**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas Tzav 5776**

Volume 7, Issue 30 16 Adar II 5776/ March 26, 2016

**Printed L’illuy nishmas Nechama bas R’ Noach, a”h**

For a free subscription, please forward your request to [***keren18@juno.com***](mailto:keren18@juno.com)

**Was it a Coincidence or Divine Providence?**

**By Rabbi Reuven Semah**

Rabbi Ephraim Shapiro tells an amazing story of Divine Providence. In Hollywood, Florida, lived an extraordinary couple, Dr. & Mrs. Rosenblatt. The doctor is a renowned oncologist. One day the doctor’s wife was driving on the highway. She noticed a car on her side that had a for sale sign with a phone number.

She doesn’t know why she did this, but she dialed the number. She didn’t need a used car. She and her husband both had new cars. She asked the driver on the highway why he was selling his car.

He said they are from out of town and his wife is sick and he doesn’t have enough money. He was told that the doctor that could help her was a Dr. Rosenblatt. So he has to sell his car for cash to help pay the doctor.

Mrs. Rosenblatt was shocked. She told him that the doctor is her husband, and he doesn’t have to sell his car. He should pick up his wife and she will call her

husband. He will take her for a patient and treat her immediately without charge. And that’s exactly what happened.

Often we experience an event, a particular person coincidentally showing up after many years; a refund check arriving in the mail in the precise amount of a recent unexpected bill. When we think this is coincidental, this is the philosophy of

Amalek, and we have not done the misvah of eradicating Amalek. We believe that everything is under direct control of Hashem.

Our daily lives are full of these instances. May we always be cognizant of the Divine Providence of Hashem in our lives.

*Reprinted in the Parshas Vayikra 5776 email of the Jersey Shore Torah Bulletin.*

**Why Reb Nochum**

**Fell from His Horse**

**By** [**Yehuda Shurpin**](http://www.chabad.org/search/keyword_cdo/kid/15169/jewish/Yehuda-Shurpin.htm)



Rabbi Dovber Schneuri, known as the Mitteler Rebbe, was known for his penchant for joyfulness. He even had a group of chassidim who formed a*kapelye* (choir), and another group who were trained to perform tricks on horseback. On special, joyous occasions, he would ask these groups to perform, and he would stand on his balcony watching. The rebbe’s son RebNochum happened to be one of these horsemen.

Once, for no apparent reason, the rebbe suddenly instructed both of these groups to perform. This was extremely unusual. Yet the chassidim performed while the rebbe stood in his usual spot and watched the horsemen carefully.

Suddenly the rebbe’s son Reb Nochum fell off of his horse. Informed that his son was in grave danger, the rebbe merely motioned with his hand to continue the festivities.

After a while the rebbe asked them to stop, and stepped into his private office.

A doctor was summoned, and Reb Nochum’s situation proved far less severe than previously thought. He had broken a leg, but no more.

The rebbe was then asked why he had told the horsemen and choir to continue with their performance while his beloved son lay injured.

He responded, “Why don’t you ask me an even better question: why did I ask the horsemen and the choir to perform on a simple weekday in the first place?”

The rebbe explained: “Today was meant to be a harsh day for my son. I saw a grave accusation against him in the heavenly court. The prosecution was very powerful, and I could see only one way out: joy sweetens the attribute of severity. So I therefore called upon the choir to sing, and asked the riders to gladden everyone with their antics.

“The joy thus created tempered the strict decree against my son, but a small portion of the decree remained. That is why he fell off his horse and hurt his leg. However, the continued revelry lessened even this residual decree. G‑dwilling, Nochum will recover in the very near future.”[1](javascript:doFootnote('1a3183552');)

FOOTNOTES [1.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/3183552/jewish/Why-Reb-Nochum-Fell-from-His-Horse.htm#footnoteRef1a3183552) Otzar Sipurei Chabad, vol. 16, p. 55, quoting Reshimot Devarim by Rabbi Yehuda Chitrik.

