**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas Bo 5775**

Volume 6, Issue 19 4 Shevat 5775/ January 24, 2015

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

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**A Great Miracle Behind the Terrible Tragedy in Paris**

**The Story Behind the Terrorist**

**Attack on the Kosher Supermarket.**

The terrorist and his wife were on their way to make a most terrible terrorist attack at the local Chabad school which is one of the biggest in France. During their drive there, they had an accident and so it drew attention to the police in the area. They panicked and [fatally] shot the policewoman that approached their car to investigate the seemingly minor traffic accident.

This accident saved the life of tens or even hundreds of Jewish children at that school. The car was later found abandoned with weapons as they could not carry so many weapons on foot. Police also found a note with the address off the Chabad school in the car, so the target was very clear.

They then realized that their plans had gone wrong and decided to separate.

The terrorist then decided to attack another Jewish target and went for the only other Jewish place he knew, the kosher supermarket.

The terrorist was then dropped off by his wife at the kosher supermarket and then drove to the airport to slip out of France. She caught a flight to Turkey and then went onto Syria, where she is believed to be and has joined up with the ISIS terrorist organization that she and her husband are members of and had undergone extensive training with the group.

We know the tragic circumstances that it ended in.

Can we now not see how Hashem is still always looking after us and our children. Look what kind of miracle there was that could have gone down as one of the worst terrorist attacks in the history on our pure innocent children. I know we lost four of our best people, and this must not be overlooked, but look what could have been without that little simply stupid car accident that saved the children's lives.

To have a target of innocent children, must tell us great things as to what these Islamic terrorists hold by in terms of humanity. This whole story is so bizarre that it's beyond the imagination of any normal human being.

The amount of arms and ammunition found astounded the police that found it. It was supposed to be a very high toll on our Jewish community.

*Reprinted from an email sent out to the general community.*

**The Legacy of Haym Salomon, Z”l (1740-1785)**

**By Rabbi Gershon Tannenbaum**



Haym Salomon z”l (1740-1785), was a true legend in his own time. In 1975, the United States Postal Service issued a stamp in his honor. This stamp was uniquely printed on both the front and the back. He following is on the back: “Financial Hero - Businessman and broker Haym Salomon was responsible for raising most of the money needed to finance the American Revolution and later to save the new nation from collapse.”

Historians who have studied the story of Salomon all agree that without his major “contribution to the cause” there would be no America as we all know it today. The 13 stars representing the colonies on the great seal of the United States were arranged in the shape of the Star of David in honor of Haym Salomon.

**The Legend of Chanukah at Valley Forge**

This past Chanukah, the legend of Chanukah at Valley Forge during the American Revolution circulated, to the great appreciation of everyone who heard or read about it. On that bitterly cold night, General George Washington, Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War, stood at the highest point in Valley Forge and surveyed his troops encamped below.

There, more than 11,000 soldiers encamped from 1776 to 1778, were freezing and hungry. Many did not have enough clothing or even shoes. Many had no weapons with which to fight and defend themselves. They were often referred to as an army of skeletons. Though, they engaged in no battles, more than 3,000 died during the two year encampment, most from disease.

As the general walked through the camp, freshly fallen snow crunched under his boots. As he came to one hut, he observed some young men lighting a candle and, presumably whispering a prayer. Then, they quietly sang a multi-stanza song. As the general entered the hut, the men turned around and jumped to attention. The soldiers explained to the general that they were lighting candles in honor of the Jewish holiday of Chanukah. Inquiring about the symbolism, the soldiers explained that the downtrodden ancient Jews fought and beat the Greek army who then occupied the Holy Land. The miracle of the menorah lights burning for eight days with only one day’s supply of oil was thus commemorated.

The G-d of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the soldiers continued, helped the few beat the many, helped the weak beat the strong, and the righteous beat the evil. The general absorbed what he was told and responded: “We too have a cruel enemy who leaves us only with the choice of brave resistance or abject submission.” Thoroughly depressed in facing his impossible predicament, the general said “Perhaps we are not as lost as many believe. Miracles do happen.”

**The General Was A Guest in a**

**Jewish Home in Pennsylvania**

In December of 1778, General Washington was a guest at the family home of Michael Hart, z”l (1738-1813), a prominent Jewish businessman in Easton, Pennsylvania, 70 miles north of Valley Forge. Before supper was served, Michael Hart, lit his menorah and explained that it was Chanukah. The general acknowledged that he was quite familiar with the holiday, having learned of it a year earlier from Jewish soldiers at Valley Forge. At that time, the general shared, he was about to give up. However, the Jewish soldiers at Valley Forge and their reverent observance gave him hope and encouragement to continue. This exchange was recorded for posterity by Michael Hart’s stepdaughter, Luisa B. Hart, in her diary that is still extant.

