

The Jewish Weekly

Special Guest Treatment

By Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev once set out on a journey, accompanied by two attendants. On Friday they arrived at a small town, and, since the Tzaddik made a point of never traveling on Friday afternoon, they decided to stay there for Shabbat.

It so happened that over the months before their arrival, this town had been visited by a series of charlatans. These resourceful gentlemen had provided themselves with the retinue of two attendants expected of a visiting Tzaddik and, through carefully studied theatricals, had managed to dupe the simple folk who lived there. On each occasion, the crooks swiftly slipped away, with even more resources than when they had come. The abused townspeople therefore suspected Reb Levi Yitzchak too, and, to make matters worse, one of their number claimed to have once seen the Rabbi of Berditchev, and his memory told him that the newcomer did not resemble him in the slightest. His cronies therefore decided that in the synagogue the next day, on Shabbat, they would call this scoundrel to the Reading of the Torah and then and there abuse him and beat him up so heartily that he would be lucky to get out of their town alive.

The two attendants of the Tzaddik smelled something wrong, and begged him to set out in time to reach some other township before Shabbat. But the Rebbe was insistent: he had never traveled on Friday afternoon, and he was not going to relax his principles now.

Dusk settled over the township, and Reb Levi Yitzchak made his way to the local shul in order to join the congregation in welcoming Shabbat. Unable to contain the rapture and ecstasy that engulfed him in prayer, he prayed as he always did - with violent gesticulations and the voice of one possessed. Having made up their minds about him, before they had as much as seen him, the congregants sarcastically marveled: "Now this one is a real expert at making an impression on people!"

The unusual sounds emanating from the shul were overheard by a gentile who was driving by the doorway on his way through the township to a village some miles away. He asked the nearest Jew: "What's all the noise about?"

"We've got some character visiting our town," said the local Jew, "who says he is the rabbi of Berditchev. That's him shouting his way through the prayers."

The gentile continued on his way until he arrived at the village of his destination. At his lodging place, the Jewish innkeeper asked, "What news did you pick up on the way?"

"I passed through a little town," replied the new arrival, "and heard the weirdest screaming coming out of the synagogue. So I asked one of

your people what it was all about, and he said they have some rabbi visiting them, and that's how he prays."

"Any idea where the rabbi is from?" asked the innkeeper.

"Berditchev, I think they said," answered the gentile.

Now this conversation was heard by the melamed (teacher) who was employed by the innkeeper as a resident tutor for his children. The melamed had once met the Tzaddik, and his heart was instantly kindled with a desire to see him again. If it was true that Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev was actually in the neighboring town, how could he not go to visit him! There was no choice: he would set out at once.

After he had already made some headway, a thought that crossed his mind suddenly stopped him in his tracks: "What on earth am I doing? Tonight is Shabbat! It's absolutely impossible to walk the whole distance to that town without exceeding the permissible Shabbat limits. How can I keep going and desecrate Shabbat?"

So he stood, giving this objection weighty consideration. He finally decided: "No matter what! If the Tzaddik is so near, I just have to go ahead and greet him!"

After having gone a little further he stopped again.

"Come now," he told himself, "you're acquiring a mitzvah by paying with a sin. Where does it say you're allowed to desecrate Shabbat in order to be able to earn the mitzvah of paying your respects to your Rebbe?"

He stood stock still, thought it through again from all angles, and then decided: "Onward!"

And so right through the night he strode and stopped, stopped and strode, until by daybreak he was on the outskirts of the town. By the time he found the synagogue, the congregation was ready for the Reading of the Torah, and, as he peered eagerly through the window, he saw the Tzaddik himself, making his way towards the Torah. Just as the long awaited moment arrived, for the irate townsfolk to teach their newest impostor a lesson he would never forget, the back door burst open, and the teacher from the nearby village, who was known by them to be some kind of scholar, ran in a frenzy up to the Tzaddik, and wailed: "Rebbe! Oy, Rebbe! I've desecrated the Shabbat!"

"Not so, my son," the Tzaddik assured him quietly, "you have not desecrated the Shabbat, because your walking here can truly be called a life-saving mission. If you had not arrived at this very moment, my life would have been in real danger."

The townsfolk, overhearing, realized that they had suspected an innocent man, - and that this time a genuine Tzaddik was in their midst. They hastily begged his forgiveness.

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.

It Once Happened...

Preferable to Silver

By Rabbi Shmuel Lew

My father-in-law, Zalman Jaffe (of blessed memory), born in Manchester, UK, was a proud descendent of Chabad Chassidim. He and my mother-in-law Roselyn were introduced to the [Lubavitcher] Rebbe in the early days of the Rebbe's leadership. Eventually this acquaintance developed into a personal friendship, and each year my in-laws merited regular visits, especially during Shavuot, which were recorded and published annually in my father-in-law's popular diary, the "My Encounter with the Rebbe" series.