*Reprinted from the Parshas Pekudei 5776 email of Chabad.Org Magazine.*

[**Five Minutes**](http://www.jewishpress.com/judaism/jewish-columns/lessons-in-emunah/five-minutes/2016/03/10/)

**By** [**Alan Magill**](http://www.jewishpress.com/author/alanmagill/)

It was mid-September and I was stuck in traffic and my plans, which were so meticulously developed, seemed to be unraveling. For the longest time I had wanted so much to see my friend from shul, a Russian fellow, who was in a rehab center in Borough Park. I would call occasionally and try to speak with him in the English words he would know.

“My wife and I miss you and wish you good health,” always seemed to get a good response, but talking over the phone wasn’t the same as seeing his sweet, smiling face. So, despite the fact that almost every minute of my day is filled with work and other responsibilities, I made an effort to find a two hour “oasis” of “Alan time” and was successful. I found a Thursday where I had a few hours coming to me on my job in Midwood, Brooklyn. I worked it out to leave my job at 2:30 p.m. for Borough Park, with seemingly plenty of time to get back to Midwood for an important 4:30 p.m. dental appointment.

If anyone has tried to drive through Borough Park, close to 3:00 p.m. on a weekday, you know about the many school buses taking the *Yiddishe kinder* back home. The car service driver I had engaged was moving up a few feet at a time as I checked my watch a couple of times a minute to see how my window of opportunity was dramatically closing.

I felt for the “*La Shana Tova*” card in my pocket. I had brought it to Congregation *Tomchei Torah*, where I daven, and the rabbi as well as scores of others had signed it, with some adding personal messages for good health. For the people who didn’t know who he was, as he had been away for a while, I encouraged them to sign it anyway. I knew I wanted to hand the card to him personally. If I had my way, the traffic would part like the Red Sea, and I would get to him in a matter of minutes, but no such miracle was in store for me so I had to take practical measures.

Rather than have the driver drop me off at the rehab center, visit my friend for a half hour, and call another car service to go back as I had originally planned, I asked the driver if she could wait for 15 minutes so that I could go back with her. She said, “Sure,” and I relaxed a bit, that was until a few moments later, when, after a call to her base, she told me she had other fares to pick up and couldn’t wait. At this point I was just hoping to get there with enough time to have some kind of a visit.

Upon finally reaching my destination, I paid the driver, rushed into the rehab center, and told the guard at the front desk the room number I wanted. He pointed to an elevator, which I hurried to and hastily pushed the button. A quick glance at my watch indicated it was 3:30. I would still have to find the number of a car service to call to take me back for my 4:30 p.m. dental appointment. *Ding!*The elevator came and I quickly got in and pushed his floor. When the door opened I realized I had to slow down. No matter how big a hurry I was in, it wouldn’t make for a comforting visit if I came in huffing, puffing, and out of sorts.

I took a deep breath, calmed myself, and walked down the hall to his room. I saw his name on the door and entered. I found him sitting alone on a chair adjacent to his bed. He looked up at me and smiled. I smiled back.

“It’s good to see you!” I said, as we shook hands.

“It’s good to see you,” he said, and he took my offered hand and put it against his heart, a gesture he had done in the past to indicate a closeness he felt.

“How are you?” I asked.

“Okay,” he said.

He paused, looking for words, and then asked, “Why are you here?”

I understood what he meant. He wanted to know if I worked there, if I was volunteering there, or if there were other people I needed to visit. I pointed at him and said, “To see you.”

Warmth engulfed his face. That someone had taken the time to come see him, someone who was not family, someone he did not have many contacts with over the last year, made him so happy. If one person showing an interest was good, imagine his reaction if scores of people showed they cared. I took out the card from my pocket, handed it to him, and said, “*La Shana Tova*.”

He returned my greeting, then went to open the card, of which I saw that he was having some difficulty breaking the seal. The fact that I was in a hurry made me think I should just take the card from him and open it for him. Why waste precious time? Why put him out more than was needed? But I saw that it meant so much to him to open it himself. He wasn’t struggling. He was slowly trying to find the right angle to grip it that would enable him to make a tear.

