



HARAV CHAIM TZVI GOLDZWEIG, ZT”L: REMEMBERING THE “FATHER” OF KASHRUS

Last summer, Klal Yisroel mourned the loss of HaRav Chaim Tzvi ben HaRav Moshe Gershon Goldzweig, acclaimed “father” of modern kashrus supervision, whose decades of service and countless hours on the road have put the OU symbol on thousands of products all over the world.

At the cRc, the loss was personal. A native Chicagoan who shared his time and expertise selflessly, Rabbi Goldzweig was instrumental in shaping the cRc Kashrus Division, guiding its transition from an ad hoc local operation to an industry leader, and was an upstanding member of the cRc Kashruth Commission until his passing.

The following thoughts were expressed by Rabbi Sholem Fishbane, who merited to learn from (and with) Rabbi Goldzweig, whom he viewed as his mentor in kashrus supervision.

It is hard to describe a man as brilliant as Rabbi Goldzweig. He was a *gaon* in Torah, a *wiz* in mechanics, a *maven* in chemicals and ingredients, and a master of humility, hiding his formidable mind behind a finely tuned sense of humor and a disarming approachability.

When Rabbi Goldzweig entered the field of *kashrus* in 1960, precious few products were certified kosher. Recognizing the historic opportunity to be *mezakeh* (give merit to) countless Jews with the *mitzvah* of eating kosher, he dedicated his life to supervising factories large and small. He drove long hours and flew even longer hours, all with the singular goal of providing Jewish people with kosher food.

Klal Yisroel, the beneficiaries of his pioneering work, may never fully appreciate his sacrifice, nor the sacrifice of his family who rarely saw him at home for a weekday dinner or school event.

When Rabbi Goldzweig entered a factory, everyone gravitated toward him. The polished executive, the gruff manager, and the scruffy laborer all saw him as a gentle and kind friend, someone they could trust and respect.

Despite his childlike openness, Rabbi Goldzweig was a perceptive supervisor whose sharp eye spotted potential

problems that others may have overlooked. A colleague of mine recalls entering a plant with Rabbi Goldzweig. With uncanny precision, he pointed to a box sitting at the far end of the warehouse. It turned out to contain non-kosher chicken fat. This took more than a brilliant mind and decades of experience. It was clear that he had a unique *syata diShmaya* (“Divine assistance”).

Why was he *zocheh* (meritorious) to this special *bracha* (blessing)? I believe that it came from another beautiful



October 2, 2014 - cRc Av Beth Din Rabbi Yona Reiss; Rabbi Shmuel Fuerst, *Dayan* of Agudath Israel; and Rabbi Sholem Fishbane with Rabbi Goldzweig at the *seudas preida* when the Goldzweigs moved to Los Angeles.



October 2, 2014 Rabbi Benjamin Shandalov shaking the hand of Rabbi Goldzweig, pictured with Rav Schwartz, *Rosh Beth Din* (seated) and Rabbi Reiss, *Av Beth Din* (standing)

facet of his personality – his utter dedication to the cause.

He was the father of *kashrus* in every sense of the word. The *Gemara* (*Sanhedrin* 105b) tells us that a father is naturally not jealous of the success of his son. Rabbi Goldzweig bore absolutely no jealousy toward the success of competing *kashrus* agencies. Despite his role as an OU *mashgiach*, he gave unstintingly toward the cRc (where he served on the *Kashrus* Commission) and others.

When Rabbi Benjamin Shandalov took the reins of the cRc *Kashrus* Division in 1981, he did so with the understanding that he would have access to Rabbi Goldzweig on a regular basis. This led to the longstanding practice of local *mashgichim* gathering on *motza'ei Shabbos* in the Goldzweig home. There, they would thirstily glean from his encyclopedic knowledge and innovative solutions.

In the era before databases and computer searches, there was Rabbi Goldzweig. He knew everything about everything. When asked about the most obscure ingredient, he could readily share where it was produced, what it con-

tained, and any other pertinent information. He gladly shared this information with anyone, competitors and co-workers alike. He did his work *lishmah*, for the sake of the *mitzvah*. If there were more products becoming kosher, he was happy.

This was the key to his amazing sixth sense. He was working entirely for *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, and *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* worked through him.

As Pesach approaches, his loss will be felt deeply by many in our city. For years, along with Rabbi Boruch Hertz, he and I formed panel of rabbis who answered *shailos* (questions) on the radio before Pesach. In truth, it was great fun. He had a mischievous sense of humor and managed to find something funny in the driest of questions.

To us in the *kashrus* world, he was more than a father, more than a mentor. He was the Rebbe of *Kashrus*, whose every word was true, inspired, and final. Heaven alone knows the extent of his amazing accomplishments. ▲



Rabbi Moshe Elefant, COO, OU Kashrus Department and Rabbi Sholem Fishbane, cRc Kashruth Administrator, consulting with Rabbi Goldzweig on *kashrus* matters