It was during one of those annual visits that my wife Hindy got a peek at the Rebbe's ornate silver menorah. In spite of its size and beauty, the Rebbe didn't use it. He preferred a small and simple one for the mitzvah of lighting Chanukah candles.

My father-in-law, remembering the sight at farbrengens (Chassidic gatherings) of the Rebbe being handed a plain bottle of wine in a paper bag for the "kos shel brachah" (the cup of blessing from which the Rebbe would personally distribute small cups of wine to whomever filed by him), decided that something more fitting was needed. Therefore, for the Rebbe's 80th birthday - 11 Nissan 5742 (4 days before Passover 1982) he wanted to present the Rebbe, on behalf of the Manchester community, with a lovely silver decanter.

But worried the Rebbe wouldn't use it, my father-in-law first wrote to the Rebbetzin (the Rebbe's wife), explaining his community's desire to honor the Rebbe with an impressive gift, but his own reluctance to do something if it would be against the Rebbe's wishes. He asked the Rebbetzin to consult with her husband and promised to call a week later for the answer.

A week passed, then, courageously, my father-in-law phoned the Rebbetzin.

The Rebbetzin replied that the Rebbe had not reacted. However, a day or so later, my father-in-law received a letter from the Rebbe, at the end of which lay the Rebbe's response.

P.S. Mrs. Schneerson told me about the request about the bottle and the paper bag. Forgive me, but while we will accept the thought as though it actually happened, I prefer a bottle with a paper bag more than a beautiful, silver bottle.

The Rebbe added, "There are many reasons, but I'll tell you one of them that I hope you will understand. I do not want to make a barrier between my way of life and the way of life of those around me".

He gave an example: "I have many silver etrog boxes, but I prefer to use a cardboard box."

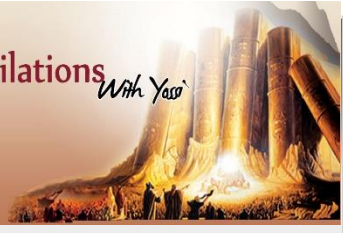
Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.



Y-GRAPHICS

Shabbat Times - Bereishit

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	5:30	6:41	7:21
Tel Aviv	5:45	6:43	
Haifa	5:35	6:42	
Be'er Sheva	5:48	6:44	



The Divine Providence of not having a Cell Phone

By Rabbi Elimelech Biederman

Chazal praise some amora'im and tana'im for not walking four amot without Torah or without wearing tefillin.

Regarding most people of our generation, it can be said, "They don't walk four amot without their cell phone." Who doesn't have a cell phone, and who doesn't have it on them every moment of the day?

Believe it or not, there are still some people among us who don't own a cell phone. Reb Baruch Buxbaum of Boro Park is such a person. He doesn't have a cell phone, for he found it greatly disturbs his Torah and Tefillah. But, he admits, not owning a cell phone in this generation isn't a simple matter, because it is so hard for others to contact him.

His business partner is Reb Sender from Williamsburg. Reb Baruch calls Reb Sender every morning from his landline house phone, and they make up where and when they will meet that day.

One morning, Reb Baruch called his business partner, Reb Sender: "I will be on 42nd St. in Manhattan in an hour... Can we meet there?"

"Certainly, but tell me, did you finally buy a cell phone? I see a cell phone number on the screen..."

Reb Baruch replied, "I didn't buy a new cell phone, and, as you know, I'm not planning to do so. I borrowed the phone from Reb Mendel Rosenberg, the head of Chessed Shel Emet (the equivalent of ZAKA in Israel and Misaskim in the UK)"

An hour later, Reb Sender was standing on the corner of 42nd St., as they arranged, but Reb Baruch wasn't there. (He couldn't call him, since Reb Baruch didn't own a phone.) Reb Sender thought that maybe he misunderstood where to meet him, so he walked around the street a little bit, hoping to find him.

Suddenly, he heard someone calling, "Rabbi! Rabbi!" Reb Sender turned and saw an older woman, hurrying towards him. She told him that she needs advice. She said, "My husband is Jewish – I'm not, and now he is in the hospital. The doctors don't expect him to live. Can I ask the doctors to pull the plug and let him die?"

Reb Sender told her that it was forbidden to kill even an old, dying person.

