

The Jewish Weekly

Clear Vision

by Chana Besser

Long ago in Russia, there was a poor Jew, Moshe, who had a big family and never made any money. He ran a tavern where the Russian peasants would come and drink. But after they got drunk they didn't pay him, so he never had the money to pay the poritz, the Russian landowner and local ruler. The first year, the poritz warned him that he had better pay him double the next year. The next year, Moshe still had no rent money. The poritz said it was his last warning, and that when the rent money came due the third year, Moshe had better have enough money for all three years ready in one lump sum or he would beat him until he was dead.

Poor Moshele. As rent day of the third year approached, he still had no money to pay. Not only that, thirty days before the rent was due, the poritz sent out one of his thugs to beat up Moshe a little and give him a black-eye, just as a warning. That upset Moshe's wife so much that she insisted that Moshe make the trek to Lujzinsk to get a blessing from the saintly Reb Elimelech.

Reb Elimelech was one of the holiest Jews of his generation. He had been one of the inner circle of disciples of the Maggid of Mezeritch, successor to the Baal Shem Tov. Now he was a Rebbe in his own right, with many students and followers. One of the holiest was the Seer of Lublin. Another was the holy Ropshitzer Rebbe. Everybody knew that the Seer of Lublin could see from one end of the world to another, so great was his Divine Inspiration.

Moshe's wife was a great believer in the blessings of the Chassidic Rebbes, but her husband was not. He was a good, devout Jew who did all the mitzvot, but he didn't believe in going to Rebbes for blessings. However, his wife was so upset he couldn't say no to her, and so off he went.

Since he scorned the renowned stories of the powers of the Rebbes so much and wanted his position to be clear, Moshe put a sign around his neck, a placard, which read, "Meilech, I need money!" He wouldn't even afford the holy Rebbe the decency of addressing him by his title as "Rebbe", or even using his full first name. Instead he referred to him by a nickname for Elimelech. Then Moshe took his one pair of shoes that he saved for the holy Shabbos and, not wanting to ruin them in the spring mud, slung them around his neck and set off barefoot to walk all the way to Lujzinsk.

On the way Moshele came up to a stopped carriage. When he got to where the carriage stood, he could see that two famous Rebbes were traveling inside. One was the Seer of Lublin, who everybody knew could see from one end of the world to the other, and with him was the Ropshitzer Rebbe. The Seer called to Moshe and beckoned for him to come over to speak with him. Moshe said he wasn't interested; he was on his way to see Reb

Elimelech, and that was only because his wife insisted on it. He had no intention whatsoever to speak to other Rebbes in addition.

Undeterred, the Seer offered Moshe some advice. "When you get home, if it is a Monday at 11:00, don't go outside."

Moshe thought that this was very strange and utterly useless advice. He hardly bothered to thank or acknowledge the Seer. Instead, he kept on walking.

When he got to Lujzinsk, as soon as he could see Reb Elimelech, he took the sign off of his neck, thumped it down on the table in front of the great Tzaddik, and rudely snapped, "See what the sign says - 'Meilech, I need money.'"

The holy Reb Elimelech looked at Moshe long and hard, gazing into his very soul. Then he said, "Moshele, listen to me. When you get back home, you tell the poritz that if he doesn't give you 15,000 rubles, you're going to leave his town."

Moshe thought for sure the Tzaddik was out of his mind. 15,000 rubles then was a small fortune, enough for a good many years, enough to buy a better business than his tavern where the drunks never paid him. Nothing that Reb Elimelech said made any sense to poor Moshe. The poritz was intending to kill him for owing him 3 years of rent, and here the Rebbe was telling him that Moshe should demand a fortune from the poritz? It confirmed all of his skepticism that these Chassidic Rebbes knew nothing more than any simple Jew and had no special powers. Oh well, at least he had come there and done what his wife had requested. Now he could go home, and if the poritz didn't kill him, at least he would have peace in his marriage.

Moshe walked all the way back home with his Shabbos shoes again draped around his neck. He kept a low profile, trying to stay out of the center of the village and out of the poritz's sight. But then the poritz himself came looking for Moshe, and upon finding him, beat him until he was almost dead. Not caring if he had left Moshe dead or alive, the poritz felt better that he had shown the Jew that no one can get away with taking advantage of him. When Moshe regained his senses, he dragged his aching and broken body home. After he crawled into his house, he heard the village church bell signaling 11 o'clock, and suddenly remembered that it was Monday and what the Seer of Lublin had told him.

