

The Jewish Weekly

Saved by a Wedding

by Rabbi Shmuel Butman

Reb Aryeh, a chassid of Rabbi Shneur Zalman, founder of Chabad Chassidism (the 'Alter Rebbe'), had been appointed by the authorities as "burgomaster" of his town. As chief magistrate and official record keeper for the government, one of Reb Aryeh's responsibilities was keeping track of all marriages, births and deaths in the Jewish community, entering them in a special register.

It happened once that a local gentile converted to Judaism. This was a grave offense in those times and in that place. Anyone even remotely suspected of having helped in the conversion process was subject to stiff penalties. This being so, Reb Aryeh was asked to conveniently "forget" to record the name of a certain Jew who had just died. The convert, who was approximately the same age as the deceased, would be given the dead man's papers and assume his identity.

It was a clever plan, and it might have worked if not for the informer who brought the plot to light. The burgomaster was caught and a trial date was set.

Reb Aryeh was in grave danger. Being a true chassid, he went to the Alter Rebbe and explained his predicament. The Rebbe advised him to postpone the trial, and it was rescheduled for a later date.

When the second trial date rolled around Reb Aryeh returned to the Rebbe. Again, the Alter Rebbe advised him to defer it. This happened several times, until finally Reb Aryeh was unable to push it off any longer. At long last the burgomaster would be tried for his "crime." The chassid begged the Rebbe to save him.

Oddly enough, the Alter Rebbe responded by inviting Reb Aryeh to his grandchild's wedding, which was about to take place in the town of Zlobin, Ukraine, in 1807. It was a union between two rabbinical dynasties: The Alter Rebbe's granddaughter, Baila, was marrying the grandson of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchov, Yekutiel Zalman.

"Why don't you come and present your problem to Reb Levi Yitzchak?" the Alter Rebbe suggested. "I'm sure that he can help you."

Reb Aryeh traveled to Zlobin, but getting in to see Reb Levi Yitzchak was very difficult, as thousands of other people had arrived with the same idea. Unwilling to give up, Reb Aryeh decided to come back in the middle of the night and stand outside Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's door. The following morning, he would be first in line.

That night, Reb Aryeh positioned himself outside Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's room and peeked inside. A strange sight met his eyes!

On one side of the Tzaddik's bed stood one of his attendants with a volume of Mishnayot; on the other side stood a second gabbai with the holy Zohar. Both men were reading aloud - at the same time - while Reb Levi Yitzchak appeared to be sleeping. Yet, when one gabbai mispronounced a word, the Tzaddik turned and protested, "Nu! Nu!"

This continued for some two hours, after which Rabbi Levi Yitzchak arose from his "nap" and Reb Aryeh was allowed to enter.

The first thing Reb Levi Yitzchak asked Reb Aryeh was who had sent him. "My Rebbe," the Chassid replied.

"And who might that be?"

"Rabbi Shneur Zalman, in Liadi, Belarus," Reb Aryeh answered.

"Ah, him!" Reb Levi Yitzchak exclaimed. "My in-law is your Rebbe? Such a Tzaddik and scholar, such a holy man of G-d!" He continued in this vein for some time, praising Rabbi Shneur Zalman to the skies. "So, tell me," he said fondly, "what can I do for you?"

Reb Aryeh explained that he was the burgomaster of his hometown. "A burgomaster?" the Tzaddik repeated after him. "What does that mean?"

The Chassid described his various duties and responsibilities.

"You mean to say that a Jew is in charge of the whole town?" Rabbi Levi Yitzchak asked, duly impressed. "How can that be?"

"To tell you the truth," Reb Aryeh replied, "the only reason I took the job was that the Alter Rebbe urged me to do so."

"Aha!" the Tzaddik declared emphatically. "My in-law - the sage, the saint, the learned scholar, the righteous one - guided you to take this position. In that case you have nothing to worry about. G-d will surely help and guard you from all harm."

Reb Aryeh went back to the Alter Rebbe and related his conversation with Reb Levi Yitzchak.

"So, what do you think?" the Alter Rebbe asked. "Did I give you good advice?"

He then repeated the question. "I gave you good advice, didn't I?"

On the day before the trial was due to begin a fire broke out in the courthouse. All the important documents in the building were completely burned - including the official indictment against Reb Aryeh. With no other record the case was dropped, and that was the end of the accusation.

Reprinted from an email from L'chaim weekly magazine.

It Once Happened..