This beautiful legend is really only part of the story. Haym Salomon was born into poor observant family of Shlomo Salomon, of Portuguese descent, in Lissa (Leszno), Poland in 1740. At a young age, he left home looking to earn his fortune. In his travels in Europe, he acquired fluency is as many as ten languages. He also gained insight to the values of different currencies. Thus he was able to successfully buy and sell from and to people of different languages using different currencies. His honesty endeared him to his clientele and they trusted him.

**Forced to Flee His Native Home in Poland**

Haym returned to Poland from England around 1770, and became involved in Poland’s then nationalist movement. He was forced to flee the country in 1772. Haym returned to England, and from there sailed to New York, then under British control since the 1660s. It was a thriving port, and the center of commercial and shipping interests in North America. Haym had during his travels acquired expertise in finance and accounting practices. He was quickly able to become a broker and commission agent for ships plying the Atlantic.

Arriving in Colonial America in 1772, he established himself in New York City as a respected and well-liked merchant. Haym was invited and enthusiastically joined the Sons of Liberty, a secret organization which had been established by men with business interests who were opposed to British rule.

Haym was arrested by the British and charged with spying in September 1776, an offense punishable by hanging. His multilingual skills caught the attention of his captors and he was assigned to German General Heister. At the time, the German state of Hesse allowed its soldiers to serve as mercenaries as a revenue creating measure. These troops, known as Hessians, were in North America to support British rule. As an interpreter for Heister, Salomon was allowed a relatively high degree of freedom. He contributed to the American revolutionary cause by persuading Hessians to switch sides. The State of Pennsylvania was promising land to all soldiers who joined the Continental cause. Salomon was successful in persuading a good number of Hessian mercenaries to join.

**Married the Daughter of Observant Jews**

Released in recognition of his good behavior in helping the British communicate with the Hessian mercenaries, On Sunday, July 6, 1777, he married Shiras Rachel Franks, a daughter of Moses B. Franks (Names recorded on his Kesuba). The Franks were observant Jews and a prominent American family. Haym generously sent funds to his relatives in Poland. When some of them expressed interest in coming to America, he advised his uncle that America was lacking in Yiddishkeit. He wrote to his cousins that chinuch for children was also non-existent.

Salomon continued to work underground to sway Hessian allegiance, and was jailed a second time in August 1778 as one of several suspects thought to be planning a fire that would destroy the British royal fleet in New York harbor. The suspected strategy also included a series of arson fires in British warehouses. He was sent to the Provost, an infamous prison, and a death sentence loomed. However, Salomon had hidden several gold guineas on himself, as well as his gold watch, which were used to bribe a friendly Hessian jail officer who enthusiastically helped him escape to freedom.

He reached Philadelphia, at that time the center of the independence movement and home to the Continental Congress the legislative body of the thirteen colonies that had declared their autonomy from Britain in 1776. With some borrowed funds, he opened an office as dealer of bills of exchange. His firm on Front Street, near the Coffee House where Colonial Army officers and members of the Continental Congress often gathered, began to flourish.

**Contributed His Own Funds**

**To Help the Revolution Cause**

The revolutionary war was in frightening financial straits. The colonies were battling against an extremely wealthy enemy, the British Empire. Keeping the American forces supplied with arms, food, and other supplies, was an impossible task. Salomon came to know many leading figures in Philadelphia during this time, and brokered a loan of $400,000 that gave General Washington funds to pay his soldiers in 1779. Salomon also contributed his own funds to this aid package. Washington’s messenger arrived at the Mikvah Israel synagogue in Philadelphia on Yom Kippur. Salomon halted the services and pled for support. As soon as the necessary commitments were ensured, the services continued.

Salomon became an associate of prominent Philadelphian Robert Morris, a member of Congress with close ties to Benjamin Franklin. Morris brokered many financial transactions that helped the revolutionary cause gather steam early on. By the winter of 1780\_81, the colonial government was broke and Morris was appointed superintendent of finance. Salomon entered into more than seventy-five financial transactions with Morris between 1781 and 1784, effectively making him the very first licensed stockbroker in the United States.