Sometimes when we have no strength left but we know that we have to do something, we say a little prayer and ask Our Creator for the strength to do His will, and then He blesses us with the strength to do what we need in order to serve Him. So it was for Moshele. He knew he was weak and helpless, so he said a little prayer asking the Holy One for the strength to barricade the door, and somehow he managed to push a heavy breakfront in front of the door and barricade himself in.

No sooner was the door barricaded than he heard the poritz banging on it. He had decided to come back to finish Moshe off. But the poritz couldn't push the door open by himself and he hadn't brought his thugs with him, so he went away. Moshele was still alive, Baruch Hashem. So now he appreciated that the Seer of Lublin really could see from one end of the world to another.

It Once Happened...

When the poritz went home, his wife asked him, "What did you do today?" The poritz didn't want his wife to think that he was a pushover or a sucker, so he told her that he had taught a Jew a good lesson and beaten him within an inch of his life for not paying him three years of rent money.

His wife asked, "Which Jew did you beat?" The poritz told her, "Moishkeh, the one who runs the tavern on my land."

"Moishkeh?" she screamed at her husband, "You beat up Moishkeh? Are you crazy? Don't you know that Moishkeh is my favorite Jew? Whenever I need something I ask Moishkeh, and he tells me where I can buy it for the best price, and where the quality is the best. You stupid fool, go beat up another Jew, but leave my Moishkeh alone." "What's more," she tells him, "you better go and make sure that he is alive and that he gets the best of medical attention, because if Moishkeh is dead, I'm throwing you out of here!"

The poritz didn't want trouble with his wife, so he rushed back to Moshe's house, hoping that he hadn't died from the beating. When he got there the door was still barricaded, so he shouted, "Moishkeh, are you in there? Are you alive? I truly hope so. I'm sorry I beat you so badly. I didn't know you were my wife's favorite Jew. Tell me you are alive and I'll take you to a doctor."

At that moment Moshe realized how great was the prophetic vision of Rebbe Elimelech. Remembering the holy Tzaddik's advice, he called out, "If you don't give me 15,000 rubles, I'm leaving this town!"


The poritz was enraged. "I'll cancel the rent that you owe me, I'll let you stay on rent-free, but I'm not giving you any 15,000 rubles. You're crazy!" yelled the poritz.

Moshe held fast and said, "15,000 rubles and not a ruble less!" The poritz offers him 100 rubles and then 200 and then 500, but Moshe didn't waiver. Finally, after refusing several more bargaining attempts of the poritz, Moshe got the whole 15,000 rubles.

With the money, Moshe bought a nice nightclub, one that attracted the highest of society, the type who pay their tab when they finish their evening out. After just a few years, Moshe and his family became exceedingly wealthy, and were able to celebrate all the Jewish holidays with the finest of meals and clothes and splendor, as well as the holy Shabbos every week.

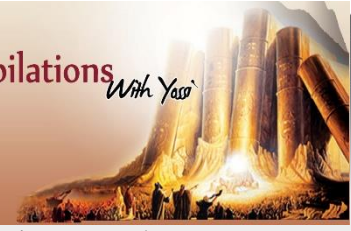
The next time the Seer went to visit Reb Elimelech, they shared the good news about Moshe. Reb Elimelech told the Seer, "When you looked at Moshe, you could only see as far as the beating. But when he came to me, I saw beyond the beating to the splendor and joy that would come afterwards."

Reprinted from an email from KabbalaOnline.org.



Shabbat Times - Parshat Re'eh

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	6:35	7:47	8:27
Tel Aviv	6:50	7:49	
Haifa	6:42	7:50	
Be'er Sheva	6:52	7:49	



A Walking Miracle

By Arele Karnevsky

When I was a baby, my family discovered that my legs were bow-legged (curved). My mother took me to a specialist. He said not to worry, for I would eventually grow out of it.

I didn't.

My mother was very concerned about my medical situation. She brought me to the Hospital for Joint Diseases to see what they could do for me. They told my mother that I would have to wear braces on my legs to straighten them. We kept visiting the hospital for regular check-ups.

Once, my mother asked the specialist how long he thought I would need to wear braces. The doctor estimated that I would need them for at least a year. He suggested that I come back in three weeks, when X-rays would be taken of the leg to determine how much longer I would need the braces.

As it turned out, the day of my scheduled X-ray appointment was the day of my brother's birthday. It was customary that the Sunday before one's birthday, one would pass before the Lubavitcher Rebbe to receive a blessing and dollar from him. My mother, my older brother and I all went before the Rebbe for dollars the Sunday before my brother's birthday and my appointment.