So much was done for him in this rehab center, I could see he wanted to do this for himself. I didn’t say a word. I watched with an encouraging expression on my face. About 30 seconds later, which to me seemed more like five minutes as it would to any person in a hurry, he was successful in taking the missive out of the envelope. I watched him as he opened it up and saw the Jewish symbols on it, the card’s typed words for a good year, and the most important part of all – all those signatures. He was not sitting alone, miles away from family, who were at work and would visit later, he was connected to scores of people, some of whom he did not know, or at least did not recognize their names.

Then he did something simple, which was so poignant and precious in its own way; he kissed the card. I knew it couldn’t get much better than this. I also knew I had to leave. I shook his hand and said, “My wife and I are looking forward to seeing you at home as soon as possible in good health.”

He thanked me with genuine warmth. I got up to leave and waved, an action he reciprocated. Outside of his room, I picked up my pace, found a stairway, and walked with alacrity to the guard at the front desk, who quickly answered my question about a car service to call. I got out my cell phone and when I reached them they said they would send a car right away. The time on my cell phone indicated that I had been in my friend’s room for five minutes. *Five minutes.* I don’t think either of us felt cheated.

I made it to the dentist with more than 10 minutes to spare.

*Reprinted from the March 10, 2016 email of The Jewish Press.*

**Call out to Him**

**By Rabbi David Ashear**

The Pasuk says in Tehilim (Ch. 145): קָר֣וֹב יְ֭קֹוָק לְכָל־קֹרְאָ֑יו לְכֹ֤ל אֲשֶׁ֖ר **יִקְרָאֻ֣הוּ בֶאֱמֶֽת"**-"Hashem is close to all that call out to him, provided that they call out with sincerity." The book Va'Ani Tefila examines this Pasuk and points out that it seems to contain extra words. It could have just said: "Hashem is close to all of that call to Him with sincerity"?

Why does it first say "Hashem is close everyone," and then add the caveat that only to those that call out with sincerity? The Pasuk is stressing to us that Hashem answers everyone, no matter what- even if he does not have good deeds, even if he is a רשע-wicked. We are all G-d's children. The only condition is that a person feels that he is really talking to Hashem and understands that He can help.

A woman told me that two years ago, her father had a stroke and she went to visit him in the hospital in Montreal. While there, she saw a family in the waiting room that she hadn't seen in over thirty years. They told her that their father had suffered a massive heart attack, and the doctors did not have much hope for his survival. This family was not religious; one of the boys was even married to a non-Jew. They were in the middle of an argument. One son said that they should pull the plug on the father, as there was no hope anyway. The other family members disagreed.

The woman approached one of the siblings and told her, "You are right. There is something you could do to make your father better. She started to tell her about prayer and Tehilim. The other woman was very receptive. She admitted that she had never said Tehilim in her entire life, but she wanted to start. She and one other sibling accepted upon themselves to become a little more religious and start keeping Kosher. Together, they began reciting Tehilim in English. For the first time in their lives they prayed with sincerity.

Baruch Hashem, the next day, their father made a complete recovery. It was a miracle. The doctors were baffled and admitted on the spot that there was no explanation other than G-d. Baruch Hashem, both patients were discharged and are doing well.

We see from here that even people who are totally unaffiliated can call out to G-d and be answered. We all know that Tefila works. However, every so often we need chizuk to give us an extra boost.

Another woman told of an experience she had in December of 2000. She flew to Montreal for a wedding, not realizing how cold it was there in the winter. A friend recommended that she purchase a pair of warm winter boots in an underground shopping center. She found a cab, gave the driver the address provided by the friend and they arrived fifteen minutes later. She paid the driver and got out of the cab. By the time she realized that she was in a residential neighborhood, the taxi had already sped away. She didn't know where she was and didn't have a phone.

She decided to knock on someone's door and ask to call a taxi. She walked up to the first apartment and breathed a sigh of relief when she saw a Mezuzah on the front door. A short woman in her sixties welcomed her in and happily called a cab. It would take twenty minutes for the cab to arrive, so the woman offered her a cup of tea in the meantime. They made conversation, and she told her hostess that she was from Baltimore. The hostess said, "Oh Baltimore. Are you religious?" "Yes," she replied. "Then you'll appreciate this story."

