

The Jewish Weekly

In Loving memory of
Mendy Klein
 ר' מנחם משה ז"ל
 בן ר' נפתלי הירצקא
 נפטר ל"ג בעומר
 י"ח אייר תשע"ח
 ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

Aliyah Funding

By G. Ma Tov, translated by Shaindel Weinbach

Rabbi Meir of Premishlan was such a holy person that many other holy men in their own right came to seek his advice and blessing. A certain tzadik once came to see Rabbi Meir, asking for his blessing because he planned to settle in Eretz Yisrael. Rabbi Meir listened and then said, "And how do you expect to raise the money for this journey?"

"I hope to visit some relatives. When I tell them of my plans, I am sure that they will help me raise the money."

Rabbi Meir was sunk in thought. He seemed disturbed. "Your idea does not appeal to me. You will be wasting months of precious time which could be far better devoted to Torah study. But I see that you are determined to go. Let me suggest something: why don't you stay here with me for some time first? I guarantee to raise the money for your traveling expenses."

The visitor thought it over, then decided to accept the offer. The Rebbe did not dismiss him but told his attendant to show in the next person who was waiting to see him.

A rich man opened the door and was about to enter when suddenly he spied the man already there. He hesitated on the threshold. Still, the attendant had told him to enter. Was there a mistake? He stood there, not knowing whether to advance or retreat. The passing moments seemed like an eternity. Finally Rabbi Meir spoke, telling him to enter.

"I have a story to tell you," he said. Then, turning to the visiting tzadik, he added, "but I would like you to hear it too." Once again facing the rich man he continued, "It has a worthwhile moral that will do both of you good."

"Many years ago there lived a very prosperous Jew who owned much property. But Moshe was a very stingy person, a miser. He never let a person into his home. If a poor man came knocking at the door, begging for something to eat, he would tell him to go to his neighbor, Matisyahu, a worthy, G-d fearing Jew. 'He will feel far more comfortable there,' Moshe would say to himself.

"And, indeed, this was true. While Matisyahu was not a man of means like his wealthy neighbor, still, his family always had food on their table. And there was always room for one person more, no matter how shabby or dirty the visitor. Reb Matisyahu's home and heart were big enough for everyone in need.

"All of the townspeople felt a lot of respect for Matisyahu. He was so good, so kind,...so hospitable! But if you think that they held him in higher esteem than the stingy Moshe, you are wrong. It is human nature to respect a man with money and they all treated Moshe with a special reverence, even though they knew how stingy he was.

"The injustice of this caused turmoil in heaven. The angels came before the heavenly court demanding that Moshe be stripped of his wealth and that these riches be given to none other than Matisyahu the neighbor, who had never denied anyone his help or

hospitality. But before the sentence was carried out, Eliyahu Hanavi (Elijah the Prophet) came before the court and said, 'A person should not be judged just by hearsay. I will descend to earth and give Moshe one last chance. I must see if he really is such a miser.'

"So Eliyahu disguised himself as a poor man and descended to earth. He knocked on Moshe's door. A servant answered. When he saw the poor, ragged, shivering man he shooed him away. 'Quick, be gone! Go, before my master sees you. He is a mean, cruel person. If he finds you here he will throw both of us out of the house.' He tried to slam the door shut but the poor man had his foot in the doorway. 'I won't take anything. Just let me warm up by the stove for a few minutes. Don't you see how cold it is outside?'

"They were still arguing, when Moshe himself arrived. 'What's going on here?' he asked. 'What do you want?' he demanded of the ragged stranger.

"The servant was so terrified at having been caught speaking to a beggar that he was struck dumb with fear. But the stranger showed no awe of the master.

"I was asking if I could come in and warm up. I wanted a small glass of shnaps (strong liquor) for my freezing bones.'

"You must be out of your mind. This is not a hotel, nor a charity hostel!' He turned to his servant saying, 'Throw this man out at once!'

