**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas Vayikra 5770**

**Loose Lips Sink Ships**

Good Shabbos Everyone.  The Torah tells us in this week’s parsha Vayikra *“And He [Hashem] called to Moshe, and Hashem spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying..."* (Vayikra - Leviticus 1:1) This verse seems to be repetitive. The beginning of the verse says *“And He [Hashem] called to Moshe…”* and the end of the verse states *“saying.”*

Therefore, the last word in the verse *“saying”* seems to be extra. We know that nothing in the Torah is extra, thus, the Sages learn out a spiritually fulfilling lesson from the this verse. The Talmud (Yoma 4b) explains that the word *“saying”* denotes: *"What I am about to say, you may say to others."*

**No Right to Repeat Information Unless**

**Given Permission by the Speaker**

We learn, therefore, that a person has no right to repeat what someone tells him unless that person gives him explicit permission to do so. (Love Your Neighbor, *parshas Vayikra* p.216 Reb Zelig Pliskin)

The Talmud relates that a certain student revealed a secret that was twenty-two years old. Rabbi Ami expelled him from the *Bais Hamedrash* (study hall) saying *"this person is a revealer of secrets."* (Ibid. citing Sanhedrin 31a)

A person should be careful not to disclose his own secrets to others. Before someone reveals a secret, he is the secret's master. But once a person reveals his secret, the secret is his master, for he lives in fear that it will become known to others. (ibid. Citing *Menoras Hamaor* 2:4) A wise man once joked: *“I can keep a secret, but the people I tell cannot.”* (Rabbi Avrohom Braun – Monsey, New York)

**World War II Advice from the U.S. Navy**

During World War II, the United States Navy instructed its sailors to be very careful not to speak about their ship’s destination. At the time, enemy spies were not uncommon in America. If the information fell into the wrong hands, it could spell disaster for the ship. Therefore, in order to impress upon the sailors the importance of keeping quiet, the Navy coined the phrase *“Loose Lips Sink Ships.”* We should remember this example when we are tempted to reveal another’s private information.

Almost every relationship we have in life depends on the ability to trust that information we share will be kept confidential. It is simply impossible to maintain a friendship or a business relationship without confidentiality. People who are in the position to hear sensitive personal information, such as lawyers, doctors, accountants and shadchanim (matchmakers) have a professional obligation to maintain confidentiality. These people’s careers depend fully on confidentiality. Who would go to an accountant who talked about people’s finances? The more sensitive the information involved, the better the person must be at keeping their mouth tightly sealed.

**An Amazing Story from Tomchei Shabbos**

The following amazing story shows the importance of keeping secrets.

Among the most gentle and caring charities in Jewish neighborhoods today are the *Tomchei Shabbos*-type of organizations, which provide needy families with food every Shabbos. Every week, with remarkable efficiency, a group of volunteers picks up Shabbos staples, such as grape juice, challah, fish, chicken, and cake from wholesalers who provide their food free or at cost. Another group of volunteers converges on the building where the provisions are stored. They package the food in cartons, depending on the size of the families. On Wednesday or Thursday, a third set of volunteers delivers the packages to the needy families.

Rarely do any of the volunteers know the identity of the recipients of these Tomchei Shabbos packages. Sometimes, the cartons are left at the front door of the recipient so that there is no face-to-face contact between the volunteer and a family member. In some cities, volunteers are permitted to deliver only to a part of town where they do not reside, so they will not recognize the address or the dweller. Maintaining the dignity of the needy is uppermost in any Tomchei Shabbos volunteers mind.

**Requesting Help from a London Baal Tzedokah**

In London, Reb Yoel Becker was in charge of fundraising for his local Tomchei Shabbos operation. Two nights a week he visited potential donors. One night he was at the home of Reb Zev Kringold who was known in the past for his charitable donations to other charities. After some small talk, Reb Yoel came to the point. *"I am sure you know about Tomchei Shabbos,"* he said to Reb Zev. *"We are in desperate need of funds and we need your help."*

The prospective donor Reb Zev answered: *“I will give you 100 pounds (the equivalent, at the time, to $180) on the condition that you tell me who receives the food packages."*

The Tomchei Shabbos volunteer Reb Yoel was surprised. *"Reb Zev, you know I can't do that,"* he said. *"We never reveal the names of people getting packages. It is strictly confidential."* *"Look,"* said Reb Zev, *"it is important to me to know that I am helping a specific individual. It makes me feel that I am truly relieving the burden of a fellow Jew."* Seeing that the volunteer Reb Yoel was not moved by his plea, the prospective donor Reb Zev said, *"I will double my donation. I'll even give you 400 pounds!"*

*"I'm sorry,"* said Reb Yoel the volunteer. *"I won't do it. I have never revealed a name and I won't do it now."* *"Look,"* said Reb Zev, getting exasperated. "*Make this one time an exception [and reveal the information to me] and I'll give you 1,000 pounds! I want to feel connected with the poor family and this way I will."*

