

# IN MEMORY OF NAAMA CHANA MARKOVITS, ע"ה

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**N**AAMA CHANA BAS YEHUDA ISSAR AND DEVORA ITA SHYICHU, a young girl from our community, was tragically taken from us this month, the eleventh day of *Tammuz*. After her passing I had the merit to meet and get to know Naama Chana's parents and an immediate personal connection was made since unfortunately, my family has suffered similar loss with the passing of our dear son, Levi Yitzchak A"H on Shabbos Kodesh, the 4th of Adar, about 17 months ago.

During our conversations Naama's parents asked that I write something to strengthen our community who are all still in shock from the sudden death of their daughter. Truthfully, I am amazed by their frame of mind at this sensitive time to alleviate the pain of those who vicariously feel their personal loss. They have just lost their only daughter and yet the importance of community still weighs heavily on their list of priorities.

It is clear they have given me a difficult task in terms of living up to this huge responsibility in providing words of encouragement. Naama obviously merited having such caring parents and I will try my best to conform and hopefully also give cause for an elevation of Naama Chana's pure soul.

It is customary that when comforting a mourner we say, "May Hashem comfort you amongst the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem." Seemingly, the passing of a four year old girl is a personal tragedy for the family and the community. But the destruction of Zion and Jerusalem, (and its ultimate rebuilding), is a connection to ALL of Israel. So why then do we wish this on the passing of an individual which is seemingly the mourning of a specific individual?

I found an explanation in a letter that the Lubavitcher Rebbe OB"M, wrote to a bereaved father whose son had passed away. The Rebbe explained that we need to know that even when an individual passes away, this in itself is a loss to all Jews because every Jew individually is now missing something and has suffered a loss. So, just as we believe with complete faith in the comforting of Zion and Jerusalem, similarly, we are comforted and believe in the resurrection of the dead and that Naama Chana will soon return and rejoice with all of Am Yisroel.

Furthermore, the Talmud teaches us about R' Meir who was *Midayek b'Shem*; he was able to know the personality of a person through their name. The Zohar stresses that when a child is born, the parents are given the "G-dly foresight" of the specific name that is best connected to their child's soul. The *Or Hachayim* also states that the secret of the name is

the *Neshama* - soul. Therefore, it is no coincidence that Naama Chana had this specific name and I will take the liberty of trying to do justice to the correlation of the spiritual aspect of these specific names.

The simple explanation of the word Naama is *Neimot*, pleasantness. Chana is *chen*, graciousness. It is clear to me from what I have understood about Naama, that she had a pleasantness that was extraordinary with both her family members and

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anyone that came into contact with her. She also had a special gracefulness to her both in the way she spoke and in her mannerisms.

It is known that the life of a Jew is not only a physical life but also a spiritual life, and we may therefore cause a continuation of her dear and precious life with all that pleasantness and gracefulness bring.

It is no coincidence that most of the days of mourning for the Markovits family are during the period of mourning known as *Bein Hameitzarim* (the three weeks) when all of *Am Yisroel* are mourning the destruction of Zion and Jerusalem which came as a result of *Sinas Chinam* (hate for no reason or without cause) as discussed in depth in the *Talmud*. So, in order to bring the redemption we need to behave in a way of *Ahavas Chinam* (limitless love), *Ahavas Yisroel* to each and every person with the sole reason that they are the sons and daughters of our patriarchs and matriarchs and this has to be done with pleasantness and gracefulness similar to the behavior of Naama Chana, A"H.

King Solomon taught us in *Kohelet* (chapter 7 verse 2), "*Vihachai Yiten el Libo*" - and the living should take to heart - We have the capacity to continue the deceased lives mission through our actions. This can be accomplished through any Mitzvah we take upon ourselves in their merit. It is also brought down in the *Rambam* (Laws of *Aveilus* chapter 13, *halacha* 12) that when someone passes away, "those who are alive should check their deeds".

To add to the above, there is also the abbreviations of her name Chana which is *Chet*, *Nun*, and *Hey* which stand for *Challah*, *Nida*, and *Hadlakat Haner*.

**A.** *Challah* not only represents the mitzvah of *challah* but it also represents all the laws relating to Kosher. This means we should try and excel in keeping *Kashrut* to the highest standards possible.

**B.** Concerning *Nida*, we must be careful to observe the laws of "family purity". Though many have learned these laws before marriage, I would suggest that men and women should re-learn these laws with a Rabbi and Rebbetzin respectively, and see if there is room for improvement in their understanding of the practical use of the laws. Along these same lines, the laws of *Tzniut* must be observed carefully as this creates an atmosphere at home of holiness and purity.

**C.** The most important aspect of candle lighting is the idea of *Shalom Bayit*. So when it comes time for candle lighting (and even before), the candles should be ready and the home should resonate with peace and calm. Also the home atmosphere should be based on the principles of Torah without any compromise which makes the home a proper vessel for all blessings, especially peace.

To elevate the precious soul of Naama Chana, and in the merit of her dear family, may we all take upon ourselves - and demand of ourselves - to do something practical and tangible in the community, and may the name Naama Chana be expressed fully with all the potential it was given when she was named.

I hope that through strengthening ourselves in the ideas listed above, we will see the fulfillment of the decree of the *Rambam* (Laws of *Teshuva*, chapter 3, *halacha* 3) that every person needs to see himself as capable of tipping the scales of the entire world for the better by fulfilling even one mitzva, and that this can bring the ultimate redemption and salvation with the coming of *Moshiach*. And only then will the prophecy be fulfilled that "death will be abolished forever and those resting in the earth will wake up and rejoice" (*Yeshayahu* - chapter 26, verse 19) may it be speedily in our days, with Naama Chana bas Yehuda Issar and Devora Ita amongst them.