

Announcing a new *SMARTSKROLL PUBLIKATION*

ספר

מאבל ליום טוב

מאת

הר' משה דוב שטארם

Esq. רחל ברכה שטארם

הר' הכלב לאטקע בן כלבא שבוע

FROM MOURNING TO CELEBRATION

Prayers of thanksgiving for the redemption of our Chinese Restaurant
keyed to the Torah portion of the week.

The *Churban* Chinese of 24 *Tishrei* 5765 left our community wallowing in a spiritual vacuum, our yearning chiefly felt in the pit of our stomachs. An immediate need arose for a formalized liturgy for prayers of forgiveness to be recited on the *Yahrzeit* of the tragedy and fund raising for a suitable *Mahzor* began soon after. Initially, the effort was severely hampered because the Young Israel could not find a single *Shabbas* where an appeal was not scheduled. It fell to the tiny Congregation Beth Shloime to lead the way to *Geula*. In a matter of months, our 4 active members were able to raise sufficient funds to purchase a package of pencils and the ***SMARTSKROLL Mahzor for the Day of Atonement for the loss of our Chinese Restaurant*** (<http://www.mikesturm.com/purim/mc.pdf>) was soon published. The response was overwhelming and clearly not ignored On High. This year, 5773, the “sweet savor” of Beef and Broccoli once again wafts through our now worthy community as did the *Ketores* of the First Temple. We have seen realized the words of the Profit Isaiah (53:5) “Fear not, for I am with you, from the East I will bring your offspring and from the West I will gather you.” The S’fas Eggroll interpreted this sentence as referring to the return of blessed gift of Chinese food at Kosher prices. In praise of He who restored a Chinese Restaurant to our community, ***SMARTSKROLL PUBLIKATIONZ*** now presents this monumental volume of essays of praise and thanksgiving, keyed to the Torah portion of the week. Our work is authored by the eminent Av Beis Din of Swinburne Island, Rav Moshe Dov Sturm, Grand Rabbi of Staten Island and translated from *Yeshivish* by his Rebbitzen, Rachel Beracha Sturm, Esq. With the insightful commentary by the *Mechaber* of the *Halachas* of the Appetite, HaRav, HaKelev, Latke ben Kalbah Savoua, the reader will find a weekly framework for prayers of thanksgiving to the Wok of Ages for allowing our community once again to perform the *Mitzva* of eating with Chopstix.

May the *Geula* of Staten Island extend to the entire Jewish world on this Purim 5773

Parshat Bereshis

בראשית

(Gen. 1:11) “Let the Earth sprout vegetation...” A Midrash (Wontonchuma 18) speaks of the many beautiful plants and grasses that presented themselves to Adam. One in particular enchanted him with its special flavor. Said Adam, “This vegetable is truly “a blessing unto me.” לִי בְרָכָה (*beracha li*)” and so he named it, “Broccoli.”

How blessed we are with the resurrection of our Chinese Restaurant. Even its menu bespeaks the blessings of our Creator: Beef with לִי בְרָכָה, Chicken with לִי בְרָכָה, Veal with לִי בְרָכָה, לִי בְרָכָה with Garlic Sauce - even a savory sauce cries out in praise to He who restored our community to its former culinary glory.

One of the great Italian *Rishonim*, the Broccoli Rabe of Cong. Beth Ha Carotene wrote, “The *Hallel* was written for the *Great Geula* of Willowbrook.” Consider, (Ps. 115:11) יִרְאֵי ד' בַּטַּח בַּד' עֶזְרָם וּמִגֹּנָם הוּא (Those who fear G-d, trust in G-d, their trust and shield is He.) Read the word מִגֹּנָם not as *MA GEE NAM* but as *MOO GOO NEM!* In the next paragraph of the *Hallel*, we find, (Ps. 115:17) “Not the dead [Original Chinese Restaurant] can praise G-d... but we [who have seen deliverance through our new Chopshtix] will praise G-d forever!”

Never forget that our deliverance requires our constant participation. The Spare'iben Ezra entreats us to have our Chinese Restaurant in mind during the *Berkat Hamazon* when we say, (Ps. 136:25) “His mercy endures forever.” Remembering our Chinese Restaurant at this most opportune moment, when we “have eaten and are satisfied” serves as our fervent supplication that the Era of the Second Staten Island Chinese Restaurant may endure eternally.

Parshat Noach

נח

(Gen. 11:26) “Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Portoriko...” The Talmud (Tractate General Tsotah 36b) comments on the Seventy Nations: Says Rav Pupu: By the hand of the Creator, a scruffy *shnurrer* was taken from Young Israel lobby and thrust into an Asian land. With outstretched hand, he trod the land pleading, “חֲמִיִּי” (Eighteen kopecs, please!) The land, yet nameless, was ruled by Emperor Fu Manchu and his descendants, the Fu Menshen. When their greatest scholar, Mao'monidies, heard the the *shnurrer* cry, “*Chai na!*” he immediately exclaimed, “What a great name for this country!” And so this great land was named...well, you know!

In the 19th century, Chinese cooking made its way to America. American Jews immediately embraced Chinese food, despite the presence of many non-Kosher ingredients such as non-*yoshon* egg roll wrappers and bean sprouts without a “J and J Produce” label. This level of Kashrut however, was insufficient for the ultra-pious Jewish community of Willowbrook Staten Island, who in the 1970's, refused to support its first two Kosher Pizza places because they did not prepare Glatt-Kosher pizza. For over thirty years Willowbrook prayed for an acceptably Kosher Chinese take-out. During this time the *Vaad of Staten Island* painstakingly learned the *chumrahs* of stir-fry *Halacha* and finally felt competent to *heksher* the Holy First Chinese Restaurant.

Sadly on 24 Tishrei 5765, the Hand of Retribution struck down our First Chinese Restaurant, many say because they served Chow Fun – no truly pious Jew should ever take time out to to have Fun. Each year since, the community of Willowbrook solemnly observed the *Yahrzeit* of our beloved Chinese take-out with prayers of repentance, fasting, charity and a Las Vegas Night. Now we cry no longer (except when we look at the price.) With every bite of Moo Shoo, every morsel of Orange Flavor Chicken we raise our eyes to Heaven in praise of He who this year, brought us ספר מאבל ליום טוב **From Mourning to Celebration.**

The authors, Rav Moshe Sturm, Grandeur Rabbi of Willowbrook, Rebbetzen Rachel Sturm, Esq. and HaRav, HaKelev Latke ben Kalbah Savoua, wish you a Happy Purim and pray for Redemption to come to all Jews who crave a Kosher Chinese restaurant and let us all say, **Chow Mein!**