She began to tell her guest about her son who had become religious at the age of fifteen. Even though she herself was not religious, she was happy that her son was. She sent him to the Ner Israel Yeshiva for high school in Baltimore. When he came back home one summer, she wasn't feeling well.

Her son was concerned and convinced her to go see a doctor. They went together, and the doctor told them that all the tests came back okay. He then called the son back into his office and broke him the news that his mother had a tumor the size of a grapefruit in her stomach and would not be expected to live more than three months. There was nothing that could be done.

The son did not tell his mother the news. He went back to the Yeshiva a few days later and told the Rosh Yeshiva. The Rosh Yeshiva gathered the entire Yeshiva in prayer, asking each student to pray for her recovery three times a day. On his next visit home, the son took his mother back to see a doctor. This time, there was no trace of a tumor. It had completely vanished. She didn't need chemotherapy or any other treatment. She didn't even know she had it until it was gone.

The hostess finished the story by saying that this story took place eight years ago, and she has been fine ever since. "Isn't prayer amazing", she exclaimed. At that point, the taxi arrived and the woman left, thanking her hostess.

The woman later remarked, "Now I understand why Hashem sent me to that woman's living room, rather than the shopping center." She herself had been praying for so long for so many things without seeing results; she had decided to give up on prayer. Now she had received renewed strength and was back to praying better than ever. The power of Tefila is amazing. B'ezrat Hashem we should all see our prayers answered.

*Reprinted from a recent email of Daily Emunah.*

**These May be America’s Proudest Shabbos Goys**

**By** [**Uriel Heilman**](http://www.jta.org/author/uriel-heilman/)



Samir Patel, left, with an associate and his father, right, says he gets about five requests each Saturday to act as a Shabbos goy for Orthodox Jews. (Uriel Heilman)

NEW YORK ([JTA](http://www.jta.org/)) – For Samir Patel, the term “goy” is no slur. It’s a point of pride.

Patel is a manager of Suhag Wine & Liquors, a family-owned business in the heavily Orthodox neighborhood of Kew Gardens Hills, in Queens. He’s a Hindu immigrant from India, but the vast majority of his customers are religious Jews, and nearly all the wine and spirits he sells are kosher.

Saturday is the store’s slowest day for sales, but there’s another service Patel provides that makes him indispensable: He’s a Shabbos goy. He even has a sign on the door advertising that fact.

“Shabbos Goy,” the signs says. “If you need help on Shabbos, please ask us.”



Arvind Patel, a Hindu convenience store owner in Queens who calls himself “the original Shabbos goy,” greets many Jewish customers with well wishes in Hebrew. (Photo by Uriel Heilman)

In Orthodox households, vital everyday tasks such as [turning lights on and off](http://www.jta.org/2004/06/15/life-religion/features/solving-a-sabbath-dilemma), using electrical appliances and cooking are forbidden on the Sabbath. Religious Jews use all sorts of workarounds – electric timers, preprogrammed thermostats, [special hotplates](http://www.jta.org/2016/03/03/news-opinion/united-states/hotmat-new-shabbat-hotplate-eyes-design-and-safety-appeal) – but sometimes it’s not enough. A bedroom light may accidentally be left on. A cool day may unexpectedly turn sweltering. The hotplate may have been left unplugged.

That’s where the Shabbos goy comes in – a non-Jew who can perform forbidden tasks for Jews.

“If someone needs anything, we go and do it for them,” Patel told JTA. “They might need us to turn off a stove. Or they left the fridge light on. Sometimes kids turn on the light by mistake.”

Because business is very slow on Saturdays, Patel is usually the only one minding the store. So when Orthodox customers come in and ask for help, Patel locks up and follows them home. He usually gets about five requests per Shabbos, he says, using the Yiddish-style pronunciation. There is no charge for the service.

