

The Jewish Weekly

An Unusual Reward by Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles

When the Maharshah heard of the Kabbalah interpretations that the ARI [Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, 1534-1572] was teaching and the wonders he was performing in Tsfat (Safed), he feared these miracles were black magic and seriously considered excommunicating the ARI and his disciples. The ARI became aware of this development and decided to send his two most important students to Lublin to present his teachings to the Maharshah (who also happened to be a relative of his -ed.) and prevent such a terrible mistake. The disciples were great righteous men in their own right, none other than Rabbi Chaim Vital (who was later to become the chief disseminator of the Ari's teachings in North Africa and the Mideast) and Rabbi Yisrael Srug (who would be the major exponent in Europe).

As "payment" for the trip, the ARI revealed to them a deep secret: the name and whereabouts of the Mashiach ["Messiah"] ben David of their generation. In every generation, the ARI explained, a Mashiach descended from David and a Mashiach descended from Yosef is born. If the generation is undeserving, they pass from the world without revealing themselves. "The current candidate to be Mashiach ben David is called Eliyachim ben Shmuel and lives in the village of Tisavitch which is not far from Lublin. After finishing your mission, as a reward for your efforts, you may visit the Mashiach of our time," said the ARI to his students as he blessed them on their departure.

Rabbi Chaim and Rabbi Yisrael set out, taking with them special delicacies of Tsfat, hot from the oven. Shortly thereafter they were picked up by a passing cloud that took them all the way to Lublin and deposited them - not surprisingly - at the entrance to the synagogue where the Maharshah prayed. They arrived exactly on time for the afternoon prayer.

The sudden appearance of these two Jews of holy countenance dressed in the impressive garments of 16th century Tsfat caused quite a stir. As a result of a certain incident which then took place in the shul (A long story in itself) the Maharshah understood that these were very special and holy visitors indeed.

The two men introduced themselves and their mission. They told the Maharshah that only that morning had they left Tsfat and, as proof, their Israeli food was still warm. The Maharshah asked them to reveal the teachings of their master, the ARI, so that he could judge for himself. "So secret and holy are the teachings," explained the visitors, "that we can reveal them only in an isolated location, away from over-sensitive ears."

They went down to the Maharshah's dark basement. As soon as the tzaddikim began to relate the teachings of their master, the room filled with light. Afterwards, the Maharshah declared that his attitude had changed. He promised them that not only had he given up any idea of declaring a ban, but from then on he would consider himself to be one of his young kinsman's great admirers.

The ARI's two disciples went on to Tisavitch to claim their reward. Upon arriving, however, they

found Reb Eliyachim's whereabouts to be unknown. Indeed, his very existence was seriously doubted by even the most informed elders of the town. The Tsfat Kabbalists proceeded to the house of the local Rabbi and asked him about Eliyachim, the son of Shmuel, but to no avail. In desperation, they revealed to the Rabbi the true nature of their mission.

After much effort on the part of the rabbi and the different people he drafted to help, they finally succeeded in tracking down the elusive Reb Eliyachim. The two visitors wasted no time making their way to his home, along with the Rabbi of Tisavitch who insisted on accompanying them.

Once at the house of the potential Mashiach ben David of the generation, to their surprise they found only one small room, two broken down beds, and one table ready to fall apart and a chair. Reb Eliyachim himself lay in bed, and his wife was at the stove which stood in the middle of the house.

After being greeted by the hosts, who were surprised but excited to have visitors, especially the Rabbi and such holy looking travelers, the guests introduced themselves. "We are the students of the holy ARI, from the holy city of Tsfat, in the holy land of Israel, and we have been told that you are our generation's candidate for the task of Mashiach ben David."

"Oh! The ARI and his revelations! He has done me and himself great damage." Reb Eliyachim exclaimed. "As a result of this secret becoming uncovered," he continued, "I must depart from the world. My last request is that you personally take charge of the funeral and all involved. On the gravestone please write: Here lies a truthful and honest man. 12 Elul 5332." (To be noted: the ARI passed away just 11 months later, 5 Av 5333.)

