

The Jewish Weekly

One Horse for Purim, one Horse for Pesach

By Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles

Although Zelig had become one of the wealthier Jews in the area, he remained a simple, modest person, never seeking to draw attention to himself. He made his living as the tenant manager of several estates of the prominent nobleman, Count Dombinsky. Although he was not specially honored within the Jewish community he was highly popular. Everyone referred to him as "Zelig the Manager."

It could be that Zelig's modesty was an inherent trait of his character, but his background was certainly a major contributing factor. For many years he had been nothing but a downtrodden, poverty-stricken wagon driver.

Once, at a mitzvah celebration meal in the synagogue, some of the men asked Zelig to tell how it came to be that he was able to make such a strikingly upwardly mobile change of professions, from a lowly wagon driver to a respected, wealthy estate manager.

Zelig seemed confused and a bit nervous as everyone turned and stared at him. It was clear that he was uncomfortable at being the center of attention in a large gathering and that it was difficult for him to fulfill their request. Nevertheless, after a bit of pressure, he agreed to tell his story.

Once, when I was still working as a wagon driver there was a ferocious storm. Sheets of rain pounded down from the heavens, accompanied by crackling lightning and mighty, terrifying winds.

People wisely refrained from leaving their houses, and certainly they were not about to embark on any out-of-town trips. Unfortunately, I had already obligated myself to one of the powerful noblemen of the area to deliver for him a wagon of goods to a distant location. I realized that if I delayed another day I would be in more physical danger from the furious noble than from the weather!

So, feeling I had no better choice, I elected to take my chances with the storm. I drove slowly and cautiously, but still, it was nothing less than a miracle that the wagon did not sink in the mud or an axle or a wheel did not break. After a few hours, I suddenly noticed a large bearded Jewish man off the side of the road. He was totally and thoroughly drenched from head to toe and his clothes looked like they were made out of mud.

I slowed down in order to pull over and offer my help. As I got close to the bedraggled storm victim, I saw to my amazement and horror that it was none other than the holy Sassover Rebbe! I quickly lent a hand for him to climb into the wagon, and helped him to shake and scrape the water and mud off of his garments.

He stared at me in wonder as if I were a redeeming angel from Heaven, while for my

part I also stared at him, bewildered as to how it could be that the Rebbe was standing alone in the middle of nowhere in such terrible conditions.

The Sassover Rebbe explained to me that he had committed himself to regularly travel to see his parents in Brod, where they lived. Occasionally it happened, as in this case, that when the time to visit came, he would find himself with no ready money, and therefore would have to journey the long distance from the town of Sassov to the city of Brod by foot. The morning he had set out the weather had not been so bad. After a time he was overtaken by the storm, but he had not been willing to turn back from the path to perform a mitzvah once he had already begun.

He then asked me how much money I expected to profit from the delivery job I was on. I told him, whereupon he said that he would obligate himself to pay me a much greater fee, if only I would agree to first take him to Brod.

The truth is that by that moment when he made his request there was already no need to do so. I had already pulled in the reins and shifted direction toward Brod. The way was extremely difficult, and many times I thought we would not make it. But finally, with the kindness of the Almighty, we arrived at our destination a few days later. The following week, after the weather improved and the roads dried out a bit, I drove the Rebbe back to Sassov.

Before we parted, the Rebbe repeated his promise to pay me as generously as he had first said. I, however, had never intended to take from that holy leader any payment whatsoever for helping him in his desperate situation. But knowing he wouldn't be pleased, I had waited until the final moment to tell him of my intentions. He, of course, insisted on paying me, but I just as firmly maintained my refusal.

Finally, to placate him, I said that although I wouldn't accept money from him, I would be delighted to receive a blessing. He thought for a few moments and then asked me, "What do you own?"

I couldn't understand what he meant by asking me that, so I answered simply, "These two horses." He considered again for a few long moments, and then gave me the most perplexing statement I ever heard of in my life: "Well, then, one horse shall be for Purim and the other shall be for Pesach."

"What sort of blessing is this?" I thought to myself. But I didn't have the nerve to question him about it.

Several weeks passed and it was already close to Purim. Two days before the holiday, one of my horses became ill and died. I was very upset. Still, the money I received by selling his carcass was enough to provide for the needs of the festival.

Four weeks later my second horse died suddenly. It was a disaster, destroying my ability to derive income, but this time too, the sale of the dead animal enabled me to barely meet the major expenditures of the Pesach holiday.

Now I realized what the Sassover Rebbe had hinted with his strange words. "One horse for Purim" meant for the needs of Purim, and "one for

It Once Happened...

Pesach" meant for the required purchases for those eight days.