My mother introduced the two of us to the Rebbe and told him in Yiddish that my brother's birthday was that Thursday. The Rebbe handed my older brother two dollars, instructing him to give it to charity on the day of his birthday.

Then it was my turn to pass before the Rebbe. After that it was my mother's turn. She thought about saying something to the Rebbe about the X-rays that were to be taken on Thursday, but was too overwhelmed in the presence of the Rebbe to say anything. She decided to say nothing, instead asking my father to write a letter to the Rebbe. When her turn came the Rebbe handed her a dollar and she started to leave. But then the Rebbe handed her another dollar saying, "This is for Thursday!"

My father gave in a letter with a request for the Rebbe's blessing before the Thursday's appointment.

Later, my parents received a phone call from the Rebbe's secretary. He told them that the Rebbe instructed them to check their tefillin and mezuzot

and to report back to the Rebbe what the sofer (scribe) had found.

My father immediately removed all the mezuzot from the doorposts and took them and his tefillin to the sofer, this time a different sofer than the one he usually used.

The sofer checked both the tefillin and the mezuzot and found three mistakes: two mistakes in the mezuzot and one in the tefillin. All the mistakes were found in the legs of each of the problematic letters.

One had a hole in the foot of the letter and the ink was coming through the other side of the parchment. This indicated that the mezuzah was invalid from the moment it was originally written. It was now as obvious to us as a ringing bell that the Rebbe's advice to check tefillin and mezuzot was Divinely Inspired.

The other two letters were found to have cracks in them.

The invalid mezuzot were replaced, in fact, my grandmother went out and bought ten of the best-quality mezuzot from Israel as a gift for the family.

That Thursday I went to the hospital. My entire family was very excited about what might happen. Even my father, who was not always able to accompany me to my regular hospital check-ups, came along to see what miracles lay in store.

The doctors took me into the X-ray room and took the required X-rays of my legs. The doctor soon came out of the room completely shocked, his eyes wide in disbelief.

"How long has your son been wearing these leg-braces?" he asked.

"Oh, about a few months," my parents answered.

"I looked at your son's previous X-rays," the doctor continued.

"They show your son's legs to be curved. For some inexplicable reason, the new X-rays show his legs to be totally straight, just perfect! Usually a case such as your son's would need surgery or possible years of wearing these leg-braces. Your son is completely healed."

The leg-braces are still in my house. They are there to remind my family and me of the great miracle. I am forever grateful to the Rebbe for his blessing.

Reprinted from an email from KabbalaOnline.org.

The Torah has been given to us today.

That is how we should approach the Torah and its mitzvot on every day of our lives. The inspiration for this comes from the beginning of Parshat Re'eh. There the Torah says, "ראה אנכי נותן לפניכם היום - See," says Hashem, "How I am giving you today all these opportunities to enhance your lives and to make this into a better world."

In similar fashion, in the Shema, Hashem says, "אשר היום מצוך היום - Which I am commanding you today."

It's obvious that it was being given on that particular day so why does Hashem repetitively say the word 'היום' - 'today'?

Our sages teach that this is in order that we should remember, "בכל יום יהיו בעיניך כחדשים" - That on every single day of our lives the mitzvot should appear to us as if they are brand new," given to us 'היום' - on this very day.

Rashi adds that we should not, Heaven forbid, relate to the mitzvot as being old fashioned, belonging to an era long past without any relevance to us, but rather the mitzvot should be like something which is brand new in our eyes, as something given today. It's very much like the latest model of a particular product being advertised. Everybody is talking about it. Everybody's trading in their old models for this brand new one. As you hold it in your hands, you appreciate everything that it does for you; all its exciting features. That's how we should relate to the mitzvot on every day of our lives. And the great thing about the mitzvot is that this is not just a PR stunt - it is true! That's the greatness of Hashem and the Torah we've been given: given thousands of years ago, in truth it has relevance and meaning on every single day of our lives.

It says, "אשרינו מה טוב חלקנו ומה נעים גורלנו" - How happy and privileged we are," to have the mitzvot to use and to enjoy, in order that 'היום' - this day, and every single day of our lives is full of meaning and purpose as a result. So let us try to be happy and thank Hashem for what he has given us and to 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.