He was almost the only broker for the sale of bills of exchange, bonds sold to provide funds for the war effort and salaries of top government officeholders. Salomon backed many of these with his own assets and personal credit. Moreover, he was the principal broker for subsidies from France and Holland that helped the American independence effort. He turned over all of his earned commissions on these transactions to the cause as well. He was also named an agent for merchandise that was seized by privateers loyal to the colonists, which he sold to help finance the war.

The story of Haym Salomon fills whole libraries. Unquestionably, there was no other contributor and supporter of the Continental cause that compared to him. As noted on the back of the stamp honoring him, he gave “most of the money needed to finance the American Revolution and later to save the new nation from collapse.” Sadly, He died at the young age of 45, having caught tuberculosis during his two terms in British prisons. He left his wife a penniless widow with four young children. His fifth child, Haym Moshe Salomon was born one month after his death.

**Died Impoverished on the 24th of Teves**

Salomon had held various financial instruments that had a face value of more than $300,000 ($7,500,000 in today’s money but essentially worthless at the time). Those instruments were being renegotiated for some value and required the signature of Salomon. Unfortunately, he was too ill at the time to sign and he returned his holy selfless soul to Heaven that same week. Impoverished, the family was unable to erect a tombstone upon his grave.

This year (2015), his yahrzeit was last week on Thursday, January 15. We, as American Jews, owe him so very much. The absolute very least that we can do is remember him and his sacrifices on his yahrzeit.

Reprinted from the January 15, 2015 website of Matzav.com Rabbi Gershon Tannenbaum is the Rav of B’nai Israel of Linden Heights in Boro Park and Director of the Rabbinical Alliance of America. Rabbi Tannenbaum can be contacted at yeshiva613@aol.com.

**The Cow That Kept Shabbat**

**Pesikta Rabbati 14**



There was once a Jew who owned a cow with which he plowed his field. Then it came to pass that this Jew became impoverished and was forced to sell his cow to a non-Jew.

The new owner plowed with the cow throughout the week, but when her took her out to the field on Shabbat, she kneeled under the yoke and refused to do any work. He hit her with his whip, but she would not budge from her place.

So he came back to the Jew and said to him, "Take back your cow! All week I worked with her, but today I took her out to the field and she refuses to do anything... "

The Jew said to the cow's purchaser: "Come with me, and I will get her to plow." When they arrived to the field the cow lay, the Jew spoke into her ear. "Oh Cow, Cow! When you were in my domain, you rested on Shabbat. But now that my sins have caused me to sell you to this gentile, please, stand up and do the will of your master!"

Immediately the cow stood, prepared to work. Said the gentile to the Jew: "I'm not letting you go until you tell me what you did and what you said to her. Have you bewitched her?" The Jew told him what he said to the cow.

When this man heard this, he was shaken and amazed. He said to himself: "If this creature, which has neither language nor intelligence, recognizes her Creator, should not I, whom G‑d created in His image and likeness and imbued me with intelligence and understanding?"

So he went and converted to Judaism and merited to study Torah. He became known as Yochanan ben Torta ("Yochanan son of the Cow")

*Reprinted from last week’s email of Chabad.Org Magazine.*

**Rabbi Sacks' Startling Revelation of Faith**

**By COLlive Reporter**

England's former Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks has authored some 25 books exploring a wide variety of areas and topics, but he hasn't written about his double battle with cancer.

Unlike other authors who successfully recovered and have written about their medical experience and journey of faith in G-d, Rabbi Sacks seldom mentions it in any of his books or lectures.

In a recent [interview](http://tabletmag.com/jewish-life-and-religion/151762/jonathan-sacks-goes-global#sMEEcJvsJSgjfKUL.01) with Tablet Magazine, the 65-year-old who served for 22 years as chief rabbi was asked why.

"It's very simple," he replied, finally opening up about the topic.

Sacks said that his father had undergone some major operations in his later years. "He was walking on crutches at my induction" in 1991, the respected rabbi and philosopher recalled.

"I used to watch him saying Tehillim in the hospital, and I could see him getting stronger," he told [Tablet](http://tabletmag.com/jewish-life-and-religion/151762/jonathan-sacks-goes-global#sMEEcJvsJSgjfKUL.01). "It seemed to me that his mental attitude was 'I'm leaving this to Hashem. If He sees that it's time for me to go, then it's time for me to go. And if He still needs me to do things here, He'll look after me.'"

