

The Jewish Weekly

The strength of a story

By Pini Rubinstein

Chaim Tyberg, a man in his fifties was about to return to Israel after staying in America for a wedding. He was on the Brooklyn Queens Expressway, when, suddenly, from the right side a small black car came racing toward him. Chaim didn't even notice it, it crashed into Chaim's car, and from that moment, everything went dark, he did not hear anything or see anything or sense anything.

He was rushed to hospital, he was hooked up to numerous life support machines, the family was gathered around his bed, waiting and hoping for a Yeshuah (salvation).

Two weeks later, on erev Shabbat, Moshe Yosef Friedlander received a call. Moshe Yosef is a Jew, who is always willing to help a fellow Jew, whether it be food deliveries to the hospital, picking up and delivering medications, or financial aid, he is a Jew who is always available to help another.

On the other end of the phone was a person telling him that there is a family at a hospital in New Jersey, it would appear without anything for Shabbat.

Moshe Yosef, didn't hesitate a minute, packed his car with a variety of food and goodies for Shabbat. He drove to the hospital, and met the family who came from Israel. He saw, the wife, the children, the entire family sitting around the bed, shattered and broken, without a glimpse of hope.

Moshe Yosef asked the family if he can go into the room to tell Chaim a story of Reb Shayele. The family skeptically look at him and said, "a story? You could try but he doesn't hear anything, he is completely unconscious."

Moshe Yosef went inside the room and recounted the following story;

In Hungary, back in the day, there was a boy by the name, Moshe Weiss. This boy, learned in Yeshiva. A false story was spread about this boy, for no apparent reason. This made him very depressed and downtrodden. Wherever he went, the gossip followed him. Someone advised him, "You know what, Moshe, travel to the Tzaddik Reb Shayale, you have nothing to lose."

He arrived in Kerestir, the waiting room was packed, lines of people were waiting to go in and speak with the Tzaddik. Moshe found a place in the back of the line. He stood there waiting, but the line wasn't moving.



Reb Shaya Ben Reb Moshe from Kerestir

Puzzled, he asked another man, "what is going on? Why is the line not moving?"

The man tells him, "the Rebbe does not want to receive anyone, until a person by the name of Moshe Weiss shows up."

"Moshe Weiss??? My name is Moshe Weiss."

"You are Moshe Weiss? Go into the Rebbe!"

He entered the Rebbe's room, Reb Shayale lifted up his arms, and looked him straight in the eyes, "Moshe, Moshe, I've been waiting for you, I know what you are enduring, I know what you are going through. Move to another town, where an elderly man lives, go there, assist him, it will be good for you."

"Moshe, Moshe, remember one thing, I will forever be with you, Moshe, I will forever be with you." Moshe, left the room feeling like a new person.

All went well for him, he had success, he got married, he began his life, as it ought to be.

Many years later, after the grueling war, Moshe arrived in Canada, and sadly, Moshe Weiss, had now become Howard Weiss, he abandoned Torah and Mitzvot, and followed a new lifestyle.

One Friday, Howard Weiss suffered a heart attack, he was taken to the hospital, and his wife was notified that he has just 2-3 hours to live. She should go home, prepare herself, because in two hours he will be gone.

About 15 minutes before Shabbat, she receives a call.

"Hello?"

It Once Happened...

"Yes, this is Howard speaking"

"Howard?!! You are about to die!"

"I am sitting here in the hospital, I am well, come pick me up!"

She drove to the hospital, she entered the lobby, and she couldn't believe her eyes. She saw her husband Howard sitting there, healthy, normal, as if nothing ever happened to him.

She asked, "Howard, tell me. What happened here?"

"Listen carefully" he responds, "I had nearly passed onto the 'next world', when suddenly, I had a dream, the Holy Tzaddik, Reb Shayele appeared in my dream. I questioned him, "Rebbe, Rebbe! How are you allowing me to die? I am so young, the Rebbe promised me, you will always be with me, and now, you allow me to die?!" The Rebbe looked into my eyes and said, "I said, I will always be with Moshe Weiss. Now with the new person that you have turned into, if you promise me to always keep Shabbat, you will be well. Moshe, I will always be with you."

"Rebbe! I promise you! from this Shabbat on, I will keep Shabbat!"

"Moshe, if so, you will be healthy."

And here I am, come, let's go home, we are going to keep Shabbat from tonight.

This is the story that Moshe Yosef said to the family at the bedside of Chaim, and ended it by saying, "With Hashem's help, by tomorrow, he will regain consciousness."