Yossi

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 55
MITZVOT ASEH: 17
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 38

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 126
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1932
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 7442

As today and tomorrow is Rosh Chodesh. We take out two Torah scrolls; seven Aliyot read in first Torah from the weekly Parsha, Re'eh, Maftir is read in the second Torah from Parshat Pinchas the two paragraphs "וביום השבת" and "ובראשי חדשיכם";

HAFTORA: for Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh "השמים כאמי" (Yishayah 66:1-24, repeating verse 23 at the end), (not עניה סוערה);

This week in Israel, we study Chapter 6 of Pirkei Avot (outside Israel one studies Chapter 5).



A Time of Reflection and Repentance

We begin to recite אורי לידוד ה' on the 2nd day Rosh Chodesh until Shmini Atzeret, some hold until Simchat Torah and some hold Hoshanah Rabbah inclusive. Some begin on the first day of Rosh Chodesh.

We begin to blow Shofar every week day at the conclusion of Shacharit until the day before Erev Rosh Hashanah where we don't blow at all.

Laws & Customs: Month of Elul (Up to Erev Rosh Hashanah)

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For the year 5782

According to Nitti Gavriel, Mishna Berurah and Shulchan Aruch Harav

Based on Rabbi Shmuel Lesches's Halachah Sheets

Reviewed by Reb Elimelech Rabinowicz שליט"א, Rav of Tzeirei Kehal Chassidim, Shaarei Chesed

Compiled by Yossi Fraenkel in memory of his grandparents

ר' ראובן בן הרב משה אליעזר הלוי ע"ה והיה ברכה בת ר' נפתלי משה ע"ה רבינוביץ

ר' יוסף בן ר' אורי ע"ה ומלכה בת ר' יצחק צבי הלוי ע"ה פרינקל

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🕊 MONTH OF ELUL

On Erev Rosh Chodesh Elul, people give extra Tzedakah.

It is a Yerushalmi Minhag to go to Kivrei Tzadikim on Erev Rosh Chodesh Elul, there are some who specially go to Mearat Hamachpela and Kever Rachel.

On Rosh Chodesh Elul, Moshe Rabbeinu ascended Har Sinai to receive the second set of Luchot. He returned with them on Yom Kippur, with Hashem having granted complete forgiveness for the sin of the golden calf. These forty days are an especially auspicious time for Teshuvah.

The Arizal taught that the thirteen attributes of Divine Mercy are revealed in the month of Elul, assisting in one's efforts to do Teshuvah. The Baal Hatanya explained this idea with the famous parable of Melech B'Sadeh – the King in the field. The month of Elul is thus known as the Chodesh Horachamim (month of mercy), and the gates of mercy are open to all who wish to come close to Hashem through Teshuvah, Tefillah and Torah. These ideas should be publicized as much as possible.

Elul is the month of preparation to usher in a new year replete with good and blessing, both physically and spiritually.

The word Elul is an acronym for a number of Pesukim alluding to the ideas of Torah, Tefillah, Tzedakah, Teshuvah and Geulah. The month of Elul is an appropriate time to increase in all of these matters.

One should increase learning, particularly those topics applicable to the Avodah of the month of Elul.

One should also increase in Ahavat Yisrael and Gemilat-Chessed.

Elul is the "month of reckoning". During this month, one should make an accurate assessment of all one's thoughts, words and deeds, and reflect on all the experiences that occurred during the course of the year. One should improve and strengthen one's qualities, and at the same time, regret and correct one's deficiencies – both the errors and wrongs that were committed, as well as those things which were not performed as well as they could have been. One should resolve for the future to fulfil Mitzvot in the best possible manner; to be more diligent with regards to Torah and Tefillah; and to correct one's negative Middot as well as acquire positive Middot.

During the month of Elul, according to the Sephardic communities, Selichot is recited daily. (The Ashkenazi communities start Selichot this year, Motzei Shabbat, August 28th.)

During Elul, one should be enthused with much Simcha, in recognition of the special closeness that Hashem shows us – "The King is in the field".

Even though Elul is a time to arouse others to Teshuvah, this should be done in a pleasant and

humble way, and not by G-d forbid saying harsh things about others.

🕊 L'DAVID HASHEM ORI

We begin reciting L'David Hashem Ori on Rosh Chodesh. Chabad and some other Chassidim start on the **first** day whilst everyone else starts on the **second** day. During Shacharit, some recite it after Aleinu and some, including Chabad, recite it after Shir Shel Yom (or after Borch Nafshi on Rosh Chodesh). Chabad and some others recite it during Mincha before Aleinu. Some communities recite L'David Hashem Ori at Mincha after Aleinu, and some only after Ma'ariv. When davening Mincha with a Minyan who says it after Ma'ariv, one must still recite Aleinu together with them. If one needs to defer L'David Hashem Ori as a result, he should recite it after Aleinu and before Al Tirah.

