

לזכות  
החיילת בצבאות ה'  
ח'י' מושקא תח'י  
לרגל יום הולדתה ל' תמוז

נדפס ע"י הוריה  
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו  
מרת דבורה לאה שיחיו  
טרייטעל

# PRACTICAL HORA'OS

A CLOSER  
LOOK AT  
SOME OF  
THE REBBE'S  
HORA'OS

**SHABBOS:**  
A TIME FOR FAMILY

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A crucial aspect of a Yid's priorities is to ensure not only that his family follows in the path of Torah and mitzvos, but that they do so **as a family**. At a Yud Shevat farbrengen,<sup>1</sup> the Rebbe quoted from the beginning of Parshas Bamidbar, when the Jewish people were being counted: Over and over, the Torah emphasizes that they were counted, “למשפחתם לבית אבתם”—by families following their fathers' houses.” They were counted as family units.

Even when everyone in the family goes to shul, the Rebbe continued, it's possible that the father goes to one shul, the mother to another, the son and daughter to other shuls. They're learning Torah and doing mitzvos, but not as a family. This cannot compare to the heights they could reach as a family unit.

This is true even when everyone in the family is doing the right thing. But when not everyone is on the same page in terms of *ruchnius* — where different generations have different perspectives — this is even more pressing.

In past generations, the Rebbe explained, it happened all too often that the parents were busy working for a living or involved in communal activism, not setting aside sufficient time to guide their children. The children were therefore left to fend for themselves, groping in the dark, and many were lost. We cannot allow that to happen. Instead, the family unit must be strengthened and must be a focus.

One way to do this, the Rebbe advised, is to ensure that on Shabbos, the entire family is together. Throughout the week, each person is busy with their own concerns and



varied schedules — with legitimate reason! But beginning Friday afternoon, as Shabbos nears, the family should gather. All the more so, they should make sure to do so during the Friday night *seudas Shabbos* — when the entire family should be gathered in one room, at one table, discussing *Shabbos'dike* matters.

Doing so creates a healthy family unit on Shabbos, which will translate into a family that is healthy during the week as well.

The key to the successful unity of the family on Shabbos is the *akeres habayis* — the wife and mother of the household. Without her efforts, the family will not be united. She is the one who creates warmth and closeness, creating a true family.

At a farbrengen a few days later,<sup>2</sup> the Rebbe brought up this topic again, delving into the root cause of the dysfunction and lack of focus on the family unit that has become increasingly prevalent.

Some hold that the family unit was only truly viable when the family worked for a living together: the father was a craftsman, laborer or artisan, and the mother and children pitched in to help with the work. Now, when the father often works far from home, the family is fragmented, and the family unit loses its value — or so they believe.

The outcome of this thought process in the Soviet Union was the belief that the parents don't have enough experience with their children to be trusted with choosing their path to education. Instead, from a young age the

children would be taken and entrusted to the state to educate them “properly.” Of course, this resulted in terrible consequences, because they forgot that there's more to a person than making a living: a person has a *neshama*, and the bond between parents and children cannot be replaced.

It is specifically when the family unit is strengthened that the *Shechina* can rest upon the Jewish people as a people in the truest sense of the word — one made up of strong families.

This connects with the mitzvah of lighting Shabbos candles as well: Shabbos candles are lit for the purpose of *shalom bayis*, and this is something we can see clearly. Shabbos is the time when the entire family gathers and converses together. Since weekday matters cannot be spoken about, the family instead discusses the words of Torah that the father heard in shul, the meaning of the davening and so on.

This makes the entire week a *chassidische* week: during the week, the father is busy working and the mother is busy homemaking, but on Shabbos they can focus on their children.

Proper family life is dependent on the family gathering on Shabbos and discussing holy things, ensuring proper conduct throughout the entire week.<sup>3</sup> **T**

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1. 10 Shevat 5734.

2. 15 Shevat, 5734.

3. Shabbos Parshas Haazinu, 5735.