***Volunteer Refuses All Pleas to Reveal a Name***

The volunteer Reb Yoel realized it was hopeless. *"Reb Zev,"* he said, *"[even] if you gave me 5,000 pounds, I wouldn't reveal who is getting your package or any other package. It's our policy and we will never change it as long as I am in charge."* Suddenly, Reb Zev put his hands to his face and wept. *"Reb Yoel, please put me on your list,"* he sobbed. *"People don't realize that I no longer have the money I once had. My family and I are destitute. I am out of work and struggling every day. I was only testing you. I was ashamed to call you to be put on the Tomchei Shabbos list because I feared that others would find out I was getting packages. I was trying to see if there was any way under any circumstances that you would reveal your recipients - but now that I see that you wouldn't. Please make sure that I am on your list."* (Echoes of the Maggid, p.55 Rabbi Paysach J. Krohn)

**How to Keep Our Friends**

By keeping private information private, we keep friends. Almost all of our relationships in life depend on trust.  Whenever we are tempted to reveal another’s private information, we should remember *“Loose Lips Sink Ships,”* and the potential damage and embarrassment we can cause. Let us be inspired by this week’s lesson to rededicate ourselves to a policy of confidentiality with our friends and business associates. If we are trustworthy, people will run to us to be our friends and to associate with us in business. Good Shabbos Everyone.

Reprinted from this week’s Good Shabbos email – gs@notspeeding.com

**Story #642**

**In Place of a**

**Temple Offering**

Rabbi Moshe-Leib of Sassov once came to the marketplace in Yaroslav. He was passing among the vendors, checking the quality of the straw and hay for sale, when he met his friend, Rabbi Shimon of Yaroslav.

Rebbe, what are you doing here? Shimon asked in surprise.

Leave out my 'Rebbe' and your 'Rebbe' and come with me to carry a bale of hay to a poor widow who had no hay or straw upon which to lay her broken body, the Sassover replied pungently.

The two holy leaders went together, hauling a bale of hay on their shoulders. Astonished bystanders stared in wonder and moved aside to make room for them to pass. As they went, Rabbi Moshe-Leib remarked, Were the Holy Temple standing today, we would be bringing sacrifices and libations. Now we bring straw, and it is as though we have all the kavanot (spiritual intentions) that come with offering the korban mincha sacrifice.

Rabbi Moshe Leib of Sassov's father, R. Yaakov, would take a job before Passover grinding wheat at the mill, not for himself, though he was also a poor man, but for a widow and orphan who lived in his neighborhood. And he did this despite his great and abiding love for the Torah, which he learned constantly.

Moshe Leib, his son, followed in his father's footsteps. Despite his greatness in Torah, he did not worry about his honor when it came to performing acts of kindness for his fellow Jew with his own hands, even if they were beneath his status in the eyes of others.

[Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from Stories my Grandfather Told Me (Mesorah) by Zev Greenwald]

Connection: Weekly Reading the offerings

Biographic Note: Rabbi Moshe-Leib of Sossov (1745-4 Shvat 1807) was the leading disciple of Reb Shmelke of Nicholsburg. He also received from the Maggid of Mezritch and from Elimelech of Lyzhinsk. Subsequently a Rebbe in his own right with many followers, he was famous primarily for his love of his fellow Jews and his creative musical talent. His teachings are contained in the books, Likutei RaMal, Toras ReMaL Hashalem, and Chidushei RaMal.

Reprinted from this week’s email from KabbalaOnline.org, a project of Ascent of Safed [**www.ascentofsafed.com**](http://www.ascentofsafed.com) ([**ascent@ascentofsafed.com**](http://webmailb.juno.com/webmail/new/5?userinfo=eff1e795994608ed6885dfdeac88e827&count=1268829887))

**In Memory of Mr. Ovadi Musafi age 52 And Mr. Lawrence Krause age 50"**

We suffered a terrible tragedy in Teaneck with the death of two of our neighbors on Motzei Shabbos (28 Adar/March 13) as they were returning to their homes from shul , which were literally 200 feet away. The lights were still out last night in Bnai Yeshurun during Mincha/Maariv which added to the somberness and melancholy that was felt by all. Rabbi Pruzansky rose to the occasion with a speech of hisorruus. Rabbi Eisenman of Passaic wrote the below Short Vort which echoes the thoughts that Rabbi Pruzansky shared with us. It’s good mussar for us all.

All of us who live in the northeast of the US, experienced the ‘*gevura*’ (strength) of Hashem this past Shabbos as strong winds, heavy rain and downed trees made life treacherous and difficult. Most of us have undoubtedly heard about the tragic deaths Mr. Ovadi Musafi and Mr. Lawrence Kraus of Teaneck NJ who were killed by a falling tree returning from Shul on Motzei Shabbos.

We feel for their families and their friends.

**An Eerie Sense of Concurrence of Time and Location**

Besides the actual strange circumstances surrounding their death; there is an eerie sense of concurrence of timing and location which led to their demise. Imagine if they would have left the shul two minutes earlier or later, they would have completely avoided their deaths.

However those calculations are the affairs of the *Master Planner* and who are we to ask: “why”? Although we may not ask “why”; however, we can ask *what* we can do in their memory and what can we learn from the tragedy.

Perhaps the most valuable lesson we can learn is what Hillel taught us: “If not now, then when?”

**Imagine a Message from a Heavenly Voice**

Meaning, imagine if a heavenly voice had filtered down to Mr. Musafi and Mr. Krause immediately before they began their private Shmoneh Esrei on Saturday night? How would they have davened that tefillah?