Rabbi Sacks says he "adopted exactly that attitude" when he battled cancer twice, once in his 30s, and later in his 50s.


Former Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks openly discusses his double battle with cancer and why he's never written about it.

"On both occasions I felt, if this is the time Hashem needs me up there, thank you very much indeed for my time down here; I've enjoyed every day and feel very blessed. And if He wants me to stay and there's still work for me to do, then He is going to be part of the refu'ah [healing] and I put my trust in Him."

The rabbi explained that for him "there was no test of faith at any point—just these simple moments at which to say, 'b'yado afkid ruchi' ['In His hand, I place my soul']. That was my thought. And since we say that every day in Adon Olam, I didn't feel the need to write a book about it. It was for me not a theological dilemma at all."

"I had faith," said Sacks, "full stop.”

*Reprinted from the January 7, 2015 website of COLLIVE.*

**Story #894**

**The Strongman of Shklov**

**From the desk of Yerachmiel Tilles**

[**editor@ascentofsafed.com**](http://webmailb.juno.com/webmail/new/5?session_redirect=true&userinfo=eff1e795994608ed6885dfdeac88e827&count=1421256063&cf=SP2&randid=1922614055)

After a visit to the city of Shklov (where he had gone because of the controversy between the early chasidim and their opponents,) **Rabbi Shneur Zalman** of Chabad decided to return home. The opponents, in their anger, plotted to throw stones at the Rebbe as he departed.

When the chasidim got wind of their plan they met to decide on a course of action to protect the Rebbe. One of them, a particular strong and robust 18-year-old youth named Dovid, stood up and declared that he would accompany the Rebbe and make sure that no harm befell him.

When the time came to leave, a crowd of people armed with stones surrounded the Alter Rebbe's carriage in a threatening manner. Young Dovid, in the Rebbe's defense, ripped a tree out of the ground and faced the menacing group: "I will kill anyone of you who dares to lift a hand against this holy *tzadik*!" he roared. The crowd backed off, fully believing that he would carry out his threat. Dovid was then able to accompany the Rebbe to the outskirts of the city unmolested.

As soon as they were outside the city of Shklov the Alter Rebbe climbed out of the carriage and said to the boy, "Dovid! You were responsible for actually saving my life. May you live to be 120!"

A century later, one day before he was to turn 120 (!), Dovid called the *chevrah kadisha*, the burial society, to his side. Although now a very old man, Dovid was still in good health. Together, he and his guests made a 'lechaim' on some whiskey. The very next day, on his 120th birthday, Dovid passed away.

 [**Source**: Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from the rendition of Basha Majerczyk, in her translation, *"Extraordinary Chassidic Tales"* by Rabbi Rafael Nachman Kahn, volume 1.]

Biographic note: **Rabbi Shneur Zalman** [18 Elul 1745-24 Tevet 1812], one of the main disciples of the Maggid of Mezritch, is the founder-and "Alter Rebbe"-- of the Chabad-Chassidic movement. He is the author of Shulchan Aruch HaRav and Tanya as well as many other major works in both Jewish law and the mystical teachings

*Reprinted from last week’s email of KabbalaOnline.org, a project of Ascent of Safed.* [*www.ascentofsafed.com*](http://www.ascentofsafed.com) *ascent@ascentofsafed.com*

**Born on the Border...**

**By Rabbi Yoseph Vigler**

Last Friday night we had the privilege of hosting a sholom zochor in our home, for good friends of ours who had a baby. It was the first time they had heard of the concept of a sholom zochor and we were thrilled to host.

The bris was a moving affair and  took place on the eighth day. I marvel at the absolute miracle of it all. Here were young parents, the product of seventy years of Communism in the USSR, followed by twenty years of American assimilation.

Yet the father himself first elected to have his own bris when he arrived in Brooklyn at age thirteen. (He was offered a Nintendo as a reward, though he never did receive it). And now they chose to bris their own son at eight days of age. Think about it, it defies logic!  It's a question that anyone of us ought to ponder - how do we raise our children to be devout Jews, yet "Made in the USA"?

The key is Yocheved.

In Egypt, there was a generation of Yidden who were aloof from Egyptian culture. They were born and raised back in Eretz hakodesh, in a holy environment; To these Jews, Egypt was an alien world which could not affect them, but they could neither understand nor influence its culture either.

Conversely, there were Jews who were born and raised in Egypt, after the original seventy souls had settled there. These Jews were raised on memories and traditions of the Holy Land. But to them, Egypt was home; They related well, perhaps too well, to the culture of their adoptive land, Egypt.

