

PRECIOUS GEMS

THE TORAH DESCRIBES HOW WISE MEN CREATED THE OBJECTS USED IN THE MISHKAN AND THE CLOTHING OF THE KOHANIM, INCLUDING THE CHOSHEN. IN THIS ARTICLE WE VISIT R' ARYEH AND GILA GABRIELOV, R' ARYEH IS AN ARTISAN WHO WORKS WITH "GOLD, SILVER, COPPER AND STONES," AND GILA IS A GEMOLOGIST WHO USES GEMS FOR HEALING AND DIAGNOSIS. THEY DESCRIBE MEETING THE REBBE MH" M AND THE LIFE THEY LED PRIOR TO BECOMING INVOLVED IN YIDDISHKEIT. BOTH USE THEIR UNIQUE PROFESSIONS TO SPREAD JUDAISM.

BY CHAIM BAR YITZCHOK



Aryeh and Gila Gabrielov live in Bnei Brak. He is an artist, designer and woodcarver, and she is a doctor and lecturer at Tel Aviv University and New York University, as well as a sought-after guest speaker at other universities in Europe and the United States.

Aryeh was born in little Tel Aviv in 1947. His grandfather was Rav Yisachar Leviov, the rav in the south of Tel Aviv. His parents were traditional, but sent him to public school. At the age of 18 he was drafted and he fought in the Six-Day War.

"We were traveling with a truck laden with explosives when suddenly a shell hit us and the entire vehicle exploded in a series of mighty blasts.

12 people died and only a friend and I were saved. My friend lost his sight and hearing, but I got away with just minor hearing loss.

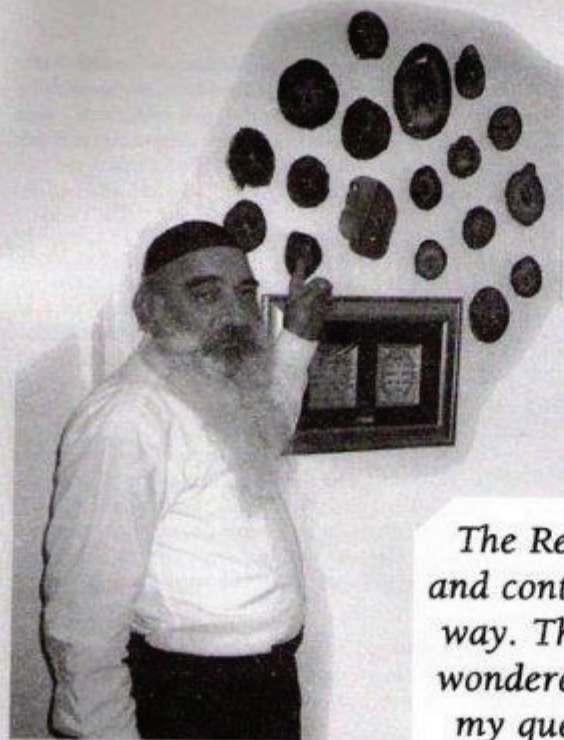
"*Baruch Hashem* I survived, but I was left with deep scars, emotionally and physically. Although I miraculously made it, I didn't understand that it was an act of G-d. That's how far I was from *Yiddishkeit*."

After his army service, Aryeh worked in diamonds. He learned how to polish diamonds professionally and sold them. He quickly became an expert in the field and opened his own business. When the diamond industry crashed, he began dealing in gold jewelry.

Aryeh had grown up in a traditional home. But Gila, his wife, did not grow up with any *Yiddishkeit* whatsoever. After her schooling, she was drafted as a military secretary and journalist (in the army camp) and was assigned coverage of the Israeli troops. After her army service she attended U.C.L.A., where she received her doctorate in gemology.

Since she grew up working in her parents' jewelry store in Tel Aviv, that, along with her studies, enabled her to assist in running her husband's exclusive jewelry company, Argil (for Aryeh and Gila).

"We attended all the important jewelry exhibits in the world, one of which was in Basel, Switzerland,"



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relates Aryeh. "One day, Nesanel (Natti) Shloush, a Lubavitcher Chassid, came to our exhibit. He also worked in jewelry, and he began to convince us not to open our exhibit on Shabbos. We told him that according to the contract we had to open our exhibit every day of the show, and besides, that was the best day for business. Our purpose there was to work, not to play.