Imagine if as they left the house for Mincha on Shabbos afternoon a Divine communication would have informed them that this was the last time they would ever see their families again? How would they have said ‘good-bye’ to their wives and their children?

Rav Elazar Menachem Man Schach Zt”l- the famed Ponevezher Rosh Yeshiva who lived to 108 years old, once commented that from the time he reached the age of 50, he always awoke and said to himself, “Remember, Lazar, ( a shortened form of his name Elazar), today may be the day you die; make the best of it!”

How often do couples leave for work in the morning while still angry with each other? How often do children go to school in the morning with the echo of their mother’s screaming at them because they are late or they forgot their lunch? How often does a husband slam the door as he leaves the house because he is upset about something his wife said or did not say?

Life is hard.

Believe me I know.

People are complicated.

I know.

However, life is also short and unfortunately none of us have a ‘life contract’ to rely on.

For the sake of Mr. Musafi and Mr. Krause, let us attempt -at least today- to be a little nicer to each other.

After all, who knows what tomorrow’s weather may be?

**RABBIS' MESSAGES**

**The Difference Between**

**The Korban (Offering)**

**Of a Jew and Non-Jew**

**By Rabbi Shmuel Choueka**

“*When a man among you brings an offering*” (Vayikra 1:2)

When the Jews were instructed on the laws of sacrifices, they were told that even a non-Jew could bring a korban, sacrifice. The only difference between his korban and ours is that we are allowed to bring burnt offerings and peace offerings, shelamim and olah, whereas the gentile may only bring a burnt offering, olah. Indeed, even if he says he’s sacrificing a peace offering, it can only be brought as an olah, burnt offering.

The lesson in this is that the non-Jewish view of religion differs from ours drastically. They understand religion to be only to G-d, only in a holy endeavor, not in the normal course of everyday life. They feel if one wants to be close to G-d, he cannot engage in the everyday pursuits such as eating or having children. Therefore, their sacrifice is a burnt offering, only for the altar.

We, however, believe that one must sanctify his everyday living in line with Hashem. We eat and we make a berachah. We get reward because it’s a misvah. In business we perform many commandments. Our duty is to take the mundane and make it spiritual. Therefore we can bring a shelamim, peace offering, where part goes on the altar and part is eaten by man. Our mission is to live life the fullest in the ways of Hashem.

**The Lesson from the**

**Word “Adam”:**

**The Unity of All Jews**

**By Rabbi Reuven Semeh**

“*Speak to B’nei Yisrael and say to them: When a man (Adam) among you brings an offering to Hashem*.” (Vayikra 1:2)

Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin notes that the verse begins with the singular, Adam, man, and continues with the plural, Takribu, all of you shall bring. He explains that in essence every sacrifice, even when brought by an individual, is an offering for the entire Jewish people. All Jews are truly connected. The Hafess Hayim, citing Zohar, writes that in heaven all Jewish souls are one in a very real sense. Thus, when a Jew does a misvah, he is benefiting not only himself, but all of the Jewish people. When he offers a sacrifice, he is achieving atonement for the entire Jewish people. The unity of Israel is alluded to in the word Adam. The Gemara comments, “You, the Jewish people, are called Adam, but the nations of the world are not called Adam.”

I would like to relate to you an incredible story told by Nahman Seltzer that illustrates what two Jewish people can do when they become unified as one. This is a true story that happened recently in Israel. Shira and Zahava were enemies for years. They fought all the time and they hated each other. They had a shared history that extended back thirty years. They had met when they were very young. In first grade the confrontation usually ended in hair pulling and scratching. It moved on to bigger and better things in later grades. Sparks flew whenever they looked at each other. They just never stopped fighting. It is true that each one at different times contemplated making peace, but it could never work out.

One Shabbat morning a Rabbi’s class on some honest self-examination broke through to Zahava and she decided that the time had come to end it. Yes, Zahava was going to make a lasting peace with Shira. She would need to do something concrete to show her that she really meant it. With trembling fingers she dialed her enemy’s home phone number.

“Shira, this is Zahava. Yes, it’s me, Shira; it’s time to make peace…” After a few minutes of silence Shira began to cry and so did Zahava. Then Zahava told her the plan. In two months Zahava’s child was getting married. Zahava wanted Shira to sit at the front table with her to show everyone that they really made peace. Shira was thrilled and started thinking about buying a new dress. They were both thrilled.

After they hung up, Shira checked her calendar. She was horrified when she realized that on that night she had an important doctor’s appointment that she had waited for for six months which she couldn’t change. She called Zahava back to tell her the disappointing news. Zahava understood. Zahava talked to her Rabbi who came up with the idea to try to change the wedding date. Zahava listened and there was a cancellation at the wedding hall. Zahava changed the date. Both Shira and Zahava were delighted.

On the evening of May 24, 2001, a disaster occurred at the Versailles Wedding Hall in Talpiot, Yerushalayim. The building collapsed. Twenty-three people died that night. Zahava’s son was to have been married on the lower floor in that building on that exact day. But they weren’t there. Their wedding had been rescheduled, because two women, enemies for thirty years, wanted nothing more than to make peace between themselves.

