

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

Clutching the Sleeve

By Rabbi Yaakov Kaidaner

Translated by Menachem Posner

Oh, hers was a bitter lot. Her husband had left her years before. Not that their marriage had been perfect, but still, did he really have to steal away like a common criminal without even telling her that he was leaving, or even granting her a divorce?

No divorce was the worst part of it all. Now she was "chained" to the man who had betrayed her. Without a divorce document, she could not remarry.

She tried looking for him, sending letters to rabbis in communities all over Poland. She even tried consulting the greatest Talmudic scholars, hoping for a "loophole" that would allow her to remarry. But nothing panned out. She had almost resigned herself to the fact that she would be alone for the rest of her life.

As a last resort, she and her brother - her faithful brother, who had supported her even when her friends abandoned her - traveled to the city of Kozhnitz. There lived the great Rebbe, Rabbi Yisrael, who was known far and wide as a wonder-worker.

"Rebbe," she sobbed, "you are my last hope! My husband left me years ago, and I desperately want to move on with my life. Tell me. Please! Where shall I turn?"

The Rebbe listened intently, his large eyes mirroring the raw pain and agony of her words. Then, turning to his assistant, he asked that a pail of water be brought into his study.

"Look into the pail," said the Rebbe to the woman, "and tell me what you see."

"I see a large city," said the incredulous woman. "I can see houses, streets, shops . . ."

"Now look for the marketplace. Can you make it out?" prodded the Rebbe.

"Yes, yes," she replied, "I can see the marketplace. It's lined with shops on either side."

"Now look into the windows of the shops, and tell me what you see."

"Rebbe! I see my husband," she replied excitedly. "He's aged a bit, but I would recognize him anywhere. He is sitting around a table with a group of workers, and they are all sewing. He's putting the finishing touches on an ornate sleeve right now. I've seen him do this dozens of times. You know he was a tailor, my husband . . ."

"Good," said the Rebbe. "Now take your hand and grab the sleeve from him."

As if in a trance, she took her hand and plunged it into the cold water, and withdrew it holding the sleeve, still warm from the iron!

"Good," said the Rebbe. "I want you to hold on to that sleeve. With it and G-d's help, you will get a divorce from your husband."

"Rebbe," pleaded the brother and sister, mystified; "please instruct us. Where should we go next?"

"You can go wherever you'd like," was the Rebbe's cryptic reply.

"But how can we possibly hire a coachman if we don't even know where we wish to travel?" they asked. "Please guide us, Rebbe."

"Go in peace," said the holy man of Kozhnitz. "The good and merciful G-d will prepare everything for you."

They stumbled out of the Rebbe's humble home, and there stood a gentile coachman next to a coach that was harnessed to two fine steeds.

"Can you take us?" they asked the man.

"Yes, get in," he replied without the usual discussion about destinations and fares.

Within minutes they found themselves in a vast and dark forest. They could scarcely see the path, but they had no fear. Clutching the sleeve, the woman had faith in G-d and His messengers.

Suddenly, the two of them found themselves tumbling on the hard ground. "We must have fallen asleep," they said to one another, "and the coachman must have dumped us out of his coach and ridden off."

They stumbled through the forest until they came to the edge of a large city. "This is the city I saw in the bucket," the woman said hopefully to her brother. "Thank G-d, the Rebbe's words are proving to be true. Let's walk through the city until we find the marketplace I saw."

Sure enough, they soon saw the marketplace. "My dear brother," she said, "let's quickly go to the rabbi of this town and ask him how we should best approach this matter. After all, my husband can easily deny having ever been married to me, despite the miracles that have brought us here."

They made their way to the rabbi's home and told him the chain of events that brought them to his city, even showing him the sleeve that they had brought with them.

"Thank G-d," said the rabbi, "He who has not abandoned our generation, and has placed His holy spirit upon the great sage of Kozhnitz.

"I know your husband well," said the rabbi. "He has established himself in our city. He has a wife and children here, and is regarded as an upstanding member of the community. But fear not. Everything will turn out well; just hold on to that sleeve."

The rabbi then told the brother and sister to make themselves comfortable in the small alcove next to his study, and immediately summoned the tailor.

It Once Happened..

"Rabbi," said the tailor quizzically, "is there something you need done? Does your clothing need repair?"

"I just have some questions for you," answered the rabbi. "Do you have a wife?"

"A wife? Of course I do. Everyone knows that I am married and have a family."

"But were you once married before you came here and started your family?"

"Rabbi," said he with a twinge of nervousness, "I was never married before. I came here free as a bird."

"Tell me," said the rabbi, "what were you sewing today?"