“Initially, I definitely thought it was strange,” said Patel, who has worked at the store, wedged between a laundromat and a kosher pizza shop on Main Street, for seven years. “When my family bought this business 20 years ago, we had no idea about the Jewish community. We didn’t know their customs. But religion is religion. We’re happy to help.”

Like many of the Jewish-owned businesses on Main Street, the checkout counter at Patel’s liquor store is cluttered with tzedakah boxes associated with Jewish charities: Chabad, Sephardic Torah Center, Hebrew Free Burial Association, Hatzolah volunteer ambulance corps of Queens.

The Patels have been serving as Shabbos goys for two decades, but they only put up the sign advertising that fact in the last year. Goy, which literally means “nation” in Hebrew, is often considered a pejorative term for non-Jews, but it is used matter-of-factly in many Orthodox circles. Patel said he wasn’t aware some considered it offensive.

“Most people don’t believe us when they see that sign,” he said. “Our customers wanted us to put it up. We were providing the service anyway, so they said, ‘Why not put up a sign?’”

Two doors down, Arvind Patel (no relation), the owner of the local convenience store, also takes pride in serving as a Shabbos goy. He, too, has a sign on his shop, Ambe Grocery: “Shabbos goy available,” it reads. “Shabbat Shalom.”

“I’m the original Shabbos goy,” Arvind boasts. “I’ve been doing this for 30 years. All the rabbis know me. They’re like family.”

Martin Goldman, an Orthodox Jewish criminal defense attorney who has lived in Kew Gardens Hills for more than three decades, calls Arvind “one of the true members of Chasidei Umos Haolam,” or Righteous Among the Nations — a Jewish term of high praise for non-Jews.

“He’s a classic example of how Jews and non-Jews can live together in peace and harmony,” Goldman told JTA.

“Once it was an exceptionally hot Shabbos day and he had his cousin come with me to my home three blocks away and turn on the air conditioning,” Goldman said. “After Shabbos I went in and tipped him, but he never asked for a penny for it. As Jews, we can all learn derech eretz” — upstanding behavior — “from these guys.”

Arvind says he usually gets about eight or nine requests per Shabbat – more on holidays. On Sukkot, he helps fix sukkahs damaged by wind (Jewish law forbids repairing a sukkah on the festival’s holy days or Shabbat). On the High Holidays, Arvind patrols the neighborhood offering help wherever needed. The local Jews all know him, he says.

Arvind also owns the laundromat next door, which he notes uses only kosher-certified soap and fabric softener. A letter of certification from a body called the Central Rabbinical Congress of the U.S.A. and Canada attests to that.

“Say I speak a little Hebrew, too. Baruch Hashem yom yom!” Arvind says, using the Hebrew for “Thank God every day.” Many Israelis live in the neighborhood.

When an Orthodox patron leaves the store, Arvind calls out, “Yom tov! Tihiye bari” – Hebrew for “Have a good day. Stay healthy!”

Arvind says he also extends credit to Orthodox Jewish customers who come into the store on the Sabbath for items they unexpectedly need, like milk or soda. They always return and pay on Sunday or Monday, he says.

*Reprinted from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA.)* [*Uriel Heilman*](http://www.jta.org/author/uriel-heilman)*is JTA's senior writer and former managing editor. The article was released on March 13, 2016.*

**Story#955**

**Ignore the Bolsheviks**

**From the desk of Yerachmiel Tilles**

[**editor@ascentofsafed.com**](http://webmailb.juno.com/webmail/new/5?session_redirect=true&userinfo=eff1e795994608ed6885dfdeac88e827&count=1458313197&randid=1919243463)

The bitter cold chilled the officer's bones and fear made his heart tremble. Ivan was not a coward, but the rumors of the sadistic Bolsheviks who were nearing the city of Rostov frightened him terribly. He paced the streets, waiting anxiously for the light of day. He was oblivious to the two men following at his heels, not making a sound.

Suddenly he felt powerful hands grabbing him. He screamed a loud and bitter scream, but the two held him. In the morning the body of the officer was found with the warning: "Beware! The Bolsheviks are coming!"