Seventy souls accompanied Yaakov down to Mitzrayim, but when you count, you *find only sixty nine! ... Says Rabi Chama bar Chanina: This is Yocheved, daughter of Levi and mother of Moshe, who was born as they entered Mitzrayim (*Bava Basra 123a)

One Jew was born between the boundary walls as Yaakov’s household entered the country. This Jew straddled the pre- and post-*galus* mentalities; she was neither from Egypt nor aloof from it. This Jew was rooted in the past but an integral part of the present; This Jew had the power to transform Egypt without being transformed by it.

This Jew was Yocheved, mother of Moshe. Only she could bring about the redemption. She was born between the walls. She related well to the culture of Mitzrayim, yet she belonged to the past.

This Jew, with her daughter, Miriam, were the two midwives who defied Paroh's decree and raised a generation of faithful Jews under the harsh hand of Paroh.

Yes, with all the nisyonos of America, even technology and the internet, we can and will succeed in raising G-dly children. In fact, we will draw the positive aspects of American culture to help us do so!

*Reprinted from last week’s email from Mayan Yisroel in Flatbush.*

**In South Dakota, Jews Have to Wait**

**All Year to Ask a Rabbi a Question**

**By Regina Garcia Cano**

RAPID CITY, South Dakota (AP) — The first Jews to settle in what is now South Dakota established themselves in Deadwood during the Gold Rush more than 150 years ago, finding a niche selling hardware, groceries, dry goods and more. By 1920, the state was home to some 1,300 Jews.

That community has dwindled to an estimated 390 people — less than a tenth of 1 percent of South Dakota’s population. No U.S. state has fewer Jews. It’s a small, but tightly knit flock that makes do without a permanent rabbi and worries too few children are coming along to sustain it.

“Nobody wants to be the last one to turn the lights out,” said Steve Benn, a neonatal doctor who serves as lay leader at Synagogue of the Hills in Rapid City. He orchestrates bar mitzvah ceremonies, performs ritual circumcisions and conducts funeral services.

The reasons for the decline vary. Some members stationed at Ellsworth Air Force Base in western South Dakota transferred elsewhere and took their families, some doctors working on Indian reservations were eventually reassigned and other Jews simply left in search of better opportunities in more populous areas.

“Anybody that has moved here or moved away … it’s always been professionally driven as opposed to other reasons,” Benn said of the Rapid City congregation, noting it’s not because of any feeling of isolation.

There are two active synagogues, one in Sioux Falls and another in Rapid City. A third synagogue in Aberdeen sometimes hosts services and Torah study groups. Rapid City’s synagogue was once a family home that was donated to the community by Stan Adelstein, a state senator who occasionally officiates weddings.

South Dakota is the only state without a permanent rabbi, which Benn says is due to “market forces.” “If the synagogue can afford to hire a rabbi and there’s a

large enough need for one, they (synagogues) make their own arrangements,” he said.

South Dakota’s last rabbi, Stephen Forstein, arrived in 1979 after the rabbi at the Sioux Falls synagogue died. Forstein was a part­time rabbi who also operated a lighting supply business that took him around the state.

“I’m out to sell a product, be it like light bulbs or Judaism, and I make no bones about it — I’m selling Judaism,” he told The Associated Press in November 1980. But Forstein moved to Michigan years later. Since then, the community has been served by lay leaders and student rabbis from Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati who travel to the state regularly.

Young Hasidic rabbinical students who are part of a global community­outreach training program known as “The Roving Rabbis” also come to the state every summer, making in­home visits. Last year, they even arranged a bar mitzvah for a boy who had just turned 13.

“Some of them wait all year for when the rabbis come in the summer to ask questions about Judaism,” Yosef Sharfstein, a Roving Rabbi, said during an August visit to Sioux Falls. He joked there are more Jewish people on his block in Brooklyn, New York, than in all of South Dakota.

The rabbinical students bring kosher meat, which is not available at grocery stores in the state; some families, including Benn’s, order the meat online. The students also bring kosher mezuzahs — small parchments of handwritten biblical verses, rolled into cases and fastened to door frames — that are a reminder for Jews that G-d is the ultimate home protection.

Benn worries that the Jewish community will continue to diminish. The Rapid City congregation has just one school­aged child. In a recent meeting, the congregation discussed whether it should follow the example of one in Dothan, Alabama, that offered as much as $50,000 to families who commit to stay at least five years.