"After he left we discussed it. Although we pushed him off, we took his request seriously. We said, 'Okay, we've been working hard, we deserve a little break.' Shabbos came and we didn't open, despite the huge loss that entailed.

"The next day, Natti came by and

asked what had happened on Shabbos. He found it hard to believe we had closed. That day he invited us to New York to photograph our collection and to close a big deal with us." Divine providence was at work, for that visit to New York was the beginning of a significant change in the Gabrielov's lives.

"In the past, we had never had free time whenever we came to New York," they recall. "We always had appointments from morning to night. But this time, since our jewelry was being photographed, we had time to

tour and relax. Natti urged us to join him at 770 to see the Rebbe. We had no particular interest in it, but since we had nothing else to do, we agreed."

Gila: "We arrived at 770 late in the morning. The Rebbe hadn't arrived yet. While we stood near the building discussing what to do, a car stopped and the Rebbe emerged. We identified him immediately from the pictures hanging in our friends' houses.

"The Rebbe walked to the door and glanced at me. Suddenly I felt myself becoming totally overwhelmed with awe... I can't explain what I felt in that moment, but all the experiences and pleasures I had ever had can't compare to the feeling I had then. The Rebbe walked down the path to the courtyard and I followed behind, captivated, until the entrance. The Rebbe turned around and looked at me and there was a huge smile in his eyes. I thought, 'That is the look of an angel of G-d.'"

Aryeh: "She didn't say a word for two hours after that. She just sat and cried."

Aryeh described his first encounter with the Rebbe: "I came there like a wise-guy Israeli. I held out my hand to the Rebbe. Only later I realized the *chutzpa*, but the Rebbe smiled and understood."

Gila: "The entire way back to the hotel I was in shock. Afterwards we got two pictures of the Rebbe from a friend, and when I returned to Eretz Yisroel I put one picture in my office at Tel Aviv University. That picture made a tremendous impact on the people who came in. I remember how one day my friend walked in and innocently told me, 'Today I was walking on Allenby and I saw a picture of your grandfather in a store.' I didn't know what she was talking about, but then I realized she thought the Rebbe was my grandfather."

Even after meeting the Rebbe, no significant change took place in their lives, and the business continued to preoccupy them. But years later an event took place that shook them up.

"It was in the '80s," relates Gila. "Our daughter was studying at a crafts school in Vancouver. We had a lot of *nachas* from her. One day we received a phone call - our daughter had been in a serious car accident and was hospitalized in critical condition. We took the first plane out to the hospital, and seeing her critical state, we felt helpless.

"Suddenly I recalled the Rebbe's gaze and I knew what to do. I called Natti Shloush and begged him to hurry to the Rebbe and ask for a *bracha*. I had the nerve to tell him to tell the Rebbe that he had to save my daughter.

"A few hours later the phone rang and he said that the Rebbe had given his *bracha* and added that she would recover and be fine. The Rebbe's *bracha* revived me. I grabbed on to it like one who finds a great treasure. I repeated the sentence to whoever would listen to me. I know that the doctors and visitors thought I was crazy, but that sentence kept me going. Our daughter went through a difficult time, but in the end, *baruch Hashem*, she recovered.

"This story is connected with another story that happened. While our daughter was recuperating, we once entered her hospital room and saw her looking up a name in the Vancouver telephone book. She said she was looking for the number of a rabbi. She wanted to ask a few questions.

"We were surprised because she had never had any ties with a religious person before. By Divine providence, she found the name of Rabbi Yitzchok Weinberg, the Rebbe's *shaliach* in Vancouver. She contacted him and he began visiting her every day and took

care of all her needs. From the first time we met, we became friends. We had Shabbos meals in his home and saw what Shabbos was all about for the first time.

"We spent two months in Vancouver until she recovered, and learned a lot about Judaism from Rabbi Weinberg and his family. Who would have imagined that years later, the *rav* who was *mekarev* us and

helped us in Vancouver would invite us, as full-fledged Lubavitchers, to be *makarev* and give lectures and workshops at the events he and his wife make!"

Aryeh: "After we returned to Eretz Yisroel, Natti asked whether we had written the Rebbe a thank-you letter. At that moment I realized that when we had a problem we knew who to turn to, but when it all worked out,

SEGULOS AND SUCCESS

"You'd be surprised by the open-mindedness of people," says Gila. "They figure, 'if it won't help, at least it won't hurt,' without understanding that the stones of the *choshen* as well as other precious stones have natural healing properties with which Hashem endowed them. People are helped with problems both large and small, physical and emotional, such as manic depression. You don't need to use chemical lithium when there's a natural lithium agent in the form of a precious stone called turmelin, which is extremely effective."