*Reprinted from this week’s Jersey Shore Torah Bulletin*

[**The Human Side of the Story**](http://ohr.edu/yhiy.php?seriesid=17&archive=1)

**The First Carrot**

**Peeler in Jerusalem**

**By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach**

There was great excitement in Jerusalem when the first shipment of modern carrot peelers arrived in the city. And who was the first housewife to receive as a gift this new gadget that made the work of the housekeeper a bit easier? The wife of the Torah giant, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, *zatzal*.

It probably came to his attention as a result of a halachic question regarding the need to immerse such a utensil in a mikveh before use. But once he became aware of its existence he rushed to purchase one for his wife as an expression of his appreciation of her role as his wife.

Reprinted from this week’s website of Ohr Somayach Yeshiva in Yerushalayim – [www.ohr.edu](http://www.ohr.edu)

**Talking Points -Parshas Vayikra**

**1. HELP, HELP**

"*Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them: 'When a man among you brings an offering to Hashem: from animals, from cattle, or from the flock, shall you bring your offering*.'" (Vayikra 1:2)

From cattle, or from the flock - The Torah only permitted sacrificial offerings to be brought from sheep or oxen, not from wild animals. This is because wild animals prey upon cattle and flock, and G-d harbors a special love for the pursued, as opposed to the pursuer. - Rabbeinu Bachya

"The Jewish people are pursued by the nations of the world. Yet, the Almighty chose the Jewish people as His special nation, as the verse says, 'And you were chosen by G-d to be to Him for a special nation.' Rabbi Eliezer ben Rabbi Yosi ben Zimra said, 'A similar dictum was said by the Almighty regarding the sacrificial offerings. An ox is pursued by a lion, a lamb is pursued by a leopard, a goat by a wolf. Don't offer Me any offerings from the predators, rather, only from the hunted as the verse says, 'An ox, lamb or goat, when it is born, shall be with its mother for seven days.' From the eighth day and thereafter it may be favorably accepted as a sacrificial fire-offering before G-d." - Midrash Rabbah, VaYikra 27:5

**Rabbi Avahu’s Advice**

"Rabbi Avahu said, 'One should always number himself among the pursued rather than among the pursuers, for there are no birds more hunted than the pigeon and the dove. Yet, the verse only allowed those species to be offered on the Altar." - Talmud, Tractate Bava Kama 93a

Although there are many varieties of sacrificial offerings, each of which is brought for a different reason, all of them share a common goal - to achieve closeness with the Almighty. The ideal attitude to adopt when seeking this nearness is to approach the Almighty with a mindset similar to that of the pursued, who recognizes that he is dependent upon others for his salvation and that he must be prepared to reach out to whoever will save him.

Similarly, a Jew must realize that absent a special relationship with his Creator, he is lost and that he must reach out to the Almighty to help him overcome his sinful inclination. Sacrificial-offerings, whose goal it is to enhance our relationship with the Almighty, must reflect this fact, and therefore only the aforementioned varieties of animals may be utilized.

**2. WATCH WHAT YOU EAT**

"If one's offering to Hashem is an elevation-offering of fowl... He shall remove its entrails...and throw it beside the Altar, eastward, to the place of the ashes." (Vayikra 1:14-16)

With its entrails - Only when offering a bird as a sacrificial offering was the crop removed prior to burning it on the Altar. The same was not done when offering an animal. This is because the crop of the bird contains the digestive organs and the food remains, which often belonged to someone else, for birds rarely have a master who feeds them. Cattle, on the other hand, often eat from that which belongs to their master, and therefore their entrails may be offered on the Altar. - Midrash Rabbah

Rabbeinu Bachya points out that this law must serve as an inspiration for us to appreciate the severity of the sin of theft. Just as the Almighty rejects bird entrails for fear that they contain traces of ill-begotten food, so too, will He reject us if our hands are sullied by tainted money.

To underscore this point, the Prophet Jeremiah warned us [17:11] that theft will drive a person from this world and will prevent his entry into the World to Come, for this particular sin inhibits the souls ability to reconnect with its Divine source.

*Reprinted from Partners in Torah Parsha Partner email.*

**Prime Minister's Son is**

**Israel's Youth Bible Champion**

**By Gil Ronen**



Avner Netanyahu, 15, son of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Sarah Netanyahu, received the top honor in Israel's national Bible Quiz championship for youth Tuesday. The girls' champion was Or Ashual of the Bnei Akiva Amana Academy in Kfar Saba.

Netanyahu, Ashual and two other runner-ups will participate in the upcoming world Bible Quiz championship for youth that will take place in Jerusalem on Independence Day, several weeks from now.

The national finals of the Bible Quiz took place in the city of Kiryat Shmona, in northern Israel, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary. The prime minister and his wife were both in the audience, as was Education Minister Gideon Saar. The panel of judges was headed by Dr. Shimshon Shoshani, Education Ministry Director.

Some 12,000 students from both the religious and the non-religious school systems participated in the Bible Quiz championship this year. There were four stages to the competition: the school stage, the district stage, the first national stage (a written test, unlike the other stages, which are public competitions) and the final national stage.

