**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas bechukosai 5776**

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**Story #965**

**The One-Eyed**

**Electrician at Meron**

**From the desk of Yerachmiel Tilles**

[**editor@ascentofsafed.com**](http://webmailb.juno.com/webmail/new/21?folder=Inbox&msgNum=0001ELk0:001NHJCJ00000xzw&count=1464184490&randid=1462986006&attachId=0&isUnDisplayableMail=yes&blockImages=0&randid=1462986006)

 The students in the school in Ramat Gan were astonished. The man wearing the uniform of *Hevrat Hashmal* - the Israel Electric Company - who had come to explain to them the dangers and safety precautions involved in electricity use, was wearing a black eye patch over one eye. Perhaps they thought he was a wounded war veteran?

 But when he gave the same talk a week later in the elementary school of Kfar Chabad, he no longer wore the eye patch. After he finished, one of the teachers, Rabbi Chayim Ben-Natan, invited him to wrap *tefillin*. The man, accepted with alacrity. When he finished saying the *Shma Yisrael* prayer and removing the boxes and straps with the rabbi's help, Meir (not his real name) offered to tell Ben-Natan his story.

 For many years he has suffered from diabetes. Recently, he developed a painful eye problem and a loss of vision in one of his eyes. As this was diabetes-related, the doctors all insisted that no cure is possible. His most recent doctor gave him some salve to put on the bad eye to ease the pain, and a black patch to cover it so as not to compromise the vision of his remaining good eye.

 His incomplete vision made it impossible for him to continue working as a technician. Instead, the IEC trained him to give presentations to school children about electricity.

 One time he was driving in the Galilee to an appointment at a school in Carmiel. On the way, he called his office to check in and confirm the directions. His supervisor, a religious Jewess, upon hearing his location, recommended that he detour to one of the holy burial sites in the North of Israel and pray there for an improvement in his condition.

 "Why not?" he thought to himself. "It can't hurt." And off he went to Meron, to the burial site of the great sage of the *Mishna* and *Zohar*, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai.

 As he stood there praying with one hand on the tomb marker (clearly this was *not* on Lag b'Omer! -YT), he heard a man at a nearby table groaning and repeatedly crying out, "Hashem, G-d, help me, please! In the merit of Rabbi Shimon, help me now!"

 When Meir finished his own prayer, he turned away from the tomb marker. The man who had been crying out stared at him in wide-eyed amazement, and suddenly grabbed his arm! "Praise G-d! Give thanks to the Al-mighty. My prayers are answered. Rabbi Shimon sent you to me!"

 "What are you talking about?" Meir said calmly. "Nobody sent me here."

 "It's true. It's true!" proclaimed Uri (not his real name) loudly, refusing to release Meir's arm. "I have a wife and five children at home and no electricity. I've been praying for hours to get my electricity back, and here you are from the Electric Company." He pointed to the IEC insignia on Meir's uniform. "Clearly you were sent here to help me. Now give me back my electricity!"

 Uri explained that his electricity had been cut off because he owed thousands of shekels in unpaid bills, which he could not afford to pay. He then resumed demanding that Meir give him back his electricity, speaking louder and louder. Meir tried to explain that the nature of his job was in no way related to Uris' problem, not technically, not financially. None of his disclaimers helped. Uri would not relent in his belief that "obviously" Meir had been sent by Heaven and Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai to help him get his electricity restored.

 Despairing of ever being able to make Uri be sensible, and in danger of being late to his assignment, Meir finally asked Uri for the number of his account. Uri showed him his most recent bill. Meir said, "Look, let me step outside, and I'll call someone very important in management, check what the situation is, and try to arrange something for you."

 Uri grinned in anticipation and stepped back. Meir went out, used his IEC internal communication device to check Uri's account, verified that he owed 2500 shekels and paid the entire bill with his own credit card number!

 Returning inside, he told Uri, "Okay, it is all arranged with the company. You can go home. In two hours you will have electricity." Uri pumped Meir's hand enthusiastically. He couldn't thank him enough. "You see," he said, "I was right that Rabbi Shimon sent you to me."

 Meir went to his car, shaking his head in amazement at his own spontaneous kind deed. About ten minutes, later, half way to his destination, he had to pull over to the side of the road. His bad eye was itching so badly he couldn't wait any longer to remove his patch in order to rub his eye. Taking off the patch with his right hand, he moved his left hand towards his eye to massage it, when all of a sudden he realized that he was seeing through the windshield with the eye that had been under the patch. Seeing normally! His vision was fully restored!