"Even though he had wanted to be kind, the servant was forced to take the poor man by the lapels and turn him out the door. He shut it tightly behind him.

"Eliyahu Hanavi stood outside in the freezing weather, weeping, pleading to be let in just for a few minutes. When he saw that there was no reaction from within, that Moshe had hardened his heart and was ignoring him, he really wept. He was weeping for Moshe's soul.

"Eliyahu returned to the heavenly court. He did not have good news. There was nothing he could say in Moshe's defense. The case rested. Moshe would have to lose his fortune, as had been ruled."

After a brief pause, Rabbi Meir continued his story. He raised his voice for emphasis.

"When I, Meir, heard of this sentence, I rushed forward to defend this Moshe. 'How can one mete out such dire punishment without warning?' I asked the heavenly court. 'I want to warn Moshe,' I declared. I will not let him be trapped like a poor helpless fly in a spider web. Every Jew deserves a second chance! Allow me to be the court's messenger. If Moshe agrees to give four hundred rubles to this righteous Jew standing here for his traveling expenses to Eretz Yisrael, and if he resolves to mend his ways, he will get his second chance. But if, and here he lowered his voice, 'G-d forbid, he ignores this warning and persists in his stingy, evil ways, he will lose his entire fortune and become dependent upon the kindness of others for the rest of his days!'"

Rabbi Meir was silent. Turning to the rich man still standing in the door, he continued, "Moshe is here right now. Let us ask him what he says."

Moshe could not speak. He burst into tears, then fell to the floor in a faint. The Rebbe and the visitor tried to revive him. When he came back to consciousness, he

It Once Happened..

turned to the Rebbe, saying, "You are so right, Rebbe; that is exactly what happened! I sinned! I have been evil! But I will turn over a new leaf, I promise. But please have mercy!"

He reached into his pocket and drew out his purse. He counted out four hundred rubles and gave them to the other man. "Please," he begged, "when you reach Jerusalem, pray for me!"

With the four hundred rubles the tzadik and his family were able to go directly to Eretz Yisrael without delay.

As for Moshe, his home became an open house for all wayfarers, troubled people, and beggars. His reputation as a generous ba'al tzedaka ("charity giver") traveled far and wide, and he used his great wealth to help his less fortunate brethren in every way.

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.

Connection

From the writings & talks of
 Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch

One Wednesday night, on the eve of the Fifteenth of Shevat, my father visited one of these shtetlach, where several hoary chassidim were sitting around together and talking. As my father and I drew nearer, we heard that they were telling stories of the saintly Rabbi Meir of Premishlan.

Among other things, they related that the mikveh (ritual bath) in Rabbi Meir's neighborhood stood at the foot of a steep mountain. When the slippery weather came, everyone had to walk all the way around for fear of slipping on the mountain path and breaking their bones—everyone, that is, apart from Rabbi Meir, who walked down that path whatever the weather, and never slipped.


One icy day, Rabbi Meir set out as usual to take the direct route to the mikveh. Two guests were staying in the area, young men who had come somewhat under the influence of the "Enlightenment" movement. These two young men did not believe in supernatural achievements, and when they saw Rabbi Meir striding downhill with sure steps as if he were on a solidly paved highway, they wanted to demonstrate that they too could negotiate the hazardous path. As soon as Rabbi Meir entered the mikveh building, therefore, they took to the road. After only a few steps they stumbled and slipped, and needed medical treatment for their injuries.

Now one of them was the son of one of Rabbi Meir's close chassidim, and when he was fully healed he mustered the courage to approach the Tzaddik with his question: why was it that no man could cope with that treacherous path, yet the Rebbe never stumbled?

Replied Rabbi Meir: "If a man is bound up on high, he doesn't fall down below. Meir'l is bound up on high, and that is why he can go up and down, even on a slippery hill."

Reprinted from an email of Chabad.org.