Sarah Netanyahu's three brothers are all former champions of the Bible Quiz: Amatziah Ben-Artzi was Deputy World Champion, Matanyah Ben-Artzi won the national competition at the age of 10, and Hagi Ben-Artzi was World Bible Quiz Champion.

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**PERASHAT VAYIKRA**

**As Heard From**

**Rabbi Avigdor Miller, Zt”l**

“*A man when he offers*” (Vayikra 1:2)

*Adam* denotes “one made of the soil” (‘adamah’). Not only the first man, but also every Adam comes from the soil which produced the food of which the body is composed. The first duty of an Adam is gratitude to his Creator, and this gratitude he must express most heartfully for the food of which he is composed and which maintains his existence.

The Korban that he offers to his Creator, whether of meat and blood or of flour or of wine, is fundamentally a demonstration of thanksgiving to Hashem that created the miracle of food, and Who performed the miracle of creating the body from food, and the miracle of maintaining the body by means of food. This is the most obvious of the intentions of the offerings. But there are indeed more intentions which can be discerned. Some of which we shall study.

Whatever intentions we may discover, yet the basic attitude was that not “a man offers to Hashem,” but a man declares that the offering belongs to Hashem the Creator. The bringing of the offering is a declaration that *He is the Giver*. This intention is the principle that underlies not only Korbanot and tithes, but also all the Mitzvot of the Torah: *To declare gratitude to the Giver* – Hakarat Hatob.

This is the primary lesson which manifests itself on Pesach and on which our Torah is built. Gratitude, Hakarat Hatov, in recognizing and acknowledging all of the tremendous gifts of kindliness that Hashem is constantly bestowing upon us and our families.

*Adapted from “A Kingdom of Cohanim” by Rabbi Avigdor Miller, zt”l.*

Parshat Vayikra

**The Baron Who Wouldn’t Sell the Jews in His Town Land for a Cemetery**

**By Rabbi Tuvia Bolton**

This week's section opens the book of Leviticus where we learn about the animal sacrifices. But strangely it opens with an apparently meaningless phrase: 'Vayikra el Moshe' "And He (G-d) called to Moses."

And even stranger: The entire book of VaYikra is named after this phrase!

Rashi explains that "Vayikra" is a term of endearment and shows that G-d liked Moses.

But this also doesn't seem to make sense. Don't we know that G-d liked Moses? And why did the Torah wait for the laws of sacrifices to tell us?

Also the last letter of the word Vayikra, which happens to be an "Alef", is written smaller than the other letters of the Torah. Why is this?

To answer this here is a story.

**Rabbi Yissachar Ber of Rodoshitz**

Rabbi Yissachar Ber of Rodoshitz was a great Tzadik that lived in Poland some one hundred years ago. Like Moses over 3,000 years earlier whenever possible he did all he could to 'take the Jews from Egypt' namely alleviate them of their problems.

And one of the biggest problems for the Jews in Rodoshitz was burial.

Several thousand Jews lived in the town but strangely there was no Jewish cemetery there. Whenever a Jew died, the bereaved family had to hire a carriage and travel for some two hours, often through rain, blazing sun or sub-zero weather to the nearest town make the funeral.

It wasn't that there was no available land in Rodoshitz, there was plenty of it. The problem was that the local Baron hated Jews passionately and the very sight of a Jew made him berserk. He not only refused to allocate land for their cemetery, the few times the Jews approached him about it they suffered for months thereafter.

**The Situation Became More and More Unbearable**

`As the Jewish population there grew the situation became more and more unbearable until finally the town elders decided they would have to do something radical; ask for the Rebbe's help.

They prepared themselves for days; purified their thoughts, went repeatedly to the mikva, gave charity, spent the entire 24 hours beforehand praying, learning Torah and reading Psalms and finally entered the Rebbe's office in fear and trepidation.

They poured out their hearts and waited in silence for the his  reply.

"Isn't there any plot of land that would be fitting for a cemetery here in Rodoshitz?" He asked.

"Yes" they answered sadly. "In fact there is a perfect place; a worthless plot of rocky and barren land about fifteen minutes from the town. True, it would be hard to dig graves there too but we figured that it was the only place that the Baron might be willing to sell.

"But he refused. We even offered him a lot of money. He just started screaming like a madman that he didn't want ANY Jews on his lands; dead or alive. Just that the live ones pay taxes. Then he raised the taxes!"

The Rebbe thought for a while and said. "Go again, offer him more money and if he refuses tell him in my name that if the Jews can't be buried there then someone else will."

**Courageously Head Straight for the Baron’s Castle**

They left the Tzadik's home and courageously headed straight for the Baron's castle without considering the consequences. They miraculously got in and even managed to get the Rebbe's mysterious message to him before he started screaming and cursing and had them evicted.

Two weeks later was the Baron's birthday and he decided to give his family a tour of his lands followed by a picnic.

His wife and four children dressed in their finest clothes and entered his enormous royal carriage pulled by four huge white steeds. The driver whipped the horses and they were off! It was a beautiful summer day and they were thoroughly enjoying themselves looking at the landscape and occasionally getting out to sit by a river or a tree.

**Farmers Come Out to Greet the Baron**

Needless to say, the local farmers turned out and waved to the carriage (more from fear than from love) and everything was going perfectly...... Until the Baron decided he would show his family the hard barren plot of land that he was driving the Jews crazy with.

