

The Jewish Weekly

In Loving memory of
Mendy Klein
 ר' מנחם משה ז"ל
 בן ר' נפתלי הירצקא
 נפטר ל"ג בעומר
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Two Orphans and their Wedding Presents

By Rabbi Rafael Nachman Kahn

There once was an innkeeper who employed two assistants, a young boy and girl who happened to be orphans. When they grew a little older the innkeeper thought that it would be a good idea for them to marry each other, a plan to which they both agreed. As they were very poor and lacked the money to make the wedding and to set up their new home, the kindly innkeeper provided them with a large sum to cover their expenses. The young couple took the money and traveled to a nearby town to make their purchases.

As they approached the village they heard a loud commotion. When they asked the local townspeople what was going on, they were told that a particular family had not paid its rent to the poritz (landowner) for quite some time. As a result, the entire family was being led to prison.

The orphaned bride and groom were overcome with pity. They immediately decided to try to ransom the poor family with the money they had been given, which happened to be the exact amount the family owed the poritz. The grateful family was released, and the young couple returned to their own town. They told the innkeeper that robbers had attacked them on the way to the store and had stolen all the money. The innkeeper then gave them more money to replace what had been stolen.

The date for the wedding was set and guests from the surrounding area were invited. On the appointed day, just a short time before the chuppah was to take place, a carriage full of unexpected guests arrived. Inside were several Jews of regal bearing, who were obviously Torah scholars. These were, unbeknownst to anyone, the Baal Shem Tov and some disciples.

Alighting from their carriage the Baal Shem Tov addressed the groom, although without revealing his own personal identity: "Mazal tov to you, nephew. I am your uncle. I came as soon as I heard you were to be married today." One of the Baal Shem Tov's disciples introduced himself as an uncle of the bride. Another explained that he was the groom's cousin. Each one of the guests presented himself as a relative of the orphaned couple, who came to take part in their simcha. They were received with much joy, for no one had known that these relatives existed.

As was the custom of the time, part of the wedding revelry consisted of publicly announcing the gifts that were being bestowed on the newly married couple. When the Baal Shem Tov was asked what he was giving, he replied: "I hereby bequeath to them the poritz's village!" This announcement caused the celebrants to laugh, for everyone thought he must have had nothing to give and merely wanted to amuse the bride and groom. One disciple said he was giving the couple another poritz's mill; a second disciple announced the gift of a different poritz's river, and yet a third said he was giving a fourth poritz's forest as a

gift. Each announcement drew a ripple of laughter from the happy crowd, all of whom was having a merry time at the wedding celebration.

A short time after the wedding the kindly innkeeper suggested that the young couple open their own inn in a neighboring village. Again he generously provided them with financial assistance and helped them set up their own business.

Not long after the inn was opened, the couple was awakened one night by a knock at the door. Standing outside was a gentile peasant, who explained that he was the servant of a very wealthy and powerful landowner. He was sent on a hunting expedition with the landowner's son, and unfortunately they met with an accident. The horse pulling the huge winter carriage had slipped and fallen into a deep ravine, dragging the wagon and the young boy inside down into the gully. The horse and wagon were stuck in the snow - could the young innkeeper please help him rescue the child?

The young man immediately threw on his overcoat, reached for this lantern and shovel, and followed the servant off into the night. Together, the two of them managed to free the horse and carriage. The innkeeper carried the half-frozen child back to his house, changed his clothes, gave him warm food and drink to revive him, and put him to bed.

The next morning, the boy was well enough to go home, accompanied by his father's servant. When they reached the poritz's estate they were given the most joyous welcome, for the landowner had sent out a search party to look for the boy, but had met with no success. Relieved by his son's reappearance the poritz nonetheless called for a doctor to examine the boy, who pronounced him fit, although weakened by the experience. He ordered that the youth rest in bed for a few weeks to regain his strength.

After the boy had totally recovered, the poritz decided to throw a party to celebrate. He invited many of his fellow landowners and sought out the young Jew who had saved his son's life, to invite him to the celebration as well. After the assembled landowners all had more than their share of fine wine, they decided to show their gratitude to the Jew who had been instrumental in the rescue by presenting him with their gifts.

The poritz, the father of the boy, got up and announced that he was giving one of his villages (the very village which had been promised by the Baal Shem Tov) to the astonished young man. Another landowner, not wanting to be outdone, stood up and declared that he would give his mill (the specific mill promised by the Baal Shem Tov's disciple) as a gift. Another presented the young man with the deed to his forest, another, his river. Each gave the young orphan the exact gift that had been promised by one of the mysterious guests who had arrived the day of the wedding. The struggling orphaned couple had now become very rich.

This was, of course, the young couple's just reward for the precious mitzvah of redemption of the prisoners, a deed that the saintly Baal Shem Tov had seen with his holy vision.

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.

It Once Happened..

The Negative Mother-in-Law

By Rabbi Elimelech Biderman

The Yismach Yisrael zt'l of Alexander traveled to the wedding of his brother's son, and remained there for the entire week of Sheva Brachot. On the seventh day, the chattan's mother said suddenly, "I don't like the kallah. I can't even look at her. I don't like her attitude and her ways. I want our son should divorce and return home with us."