On Motzei Shabbat, Moshe Yosef received a call from one of the family members. "Moshe Yosef, you won't believe this! 11 o'clock this morning, our father woke up, my father woke up! He is alive! He is here!"

This is the power of a story of a Tzaddik.

Transcribed by "The Jewish Weekly" from a video clip just released.

Editor's Note: Reb Yeshaya Ben Reb Moshe, known as Reb Shaya'la of Kerestir ז"ל's 96th Yahrzeit was Thursday, 3rd Iyar – April 15th of this year



Shabbat Times – Parshat Tazria - Metzora

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	6:33	7:47	8:27
Tel Aviv	6:49	7:50	
Haifa	6:40	7:50	
Be'er Sheva	6:50	7:49	



Reb Shayala's Imposter By Cheston Mizel

Reb Shloime Engel was a steady presence at the Rebbe's side during the weekly Melave Malka. As a successful businessman, he was well acquainted with the financial situation of the Rebbe's court, and was always looking for ways to increase the flow of income to meet the mounting expenses.

He happened to be in Kerestir one day when the Rebbe was not: Reb Shay'e'le had traveled elsewhere for Shabbat and hadn't yet returned.

That day, a large horse-drawn carriage pulled up in front of the Rebbe's home, and a well-dressed Jew emerged. He explained that his wife had taken ill, and he was desperate for salvation: if the Rebbe would only help him, he said, he would be happy to donate whatever money the Tzaddik asked of him.

The gabbai was about to inform the anxious fellow that the Rebbe wasn't in Kerestir. The enterprising Reb Shloime motioned to the gabbai to remain silent, then he quickly sent a message, telling the gabbai to lead the visitor into the Rebbe's room.

"Listen," Reb Shloime explained in a whisper, "the stores here in Kerestir will no longer extend credit to the Rebbe since he owes them too much money. The Rebbe's court needs money in order for the Rebbe to continue his great works, and this visitor comes with money: there is no choice."

The worried husband was led into the room where Reb Shloime sat waiting, clad in a rebbishe coat and large rabbinic hat.

The visitor shared his anguish and fear about the fate of his wife, and the 'Rebbe' listened closely and studied the written kvittel. Then Reb Shloime extended his hand and showered the Jew with brachos for his wife, assuring him that Hashem, the Healer of all flesh, would send her a cure.

The petitioner left a substantial sum of money on the table and went on his way.

Several days later, the Rebbe returned from his travels. Among the stream of chassidim and visitors that descended on the town, came an unfamiliar Jew, clearly a man of means. He gave the gabbai several large crates of chickens, along with sacks of potatoes and flour as a gift: then he entered the Rebbe's room.

The guest beheld Reb Shay'e'le - who was short in stature, while Reb Shloime Engel was tall - and realized that it wasn't the same tzaddik who'd blessed him. Nevertheless, being unfamiliar with the customs of tzaddikim, he assumed that there were several Rebbes who worked in shifts, dispensing shared brachos.

He thanked Reb Shay'e'le profusely for the great miracle he'd experienced, and joyfully related how his wife had returned to good health. He handed the Rebbe a large sum of money to supplement his previous donation.

Reb Shay'e'le immediately grasped what had occurred, and when the visitor left, the Rebbe sent for Reb Shloime. The chassid entered the Rebbe's room filled with trepidation, realizing he'd been caught.

"Rebbe," he whispered in fright, "please forgive me: I only did it for the benefit of the Rebbe and his court, so that we could begin to pay back the many creditors. I had faith in the Ribbono shel Olam that in the merit of the Rebbe and my pure intentions, this Jew would be helped."

Reb Shay'e'le invited Reb Shloime to sit down.

The Rebbe told a story about a Jew named Elimelech, from the town of Lizhensk: pious and learned, he was also impoverished. When it came time to marry off his daughter, he had no recourse other than to travel to other cities and seek help from good Jews.

In advance of his trip, he borrowed a rabbinic coat and hat, so that he might make a better impression, and he set off on his journey. When he reached the first town, he entered the beis medrash and was greeted by local Jews, who asked his name.

"My name is Elimelech, from Lizhensk."

They immediately concluded that the imposing Jew from Lizhensk was none other than the celebrated tzaddik, the Rebbe Reb Elimelech, and the news spread through the town: a tzaddik had arrived.

The visitor was greeted by the rosh hakahal (head of the community), who insisted on hosting him. The scholarly Jew was led to the head of a large table and streams of locals came by, bearing kvittlech and generous pidyonot, financial gifts.