 The various doctors that Meir had been seeing could not believe their own eyes. "This can only be a miracle,'' each one proclaimed, even if it was not clear that before this episode they believed in miracles. Meir smiled, understanding the simple formula: If you provide light for another Jew, G-d will provide light for you. And also, as the Talmud states, "Rabbi Shimon Bar-Yochai can be relied on in desperate situations."

 **Source:** Heard from several Chabad Chasidim in Tsfat, including the brother of Rabbi Ben-Natan in the story.

 **Biographical note:** Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, one of the most important sages in Jewish history, lived over 1800 years ago. Teachings in his name abound throughout the Mishnah, Gemorrah, and Midrashim, while the *Zohar*, the primary source text of Kabbalah, is built around Rabbi Shimon's revelations to his inner circle of disciples. During the hours before his passing, on *Lag b'Omer*, he disclosed the "most sublime" secrets of Torah, in order to ensure that the day would always be an occasion for great joy, untouched by sadness because of the Omer period and mourning for him. The seminal importance of the Zohar in Jewish thought and the annual pilgrimage to Meron on Lag b"Omer are testimonies to his success.

 **Connection:** Seasonal -- Meron, Rashbi

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

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**A Kohan Who Wanted the**

**Mitzvah of Burying the Dead**

**By Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetky**

 Rabbi Yehuda Laib Lewis is the Rav of a beautiful kehilla in Amsterdam. As in every kehilla, the community has a Chevra Kadisha which tends to the needs of the dead and dying, insures a dignified burial for the deceased, and helps the mourners through the process of bereavement.

 Membership is a privilege and only outstanding members of the kehilla are selected. There is one group of people who, no matter how outstanding they are considered in the community, are never asked to serve as part of the Chevra. You see, kohanim (priests) are not allowed to come in contact with a dead body, so burying the dead is one mitzvah that they rarely perform!

 It so happened that Rabbi Lewis’s community purchased a plot of land to consecrate a new cemetery for the kehilla. The kohanim, as well as other members of the community participated in this great mitzvah [of donating to the purchase of the cemetery land] and designated the first plot that was to be used.

 Not long after the purchase, a member of the kehilla passed away. He would be the first to be buried in the new cemetery. The next day the friends and mourners arrived with the deceased at the cemetery. Shovels in hand, they approached the grave to begin burying the inaugural plot for the deceased. They were shocked to see that the plot had been dug!

 After burying the man, they found out the true story. Moshe Cohen, a member of the community and a kohen, wanted to participate in the great mitzvah of burying the dead, all his life. However, there are very few limits to the restriction of a kohen coming in contact with a dead person. But when Mr. Cohen heard that there was a new cemetery being consecrated and that there was no one interred in it, he saw the opportunity that he had watched and waited for. And the first one buried in the new cemetery had his grave ready and waiting, dug by none other than Moshe Cohen! (As told by Rabbi Paysach J. Krohn).

*Reprinted from the Parshas Emor 5776 email of Torah Teasers*

**The Central American Hero Who**

**Saved Thousands of Jewish Lives**



José Arturo Castellanos - 1930's Italy - Photo courtesy of René Boehm

 An army colonel and diplomat from El Salvador who helped save tens of thousands of Jews from Nazi persecution during World War II by providing them with false Salvadoran identity papers was honored in Germany. The tribute to Jose Arturo Castellanos, who served as El Salvador’s consul general in Geneva, was held last week by Germany’s Ministry of Foreign Relations and the Berlin Jewish Center.

 Yad Vashem representative Sandra Witte said that Castellanos, who was recognized posthumously as *Righteous among the Nations* by the Israeli Holocaust memorial and museum in 2010, is a distinguished icon among all saviors.

 “We can say that very few are like Jose Castellanos or Raoul Wallenberg, who have saved several thousands. And it happened in times that they say there was no margin for action and nothing could have been done. Castellanos proved something can be done,” Witte said.

 Felix Klein, a German diplomat, said Castellanos’s example shows that denying the Holocaust is inconsistent. “If a diplomat from a foreign country could be aware, many Germans could be, too,” he said.

 While in Switzerland during World War II, Castellanos befriended George Mandel, a Hungarian-Jewish businessman. Castellanos appointed his friend, who adopted the more Spanish- or Italian-sounding name of George Mandel-Mantello, to serve as the consulate’s first secretary, a fictitious title. They issued passports or visas identifying thousands of European Jews as citizens of El Salvador to save the holders from the Nazis.

 In 1944, this relatively small-scale distribution of Salvadoran documents became almost a mass production. Eventually Castellanos realized that he could not issue the documents quickly enough to save most Jews. So he and Mandel-Mantello secretly distributed more than 13,000 “certificates of Salvadoran citizenship” to Central European Jews, which allowed them to receive the protection of the International Red Cross and eventually the Swiss consul in Budapest. Due to these efforts, now called the “El Salvador Action,” at least 25,000 Jews were saved.