With these words, Eliyachim ben Shmuel passed away, leaving behind him a world still unworthy of Mashiach. (There are some who say that this revelation had such a tragic end because of the presence of the Rabbi of the town; had the ARI's pupils come by themselves, the result would have been different.)

After the funeral, Rabbi Chaim and Rabbi Yisrael went to visit the widow in her mourning. They questioned her about the deeds of her husband.

"I married very young" his wife replied. "All the years my deceased husband was very ill. I myself provided whatever living we had. Most of the time he lay in bed. However, right before Shabbat there would be a drastic change - the house would become wider and longer and a fully set table with the best of Shabbat dishes would appear. Then a group of very holy looking visitors would arrive, always bringing with them a Torah scroll. My husband would become strong and healthy and together with the guests, would spend the entire Shabbat in prayer, study and eating the three traditional meals.

"After the Saturday night prayer and havdalah, the house would shrink back to its weekday size, the guests would disappear and my husband would return to his bed. This was the schedule every week since our marriage."

"Why didn't you ever tell anyone about this wondrous miracle?," she was asked. Seeing how amazed everyone was by what she had so innocently told, she explained, "I know that a bride is like a queen and the groom is like a king. Therefore I assumed that this happens in every Jewish household, on every Shabbat after the wedding."

Reprinted from an email from lchaimweekly.org.
Editor's Note: Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, "the Holy Ari zt"l's, 450th Yahrzeit is Tuesday, 5th Av - August 2nd of this year.

It Once Happened...

The Holy Ari Honors a Younger Man by Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles

One weekday Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, the holy ARI, was in his house discussing Torah with his chief disciple, Rabbi Chaim Vital, when a local young man, Shmuel Aceda, bashfully entered, dressed in Shabbat garb.

Immediately the ARI stood up and greeted him. "Boruch Haba! Welcome!" He shook the fellow's hand and invited him to sit beside him.

R' Chaim gaped in amazement. His mentor never acted like this. Why did he stand up for a man younger than him and of a lesser level of scholarship? And why did he seat him on a chair?

As soon as the boy left, R' Chaim could no longer contain his curiosity. "I've never seen you act in this manner before. What is the reason for showing Shmuel such honor if I may ask?"

"What are you saying!" replied the ARI. "I did not stand up for this young man, nor was it him I greeted. What really happened was this. I saw the soul of the Mishnaic sage, Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair [father-in-law of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai], hovering over the boy's head - a merit the lad earned today by performing a commandment for which that sage was famous when he was alive. It was for him that I stood up and it was him that I greeted."

R. Chaim marveled at this revelation. What had the young man done, he wondered, to deserve such a special reward? With permission, he dashed outside in pursuit of him.

Finding him in one of the cobblestone lanes, he asked, "Tell me, Shmuel, what extra commandment did you do today?"

"The only thing I did out of the ordinary today," the fellow answered hesitantly, "happened this morning while I was going to shul. As usual, I left my house at the crack of dawn and walked in the direction of the synagogue. As I turned a corner, I suddenly heard crying from one of the windows. Why would adults be crying, I wondered?"


"I decided to find out. When I entered the house, I saw the room was in shambles. The residents, still in their sleeping garments, were standing in the middle, sobbing. A band of thieves had taken everything of value, they told me, even their clothes.

"I gave the father my clothes and dashed home to put on my only other garments, my Shabbat clothes. As you see, I'm still wearing them."

Delighted, R. Chaim kissed him and returned to his master.

"In the merit of this mitzvah," remarked the ARI, "Shmuel certainly deserved that the tzaddik's soul should envelop him. Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair was famous precisely for redeeming captives and helping forsaken people whenever he could."

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.