Children who suffer from painful ear infections don't need antibiotics with all the side effects. They can be treated with four tiny stones taped behind the ear. This gets rid of the pain immediately!

There are two stones that are a terrific aid for concentration and memory, most helpful when studying Gemara. Eight-year-old Yosef Chaim suffered from learning problems and they wanted to take him out of his Talmud Torah and put him in special education. Dr. Gabrielov diagnosed him by using stones. He was given the proper stones to help with his motor skills and with controlling his emotions, and he began improving at school.

A woman in Bnei Brak who hadn't had children in 14 years went to Dr. Gabrielov after protracted and fruitless treatment, to ask for her advice. Dr. Gabrielov remembered what Rabbeinu Bechayai writes about the ruby: "If people would grind it and mix it in food and drink, it would help a great deal for pregnancy. A year went by and Dr. Gabrielov was invited to the *bris*.

A woman from Yerushalayim continually miscarried. *Chazal* write about even *ha'tekuma* in Gemara Shabbos (66b), saying that women can go out with these stones on Shabbos...lest they miscarry - even if she is not pregnant, lest she become pregnant and miscarry." Apparently this stone was used in the time of the Gemara to prevent miscarriage. Dr. Gabrielov gave the woman the proper stone and for the first time in her life, the woman carried her baby to term.

Who says stones can't help with a livelihood? Someone from Yerushalayim was having a hard time with *parnasa* and was looking for ways to improve his situation. The bank threatened to take away his apartment if he couldn't pay the mortgage. *Chazal* say there's a stone called Cat's Eye, about which the Midrash Talpios says that whoever carries it will become wealthy. After Dr. Gabrielov gave him the proper stone for his situation, the man's financial situation improved and the family retained their home.

we didn't even think of a thank-you. Of course we quickly took care of that, and shortly thereafter Rabbi Segal of Afula called us and read us an answer from the Rebbe that contained many *brachos*. He added that the Rebbe also suggested we keep Shabbos. That was a bomb, as far as I was concerned, but it didn't fall on deaf ears."

Gila: "At least Aryeh had some Jewish background, but I had nothing. We were living in Ramat Gan at the time, and I called the Chabad House there and they referred me to Mrs. Bella Rosenberg. I decided to go and listen to her whenever she would give a lecture. I remember that I took her in my car to a class and I asked her whether after the class I would know how to keep Shabbos!"

Aryeh kept up his connection with the Rebbe, slowly edging into a life of *mitzvos*. When he visited his children in New York, he went to 770 many times without someone having to *shlep* him there. "I already understood and appreciated the privilege of being with the Rebbe to receive his guidance," he says.

"One time I arrived at 770 in the middle of a *farbrengen*. It was late at night and I was very tired, but I told myself that I had to speak to the Rebbe no matter what. Since there were no private audiences at the time, I stood in the *shul* and figured out how the Rebbe would walk out and where I could stand so that I could stop him and ask him something.

"It all went according to plan, and at the end of the *farbrengen* the Rebbe began moving towards the exit where I stood. That's when the plan drastically changed and instead of my approaching the Rebbe, I saw the Rebbe standing right near me saying, 'You wanted to ask me something?' I couldn't utter a word.

"I finally stammered and said something like, 'Everything's fine.



I can't explain what I felt in that moment, but all the experiences and pleasures I had ever had can't compare to the feeling I had then.

Baruch Hashem, I have no questions.' The Rebbe smiled and continued on his way. That's when I wondered where all my questions had gone. I guess the power of the Rebbe's presence had answered my questions..."

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I visited Aryeh in his workroom on the second floor of his home. I was amazed to see how delicate and complicated is the work that he does. He designs, engraves, creates with silver, cuts, solders, and then sets precious gems in a delicate arrangement with other fine metals.

He puts tremendous effort into his work.

Those who know Aryeh testify to the rare talent he has with gemstones, and the high quality of work he does with his creations in wood and silver. Aryeh designs and creates unique pieces in his own original style. The walls of his home are the gallery which display his amazing work. Every piece contains verses from the Torah.

Aryeh has an excellent reputation. To date he has done work for several *rabbanim* and *Admurim*, as well as dozens of presidents and heads of state, *Ihavidil*. Many Torah institutions have ordered work from him to beautify their *shuls* and to award their donors.

