

The Jewish Weekly

The Case of the Lost Valise

By Rabbi Shmuel Butman

The Rebbe Rashab (Rabbi Sholom DovBer Schneersohn, zt"l, 1860-1920) once was travelling to Petersburg by train. When he reached his destination he claimed all of his baggage except one valise which was nowhere to be found. His attendants searched the entire train station, but that suitcase which contained several important books was lost.

Several days later the Rebbe was visited by a young man named Reb Avrohom Eliahu Guarary. The young man was newly married and had invested his considerable dowry in a business which had unfortunately failed. Now, he was left with only one thousand rubles and had come to seek the Rebbe's advice.

No sooner had he entered the room when the Rebbe said, "Ah, Reb Avrohom Eliahu will bring me back my suitcase from the train station!" He handed the young man the claim and sent him off, unaware that the case was missing.

The train station was deserted and Reb Avrohom stopped to have a smoke. He noticed a man watching him and staring at his pack of cigarettes. "Do you smoke?" Reb Avrohom asked the man.

"Yes," he replied.

The young chassid offered the gentile a cigarette and they were sharing a smoke together when the man asked, "What are you doing here at such an hour?"

Reb Avrohom replied affably, "There is a rabbi by the name of Schneersohn visiting, and I am here to pick up his suitcase."

"That's a handy coincidence. You see, I'm the warehouse manager. Why don't you give me your baggage ticket and let me see if I can find your case."

The manager went into the large warehouse and instructed his workers to bring him the suitcase, but to his consternation, they couldn't find it. He ordered them to check each piece of baggage carefully. Sure enough, they found the valise lying behind a large crate. Reb Avrohom thanked the man profusely and returned to the Rebbe, valise in hand.

The Rebbe was very happy to receive his lost suitcase and said to the young man, "I am now in your debt. How can I help you?"

Reb Avrohom poured out his whole story of the ten thousand ruble dowry which he had lost in an unsuccessful business. Now he had only one thousand rubles and wanted to know how to make the most of it. The Rebbe

advised him, "Go to the city of Koritz and there G-d will provide you with a livelihood. Just make sure that you bring along food for the trip."

Reb Avrohom returned to his wife and told her what the Rebbe had said. His wife baked and cooked all kinds of delicious foods for his journey, and they chatted excitedly about the success they faithfully anticipated.

Reb Avrohom arrived in Koritz on a hot, humid day. He decided to cool off by taking a swim in the Black Sea. After the refreshing swim, he sat down on the beach to eat some of the delicious food his wife had packed. He noticed another Jew nearby and Reb Avrohom, being a friendly type, offered him some of his wife's food. They struck up a conversation and Avrohom told the stranger the story of his failed business and the blessing he had received from the Rebbe.

"I would like to help you," said the man. "Come back here tomorrow. I'm going to bring a friend with me. Perhaps between the two of us, we can figure out a way to help you out. But don't forget to bring along some of your wife's great cooking," the man added, smiling.

The next day the three men met and concluded a deal. "I have decided to sell you my entire shipment of cigarette papers for a thousand rubles," said the friend. "I hope you are successful and make a big profit from it." They shook hands, and went their separate ways. Reb Avrohom headed for the town of Kremenchug to claim his goods. That town was a center of cigarette manufacture and there he would be able to sell the papers. He headed for the factory of a certain Reb Tzvi and made him a proposal: "I will sell you my entire stock for ten thousand rubles," he said.

"What! The paper is worth two thousand at the very most."

"No," replied Reb Avrohom, "I want to recover my whole loss. I will take ten thousand or nothing." And it was impossible to move him.

Reb Tzvi listened to the young man's whole story and decided he would go to Koritz himself and try to make a similar purchase. But when he arrived he was disappointed to find that there was no cigarette paper to be had. In fact, there was a severe shortage in the whole city. The seller had given Reb Avrohom his last lot for the thousand rubles out of pity for the young man.

Reb Tzvi lost no time. He telegraphed Reb Avrohom, requesting him not to sell his supply of cigarette papers to anyone else. He then rushed back to Kremenchug and paid the asking price of ten thousand rubles.

Having recovered his loss, Reb Avrohom returned to the Rebbe for further instructions.

"But, Reb Avrohom Eliahu," said the Rebbe this time, "my debt to you is already repaid!"

Reprinted from an email of L'Chaim Weekly.