Shabbat Times - Parshat Massei

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	7:03	8:18	8:55
Tel Aviv	7:18	8:20	
Haifa	7:11	8:21	
Be'er Sheva	7:19	8:19	



The Master and the Lad By Basha Majerczykn

After the passing of the Maggid of Mezritch in 1772, when the spheres of influence in spreading the teachings of Chassidism were divided up among the inner circle of the Maggid's disciples, Rabbi Shneur Zalman, the "Alter Rebbe" of Chabad Chassidism, was allotted Lithuania and White Russia. However, being as Rabbi Shlomo of Karlin had followers in the towns of Beshenkovitz, Tzeshnik and Liepli, he was allowed to continue visiting there.

When Rabbi Shlomo decided that he wanted to permanently move to Beshenkovitz, he first asked permission of Rabbi Shneur Zalman. The Alter Rebbe agreed, with the following conditions:
1) Reb Shlomo would not demean those who devoted themselves seriously to the study of the revealed parts of the Torah;
2) Reb Shlomo would not disparage those who had an innate fear of Heaven;
3) Reb Shlomo would teach his own chassidim that faith alone in the Tzadik (pure, righteous leader) is not sufficient to enable one to ascend to higher spiritual levels, but that one must personally toil in one's G-dly service.

Reb Shlomo was willing to agree to the first two conditions but could not come to terms with the third, for he taught his chassidim that those who are bound to the Tzadik are elevated by his service; the mission of their Divine service is simply to be enthusiastic about the study of Torah and the observance of its commandments.

But his teachings conflicted with the school of thought known as Chabad Chassidism established by the Alter Rebbe. The Alter Rebbe taught that each individual must personally exert effort in understanding G-d and His world, and in one's Divine service. Therefore, Reb Shlomo did not move to Beshenkovitz, though he continued to visit there periodically.

Despite their disagreements and differences, a number of years later when Reb Shlomo visited the Alter Rebbe on a communal matter, the Alter Rebbe treated him with utmost respect and deference. When Reb Shlomo left to travel to Beshenkovitz for one of his visits, the Alter Rebbe sent a number of young scholarly chassidim to accompany him, among them Binyamin of Kotsk.

Along the way, Reb Shlomo and the Alter Rebbe's chassidim engaged in deep discussions of all areas of Torah. Reb Shlomo was very impressed with the

depth of knowledge of his escorts. Upon their arrival in Vitebsk, the Alter Rebbe's Chassidim got ready to return to Liozna, but Reb Shlomo asked R. Binyamin to travel with him to Beshenkovitz. Reb Binyamin agreed.

When it was time for the afternoon prayer, Reb Shlomo instructed his wagon driver to stop the coach so that he could pray. Reb Shlomo climbed down and looked for a stream to wash his hands but there was none nearby. He climbed back up into the coach and sat there for many moments in meditation....

... Suddenly the horses started to gallop undirected. Before long they stopped near a stream, whereupon Reb Shlomo descended and washed his hands. He prayed the afternoon service with his usual fiery devotion, and then alighted upon the wagon.

When the wagon driver informed Reb Shlomo that he had no idea where they were, Reb Shlomo told him to allow the horses to proceed on their own. The horses galloped along until they came to a highway. From there they traveled until they arrived at an inn.

Reb Shlomo told the wagon driver to stop at the inn. He and R. Binyamin prayed the evening service followed by Tikun Chatzot [the after-midnight set of prayers in remembrance of the destruction of the Holy Temple]. At dawn they prayed the morning service and then continued on their way. They arrived in Beshenkovitz on Thursday afternoon, in time for the afternoon prayer.

At this point it was impossible for Reb Binyamin to return to Liozna in time for Shabbat and so, he decided to stay in Beshenkovitz for Shabbat. Throughout Shabbat, R. Binyamin met many of his fellow Chabad chassidim. They were amazed that the Alter Rebbe had accorded Reb Shlomo so much honor as to send such a scholar as R. Binyamin to accompany him. Thereafter, they accorded Reb Shlomo much more honor than they had previously.