🕊 SHOFAR

Shofar is blown during the month of Elul, most have the custom to begin on Monday, the second day of Rosh Chodesh and some on the first day. The purpose of hearing the Shofar is to arouse feelings of Teshuvah.

Some have the custom to blow Shofar also after Mincha or Maariv. Those who blow Shofar after Maariv, should do so also on Motzei Shabbat

Some have the custom to blow just Tekiah-Shevarim-Teruah-Tekiah and others, including Chabad, blow ten sounds. [Tekiah-Shevarim-Teruah-Tekiah; Tekiah-Shevarim-Tekiah; Tekiah-Teruah-Tekiah.]

If one was unable to hear the Shofar with a Minyan, he should still endeavor to hear the Shofar.

During Elul, one does not need to repeat the sounds, if the Shofar was Passul (e.g. it had a crack or hole). Similarly, one does not need to repeat any sounds blown incorrectly (e.g. the Tekiah was too short). If the Ba'al-Tokeah chooses to fix his mistake, he certainly does not need to redo the entire section, as he would, were it Rosh Hashana.

🕊 OTHER CUSTOMS OF ELUL

There is a tradition to recite 10 extra chapters of Tehillim each day of Elul, which will equal the completion of Tehillim twice (300 chapters – numerically equivalent to כפר – atonement). Chabad have the custom to only recite three extra chapters of Tehillim each day. Ideally, these should be recited immediately after the Tehillim that is normally said at the end of Shacharit.

If one neglected to recite these chapters of Tehillim on the appropriate day, he should do so at the earliest opportunity.

Beginning on the first day of Rosh Chodesh, most, including Chabad, have the custom to wish (both in person as well as in writing): "Ketivah V'Chatima Tovah L'Shana Tova U'Metukah". [The Lubavitcher Rebbe included

these wishes at the end of his letters. From Rosh Chodesh onwards, he would write only "Ketivah V'Chatima Tovah", and would begin adding "L'Shana Tova U'Metukah" from around the 18th of Elul onwards.]

Although the basic requirement is to check Mezuzot and Tefillin twice every seven years, some have the custom of checking them every Elul (unless they were checked within the last 12 months).

🕊 DATES IN ELUL

7 Elul – Shabbat Parshat Shoftim. The sixth chapter of Pirkei Avot is recited.

14 Elul – Shabbat Parshat Ki Teitzei. When reading the last Passuk of the Parsha, the word Zeicher is read twice, first with a Tzeirei (Zeicher), and then again with a Segol (Zecher).

The first and second chapter of Pirkei Avot is recited. The opening Mishna ("Kol Yisrael") and concluding Mishna ("Rabbi Chananya") are recited only once.

15 Elul – Being thirty days before Sukkot, one begins learning its Halachot. This thirty-day period should also be utilized to ensure that the Chag needs of the poor are met, as well as planning Sukkot festivities.

18 Elul – The birthday of the Baal Shem Tov and the Baal Hatanya. On this day, the Chabad Rebbeim would wish one a "Chag Sameach".

The last 12 days of Elul (18-29 Elul) correspond to the 12 months of the year. On each of these days, one should make a reckoning of the corresponding month, and make all necessary corrections.

21 Elul – Shabbat Parshat Ki Tavo. The third and fourth chapter of Pirkei Avot is recited by all. The opening Mishna ("Kol Yisrael") and concluding Mishna ("Rabbi Chananya") are recited only once.

🕊 28TH ELUL "SHABBAT MEVARCHIM"

Shabbat Parshat Nitzavim. We don't bentsh the new month before Musaf, however Av Harachamim is recited. The Baal Shem Tov explains that Hashem Himself bentshes the month of Tishrei, and with this power, we bentsh the other months of the year.

Many make a kiddush after davening, in honor of "Shabbat Mevarchim".

Tzidkatecha is recited.

One learns the final two chapters of Pirkei Avot after Mincha. The opening Mishna ("Kol Yisrael") and concluding Mishna ("Rabbi Chananya") are recited only once.

Vi'hi Noam and V'atah Kaddosh are omitted on Motzei Shabbat.

🕊 SELICHOT

Due to the very varied customs on Selichot, we advise everyone to make themselves familiar with their own particular customs.



The Jewish
Weekly
 will be releasing a Tishrei guide of
 Stories, Halachot and Minhagim