He gave orders to the driver and in no time they were there. It was bumpy and rough going but that just added to the fun. But suddenly the carriage slowed to a halt and all that could be heard was the driver shouting, cursing and whipping the horses.

"What is the problem?!" Yelled the Baron through the window.

"I don't know." The driver replied. "We're stuck in some mud and the horses aren't getting us out. They're up to their knees in whatever it is. I can't figure it out."

The driver got off the carriage and saw what seemed to be a large shallow puddle of water in the road that he drove through, turned out to be deeper than he thought.

Although he couldn't figure where such a puddle came from in the middle of the summer, suddenly he realized that he himself was beginning to sink.

Meanwhile the Baron opened his door and descended from the wagon figuring he would just take his family out. But as soon as he did, his feet also began to sink. It was only with the greatest effort that he and the driver managed to pull themselves from the muck and get back onto the carriage.

They shouted for help, the driver even blew a trumpet he had for such emergencies and in no time farmers had gathered around and began yelling advice. The puddle seemed to grow, pushing them further and further from the carriage. A few of them ran home and brought ropes to throw as life-lines but by the time they got back the water had spread out so that the ropes simply didn't reach the carriage.

Someone brought planks of wood but they simply sank in the mud as soon as someone stepped on them. A few farmers even set off desperately to the Castle for help, which was a good two hours drive.

**Baron’s Family Screams in Panic**

After half an hour the wheels of the carriage were half sunk and going steadily down. The Baron's wife and children were screaming in panic while the Baron had his head stuck out the window alternately screaming and cursing the crowd for not doing anything and looking up trying to figure how to get his family onto its roof.

Finally someone in the crowd suggested that they call the Rabbi.

When the Baron heard that he immediately shouted "NO!!". But his weeping family gave him a change of heart. "Err. That is ... YES! YES! Certainly! Good idea!!

Run! Run with all your might!" He shouted.

It took almost a half an hour and when they finally returned with the Rebbe, the Baron and his family were sitting on the roof of the carriage, swooning; wailing and waiving their arms in helpless fear while only few feet of the carriage were jutting above the water.

**The Rebbe Asks Baron**

**To Sell the Cemetery Land**

"Are you willing to sell the cemetery land?" The Rebbe yelled to him.

"Yes, Yes!!" The Baron shouted back. I'll even give it to you. Take it for free!

Just get us out of here!!"

"No!" Answered the Rebbe. "I want to buy it and I want you to write up the deed."

"Good, Good!" The Baron yelled as he produced a pen and a large scrap of paper from one of his pockets, wrote what the Rebbe told him to, signed it, took off his shoe, put it inside and threw it to the Rebbe.

As soon as the Rebbe read it and was satisfied he yelled to the driver to get back in his seat and urge the horses, who were now up to their necks in mud, to move.

It seemed ridiculous but the driver had no other choice and sure enough...it worked!! The carriage actually began to move and in moments they had pulled the carriage, now completely black with mud, to freedom!

The farmers helped the Baron and his family down from the roof of the carriage and as soon as their feet hit the ground his wife was beside with gratitude to the Rebbe. She would have hugged him but his very being radiated such awesome holiness that she kept her distance.

The Baron then approached the Rebbe, curtly bowed and said quietly 'I will always be grateful to you for this. Please come to see me at my castle at your convenience and I will have all the necessary papers drawn up. You are welcome in my home'

Two days later the Rebbe visited the Baron, paid him the money and received an official deed of sale. The Baron then shook the Rebbe's hand and said,

"I have begun to think differently about your people. I see why the Bible calls you special and chosen and holy. I mean, you could have let me and my family die, which is what I would have done to you in such a case... but you didn't. I see I have a lot to learn from you. I have decided to change my attitude and help your people who I have so wronged . If you ever need anything please ask me'

**Answers to Our Questions**

This answers our questions.

The sacrifices are the most physical way possible of serving G-d; taking the blood, meat and very life of a brutish animal and converting it from being merely part of the 'creation' (which is G-d's external will; His word so-to-speak) to a commandment (G-d's inner will or thought).

In fact, the sacrifices to a degree, transform even death (the animals are killed)  
to holiness. This is the job of the Jewish people. To reveal the Creator in the entire creation and to transform the entire world into holiness as it once was in the Holy Temple and the sacrifices.

**The Lesson of the Physical Mud**

Something like the physical mud, carriage and horses in our story revealed to the Baron that G-d was king of the world and the Jews are His people.

But our Torah portion section, in fact this entire book of Vayikra, tells us that it all depends on G-d's endearment of Moses; the humblest Jew in the world (hence the 'small' letter Alef) whose only goal in life is to help all the Jews to achieve the above goal.

Without Moses, or the Moses in every generation, the Jews forget their goal and the sacrifices as well as the Holy Temple become empty of blessing with no power to effect the entire creation.

In fact, this is why the Two Temples were destroyed.

But there is hope. Vayikra is hinting at Moshiach who will be a leader and even more humble than Moses.

And that is why Moshiach will build the third Temple and consequently gather all the Jews to Israel. Because ONLY he will awaken true Jewish identity and reveal G-d's endearment of all the Jewish people.