Immediately after Pesach, I went to call upon the Sassover Rebbe. I told him how his words had indeed come true, and in amazing fashion, but bemoaned the fact that now I was in extremely difficult circumstances with no means to make a living.

The Rebbe gazed at me with sparkling eyes and a beaming smile. He remarked cheerfully, "It seems that it has been decided in Heaven that you have spent enough years as a miserable wagon driver. The time has arrived for you to become rich!"

I stared at him dumbly, unable to utter a word. Could I really have heard him correctly? But then the Rebbe continued and said, "Take my advice. Go and lease a nice property from one of the nobility. Then you can make a nice living as an estate manager."

My initial reaction was that the Rebbe was teasing me, even though I knew a holy person such as he would never do such a thing. I didn't even have the money to purchase a new horse; how could I possibly come up with the funds to lease a prosperous estate? I left the Rebbe's room, only barely managing to conceal my perplexity and doubts at what he had told me.

I made my way from village to village - confused, depressed, and at a loss over what to do next. One day, while sitting in an inn, I overheard a conversation between two Jewish merchants. It seemed that all the Jewish managers of the estates of Count Dombinsky had quit and left the region, due to his evil disposition and his ill treatment of them. The Count told the two men that he would not do any business with them until they found him a new Jewish renter to take over at least one of his properties.

I jumped up, ran over to them and volunteered to be the tenant manager they sought. It was absolutely clear that this is what the Rebbe had intended.

The Count acted pleased to meet me. When I told him I couldn't afford the lease money, he generously offered to waive the first year's payment and allowed me to rent an excellent estate with great income-producing potential. Over the years our relationship grew stronger and he encouraged me to lease other properties of his as well. Thus I prospered and became as you see me today.

I know all my predecessors and many other Jews found the Count to be a terrible person, but he has always treated me very well. I assume it is in the merit of the Sassover Rebbe's blessing.

Reprinted from an email of Sichat HaShavua.



Shabbat Times - Parshat Vayakhel - Pekudei

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	5:12	6:26	7:06
Tel Aviv	5:28	6:27	7:03
Haifa	5:19	6:27	7:05
Be'er Sheva	5:30	6:28	7:06



Hospitality for Man and Beast

By Yanki Tauber

For many years the two saintly brothers, Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk and Rabbi Zusha of Anipoli, wandered the back roads of Galicia. Disguised as simple beggars, they journeyed from town to town and from village to village, refining their souls with the travails of exile and inspiring their brethren with words of wisdom and encouragement.

Late one evening, the brothers arrived in the town of Lodmir. Seeing a lighted window in a large, well-appointed home, they knocked on the door and asked for a place to stay the night. "I don't run a hotel," was the irate response of its large, well-appointed resident. "There's a poorhouse near the synagogue for wandering beggars. I'm sure you'll have no trouble finding accommodations there."

The heavy door all but slammed in their faces, and Rabbi Elimelech and Rabbi Zusha walked on. Soon they came upon another lighted home, whose resident, the town scribe, welcomed them in and put his humble hut and resources at their disposal.

Several years later, the two brothers again visited Lodmir. This time, they were official guests of the community, which had requested that the now famous rabbis come for a Shabbat to grace the town with their presence and teachings.

At the welcoming reception held in their honor and attended by the entire town, a wealthy gentleman approached them.

"Rabbis!" he announced, "the town council has granted me the honor of hosting you during your stay. Hahsem has been generous to me, and you'll want for nothing in my home. I've already explained to your coachman how to find my residence, though he's sure not to miss it - everyone knows where 'Reb Feivel' lives..."

The gathering dispersed, and Rabbi Elimelech and Rabbi Zusha went to pay their respects to the town rabbi and meet with the scholars in the local study hall. The rich man went home to supervise the final arrangements for the rabbis' stay. Soon the coachman arrived with the brothers' coach and luggage. The horses were placed in the stables, the luggage in the rabbis' rooms, and the coachman settled in the servants' quarters.

Hours passed, but still no sign of the two visitors. Growing anxious, the host sought out their coachman. "What happened?" he asked. "When are they going to come here?"

"They're not coming," said the coachman. "Rabbi Elimelech and Rabbi Zusha are staying at the scribe's home."

"At the scribe's?! What are you talking about?! You're here, aren't you?"

"Those were the rabbis' instructions. Take the horses and our luggage to Reb Feivel's," they said to me. "We'll be staying with the scribe."

Reb Feivel rushed to the scribe's hut and fairly knocked down the door. "Honored Rabbis," he cried, finding Rabbi Elimelech and Rabbi Zusha before the fire, having a cup of tea with their host. "Why have you done this to me? It was agreed that I would host you. You must tell me what I have done to deserve such humiliation!"