Defining Your Life's True Lamborghini

by Rabbi Yosef Farhi



2022 Lamborghini

The other day, I asked my Rabbi if I should get a new car. My car is a Toyota Prius, the first, awesome hybrid, and it works fine and is extremely inexpensive. B"H, I have more money than I need, and I can buy any car I want. For me, the truth is, I don't even need a car. I work from home, and my apartment in Jerusalem is less than 5 minutes' walk to all my kids' schools, and endless minyanim. One of my life's blessings is that I don't need, ever, to be stuck in traffic.

But when I was seeing how everyone got new cars, I wondered if I am doing something wrong. I asked my Rabbi, "So many friends have gotten themselves nice cars, like Volvos, Teslas, Audis, etc. Should I upgrade to a brand-name car, or just stay the way things are?"

My Rabbi answered me, "The reason why they got the Volvos, Teslas and Audis is because, they are seeing others getting Porsches and Lamborghinis, and they feel that they need to upgrade, so they got the cars they got. You have to ask yourself what serves your needs, and not look around at what other people are choosing."

So, instead of my putting money into the most expensive, fancy black Audi, I will put my money into the most expensive pair of black Tefillin for my son's upcoming Bar Mitzvah. That is my Lamborghini.

Instead of investing time in the stock market, to gain from a bear market, something I have no control over, I am investing in my health and running in the forest, every day, in the backyard of my neighborhood Bayit Vegan (there are no bears there).

Instead of my trying to figure out a way to beat inflation, I am investing in relationships, by giving free services to as many people now who are in need and can't afford the new life expenses. I try to beat the herd mentality, instead of falling for it. I try to stop seeing the world from the point of view of the news media.

email of Rabbi David Bibi's Shabbat Shalom from Cyberspace.

YF GRAPHICS

Shabbat Times - Nitzavim - Vayelech

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	6:19	7:31	8:11
Tel Aviv	6:34	7:33	8:08
Haifa	6:26	7:32	8:10
Be'er Sheva	6:36	7:33	8:10



**The Baba Meir's Advice
To an Illiterate Job Seeker**
By Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg

Many years ago, Levi decided to move from Morocco to Eretz Yisroel. The problem was that Levi did not know how to read or write, and he did not even know the letters. His friends discouraged him from moving to Eretz Yisroel. They told him, "People are more educated there, and you won't be able to get a job if you can't read or write."

He decided to ask Rav Meir Abuchatzzeira (the Baba Meir) and do whatever the Rav suggested. Rav Meir said, "Go to Eretz Yisroel and have no worries. HaKadosh Baruch Hu feeds every living thing. He feeds all the animals, even though they can't read or write. Why should He not feed you too?"

When Rav Meir saw that Levi was still nervous, he added, "If Hashem wants, He can send you your Parnasah, not just despite the fact that you can't read, but specifically because you can't read!"

Levi took Rav Meir's advice and moved to Eretz Yisroel. After he found a place to settle in, he went to the employment office to look for a job. During the long wait for his turn, he saw many people who were younger and better educated than he was, and his doubts returned.

"What kind of employer would want to hire me over these people?" he asked himself. When his turn finally arrived, he introduced himself to the clerk on the staff. "I just came from Morocco, and I am looking for work." Then, almost as an afterthought, he confessed, "But I can't read or write."

The clerk wrote down everything he said, and Levi was immediately consumed with regret. "Why did I have to tell him that?" Then he regained his composure and put his trust in Hashem and in the advice of Rav Meir, who had advised him to move to Eretz Yisroel. Hashem would provide his Parnasah no matter what.

Early the next morning, the phone rang in Levi's house. "We are calling from the Defense Ministry. Please come as soon as possible for a work interview." Levi arrived and was told to sit in the waiting room until it was his turn. Levi sat there and waited for a very long time, watching the people who were entering and leaving the room. He could not understand why, after such a long wait, no one called him in for his interview. After three hours of waiting, he was almost ready to get up and go home. Then, someone finally approached him and asked him to come into a different room.

The officer who sat there questioned Levi about his background, focusing mostly on his inability to read. Levi explained, "I never went to school when I was a

child, and when I grew up, I didn't manage to grasp the shapes of the letters." At that point, the officer stood up and extended his hand. "You're hired to work here in the department for weapons development. Your job will be to shred piles of documents, to make sure they do not get into the wrong hands."

Levi was amazed. How could it be? Why would such an advanced department want to hire him? Only after he started working there did he come to understand. The department produced very large amounts of secret documents, and they were stuck with the problem of what to do with it all. The staff consisted mostly of highly trained engineers, whose time was very valuable and could not be wasted on shredding paper.