"Funny you should ask," he replied, relieved that the conversation had shifted to a less touchy subject. "It was the strangest thing. I was sitting at the table working with my fellow craftsmen. I was holding the sleeve of a coat I was making for a nobleman."

"All of a sudden," said the tailor, "the sleeve flew right out of my hands. We all watched in shock as it flew out of the room, as if it were a kite in the hands of a child. We looked everywhere for that sleeve - I had invested hours of work into it - but it was gone. It was like a miracle had happened."

"And what would you give me if I were to give you back your sleeve?" asked the rabbi.

"There is nothing I could give you," said the tailor, "because there is no way you could possibly give me back that sleeve. It's gone forever."

"Oh, I can do it," said the rabbi, sliding open the door of the alcove. The tailor gazed at the sleeve in amazement.

"Come in," the rabbi bade the woman, "and give your husband what is rightfully his."

The long-suffering woman placed the sleeve on the table, as the tailor gazed at the sleeve in amazement. He was so astonished by its miraculous return that he didn't even notice who had carried it in.

"This is indeed your sleeve," said the rabbi sternly, "but this is your wife!"

The man looked up and fainted.

After he was revived, the husband humbly gave his wife a divorce.

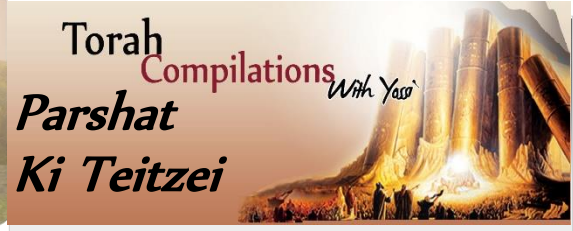
Reprinted from Sippurim Nora'im in Hebrew.



Y-GRAPHICS

Shabbat Times - Ki Teitzei

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	6:32	7:44	8:23
Tel Aviv	6:47	7:46	
Haifa	6:39	7:46	
Be'er Sheva	6:49	7:46	



The Lubavitcher Rebbe's Bottle of Vodka that Seemed To Show He Wasn't Infallible

By Rabbi Tuvia Bolton

Several years ago, thousands of Jews were crowded into the huge shul at 770 Eastern Parkway, the shul of the Chabad Chassidim in Brooklyn, New York, to hear the Lubavitcher Rebbe speak. Not only religious Chassidim but all sorts of Jews were there and even those who didn't understand a word of Yiddish were hypnotized by the awesomeness of the man.

Mr. Dovid Asulin came to see for himself and, although he didn't exactly believe all the stories, he was glad he came. He had been born in Morocco. There everyone believed in Tzadikim; unique Jews who were very G-dly. So all this wasn't completely new to him. In fact since he moved to France twenty years ago he had almost forgotten about the Tzadikim and now he felt at home. This was his first visit to America, he was going for business, and his friends told him that if he wanted an unforgettable experience he had to see the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

And it was just as they said. After about two hours of listening, with ten minute pauses between topics, people began to stand up and form lines to the Rebbe which eventually became one line, and when they reached him he would give each one a bottle of vodka.

Mr. Asulin didn't understand that the bottles were only for those people that were making simchas (such as weddings or bar mitzvahs) throughout the world, he thought that everyone was entitled to a bottle. So he got in line as well!

When it came his turn and he was face to face with the Rebbe, the Rebbe smiled, gave him a large bottle and said in French "This is for the wedding."

He was amazed; how did the Rebbe know he spoke French! That was astounding, it just verified all the other stories he had heard. The Rebbe certainly had uncanny powers of perception! But one thing for sure...it also proved he wasn't infallible. Dovid had been happily married for years! What he said about the wedding was clearly wrong.

A week later he returned to France, unpacked, and when he showed his wife the bottle, they had a good laugh over what the Rebbe said. But when he visited his local Chabad house (Rabbi Chaim Malul in Cartel, France) the rabbi didn't agree with Dovid's conclusion, and assured him that in time he would see that it was no mistake.

"The rabbi is certainly a bit out of it..." David laughed to himself, "But he is a nice man, very dedicated. So what if the Rebbe made a little mistake" and Dovid promptly forgot the entire incident.

Months later he happened to open the cabinet where he had put the bottle and it reminded him of his experience in Brooklyn. "You know" he said to his wife, "It's a shame that this should just remain unused. Let's make a party, invite all our friends and family and give them all

to drink a L'chaim. It will be fun for everyone and a blessing as well. And I'm sure they will all come."

They began making plans. At first they thought of making the party at their home, but at the last moment decided it would be less trouble to move it to the small wedding hall of the local Synagogue (in Rancee near Paris), and to have it catered by a local kosher restaurant.