The Yismach Yisrael was very upset when he heard this. At the final Sheva Brachot, the Yismach Yisrael spoke, and he revealed a secret of chassidut that many are not aware of.

He said: "How one perceives another person has an effect on that person, and what will become of them. This is because everyone has two sides to their personality - a good side and a negative side - and depending on what you focus on, creates an imprint on their essence.

"If you focus solely on the other's good and you judge him favorably, your positive opinion creates an impact on that person's neshamah. That person will improve because of your positive eye. If you focus on someone's faults it will impact that other person negatively, and they will have a spiritual descent.

Avraham told Sarah (Bereishit 16:6), "Do to her what is good in your eyes." The Targum Yonatan translates it, which can mean, "Fix her with your eyes." Avraham told Sarah that if she isn't happy with Hagar and her attitude, she should transform her by looking at her with a positive eye."

With this Dvar Torah the Yismach Yisrael was hinting to his sister-in-law that if she will focus solely on the good of her new daughter-in-law it will transform her daughter-in-law, and she will be fixed with her eyes, and begin to act in a preferred manner.

The mother-in-law accepted the counsel, and the marriage was saved. It is important for parents and educators to be aware of the influence they have on their charges just by having a positive opinion about them. What they think of, and how they perceive them, affects them.

This is certainly true when a child knows what the adult thinks about them. But even when they don't know, the fact that their parents or educators are thinking positively about them has an influence on the child's soul.

It is in the parents and educators hands to transform the hearts and minds of their charges by viewing them in a positive light. They should tell themselves over and over again, "He is good. He is very special..." because this will cause their natures to turn over and become good.

Reprinted from an email of Torah Wellsprings.



Y-GRAPHICS

Shabbat Times - Chukat

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	7:13	8:31	9:06
Tel Aviv	7:29	8:34	
Haifa	7:22	8:35	
Be'er Sheva	7:29	8:32	



THE UNEXPECTED GIFT

By Rabbi Yeudah Pevzner

One day the phone rang and on the other end of the line a voice said to me. "Hello, do you want a Mitzva Tank as a gift?"

I could not believe my ears. For a second, I thought I was dreaming. I pinched myself to check.

"What do you mean want?" I said, "We'd love to have one!"

A Mitzva Tank, which is actually a Chabad House on wheels, was an initiative taken by Chassidim after the Yom Kippur War, as a creative tool for disseminating the Lubavitcher Rebbe's Mivtzaim (Mitzvah campaigns).

The Rebbe greatly encouraged this initiative and said that these are tanks of holiness and the letters for "tank" in Hebrew are an acronym for Taharot, Nezikin, Kodshim (three tractates of the Mishna). The tanks, said the Rebbe, will be weapons against assimilation.

Since then, many Chabad Houses set themselves a goal of acquiring one of these tanks, decorated with Jewish signs, with which to go on Mivtzaim: Putting on tefillin, checking mezuzot, giving out Shabbat candles, etc.

I very much wanted one of these tanks. I had been trying to rent a mobile home so that I could turn it into a Mitzva Tank in order to prepare the West Village for the Geulah. Whenever I was about to sign a rental contract, it fell through at the last moment.

I didn't understand why there have been so many obstacles, and wondered why, when the goal is so great. Then I immediately remembered, that they say that if there are impediments that's a sign that it's very important. The Sitra Achra (the other side or Yetzer Harah) which interferes with holiness, realizes that there is something great here and tries to prevent it".

I am not the type to give up easily. I tried again and again to get a tank, without success. Then, I got this unbelievable phone call. A tank as a gift!

I asked him how he was able to give us a tank as a gift.

He told me that he had planned a long trip across America that he was going to make in a mobile home that he bought. Unfortunately, shortly before he was going to set out, he fell from a great height and was taken to the hospital. His condition was critical; he had hemorrhaged in his brain.

After a while, he miraculously was no longer in danger but needed a long recovery period before he could leave the hospital for home. Even then, he wasn't in the best of health and they told him that he

could not drive. That is when his grand plan fell through, to his great disappointment.

He wondered what to do about the RV that he had bought. He then decided to donate it so that it would be used for good things.

I then realized why renting a RV had always fallen through. It was because the Rebbe had sent me a tank as a gift!

As soon as I got the tank, I began using it to spread Yiddishkeit. On Sunday, two bar mitzvas were held in the tank for two adults who had never celebrated their bar mitzva. This was the first time they were putting on tefillin.

Excitedly, I called the donor of the tank to tell him about his great merits thanks to his donation.

"I can't believe it" said the man. "Just today, I had an important test to check whether anything inside me was damaged and thank G-d, I'm healthy! I have no doubt that this is because of the donation of the tank and the important work being done with it". This definitely spurred me on in my holy work.

Another special thing happened to me with this tank. One day, I was putting tefillin on with people near the tank on Broadway. My cell phone is usually in my pocket or in the tank.

That day, there was a problem with the loudspeaker on the tank and I had to connect my phone to the sound system so that joyous Chassidic music could be played loudly. So the phone was in the tank and I stood outside and put tefillin on people.

