations, that G-d accepted as guarantors that the Torah would be kept and cherished.

I further urge you, all the participants of this convention and all Jewish women everywhere, to take the initiative for a world-wide campaign to promote *Taharas Hamishpocha* and to bring the message of true motherhood into every home. Jewish women have historically played a crucial part in the preservation of our people, and they must do the same in the present critical times.

And in the merit of adhering to *G-d's Plan*, all human planning and designs against our people, and against humanity in general, will come to naught, and we can confidently look forward to the fulfillment of the Divine promise, through the mouth of our Prophet Micha (7:15): "As in the days of your exodus from the land of Egypt, I will show you wonders." **T**

1. Adapted from the Sichas to *talmidos hamesaymos*, 5 Tammuz 5740. *Sichos Kodesh* 5740 vol 3., pp. 494–495.
2. *Yevamos* 62a. *Avoda Zara* 5a.
3. *Shemos* 1:20.
4. Adapted from *Motzei Shabbos*, 10 Shevat 5730. *Toras Menachem* vol. 59, pp. 134–135.
5. *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 35, and fn. 63.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 36, and fn. 77.
7. *Yud Gimmel Tishrei* 5744; *Hisvaaduyos* 5744 vol. 1, p. 157.
8. *Yud Gimmel Tishrei* 5744; *Ibid.*, p. 161.
9. *Shabbos* 30b.
10. *Or Hatorah - Yahel Or* p. 619.
11. *Shabbos Beshalach* 5745; *Hisvaaduyos* 5745 vol. 3, p. 1128.

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