The Jews were the most shaken by news of the Bolsheviks' approach, as the study of Torah and observance of its precepts was a serious crime to the Bolsheviks. There was only one part of the city where life went on as usual, where fear of the Bolsheviks was not felt: in the *Yeshiva* called *Tomchei Temimim*.

The *yeshiva* students continued their studies without disruption. They drew their strength from their Rebbe, **Rabbi Sholom Dovber of Lubavitch** - the fifth Rebbe of the Chabad dynasty. The Rebbe encouraged them to study and pray as usual, and the *yeshiva* bustled with life.

It was Zundel the Beggar who brought the news: "The Bolsheviks are on their way into the city!" Soon Rostov became a city of flames and the Bolsheviks beat and killed anyone they chanced upon.

Thus passed several weeks. The holiday of Purim was approaching. The Rebbe isolated himself and didn't speak to anyone. The students could not make peace with the Rebbe's isolation. They remembered the great joy of Purim, when Jews celebrate the victory over Haman who tried to "destroy, kill and annihilate."

And then it was Purim. Not a soul smiled. Finally, two *yeshiva* students who could no longer bear the thought of Purim passing in such a manner, summoned up their courage and entered the Rebbe's room. After a few silent moments they heard the Rebbe's voice: "The Bolsheviks are in the city. I cannot exist together with them. But for the sake of Purim, we'll forget about the situation. Go buy plenty of vodka and let there be light for the Jews!"

The good news spread through the city and the*yeshiva* students took their places for the Purim gathering. The Rebbe spoke and all listened. When the Rebbe concluded, an older Chasid began singing a soulful Chasidic *niggun* (melody). Everyone joined in, singing from the depths of their hearts. Suddenly the door burst open. At the entrance stood a Chasid. "The Bolsheviks are coming," the Chasid cried out in fear.

The singing stopped at once; everyone was gripped with terror. The Rebbe, however, disregarded the news, and began softly singing a *niggun*. The melody touched and calmed the frightened crowd. Having concluded the melody, the Rebbe began saying a Chasidic discourse. The room was silent; the only audible sound was the Rebbe's voice.

Suddenly the silence was broken by loud knocking. The Rebbe continued speaking as though nothing was happening. After a few moments one of the members of the Rebbe's family said: "Rebbe, the Bolsheviks are demanding that we let them in. If they see us gathered here it will be our end...G-d forbid." The Rebbe interrupted the discourse and said, "Open the door for them."

In the doorway stood two tall and fearsome looking Bolsheviks, their eyes darting all about, hungry for prey. "What is this gathering? What is going on?"

Trembling, one of the Chasidim called out, "This is the Rebbe Sholom Dovber of Lubavitch. He is teaching Torah to his Chasidim. The Rebbe is busy with his talk and he cannot be bothered." He could hardly believe the words that came from his mouth. The two soldiers were astounded at the Chasid's nerve, and they turned on their heels and departed.

"An open miracle!" the Chasidim exclaimed to one another. They felt protected and sang with greater fervor. Thus passed two hours. So immersed were they in their joy, that they did not hear the Bolsheviks knocking again... "Rebbe, what shall we do?" several frightened Chasidim cried out.

The Rebbe freed himself from his thoughts and said, "Open for them! I don't fear them." The Chasidim understood that another great miracle was about to occur. The Bolsheviks burst through the door, their weapons in hand. The Rebbe ignored their threatening presence and said, "We will begin saying some words of Torah." The Rebbe raised his voice and began, *"Amalek is first among the nations but his end will be destruction"* (Num. 23:20).

The Bolsheviks' faces softened. They returned their guns to the holsters, and watched with growing perplexity as the Chasidim listened to the Rebbe. They looked at one another and then, without a word, turned and left.

The Chasidim thanked G-d for miraculously saving them and for giving them their Rebbe in whose presence evil had no power.

Everyone was deeply moved, feeling in their hearts without knowing why that this would be their last gathering with the Rebbe. Painful tears flowed from their eyes, tears of parting.