Suddenly, out of nowhere, a homeless man entered the tank and then rushed out. The music instantly stopped and I did not know why, until I figured out that my phone had been stolen.

It wasn't the end of the world. I contacted the cell phone Company so that they could disconnect the phone remotely so the thief could not use it.

When I returned to the tank, I sat down to write to the Rebbe and I put the letter into a volume of Igrot Kodesh. The Rebbe's answer was, "Continue your Mivtzaim activities."

I had a busy day, at the end of which I returned home, tired and happy, having almost forgotten about my phone. I didn't think I would see my phone again.

My wife told me that someone had called about the stolen phone.

I returned the call and was asked to come the next day to the same spot where I had been with the tank that afternoon.

The next day, when I came with the tank, I recognized the man who was sleeping on the pavement. I woke him and asked if he had my phone.

The man pointed at the Rebbe's picture on the tank and asked, "Do you have a connection with that man"?

I told him that I work for him. The man took out the phone and gave it to me and said to me beseechingly, "Just tell him to please stop bothering me".

Reprinted from an article in a Chabad Publication. Editor's Note: the Lubavitcher Rebbe - Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson z"l's, 26th Yahrzeit was Thursday, 3rd Tammuz - June 25th.

In this week's Parshah we learn about the Mei Meriva. Hashem tells Moshe, take the stick, and gather the nation, talk to the rock, in front of their eyes, water will come out of the rock and there will be enough for all to drink. Moshe took the stick as he was told. Moshe and Aharon gathered the people around the rock and said to them "שמעו נא המרים המן הסלע הזה נוציא לכם מים" - Now listen you rebels, from this rock water will come out." Moshe picked up his stick and hit the rock twice, and the water came out and the nation had what to drink. Hashem says to Moshe and Aharon, "because you did not trust Me in front of the nation, therefore you won't be the ones to bring the nation into the land."

Where exactly was the lack of belief in Hashem in the actions of Moshe? Rashi says, that had Moshe spoken to the rock instead of hitting it, it would have created a greater impact. Hashem told him to take the stick. What did Hashem want him to do with the stick asks the Ramban. Remember this is the same Moshe, who used the stick for the ten plagues and Kriat Yam Suf, and all those places when he was told to take the stick, it was to use, why not here?

The Ramban in the fourth perek of Shmona Perakim explains. Moshe was punished for getting angry at Klal Yisrael when he said "שמעו נא המרים" - Now listen, you rebels. Because the people around him, knew that Moshe doesn't just get angry. If Moshe is angry, it is because Hashem is angry. We don't find anywhere to indicate that Hashem was angry. They complained they were thirsty, Hashem said to bring them in front of the rock and tell the rock to give water, and the water will come. Since Moshe gave the nation the false impression that Hashem was angry, he was punished.

Perhaps what Rashi is saying is, had he just spoken to the rock, i.e. the heart of Klal Yisrael at the time, without blasting them or calling them rebels, and just shown them love, dear friends, lets show you how much Hashem loves you, then spoken to the rock and the water would have come and flown, the Kiddush Hashem would have been massive.

Friends, we need to know that the Hashem loves us so much more than we can imagine. No matter how far we have gone, our Father is waiting for us right behind the door, waiting for us to come home, so He can give us a hug and kiss to express the love He has always had for us. Though sometimes, we make ourselves unresponsive of that love, through our actions, Hashem's love for us is infinite, and if you ever hear otherwise, that some individual told you, that Hashem is angry at you, or that Hashem does not love you, they are lying and have no authority to tell you this. כי לא תחפץ במות המת, כי אם בשובו מדרך. ודיה - Hashem does not anticipate the death of a person, he would rather he do Teshuva and live. ועד יום מותו תחכה לו, אם ישבו מיד. Until the day a person dies, Hashem is waiting for him, if he returns, he is immediately accepted. ואמת כי אתה הוא יוצרם, ואתה. - It is true, You have created them and understand their temptations as they are human. Let us pray that we should merit to just come back home where we feel that love of Hashem, without any barriers. He is waiting for us. The electricity is flowing strongly in the outlet, unfortunately, some of us unplug from the outlet, or we strip our wires, but that does not mean that the connection is not there, we just need to replug in and we will feel that flow of energy just as strong as ever.

B'ezrat Hashem this year Shiva Asar B'Tammuz and Tisha B'av will be turned to Chagim when we come home and give our Father back the hug He has been giving us this whole time.

So let's try and replug ourselves in, and let's pray with all our hearts, for the recovery of all the sick from this crazy pandemic, as well as praying for our soldiers and healthcare professionals, and Chevra Kadisha members worldwide, 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 and happy Shabbat.

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 3
MITZVOT ASEH: 3
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 0

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 87
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1245
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 4670

HAFTORA: Shoftim 11:1 - 33

This week we study Chapter 5 (Diaspora and some in Israel study chapter 4) of Pirkei Avot

Yossi

חוקת

Look out for our Halacha and Minhagim Guide for 17 Tammuz and the 3 Weeks coming next week