The 'Rebbe' showered them with Brachot (blessings), assuring them salvation. Once he'd amassed a substantial sum of money, the Rebbe thanked his host and left town.

Though the brachot he'd dispensed bore fruit, Elimelech began to feel guilty just the same. He took the money he collected and went to the Rebbe, Reb Elimelech.

He told the Rebbe what he'd done. "Rebbe," he pleaded, "the money is yours, since these Jews thought it was going to you. I only ask that you give me a small part of it for my efforts."

"Tell me," said the Rebbe, "what gave you the temerity to guarantee blessing and salvation when you know that you aren't really worthy of promising such things?"

"Before I started to read the kvittlech, the notes," Elimelech replied, "I offered a little prayer, a tefilla. Aibishter," I whispered, "these Jews, in their great sincerity, consider me to be the tzaddik of Lizhensk, capable of helping them. Please, Aibishter, don't let the name of the great Rebbe Reb Elimelech be sullied through me. Let these Jews be helped in the merit of the tzaddik they think I am."

Reb Shay'e'le concluded his story. "Do you hear, Reb Shloime? That which you've already done is done, but I warn you never to try something like that again."

Reprinted from an email Pico shul.



"Please be careful, I'm impure." That's what the Metzora would declare.

As described in Parashat Tazria, a person afflicted with leprosy was required to go outside of the camp. And when people were approaching, they would shout out, "טמא טמא" – "please be aware of the fact that I am impure." As the Torah says, "וְטָמֵא טָמֵא יִקְרָא" – that's what he must call out.

The Gemara in Masechet Moed Katan (daf hey amud alef) tells us that he shouted out "טמא טמא" for two reasons: the first was so that people passing by would be aware of his ailment and would pray for him; the second, was that they needed to be aware of the fact that they shouldn't come too close, so that they themselves would not become 'טמא'.

The Kotzke Rebbe brilliantly reads something deeper here. He places the comma in the middle of the statement. You see the Torah says "וְטָמֵא טָמֵא יִקְרָא", he must call out "טמא טמא". Rather, says the Kotzke Rebbe, we should read "וְטָמֵא" – "as for this person who is impure" – "טמא יקרא" – his problem is that he calls out to others, "you are impure." You see, he doesn't attribute any weakness or negativity in character to himself. His problem is that he's complaining about the deficiencies of character in others all the time. Indeed, that's why he becomes 'טמא' in the first place.

The Gemara in Masechet Kiddushin (daf ayin amud alef) says something that's really very perceptive. "כל הפוסל במומו פוסל" – "there are many people who criticize others regarding weaknesses in their character, but actually, 'במומו פוסל' – they're talking about themselves. It's a classic example of projection.

An elderly man once went to his doctor, he said to the doctor, "I think my wife is going deaf." "So how serious is this?" asked the doctor. He said, "I don't know, she's just not hearing me." The doctor said, "Well, why don't you call out to her when her back is turned, and see how close you have to get before she hears you."

So he stood well behind her as she was standing in the living room, and he called out, "What's for supper tonight?" No answer.

He came a few steps closer, "What's for supper tonight?" No answer.

A few steps further, no answer.

Until eventually he stood just behind her and called out, "What's for supper tonight?" This time she turned around and shouted at him, "Fish and chips, as I've already told you five times!"

She wasn't the one who had a problem – it was him.

And so too in life. Let us recognize that in the tense moments of some relationships, (while sure enough there might be weaknesses on the other side) we should ask ourselves, where might we have gone wrong? What mistakes might we have made? What words might we have said out of turn? What could we be doing in order to improve the situation ourselves?

Let's learn that lesson of the "טמא טמא יקרא", and if we have this approach to life, I guarantee you that this world will be a much better place. We can also start by praying with all our hearts for all those who are sick from the epidemic as well as praying for our soldiers 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 and happy Shabbat.

Yossi

תזריע - מצורע

This week is dedicated in memory of all the fallen soldiers and civilians who perished in terror attacks while protecting us

The Jewish Weekly staff salute you

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The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

Parshat Tazria
NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 7
MITZVOT ASEH: 5
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 2
NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 67
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1010
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 3667

Parshat Metzora
NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 11
MITZVOT ASEH: 11
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 0
NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 90
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1274
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 4697

HAFTORA:
Malachim II, 7:3 - 7:20

This Shabbat we study Chapter 2 of "Pirkei Avot."