"But you are hosting us," said Rabbi Elimelech, "at least, that part of us that you desire to host. Last time we were here, but without a coach, horses, coachman and bundles of pressed clothes, you turned us away from your door. Nothing about us, personally, has changed, so it is not us you want in your home now, but our coachman, horses and luggage - which are currently enjoying your hospitality!"

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Pesach

Halachot, Minhagim and Stories

for the year 2023 / 5783

According to Shulchan Aruch Harav, Mishna Berura and Nittel Gavriel
 All times listed are for Jerusalem unless as per www.myzmanim.com
 Based on Rabbi Shmuel Lesches' Pesach Sheets
 Reviewed by Reb Elimelech Reb Yanki Tauber
 Compiled by Yossi Yanki Tauber

in memory of my parents
 ר' ראובן יצחק אליעזר הלוי ע"ה
 ותהיה ברכה ב"ה משה ע"ה רבינוביץ
 בן ר' אורי ע"ה
 ומלכה בת ר' יצחק צבי ע"ה פורנקל
 ר' פתוך שמחה בן ר' אליהו בן ע"ה כהן

in memory of his close friend and mentor,
 ר' מנחם משה בן ר' נפתלי הירצקא ז"ל
 דבורה חנה ע"ה בת מנחם מענדל ש"ס

COMING SOON

The second part of this week's double Parsha of Vayakhel-Pekudei is remarkable. Most of the Parsha provides for us a detailed balance sheet. After the construction of the Mishkan, we're told exactly what the nation contributed, and how Moshe used every single item in a responsible way. In this manner, Moshe wanted us to know, that what he had done was carried out faithfully and correctly.

Moshe was sensitive to what we call מראית עין. He knew how important it is, not only to do what's right, but to be seen to be doing what is right. For example, we are conscious of עין מראית עין if, a person goes into a non-kosher butchery in order to buy some bones for his or her dog. Someone who sees this happening, might conclude that they're buying non-kosher meat for themselves. Or alternatively, an onlooker could say 'I didn't know that that butchery is kosher.' It is right always to do what is right, and to be seen to be doing what is right.

In this spirit, the Talmud tells us, that in the times of the Beit Hamikdash, the tax collectors were instructed, never to have pockets in their clothes nor folds in their garments. They would hold the monies that they had taken, in their hands, and similarly we are told, that when raising funds for charity, we should go around not as single individuals, but in pairs.

The Mishnah tells us about the Garmu family. They were responsible for baking the shewbread in the Temple, and they kept the recipe secret within their family circles from generation to generation. They had a tradition, that they never served baked goods in any of their homes. They didn't want the thought to cross anybody's mind, that they were using Temple ingredients for the baked goods that they were serving. Similarly, the Mishnah adds, that the Avtinan family were responsible for preparing the incense in the Temple, and they had a family custom, when it came to their family smachot - none of the women ever wore perfume, lest it crossed the mind of anyone, that these women were using some of the sweet fragrances of the Temple, for their own personal needs.

The Torah is well-known to be exceptionally concise. Often we learn major laws from just one word, sometimes even from one single letter. But this week's Parsha provides all the space necessary to provide the balance sheet, in order to let us know how sensitive Moshe Rabbeinu was to מראית עין.

So we too should be sensitive to מראית עין. Always trying to do what's right, and to try to be seen to be doing what is right, and let's pray with all our hearts, for the recovery of all the sick, 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, happy Shabbat and Chodesh Tov.

Yossi

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

Parshat Vayakhel	Parshat Pekudei
NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 1	NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 0
MITZVOT ASEH: 0	MITZVOT ASEH: 0
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 1	MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 0
NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 122	NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 92
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1558	NUMBER OF WORDS: 1182
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 6181	NUMBER OF LETTERS: 4432

The Shabbat preceding (or on) Rosh Chodesh Nissan is called Shabbat HaChodesh.

We take out two Sifrei Torah, in the first, we have seven Aliyot in the weekly Parsha, followed by Half-Kaddish.

In the second Sefer Torah, the Maftir reads from Parshat Bo (12:1-20), which starts with the first Mitzva given to the Bnei Yisrael, while they were still in Mitzrayim, even before the Mitzvot of the Chag Pesach - the Mitzva of Kiddush HaChodesh. The reading begins with the declaration that the Hebrew month of Nissan, and not Tishrei, is to be considered the first month of the year. The passage then continues with some of the mitzvot of Pesach, which are certainly appropriate to be read and studied as the holiday approaches.

HAFTORA:
 Ashkenazim: Yechezkel 45:16 - 46:18
 Sephardim & Chabad: Yechezkel 45:18 - 46:15