Editor's Note: Rebbe Meir of Premishlan ז"ל's 170th Yahrzeit is today, 29th Iyar – May 23 this year



Shabbat Times – Bamidbar

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	6:59	8:16	8:52
Tel Aviv	7:14	8:18	
Haifa	7:07	8:20	
Be'er Sheva	7:15	8:17	



More than Eighty Thousand Welcoming Souls

By Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles

One day in 1850 a chassid called on Rebbe Meir of Premishlan and, as often before, handed him a kvitl note. The Tzadik took the note on which the man's requests were noted, leaned his head on his arms, and was soon deep in thought.

Then he said: "You should know that you stand in serious danger, and are in need of the mercies of Heaven. But I have a way in which you may be saved. Every year I send to our needy brethren in the Holy Land, 702 rubles - the numerical value of the letters that make up the word Shabbat. Half of this sum I send before Pesach, and half before Rosh HaShana. Now Pesach is already approaching, and I haven't a single penny. Provide me with the 351 gold rubles that are needed now, and you will be spared from all evil."

The man trembled in awe.

"Rebbe, of course I want to fulfill your wish," he said, "but I haven't got that amount with me. Let me therefore journey to Lvov to borrow the sum, and I will bring it to you."

"If you haven't got the money," replied the Tzadik, "then your redemption will come through another means. Take a message from me to the Rebbe Yisrael of Ruzhin, who lives in Sadigora, and you will have no need to give me that sum of money."

The chassid agreed at once. In fact he was quite delighted with the opportunity of not only visiting the Tzadik of Ruzhin, but of passing on to him a message from his own Rebbe as well.

[In fact, Reb Meir of Premishlan and Reb Yisrael of Ruzhin were dear friends, although they lived shockingly different lifestyles. The Premishlaner's household, furniture and all, was a picture of dire poverty. No penny was ever allowed to spend the night in his tumbledown cottage: all the large sums that people used to give him he would immediately give away in charity. The Ruzhiner household, on the other hand, was conducted in a manner befitting royalty.

Reb Meir used to make the following comment: "What is the difference between the Tzadik of Ruzhin and me? To him one may apply the words of the Psalmist: 'Treasure and wealth are in his house; his righteousness (or charity) endures forever'. To me the other verse applies: 'He distributed alms freely to the poor; his righteousness (or charity) endures forever'."]

"Very well," said Reb Meir. "Travel straight from here to Sadigora. As soon as you arrive there go directly to the household of Reb Yisrael, and tell his attendants that you have a message from me. You will arrive there on Friday morning, and when you enter the Tzadik's study you shall address him in these words: 'Meir has given you the following order. Our passports have already been signed, giving us free passage through all the borders. It is true that eighty thousand souls are waiting to welcome you, but for Meir many more are waiting - except that Meir's passport expires before yours.'"

The chassid went pale with terror. He begged to be excused, and tried to explain to his Rebbe that he could not undertake a mission such as this. He would be prepared to contribute the sum needed for the poor folk in Israel - so long as he would be freed of this mission. Nothing helped. The Tzadik entreated and directed him to carry out his mission in full.

Much against his will the chassid set out for Sadigora. When he arrived on Friday morning the attendant on duty refused him entry: this was not one of the times at which the Tzadik received callers. But as soon as he said who had dispatched him, the attendant asked his Rebbe, who asked that he be admitted at once.

The chassid approached the Ruzhiner with a kvitl in hand.

"This is not the time for receiving kvitlach," said the Tzadik. "Tell me, therefore, what mission brings you here."

"Before I do that," said the chassid, "I would like to receive your blessing, for my Holy Master in Premishlan had told me that he sees ominous things destined for me. For this reason I would request you to accept my kvitl and to give me your blessing."

Rebbe Yisrael blessed him, and the chassid faithfully passed on Rebbe Meir's message, word for word. All this while the Tzadik of Ruzhin sat motionless in his place, as if the message in question did not involve himself at all.

One Thursday some months later Rebbe Meir said to all the Chassidim who were with him: "Whoever does not want a disturbed Shabbat had better make the journey home."