It all depends on us to do all we can to reveal and receive....Moshiach NOW!!

*Reprinted from this week’s TorahOhr Tmimim email (torah@ohrtmimim.org)*

**A Slice of Life**

**The Butterfly Effect**

**By Mina Gordon**

It was a cold winter's evening in Russia. Mrs. Brodsky was walking home, lost in thought. Her only daughter, Bracha, lived far away in another city, on another continent. Mrs. Brodsky was proud of her son-in-law's position as assistant rabbi for the Russian congregation there and admired her daughter's involvement in communal work. It was difficult, however, that they lived so far away. "If only I could be nearer to my grandchildren," she sighed. "I shouldn't complain. I should just thank G-d for the four beautiful grandchildren. Who would have imagined that at 28, my little girl would be a mother of four, thank G-d."

**Notices A Young Woman at the Bus Stop Sobbing**

Her musings were interrupted when she glanced down and saw a young woman sitting at the bus stop, sobbing. Her warm heart did not let her ignore the girl, so she sat down next to her.

"Why are you crying? Please tell me what's wrong; maybe I can help."

The woman looked up tearfully and replied, "Don't worry, it's okay. I'll get over it."

"What is it? Sometimes just talking about a problem helps you work out what to do."

"I just found out that I'm pregnant with twins. I was so excited. Twins! What a blessing! But then my doctor brought me down to earth. 'Of course you'll want an abortion,' he said. 'You already have two children. It would be irresponsible.'"

"If you have two children, you're already an experienced mother," Mrs. Brodsky pointed out. "Why can't you take care of two more children?"

**“I’ve Never Met Anyone with Four Children!”**

"How will we be able to afford the expenses if we double the number of our children? Besides, in all my 28 years, I've never met anyone with four children!"

"Did you say you're 28?" exclaimed Mrs. Brodsky. "I just happen to know a young woman who is the same age as you, 28, and she has four children. She doesn't live in Russia, it's true, but you see that it can be done!"

"Really? Are you serious - she is exactly 28 and has four children? Well if someone else can manage, maybe I could as well..."

"I think I know of an organization that can help you financially, too." Mrs. Brodsky told the young woman about the local Jewish community resources, about Chabad in her city, and about her daughter and grandchildren overseas. When she finished, the young woman looked up at Mrs. Brodsky with eyes filled with hope and a mother's love for her unborn children.

"Thank you for giving me so much encouragement. I think I just needed to hear that it's not impossible." She tore up the referral to the abortion clinic that her doctor had given her.

**Story is Related to the Daughter**

Months passed and Mrs. Brodsky, who missed her daughter and grandchildren, stayed in touch with the young woman, who needed the support of a grandmother. Upon hearing that her young friend had given birth to a healthy set of twins, Mrs. Brodsky told the whole story to her daughter.

"Bracha, do you realize that you helped these two children come into the world although you never even met their parents? Sometimes the most powerful lessons are those taught by example."

Russia in 1991 was at the end of a long and dreary winter. After 70 years of repression of Judaism in the U.S.S.R., Jewish souls were stirring. A young man, Yefim, now called Chaim, was one of those souls. He eagerly absorbed all he learned and then went to New York, to further his studies in yeshiva.

When American rabbinical students prepared to travel through Russia and Ukraine in "Mitzva Tanks," Chaim was asked to join them.

"Since we're going to Ukraine, let's stop off in the towns around Lugansk, where I grew up. My family left a few years ago, but it has a large Jewish population. I know many people there," he suggested.

**Reaching the Isolated Town of Lugansk**

The other students agreed. After many hours on the road, they reached Lugansk. Chaim led them to the addresses of the friends and relatives that he remembered from his childhood, but to his chagrin, not one family remained. It seemed that every Jew had moved out of town since Chaim's family had lived there. All they found was one woman who said that she was Jewish.

They told her about lighting Shabbat candles, and when she said that she had a young son, they gave her a brochure about a summer camp many kilometers away. After that unremarkable encounter, they were wondering whether to continue looking for Jews or to resume their journey. The answer came soon, in the form of a group of anti-Semitic thugs who made it clear that they had better leave town fast. Disappointed, they fled.

Chaim felt bad for bringing his friends on such a futile trip, but they soon reassured him. "G-d directs the steps of man," they quoted. "Everything is by Divine Providence."

Chaim was amazed once again by the positive attitude of those who study Chasidic philosophy. He strengthened his resolve to learn and to do.

**Sixteen Years Pass and a Revelation is Discovered**

Sixteen years passed, and Chaim was himself a shaliach (emissary) of the Lubavitcher Rebbe in another country. In 2007, he was at the International Conference of Shluchim for the first time, and met many fellow shluchim. One emissary came over and gave him a hearty greeting. Chaim looked at his name tag, but neither the name nor the face was familiar. "If not for you, I wouldn't be here," he exclaimed.

"I am really sorry," Chaim apologized, "but I don't remember ever meeting you before."

"You didn't, but you did meet my mother in Ukraine 16 years ago, and you gave her some information about a summer camp. I went to camp and then on to yeshiva, and now I'm an emissary, too!"