*Reprinted from the Parshas Emor 5776 email of Torah Teasers*

**2005 – GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

 Despite the weight of his great deeds, Col. Castellanos dwelt in the shadows of obscurity until 2005 when in a strange episode from the pages of a detective novel, a suitcase with over 1,000 of the original Salvadoran certificates is unearthed from a dusty basement in Geneva. The life-saving nationality documents make their way to the vaults of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC where researchers and scholars study their every detail to shed light on the massive scale and complicated mechanics of the Salvadoran rescue mission.

**2010 – JERUSALEM, ISRAEL**

 Thanks to overwhelming evidence and efforts by the Salvadoran government and the Salvadoran Jewish community, José Arturo Castellanos is recognized as [*Righteous Among the Nations*](http://db.yadvashem.org/righteous/family.html?language=en&itemId=5604975) by Yad Vashem, the world centre for holocaust research in Jerusalem.  This honour is reserved for rescuers like Raul Wallenberg and Oskar Schindler whose heroic efforts have been well documented.  José Arturo Castellanos however, died in 1977 in obscurity in his country of El Salvador.

Reprinted from the website: [www.castellanosmovie.com/the](http://www.castellanosmovie.com/the) film

**Why an Israeli Sailor Became**

**A Chozer Bi’Teshuvah**

**By Rabbi Dovid Hoffman**

 The following story was told to a Rav in Israel while he was sitting on a bus. A sailor of the Israeli navy boarded the bus and sat down next to the Rav. Soon, the two were involved in a deep conversation with the sailor relating that he was a Jew who returned to the fold of observant Judaism after he witnessed many open miracles.

 He explained that he was a crew-member on the INS Chanit, when it was damaged on July 14, 2006 by a missile fired by Hezbollah. The flight deck caught on fire and crippled the propulsion system inside the hull. Four crew members were killed during the attack.

 It was a Friday night and several of the religious Israeli sailors on the ship approached the captain with a request. It was crucial for the success of their mission, they said, if the entire crew ate the Shabbos meal together. They begged the captain to not only permit this request, but to allow the entire ship to join in. They understood that such a request - to have all the crew members of a war ship eating a meal together - is not standard operating procedure. Under normal circumstances, the crew ate in shifts so as not to be vulnerable to the enemy at any point. This, however, was not a normal circumstance, and perhaps it was what was needed to invoke Divine protection on the ship.

 The captain granted the religious sailors their wish insisting, though, that four men must remain on the deck at all times, as a security precaution. The sailor then explained to the Rav where he was when it all happened. He had been very tired and his next shift of duty was to begin at 12:00 am that night. He was planning to skip the dinner and take a nap to be re-energized for his shift. However, when he heard that everyone was eating together, he decided to pop in for a few minutes. He walked in in the middle of davening and was impressed to see Israelis of many different points on the religious spectrum answering Kaddish and singing Lecha Dodi in unison.

 Following Kabolas Shabbos, they all sat down to eat the Shabbos meal together. Usually, Navy meals are eaten in shifts, often a bit rushed. Similar to eating lunch in the middle of a work-day, these sailors have many responsibilities and cannot eat leisurely. This Friday night, however, they were all laughing, eating, enjoying and singing for several hours.

 When the meal ended, they started to recite the Birchas Hamazon out loud. The sailor told the rabbi on the bus that he ended staying for the entire meal and blessing afterwards. His plans to sleep were foiled. However, he now has a great appreciation to Hashem that he missed that nap. Moments after Birchas Hamazon began, the ship was smashed by a Hezbollah missile.

 The sailor explained several possible scenarios that should have happened. First of all, the size of the missile should have sunk the ship. A big enough hole would have been created to sink the vessel, but the missile hit a huge anchor being stored on the deck that absorbed much of the impact. He also explained that the ship caught fire and tons of stored fuel in close proximity to the flames could easily have exploded. Miraculously, they did not.

 Then the most obvious miracle of all - if the crew had eaten according to their normal schedule, tens of sailors would have been on deck and most likely injured or killed. They were saved due to the fact that the entire crew was eating together in one room on the opposite side of the ship - far away from where the rocket hit.

 The sailor ran down to his quarters and found his entire room, belongings, and bunk melted to ashes from the heat of the fire. He personally knew what his fate would have been had he taken that nap - had the big Shabbos meal and davening not taken place.