The couple became more involved in *Yiddishkeit*. They began asking deep questions about the meaning of life and searched for real answers. The road led directly to the world of Torah and Chassidus.

The Gabriellov family moved to Bnei Brak a few years ago. They keep in touch with their friends from the

past and try to be *mekarev* them to *Yiddishkeit* and the light of Chassidus.

Gila's work is also fascinating. She is a doctor of behavioral science and also has a doctorate in gemology. Since she has become religious, she has received an additional doctorate in the field based on Torah sources.

"The stones of the *choshen* as a healing for body and soul" is a field that is warmly accepted at the university. To Gila's surprise, healing with gemstones has many sources in the Gemara, Midrash, and early commentators, and she has arrived at startling conclusions. Today she is one of the few researchers, perhaps the only one in the world, who has found a connection between science and faith in the study of precious stones. She is known as a leading authority in the field of gemstones. In her work she has discovered ancient means of diagnosis and healing. She diagnoses illnesses and physical and spiritual problems, and she prescribes treatments and heals.

"Diagnosing is an important part of working with stones," says Gila. "Through gemstones, a person can discover and clarify his various problems and their causes. Based on the diagnosis, a person can get a body and soul X-ray as to what is going on, and can be helped by properly using the stones."

What sort of problems can be aided through the stones of the *choshen*?

"Many solutions can be found, which are not available through conventional medicine, for problems like pain in the joints, osteoporosis, blood pressure, high stress levels, depression, and many other things."

Gila has so many stories about people being healed at her clinic that even skeptics begin to wonder. There was a *bris* that couldn't take place because the child was jaundice. A

FROM THE SOURCES

Sh'mos 28:17-20: "You shall fill it with a stone mounting, four rows of stone: a row of *odem*, *pltda*, and *barekes* - the one row; the second row: *nophech*, *sapir*, and *yahalom*; the third row: *leshem*, *sh'vo*, and *achlama*; and the fourth row: *tarshish*, *shoham*, and *yashfeh*; set in gold shall they be in their mountings."

The commentator Rabbenu Bechayai writes that every precious stone draws down Heavenly powers. The Midrash (Bereishis Rabba 10:4) says that when rain falls, everything is blessed...even a precious stone senses it and receives power and quality." The commentator Even Ezra (Sh'mos 28:9) says that every power is distributed among each of the stones according to their type.

We find that stones were used in the times of the Mishna and Gemara. The Rashbi says (Bava Basra 16) that Avrohom Avinu had a precious stone hanging from his neck. Any sick person who saw it was healed immediately. When Avrohom passed away, Hashem suspended it in the sun.

friend referred the father to Dr. Gabrielov, who gave him jade to put on the baby. Within hours the bilirubin level had gone down and the *bris* was done on time.

Gila uses this knowledge to spread *Yiddishkeit*. She lectures at Tel Aviv University, proudly and modestly dressed with a head-covering.

What do they think about that at the university?

"I just do it and they accept it just fine."

In the evenings she lectures at various places and tells all her audiences, "There is nothing that Hashem created for no reason. Hashem invested special powers even within the inanimate. Stones have tremendous power."

What do people think about your non-conventional approach?

"They love it. People who would never agree to listening to a talk about Torah accept this as though it were given at Sinai."

In her lectures, Dr. Gabrielov teaches how to heal with gemstones, relating the story of her life, which helps *mekarev* them to *Yiddishkeit*. She

is also popular among the many Chabad Houses in Eretz Yisroel and around the world. She has been invited by many *shluchim* in the U.S. and Canada (like Rabbi Raskin in Montreal, Rabbi Berkowitz in Miami Beach, Rabbi Weinberg in Vancouver, Rabbi Landau in Toronto, and the Chabad House in Calgary), where she lectures about the healing power of the stones of the *choshen*, as well as *emuna*, making a tremendous impression on her audience.

Shluchim invite her to come back. She is preparing to deliver a series of lectures for Rabbi Weinberg and Rabbi Landau again. Experience has shown that many Jews begin coming to the Chabad House as a result of her lectures.

The stones are also connected to *Geula*, as the prophet Yeshaya (54:12) says, "I will set your window [frames] with ruby and [make] your gates of carbuncle stones, and your entire border of precious stones." The commentator, *Kli Zahav*, writes: "There will be precious stones everyone will benefit from; all the stones within your borders will reveal their special properties and will be the precious stones through which everyone will have their wishes fulfilled."