She said, "My husband used to be religious, but he became irreligious, and he married me. He committed many white-collar crimes and was in prison for several years. It was in prison that he began to do teshuvah. He had permission to go home for the holidays, but he told me that in prison there was a succah and the Lulav and Etrog. He

wouldn't have them at home, so he preferred to remain in prison. A few weeks ago, he suffered a stroke, and he's been in the hospital since then. The doctors say he won't make it.

"What should I do when he dies? Can I call a priest and bury him in a Christian cemetery?" "Don't do that," Reb Sender told her. "He should be buried as a Jew."

"But I don't know who to contact. I don't know how to arrange these matters."

Reb Sender remembered that he had the phone number of Reb Mendel Rosenberg, the head of Chessed Shel Emet, since Reb Baruch had just called him from that number. He gave her the number and told her that when her husband is near his death, she should contact them.

She was grateful for all the advice she received.

Soon afterward, Reb Sender found Reb Baruch waiting at a different corner. (They had indeed misunderstood each other.)

This story shows Hashgachah Pratit. If Reb Sender hadn't been waiting for Reb Baruch, he wouldn't have met this woman, and she wouldn't have known how to deal with her dying husband. She may have even pulled the plug and killed him before his time, and then had him buried in a Christian cemetery. Also, by Hashem's Providence, Reb Sender had Chessed Shel Emet's phone number on him that day, because Reb Baruch called him from that phone. All these steps were arranged by Hashem, to help this baal teshuvah.

We can see from this story how precious teshuvah is to Hashem. Many miracles and Hashgachah Pratit happened, so this baal teshuvah could live out his life and then have a proper Jewish burial.

Perhaps it was also in the merit of Succah and the Lulav and Etrog that this Yid kept, at the end of his life, with Mesirat Nefesh (Self Sacrifice). He refused a leave from prison to keep the mitzvot of Succah and the Lulav and Etrog.

There's a Tefillah (prayer) to say when going into the Succah: זכנו לשבת בסתר צל כנפך בעת, "May I merit to dwell and be protected under the shade of Your wings when the time comes for me to depart this world." Thus, the mitzvah of Succah may have helped that Jew be buried according to Halachah so that he could reside in Heaven under Hashem's wings.

A Tefillah said for the Lulav and Etrog is: בזכות מצוות ארבעה מינים אלו תאריך אפי' שנוכה לשוב אליך, "In the merit of the four minim, hold off Your anger until I merit to repent before You." This mitzvah may have helped him die at his right time and complete his teshuvah (which wouldn't have happened if she would have allowed the doctors to pull the plug).

Reprinted from an email of Torah Wellsprings.



This week's Parsha as we know, discusses the way Hashem formed this beautiful Universe. When the Torah tells us about the creation of man, it reads as follows - ויאמר אלהים נעשה אדם בצלמנו כדמותנו - and Hashem said, let us create man, in our image we will create him." This is odd, who was Hashem talking to? There is an understanding that Hashem was talking to the מלאכים - angels. I never liked this understanding, because why would Hashem need to discuss this with the angels, after all they don't understand us. Humans were created with free choice, angels don't have free choice, they simply carry out Hashem's will, there is no temptations, there is no laziness etc. So exactly how they had an opinion is beyond me. This year I merited to see a new understanding.

The Ohr Hachaim explains this as follows, we know as we read during Selichot, that there are 13 מידות - Attributes of Hashem, along with the Attribute of דין - Judgement, we have חסד - Kindness, רחמנות - Compassion, אמת - Truth, סולח - Forgiveness etc. All of these מידות - Attributes which make up the Essence of Hashem, came together and said "let's create man in our image" meaning, that we are going to create a man, by infusing him with our image, by infusing him with a bit of each of our energies. Yet this being, called a human, will have free will, "וירד" he can choose a path and go down very deep, like the fish at the bottom of the sea. At the same time he can fly high in the sky and reach heights like the birds. With that "ויפה באפיו נשמת חיים" He breathed into his nostrils the "Soul of Life".

Friends, we have all been created with tremendous talents and energy in this world, for the very mission each of us was brought into this world to accomplish. We all have this energy in our makeup, it is the raw ingredients of what makes us who we are. Let us all tap into that energy, and use it for what it was put there for, to help us soar to the highest of heights, fulfilling the purpose we were created to do, to live in the "image" of Hashem and strive to emulate His ways.

Through this we will strengthen our relationship with our Creator and 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 Shabbat and Chodesh Tov.

Yossi

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 1
MITZVOT ASEH: 1
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 0

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 146
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1931
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 7235

HAFTORA:

The special Haftora for a Shabbat whose tomorrow is Rosh Chodesh: מחר חודש

Shmuel Alef 120:18-42

Shabbat Mevarchim Chodesh MarCheshvan
Rosh Chodesh - Sunday & Monday - October 18 - 19

בראשית

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