But though it’s small, the feeling of community is strong. Some travel nearly three hours to attend Friday Shabbat services in Rapid City. In September, the congregation welcomed Sara Eiser, its new student rabbi. She quickly identified her priority: Cultivating the Jewish faith in the congregation’s only child.

 “I want (the child) to be able to walk into a classroom and say ‘I’m Jewish and I’m proud of it,'” Eiser said.

*Reprinted from the December 29, 2014 Associated Press article published in dozens of newspapers across the United States.*

**Recognizing the Precious Gems Generated by Sincere Tefillah**

**By Rabbi Yechiel Yaakobson**

Rabbi Dov Brezak, principal and director of Talmud Torah Ezrat Torah in

Yerushalayim once related the following: A benefit of becoming aware of a child's

feelings is that we become more aware of the degree of difficulty the child is experiencing, and this will help us adjust our methods and it may also open our eyes as to why previous methods used until now may not have been successful.

Rav Yechiel Yaakobson, renowned mechanech and lecturer in Eretz Yisrael, tells the following story to illustrate this point. A father wanted to know what he could do about his son who refused to daven. The father said, “Until now, I tried to

get him to daven by applying constant force and pressure, but it hasn't worked.”

The **father was advised to change his approach, and so he began to praise and** encourage his son. However, this too did not work. In fact, from the moment the father eased up on his son, the boy began taking advantage and stopped coming to davening altogether. This was strange, because the son enjoyed the new encouragement, and the confused father came to Rabbi Yaakobson for guidance once again.

A careful examination of the situation revealed that the father was not aware to the extent of his son's difficulties in this area. The father and son sat in one of the back rows of the shul. This area contained a considerable number of children who made fun of anyone who davened with kavanah, and who would tease him about ‘trying to make himself look like a Tzaddik’.

As if that wasn't enough, the conduct of some of the adults in the vicinity did not necessarily provide the best example for a child wishing to improve his davening. It was explained to the boy's father that it is unfair to expect a young boy to withstand such difficult tests, as it is beyond his capacity at that age. The boy could not handle the mockery of his peers, and the more his father demanded and

insisted that he daven well, the more the boys made fun of him.

Although it was difficult for the father to change his usual place of davening, the father decided to make the switch. He moved up to the front of the shul, and he also spoke with the Rav, and together they came up with a plan. That Shabbos night after davening, the Rav announced that the next day there would be a special Kiddush for children only, and understandably, the children were very excited.

At the end of the Kiddush, the Rav stood up to speak. He said, “I'm sure you are curious as to why we made a Kiddush especially for you, and the reason is because I wanted to tell you a story.” The Rav told them a story about some children who were allowed into the king's treasure house. Once inside, they were told they could fill their bags with as many diamonds as they could for the short period of time they would be permitted to stay.

When they got inside, only one of the boys took advantage of the opportunity. He gathered and gathered, filling his bag and not wasting a moment. The other children were lazy and not that interested, and they spent most of their time making fun of the child who was working hard collecting diamonds. In great detail, the Rav described the ridicule of the lazy boys, the feelings of the serious boy, and the tremendous effort necessary for the good boy to ignore the others and continue collecting the precious stones.

The Rav then explained to the group what happened when the time was up. He described the deep pain of the other boys when they realized what they had lost, and the tremendous good fortune attained by the serious boy, only because he ignored their teasing and ridicule.

 “Not only was he able to collect a large quantity of diamonds,” the Rav told

the boys, “but he also received the portions collected by the other boys, for when the king heard how they had ridiculed the good boy, he took away the little they had collected and gave it to that child!” After finishing the story, the Rav said, “It is very unfortunate that such wonderful children are losing out on the great wealth that Hashem gives them a chance to receive.

“Every word of Tefilah is a diamond! Isn’t it a pity to lose out on this treasure?” The Rav continued, “I also want to tell you that I am jealous of this boy,” and indicated the child who was being teased. He said to the surprised crowd, “I am jealous of him, because even though others made fun of him he continued to daven as he should, with concentration and seriousness!” He shook the boy's hand, who then wiped tears from his eyes.

Half a year later, the father wrote a letter to the Rav in which he said, “I feel so emotional about this that I can't bring myself to come and thank you personally. I don't recognize my son! I never thought it possible that a child would love davening so much!”

*Reprinted from last week’s email of “Torah U’Tefilah: A Collection of Inspiring Insights” compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.*