A week after Purim the Rebbe became very weak, and on the second of Nissan his soul departed in holiness and purity.

*Source*: Supplemented by Yerachmiel Tilles from lchaimweekly.org (#1061), with permission.

*Biographical note*: **Rabbi Sholom-Dovber Schneersohn** [of blessed memory: 20 Cheshvan 5621 - 2 Nissan 5610 (Oct. 1860 - April 1920)], known as the *Rebbe Reshab*, was the fifth Rebbe of the Lubavitcher dynasty. He is the author of hundreds of major tracts in the exposition of Chasidic thought.

*Connection*: Seasonal/Weekly Reading (added section - Deut. 25:17-19) -- "Remember what Amalek did to you" - May his name and all traces of him be blotted out.

*Reprinted from the Parshas Vayikra 5776 email of KabbalaOnline.org, a project of Ascent Institute of Safed.*

**The Gardner’s First Job**

**In the Holy Land**

**By Rabbi David Ashear**

Someone told me that he has been out of work for so long that he does not have the will to keep trying. A Jew should never give up.

I just read a story told by a young woman from Israel. She writes that she was a guest at someone's house for dinner. Another guest there, a man in his upper sixties, mentioned that he hadn't had a job in the three years since making Aliya. At his age, without Hebrew skills, employers were not willing to hire him.

Yet he kept saying, "Baruch Hashem, Hashem takes care of me. I always have what I need. I know that He will continue to provide." He was asked what type of job he would be interested in, and replied that gardening was his ideal occupation.

A few days later the woman was visiting a friend in her house. The friend was complaining about her gardener, pointing to the unsightly garden surrounding her house. The woman asked her if she would be willing to try somebody new. Just like that, this man had his first job in Israel.

A few weeks later she returned to her friend's house, where she was greeted with a beautiful garden. Her friend said that although the new gardener's price was high, it was well worth it. Also, she said that he was a wonderful influence on her children, always talking about Hashem. The word soon spread, and the gardener's reputation grew. He is now well on his way to earning a good living.

The woman later said, "What where the odds of this older man finding exactly the job he wanted, in a new country without speaking the language. It is so clear that Hashem was taking care of him."

We don't care about odds. Everyone can always be helped no matter what. Our prayers are always a success.

*Reprinted from the March 4, 2016 email of Daily Emunah.*

**Rabbi Moshe Sofer and the Beautiful Kiddush Cup**

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Moses_S._Schreiber_Litho.jpg)

Rabbi Moshe Sofer (1762-1839), beloved Rabbi of Pressburg and author of the noted work Chasam Sofer, was about to preside as a judge in a difficult lawsuit. A few days before trial was to begin he received a package from one of the litigants. It was a beautiful sterling Kiddush cup.

That Friday night the Chasam Sofer took the cup out of its velvet pouch, and raised it for his entire family to see. "Look how beautiful this cup is. Do you notice the intricate etchings? It must be worth a fortune!"

The family looked on in horror. They knew that the gift was sent as a form of a bribe. They could not imagine why the Chasam Sofer had removed it and was seemingly admiring it.

Abruptly, the Chasam Sofer stopped talking. His eyes became sternly focused on the cup. He began, once again, to speak. "But, my children, the Torah tells us we may not take a bribe! Therefore, I will put this beautiful cup away and never use it. It must be returned to the sender immediately! He must be chastised for this terrible breach."

Then he continued. "You must be wondering why I even looked at the cup. You certainly must be bewildered why I even admired it openly. I will explain. How often is it that I am offered a bribe? Never! I never felt the passion or desire to accept a bribe, as it was never offered! When I had the opportunity to observe the Torah's prohibition against corruption,

“I wanted to make sure that I did it from a vantage of passion. I wanted to realize what I was turning down. I wanted to value the Torah's command over an exquisite and ornate silver goblet. I felt that by working up our appetite for the item we surely would appreciate its refusal."

*Reprinted from the Parshas Vayikra 5776 email of Reb Mendel Berlin’s Torah’sSweets Weekly.*