

## Into the Choshen HaMishpat, shall you place the Urim and Tumim. (28:30)

*Rashi* explains: "The *Shem HaMeforash* (Hashem's 42 or 72 letter Name) was placed inside the folds of the *Choshen*, where, by means of the *Urim* and *Tumim*, the *Choshen* would illuminate its words and bring perfection to its words." [*Urim* literally means "lights"; *Tumim* means "perfection." ] While the illumination is understandable, what does *Rashi* mean that the *Tumim* brought perfection to its words? *Horav Moshe Shternbuch, Shlita*, explains that in order for one to present a query to the *Urim V'Tumim* successfully, the questioner must believe unequivocally that the answer which he will receive is *emes l'amito*, absolute, unimpeachable truth. Furthermore, he must be prepared to do everything that the *Urim V'Tumim* instructed him to do. He must carry out the plan without deviation. This is the only way that he will receive an answer.

The *Rav* notes that this, likewise, applies to one who asks an *eitzah*, seeks counseling from a *tzaddik*. If the supplicant is not prepared to believe and accept everything the *tzaddik* tells him to do – the *tzaddik* will not have the *siyata d'Shmaya* to render the correct reply. This applies equally to the *goral ha'Gra*. [This is a ritual attributed to the *Gaon m'Vilna*, which is conducted randomly by opening a *Chumash* and linking the *pesukim* on the page to the matter at hand. Obviously, there is much more to it. This *goral* has been successfully used by holy righteous men throughout the past generations.]

*Rav Shternbuch* recalls during World War II, after the Nazis invaded and overran France, they would bomb England by day and by night. They were certain that England would soon capitulate and surrender. An opportunity materialized to provide ships to transport children to either America or Canada. Thousands of children were given the opportunity to leave. Unfortunately, a great spiritual risk was involved, since it meant sending children alone to homes that were not Jewish. While they might respect the needs of the Jewish children – how long would this last before the children acculturated and assimilated into the non-Jewish culture? *Rav Shternbuch's* mother wanted to save her children, but at what expense? She turned to the saintly *Horav Eliyahu Lopian, zl*, for counsel. He replied that, on his own, he could not give advice concerning a life and death situation. He was prepared, however, to implement the *goral ha'Gra* in order to resolve her dilemma. He added two contingencies: She must accept the answer he gave without question. Otherwise, he could not guarantee an efficacious response. Second, he said that the *goral* could only be implemented during an *eis ratzon*, a propitious time of good will. Thus, he would only perform the *goral* on Monday or Thursday after he had fasted all day.

For some reason, he was unable to execute the *goral* on Monday. *Rav Shternbuch's* mother begged that he do it immediately, since the ships would be leaving at any time. He replied that he would only achieve the correct response at the proper time. They decided that this would occur the following Thursday. The ship left England earlier, leaving the *Shternbuch* children stranded in England. Tragically, the Nazis torpedoed the ship, and hundreds of children lost their lives. The

saintliness of *Rav Elya* watched over them. *Rav Shternbuch* survived the war and became one of the greatest *poskim*, *halachic* arbiters, and Torah giants of our generation.