Reb Binyamin remained in Beshenkovitz for another two days, walking around as if in a daze from all that he had learned from Reb Shlomo and from everything he had seen in Reb Shlomo's prayers and Divine service. He had even had a fleeting thought to stay on in Beshenkovitz to spend more time in Reb Shlomo's company. In the end, R. Binyamin decided against staying and called on Reb Shlomo to take his leave.

Reb Shlomo spoke passionately to R. Binyamin for many hours, entreating him to stay and become one of his chassidim. He promised that he would share with him wondrous secrets of the Torah and he would hand pick a group of students for him to teach who would be worthy of his keen intellect.

Reb Binyamin listened and responded by quoting a Ukrainian rhyme (just as Reb Shlomo would often spice his conversation with Ukrainian sayings):

"The master's a master...but he's not mine;
The lad's a lad...but he's not thine."

And he returned to the Alter Rebbe in Liozna.

Reprinted from an email from lchaimweekly.org.

Editor's Note: Rabbi Shlomo of Karlin zt"l's, 230th Yahrzeit was last week Thursday, 22nd Tammuz – July 21st of this year.

When travelling, the most important thing to take with us doesn't weight anything at all.

Now that at long last many of us can think about travelling once again, we can derive a lot of inspiration from Parshat Massei. There the Torah tells us about the journeys of the Bnei Yisrael in the wilderness, it says "למסעיהם על פי יהוה" - They journeyed according to the word of Hashem."

In Parshat Beha'alotecha, added details are given: "על פי ה' יסעו יהוה ועל פי ה' יסעו" - According to the word of Hashem they camped and according to the word of Hashem, they travelled."

The Chassidik master Rav Usher of Riminov commented that we can learn from here how important it is, regardless of whether we are at home or on our way, to take Hashem with us always. He writes that it is usually far easier to be committed to a life of קדושה and טהרה, holiness and purity, when we are at home.

The Torah in Parshat Tzav (Vayikra 6:5) tells us about the perpetual fire on the altar. The Torah there says, "הואש על לא תכבה" - The fire upon the altar shall be established upon it. It shall never be extinguished."

In the very next verse, again the Torah says, "לא תכבה" - it shall never be extinguished." The Gemara in the Yerushalmi, Masechet Yuma, tells us that we are told twice to never extinguish the fire because this is an allusion to the fire of our Judaism within us. We should not extinguish it when we are at home and it shall not be extinguished when we are away from home. And the Torah says "תוקד בו" - it shall be upon it" which can also be understood as, "it shall be always within us ourselves."

I'm always inspired by so many people who make a point while away from home of going to the maximum in order to guarantee that they can keep kosher properly, that they can learn, that they can be involved in Jewish community life. It's so wonderful when people, wherever they are in the world, will always pop into the local community; look into its history; take an interest in what is going on there; learn from what the opportunities are and how their lives can be Jewishly enriched as a result of the vacation that they are enjoying.

In this way we can fulfil the words of the Torah that we all know by heart from the Shema: "ושננתם לבניך ודברת בו." We should teach our families to grow up in a Jewish way we should speak words of Torah and practise the mitzvot, and where? "בשבתך בביתך ובלכתך בדרך" - equally when we are at home and when we are on the way.

So may we always remember to take Hashem with us and let's pray with all our hearts, for those suffering from the current situation in Eastern Europe, as well as for the recovery of all the sick, our soldiers and healthcare professionals, and Chevra Kadisha members worldwide, for peace 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.

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 6
MITZVOT ASEH: 2
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 4

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 132
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1461
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 5773

HAFTORA:

Ashkenazim: Yirmiyahu 2:4 - 28 and 3:4 Shimu
Sephardim & Chabad: Yirmiyahu 2:4 - 28 and 4:1-2
(The three Haftorot of the three weeks preceding the Ninth of Av, are called the "שלוש דפורעות" - the "Three (Haftorot) of Punishment").

This week in Israel, we study Chapter 3 of Pirkei Avot (outside Israel one studies Chapter 2).

מסעי
מטות מסעי

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