It Once Happened...

The Young Man Who Cared about His In-Laws

By Rabbi Elimelech Biderman

A young man was engaged, and his future in-laws promised him precious presents and a dowry. They kept their promise down to the last penny.

His first Shabbat as a married man, in his in-laws home, he saw something was amiss. The candlesticks were made of clay, the beds were broken, and in general, he saw several signs of poverty in his in-laws home.

He asked his wife about that. She told him that her parents sold all their home utensils, and went into debt too, to cover the cost of the dowry they promised.

He replied, "We can't let matters be this way." On Motzei Shabbat he returned the dowry and gifts. He couldn't have his wife light Shabbat candles in silver candlesticks, while his in-laws had clay ones. He couldn't sleep well, knowing his in-laws were suffering because of him.

On Sunday morning, he borrowed twenty thousand rubles from a friend. He used a thousand rubles to buy utensils for his home, and he went to the market to see where he could invest the rest of the money. A big merchant offered him a lucrative business opportunity for ten thousand rubles. He invested and became wealthy in a short time.


Because of his wealth, when his children became of age, he made prestigious shidduchim. One of his mechutanim was Reb Shimon Sofer zt"l (son of the Chatam Sofer zt"l).

At that wedding, in Cracow, a rav asked him how he earned his wealth, and how he merited this prestigious shidduch with Reb Shimon Sofer. He told him his story. He explained that he was willing to forgo his own pleasure and wealth so his in-laws don't suffer. And just as he did kindness with them, Hashem performed kindness to him, and he earned wealth and wonderful shidduchim.


This story is brought down in Mishnat Yosef (Brachot 8.) who concludes, "It isn't my way to write stories in this sefer but this story has an important message that the wise can learn from.

They should be cautious with the money and vessels of their father-in-law, and more importantly, they should be cautious with their father-in-law's heart. And if you will act with kindness, you will receive many brachot from Above."

Reprinted from an email of Torah Wellsprings.



Shabbat Times - Parshat Ki Tisa

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
 Jerusalem	5:04	6:17	6:58
Tel Aviv	5:19	6:19	
Haifa	5:10	6:18	
Be'er Sheva	5:22	6:20	



Angelic Pleasure
By Rabbi Levi Goldstein

The saintly Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk once recovered from a life-threatening illness. When his recovery was complete, his closest disciples mustered their courage to ask him what he had seen while hovering between life and death.

The Rebbe said that he would tell one thing he learned:

As I walked in the Garden of Eden, I saw among the most honored souls a familiar face. He looked very much like Mottel the Bookbinder. To be sure, Mottel was a G-d-fearing Jew, an honest, hard-working bookbinder, but he was otherwise an undistinguished ordinary Jew, not even much of a Torah scholar.

"Is it truly you, Reb Mottel?" I asked the soul as I approached him.

"Yes, it is I," called out Reb Mottel happily.

"But how did you get to this exalted place?" I asked Reb Mottel quite innocently.

"When I was brought before the Heavenly Court, I was asked the usual questions. I had to admit that, regrettably, I had studied very little Torah. I didn't have much of a head for it. Besides, we were very poor, so I had to find a way of earning money to help my parents support the family. I was apprenticed, at an early age, to a bookbinder, I explained to the Court...

"They began the weighing of my mitzvot (commandments) and sins. On the right side of the scale, angels began putting all my good deeds. Then they pushed the scale down to make it weightier, saying this was for the joy and sincerity with which I performed the mitzvot. "But then other angels came forward and began to load my sins and misdeeds on the left scale. I watched with horror as my sins were added up. Most of the sins were truly not serious, and they happened because of my ignorance. But, though they were small, they were adding up dangerously, till they tipped the scale.

"As I stood there before the Heavenly Court, trembling and ashamed, an angel suddenly appeared with a worn-out siddur (prayer book) in

his hand. Behind him was a line of wagons loaded with sacks.

"I am the angel in charge of stray pages from holy books. I go to every Jewish home, every shul and every Jewish school. I look to see the condition of the holy books. Whenever I see a worn out book, with crumpled pages and loose covers it gives me tremendous pleasure, for this is a sign that the books are in constant use. But when I see that some of these books are tattered beyond repair, I am troubled, for every holy book has a holy soul, and every page has a soul, which must be treated with care and respect.

"In the course of my travels I met this man here on trial. Ever since he was a child, Mottel loved his little siddur and would often caress and kiss it before closing it.