*As told to Mina Gordon by Nechama Shapiro. Reprinted in this week’s L’Chaim, a publication of the Lubavitch Youth Organization with permission from the N'Shei Chabad Newsletter*

Wine

**Making Kosher Wine, Finding**

**A Path Back to the Fold**

**By Jordan MacKay**

One would expect that the motivation to make great kosher wine would have come via devout Jewish faith. Yet in the case of Jeff Morgan, the reverse occurred; it was through making kosher wine that he discovered his faith.



Heidi Schumann for The New York Times

Jeff Morgan, left, Napa Valley winemaker, and Jonathan Hajdu, Mr. Morgan's associate winemaker, test Covenant kosher wine.

Mr. Morgan, an author, educator and winemaker in Napa Valley, produces Covenant [cabernet sauvignon](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/w/wines/cabernet_sauvignon_us/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier), California’s finest kosher wine. The creation of Mr. Morgan and his backer, Leslie Rudd (Rudd Winery and Vineyards, Dean & DeLuca, Distillery No. 209 gin), Covenant began as a challenge. In 2002 the two, both nonpracticing Jews, were at a fund-raiser for the synagogue in Napa when Mr. Rudd asked, “Why are kosher wines so bad?”

“You know, Les, they don’t have to be,” said Mr. Morgan, who knew quite a bit about it, having written Wine Spectator’s annual kosher wine roundup many times in the ’90s.

He had tasted hundreds of kosher wines — a few good, he said, but most bad — and told Mr. Rudd, who owns a celebrated Napa vineyard, “I think I can make the greatest kosher wine in 5,000 years, if you just give me 10 tons of red grapes.”

Mr. Rudd demurred, explaining gently that, if Mr. Morgan failed, his wine would be the worst kosher wine from Rudd vineyards. Instead, he offered to back the project if Mr. Morgan used other grapes. Mr. Morgan was fortunate to win a contract from another top Napa vineyard.

But where to make it? That was the crucial question, Mr. Morgan explained. “[Kosher wine](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/w/wines/kosher/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier), despite its reputation, doesn’t have to be different from any other wine as long as it is handled in the cellar only by Sabbath-observant hands,” he said.

Finding such hands in California wasn’t easy, but Mr. Morgan knew that the Herzog family owned a kosher winery on California’s Central Coast.

He booked a dinner with Nathan Herzog at a kosher restaurant. Halfway through, Mr. Morgan finally found the courage to ask to use the Herzog building and its Orthodox crew. As he made his request, though, he was surprised to find himself beginning to sob, his tears gushing like wine from a cracked barrel.

**“Grew Up Knowing I Was Jewish,**

**But Not Really Connected…”**

“I guess there were feelings I didn’t know about,” he said. “I grew up knowing I was Jewish but not really connected to any Jewish tradition.”

He recalled a trip to Jerusalem in his youth: “At the Wailing Wall I saw all these guys praying, and I remember feeling kind of inadequate and sadly disconnected from my heritage. That stayed with me for another 20 years until I started this project.”

From 2003-7, Covenant was made at the Herzog cellar. Mr. Morgan would ship his Napa grapes down the coast, staying a week at a time when he needed to supervise the Orthodox crew.

During these years, Mr. Morgan taught himself Hebrew.

In 2006, he was asked by a niece to read Hebrew at her wedding, since he was the only one in the family who could. Still a beginner, however, he sought the help of the Herzog cellar crew, who the next day took him to practice reading Torah at morning services. There, Mr. Morgan’s halting Hebrew brought a complaint from a member of the congregation. “Come on, what’s the problem here? I got to get to work!” someone shouted.

Mr. Morgan turned around and replied, “Look, this is the first time I’ve ever done this.”

**“Then This is Your Bar Mitzvah!”**

Surprised, the man said: “Really? Then this is your bar mitzvah!” Out came Scotch, bagels and more tears, as a celebration ensued.

“I arrived at work completely shickered,” Mr. Morgan recalled.

He says the spirit has rubbed off on Mr. Rudd, too, who said via e-mail: “Religion is more of a personal journey for me. I simply wanted to make great wine and felt we could do it, as well as respect the kosher laws.”

Notably, though, Mr. Rudd this year, at great expense, released a kosher-for-[Passover](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/p/passover/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier) edition of his Distillery No. 209 gin.

In 2007 Mr. Morgan hired a former Herzog cellar worker, Jonathan Hajdu, as a full-time associate winemaker, which allowed him to move his [winemaking](http://www.nytimes.com/info/winemaking/?inline=nyt-classifier) home to Napa. Today Covenant’s lone tank and barrels take up a small corner in space rented at a large custom crush plant.

**Great Precaution to Insure Wine Remains Kosher**

Great precaution is taken so that only Mr. Hajdu handles the wines, which are lavished with the same care as every other top Napa wine. Occasionally a rabbi from the Orthodox Union arrives to inspect the operation.

Mr. Morgan succeeded in making a fine kosher wine. Covenant has earned high scores from critics and found its way onto wine lists at the French Laundry, Per Se and Spago.

But in 2008 Mr. Morgan truly knew he had made it when Mr. Rudd finally offered him some of his finest Napa fruit. That wine, to be called Solomon after Mr. Rudd’s Hebrew name, will be released later this year.

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