On the other hand, they could not hire someone from the outside to do it, since he would see all their military secrets. Then someone suggested that they hire someone who couldn't read to do the paper shredding for them. At first it sounded crazy. Where would they find someone illiterate in today's times? Nonetheless, they told the employment agency that they were looking for someone who was illiterate, and asked to be alerted if such a person came looking for a job.

Hashem had orchestrated such an amazing turn of events, that after the Defense Ministry came with such an odd request, Levi came looking for a job, and accidentally let it slip that he was illiterate. It was precisely for that reason that he got the job!

Later, he discovered that his three-hour wait was just a test. They could not believe that he was entirely illiterate, so they left him in the waiting room with a bunch of newspapers and books, and a hidden camera to watch what he did with them. Over the course of three hours, they waited to see if he would start to read them.

At one point, Levi was so bored that he opened the newspaper, but he opened it sideways, proving that he couldn't read! He found his job simple and steady, and it paid a salary that his educated friends could only dream of. After many years of working at the same job, with a comfortable salary, he decided to retire and live off his pension.

However, his retirement did not last long. He soon received another call from the Defense Ministry asking him to come back to work for them. They had not been able to find anyone to replace him, and they desperately needed his services. They promised, "We'll pay your pension and your salary, too," and Levi agreed. Levi merited to see the fulfillment of Rav Meir's Brachah. It was precisely because he was illiterate that he found such a good job. Who knows if he would have found such a good job had he been able to read and write!

Reprinted from an email of Torah U'Tefilah.

What is the significance of every single letter of the Torah?

The Lubavitcher Rebbe gave a beautiful explanation. In Parshat Vayelech, which we'll be reading this coming Shabbat, the Torah presents us with the last of the Mitzvot. Mitzvah number 613 states "ועתה כתבו לכם את השירה הזאת ולמדו את בני ישראל שימה בפיהם – and now, write for yourselves this song, which is the Torah, and teach it to the children of Israel. Place it in their mouths".

Why is there a mitzvah to write a Sefer Torah? We can fulfil this Mitzvah by writing just one letter of a Sefer Torah and it's attributed to us as if we've written the whole Sefer. But why this imperative to be engaged in the writing of letters of the scroll?

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explained, there is a Halacha which we learn from the Gemara in Mesechet Meachot, Daf 29a. There Chazal tell us that all the letters must be "גויל מוקף – surrounded by blank parchment". That is to say that no letter can be connected to any other letter. At the same time there is also a Halacha that each letter must be visibly part of its own word – and visibly separate from all other words.

Each letter represents an individual. The message of the letters of the Torah, is that each one of us should know that we are unique people. As a result, everyone should respect our own individuality, our unique nature and personality. At the same time, none of us should ever forget that we are an integral part of our nation and as a result, we have an 'ערבות – a responsibility', to selflessly care for others and reach out to them.

In addition, if one single letter of the Torah is 'פסול – rendered unfit', then the entire Sefer Torah is unfit. From here we learn that if there is something with just one of us, then every single one of us is affected as a result.

This is such a beautiful message for us and so apposite on the eve of the commencement of Selichot – a time when we're just about to usher in a new year and when we're engaging in 'השבח והגפוש – introspection'.

At this time, therefore, let us never forget how important each and every one of us is and how we should develop ourselves and excel in our own personal way as individuals. At the same time, we should never forget that everybody depends on us and is looking for us to pull our weight for the sake of our nation and for the sake of the world. So let's join together as one to pray with all our hearts, for our soldiers and healthcare professionals, and Chevra Kadisha members worldwide, and for those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnasah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual, loving and sweet Shabbat.

Yossi



The Jewish Weekly's
PARSHA FACTS

Parshat Nitzavim	Parshat Vayelech
NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 0	NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 2
MITZVOT ASEH: 0	MITZVOT ASEH: 2
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 0	MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 0
NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 40	NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 30
NUMBER OF WORDS: 657	NUMBER OF WORDS: 553
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 2575	NUMBER OF LETTERS: 2123

HAFTORA:
Yeshayahu 61:10 - 63:9 (שוש אשיש) (this is the last of the seven Haftorot, that precede Rosh Hashanah).

This week we study Chapter 5 and 6 of Pirkei Avot.

Motzei Shabbat, after midnight, or in the early hours of the morning, Ashkenazim begin the recitation of Selichot.

Rosh Hashanah is Shabbat and Sunday, Sept. 16 & 17.

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