"When it came time for Mottel to be apprenticed, he told his father that there was nothing he would like more than to be a bookbinder.

"I have never seen a book-binder like Mottel," continued the angel in my defense. 'He never got any pages mixed up, never missed a stitch, and always used the best materials. From time to time, he would go to the shuls in his town and collect holy books that cried out for attention. He took them home and worked late into the night to restore them, bind them and give them new life. He never charged for this and never even told anyone about it.

"I respectfully request that the Heavenly Court permit me to unload all the sacks of worn-out holy books to which Mottel the Bookbinder has given a second life, and put them on the scale with all his other mitzvot and good deeds.

"The Heavenly Court agreed. Long before the wagons were half unloaded, the scale with the mitzvot clearly outweighed the other side.

"Believe me, dear Rebbe," Mottel concluded, "I was as astonished as you were at what happened before my eyes at seeing me in this place of honor."

"I wanted to ask Mottel a few more questions," explained Rebbe Elimelech, "but at just that moment I began to recover. Reb Mottel's story speaks for itself. But let us also remember," Reb Elimelech enjoined his disciples, "that G-d never fails to give credit and reward for any good deed, even for such a seemingly trivial act as smoothing out a crumpled corner of a well worn page in a holy book.

Reprinted from "Talks and Tales." (as posted in an email of lchaimweekly.org.



In Parshat Ki Tisa, we are told that Hashem intended to destroy the Jewish people, in the aftermath of the worshipping of the Golden Calf, and the smashing of the Tablets.

Moshe prayed to Hashem and he said, "שוב מהרין אנכי – Please G-d, relent from Your wrath." "והנהם על הרעה לעמך" – And reconsider the bad that You are going to be bringing to Your people."

It is fascinating that the term used here is 'והנהם', from 'נחמה' – which means 'comfort'. So why is that term used for 'reconsidering'?

Indeed we find, that after Moshe's prayer was successful, the Torah tells us, "וינהם ה' על הרעה" – God indeed reconsidered."

What we see from here, is that 'comfort' is directly linked to the idea of 'reconsideration'. It is linked to a change of attitude, a change of mind set, and a change of action.

In the wake of tragedy, when we experience grief, G-d forbid, one can simply wait for the world to come and bring them pity. One can engage in self-pity. But ultimately, in order to grow, to develop and to move forward, it is important that there is change. Because, when one can effect a change of attitude, a change of mind-set, and most definitely a change of circumstances, one is better placed to be able to cope.

Let's consider what happened to the Jewish people, after the Holocaust, the most horrific national tragedy to have befallen us, and perhaps to any people on earth. I think the world would have understood, if the Jewish people were condemned to an eternal state of paralysis and depression. But that is not what happened. In the midst of our grief, with the emotional wounds still raw to this day, we have taken action.

In the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust and the creation of the state of Israel, there was a dramatic increase in commitment to Torah and to Mitzvot, to fighting hate and racism, to improving the values of society, trying to guarantee that the scourge of antisemitism would not raise its head again.

We changed our national circumstances, so that we could move forward constructively.

From Parshat Ki Tisa we learn, that in those trying and difficult moments of our lives – and they affect all of us at one time or another – of course there is no easy answer to any situation, but most definitely we need to recognize, that 'נחמה' – comfort, is not necessarily going to come from what other people will do for us. Rather it is within our hearts, within our minds, and within our power, to do something in order to bring about the comfort that we need.

So let's find comfort in everyone, by praying 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, sweet and happy Shabbat

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בני תשא - פרה

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PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 9
MITZVOT ASEH: 4
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 5

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 139
NUMBER OF WORDS: 2002
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 7424

This year, (5781 / 2021) Parshat Ki Tisa is a special Shabbat.

The Shabbat immediately following Purim is called Shabbat Parshat Parah. The Maftir, from Bamidbar, Parshat Chukat, (19:1-22), describes the preparation of the Parah Adumah (Red Heifer), whose ashes were used in the spiritual purification process during the time of the Bait Hamikdash. This purification was carried out at this time of the year, to ensure that everyone would be able to partake in the Korban Pesach (Pascal Lamb) to be offered on the 14th day of Nisan.

HAFTORA:
Ashkenazim: Yechezkel 36:16-38
Chabad & Sephardim: Yechezkel 36:16-38

Yossi