The day of the party arrived and the guests began arriving in good spirits. A small band played happy music and people were exchanging greetings and handshakes. But as they were sitting down to begin the meal, the rabbi of the synagogue entered the room with a smile, looked around for Dovid and when he found him took him aside and whispered something in his ear.

Dovid turned to the crowd and said: "The rabbi needs nine men to join him to make a minyan. It will only take a few minutes, who wants to come? I'm going to go."

In no time he had the required number following the rabbi to the next room for what they thought would be prayer (Jews are supposed to pray in groups of at least ten adult males) but they were in for a surprise.

In the room stood a bride and groom alone; it was a wedding! In fifteen minutes the entire ceremony was over. Dovid and the other men shook the groom's hand, wished the newlyweds 'Mazal Tov' and gingerly asked where the wedding meal would be (they also were wondering why there were no guests but were embarrassed to ask).

When the groom answered that no meal had been arranged, Dovid joyously announced that they were invited to his. Dovid's informal party suddenly became a real wedding party. The band played merrily and the men began to dance on one side of the room with the groom, while the women on the other side danced with the bride.

When the dancing finished they all sat down to eat. Then in the middle of the meal Dovid stood, held up the Rebbe's bottle, cleared his throat for silence and told the story of the Rebbe saying it was "For the Wedding!"

Now he understood that the Rebbe wasn't mistaken at all.

"What!" exclaimed the bride. "That bottle is from the Lubavitcher Rebbe for my wedding?" and she burst into tears; she was weeping from sheer joy. When she calmed down she explained.

This was her second marriage. Her first ended in a bitter divorce that, coupled with the fact that she decided to be an observant Jew, resulted in a major rift in her family and none of her relatives showed up. No one came from her husband's side either, but his reason was more simple. He converted to Judaism and simply had no family.

She felt so uncertain and alone, then someone suggested she write a letter to the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

A few weeks ago she did it and in the letter she asked for some sign that the marriage would succeed.

"And here you are with the Rebbe's blessing!!"

Reprinted from an email of Yeshiva Ohr Tzamin, www.ohrtzamin.org.



A teacher's mistake once caused a national catastrophe.

This week's Parasha of Ki Teitzei gives us the Mitzvah, 'תמחה את זכר עמלק מתחת השמים לא תשכח', 'Wipe out all remembrance of the Amalekites from under the heavens – never forget'.

A nice commentary I read from The Chief Rabbi of England and the Commonwealth, Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis says, that in the days of King David, as is recorded in the first book of Kings (Chapter 11), he asked Yoav, the Chief of Staff of his army, to fight against the Amalekites. And it took Yoav six months in order to be victorious. At the end of those six months, he came back to King David and triumphantly he declared, "I have killed all the males of Amalek".

King David said to Yoav, "are you not aware of the Mitzvah in the Torah where Hashem commands us to wipe out the entire people of Amalek – they are the ultimate evil that can ever be on the face of the earth, their very presence will plague good people for the rest of time".

And Yoav said, "but the Torah only talks about the males". King David says, "where?"

As is recorded in the Gemarah, Mesechet Bava Batra (21b), Yoav pointed to the verse in our Parasha, '... תמחה את זכר'. King David said, "זכר 'זכר', meaning 'males', rather 'זכר', the 'remembrance' of them all".

Yoav was stunned. Suddenly he realised that when at school, he was taught incorrectly. He went out and he sought to find his teacher. Eventually, he located him. By now, the teacher was an old man. Yoav came into his home with a Sefer Torah, he opened it up, he pointed to the verse and he said to the teacher "read it!". And the teacher read, '... תמחה את זכר זכר' – and not 'זכר', the 'males' and not the 'remembrance' – different vowel points.

And Yoav was so angry, he took out his sword and he had to be restrained from actually killing his teacher.

The fact that the Talmud reveals the story to us is a message all about the quality of education. Of course, we must have as many schools as possible, and we must populate them with as many pupils as possible. But together with that, we should never compromise on the standard of Jewish education.

When a teacher or a parent makes a mistake, I don't think it's going to cause a national calamity, but nonetheless, we have a responsibility to always get it right.

So let's try to always get it right 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 for 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 and sweet Shabbat.

Yossi

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 74
MITZVOT ASEH: 27
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 47

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 110
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1582
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 5856

HAFTORA:

Yeshayahu 54:1- 10 (רני עקרה) (this is the fifth of seven Haftorot, [the Seven Haftorot of Consolation] that precede Rosh Hashanah).

This week we study Chapter 2 (Diaspora and some in Israel study chapters 1 and 2) of Pirkei Avot



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