Though no one understood what he could be alluding to, they all went home. One man only - a Tzadik by the name of Reb Yisrael of Kalisz - requested the permission of Rebbe Meir to stay on for Shabbat.

"If you want to be here," answered the Rebbe, "you may do so. But just remember that Shabbat is - Shabbat."

And on that Shabbat he departed This World.

On Motzei Shabbat, when the Day of Rest was over, and Rebbe Yisrael of Ruzhin was sitting at his table on which stood two lighted candlesticks, one candle suddenly went out. Someone lit it again, but the other one went out.

"There is great darkness in the world," said the Tzadik. And the next day the bitter tidings from Premishlan reached them.

Five months later Rebbe Yisrael of Ruzhin also passed away.

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.

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Our comments on social media can make or break people.

A reflection on the impact that we have on others is given by our sages based on a Passuk in parashat Bamidbar. At the beginning of chapter three the Passuk states 'ואלה תולדות אהרן ומשה' - And these are the generations of Aharon and Moshe', and then the Torah goes on to say in the next Passuk 'ואלה שמות בני אהרן' - and these are the children of Aharon', and then their names are given. Where are the names of the generations of Moshe? They don't appear in this passage. So then why does the opening Passuk say 'ואלה תולדות אהרן ומשה' - And these are the generations of Aharon and Moshe?'

Therefore the Gemara in Masechet Sanhedrin tells us 'כל המלמד בן ילדו - if you teach the children of somebody else Torah it is attributed to you as if you gave birth to them' - because the children of Aharon are presented to us here as being part of the generations of Moshe. In the event that you have educated somebody, you have fashioned their lives - you have made them into what they are, it is as if you have given birth to that child.

The Gemara, later on, in Masechet Sanhedrin actually goes further, and says 'כל המלמד את בן חבירו תורה מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו ילדו - If you teach somebody else's children Torah it is attributed to you as if you made that person', as if you fashioned that person, created that person - meaning it is as if you are Hashem! The scriptural source for that comes from Sefer Bereishit, where we are taught about the impact that Avraham and Sara had on their environment 'את הנפש אשר עשו בחרן' - all their followers are called the souls that they made in Charan - they made those people into the people they became. Therefore, it is as if they are like Hashem Himself.

Now of course, an influence of this magnitude, has the potential to not only be used positively but also Heaven forbid, negatively. If you have inspired a person to direct his or her life in an inappropriate direction, you too are responsible for their deeds. You have given birth to that person and to those deeds, you have made that individual who he or she is! This does not only refer to somebody who stands up in a classroom to teach in a formal capacity - actually, just about everybody is a teacher in some way because you are interacting with people, you are conveying messages to them.

On social media you are publishing something for the world to read, and those who internalize what they have read that message, who take notice of it and then who act upon it - one is responsible for that action.

There is therefore no limit to the extent of the impact we have on others. Heaven forbid, it is possible through our words to break someone, but thankfully we can be just like Hashem, to make someone into the great person that he or she can be.

Let's pray with all our hearts for the recovery of all those who are sick from this crazy pandemic, as well as praying for our soldiers and healthcare professionals, Hatzalah members and Chevra Kadisha members worldwide who go out to protect us, and those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual, sweet, happy Shabbat and Chodesh Tov.

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: NONE

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 159
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1823
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 7393

HAFTORA:
"Machar Chodesh," the special Haftora for a Shabbat whose tomorrow is Rosh Chodesh. (Shmuel I 20:18-42).

Shabbat Mevarchim Chodesh Sivan
Rosh Chodesh - tomorrow, Sunday, May 24, 2020.

יום ירושלים Yom Yerushalayim, Friday, May 22, 2020.

This week we study Chapter 6 of Pirkei Avot

Tuesday, May 26, 3 Sivan, marks the beginning of the שלשת הגולה - the three days before Shavuot, on which the Bnei Yisrael purified themselves before receiving the Torah.

Shavuot is Friday, May 29.

במדבר

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