 But there’s more to the story. Upon searching the ship after the missile attack, crew members found a Sefer Tehillim that was opened to chapter 124. The words of the posukim are astounding:

 “A song of ascents, by Dovid. Had not Hashem been with us .... when men rose up against us, they would have swallowed us alive, when their anger was kindled against us. Then the waters would have inundated us; the current would have surged across our soul. Then they would have surged across our soul- the treacherous waters. Blessed is Hashem, Who did not present us as prey for their teeth. Our soul escaped like a bird from the hunter’s snare ... Our help is through the Name of Hashem, Maker of heaven and earth.”

 Looking at the Rav with gleaming eyes, the sailor declared, “I have become a religious Jew from this experience.”

*Reprinted from the Parshas Emor 5776 email of Torah Tavlin.*

**A Lesson in Ahavas Yisroel from**

**Rav Issur Zalman Meltzer, zt”l**

**By Rabbi Dov Brezak**

 At the funeral of Maran Hagaon Harav Issur Zalman Meltzer, ztz”l, his nephew Rav Moshe Chevroni related the following story.

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**Rabbi Issur Zalman Meltzer**

 In Eretz Yisroel at that time there was a terrible battle waging between the British and the Israeli Underground. At certain times the British would declare a curfew. At those time people were not permitted to leave their homes from 6pm in the evening until 6am in the morning. Bbritish soldiers would patrol the streets in order to ensure the curfew be strictly adhered to. If an Israeli was found in the streets he would be taken to jail. In case he looked suspicious or dangerous he could even be shot by the soldiers.

 Late at night Rav Moshe was sitting in the yeshiva and learning. It was 2 A.M. and suddenly he heard someone knocking on the door . Rav Moshe became scared that perhaps the British soldiers were coming after him. “What are they searching for in Chevron Yeshiva”, he thought to himself. “Do they think we are hiding ammunition? What will be? I don’t know English and I have no way of communicating with them.”

 He davened from the depths of his heart and only then approached the door asking quietly who it is.

 A voice answered in Yiddish, “It’s me your uncle!”

 “My Uncle” He said to himself in surprise.

 With a feeling of great relief he opened the door and Rav Issur Zalmen walked in.

 “Uncle, why did you come to the yeshiva this hour?”, he asked. “There is a curfew and its dangerous to be outside.”

 Rav Issur Zalmen answered “I was sitting at home with a difficult Rambam and I urgently needed to have pshat . Who could I ask at such a late hour, I thought. I said to my wife that you are certainly not sleeping at this hour. I knew you would still be in yeshiva learning and so I came. I figured that together we will be able to work out this kashya I have in the Rambam.”

 “I was amazed at the magnitude of my uncle’s love for Torah,” said Rav Chevroni at the funeral.

 “He troubled himself to come to the yeshiva at 2 A.M. , in the midst of a curfew, because he could not remain without an answer for his kashya on the Rambam.”

 After that the Rav continued. “Rav Issur zalmen shared with me the great kashya that he had. I davened to Hashem that he should light up my eyes and I was able to provide an answer. Rav issur Zalmen was very pleased.
He turned to leave but I asked him to stay. ˜It’s dangerous to go in the street now, I said.”

 “I have to write the answer”, he said. “You can write it here”, I said. “No I have to write it in my notebook in my house, he insisted. He was determined and there was nothing I could do to deter him.”

 “See how great is the love of Torah that Rav Issur zalmen had. See how great was his hasmodo in Torah concluded Rav Moshe Chevroni in his hesped.”

 During the shiva when Rav Moshe Chevroni came to pay his condolences the family reminded him of the story he had told over at the levaya. His aunt, the wife of Rav Issur Zalmen said that that is not how the story went.

 Rav Moshe asked in amazement, “But I saw this with my own eyes”

 “Yes, replied the rebbetzin, he came to you in the middle of curfew but the story was very different. Rav Issur Zalmen would write his chiddushei Torah and I would help him organize them. He wanted to have his chiddushim printed and I wanted even more than him.

 “The problem was that the printers were so inundated that they said they would only be able to print the sefer in 5 years. That is how overloaded they were. This was very painful as we knew how much the Torah World would benefit from the sefer of Rav Issur Zalmen.

 “One day the printer let me know that someone decided not to print his book. ‘If you bring me the material before 8 am tomorrow the writings will immediately go to the printing press. If you bring me the material any later, even at 8:05 A.M. the turn will already be taken by someone else and you will have to wait another 5 years.’

 At night Rav Issur Zalmen returned home and with great happiness the rebbetzin told Rav Issur Zalmen what had happened. ‘At 8 A.M. tomorrow morning your writings will begin printing,’ she said.

 “Rav issur Zalmen turned white. ‘What is the matter’ asked the rebbetzin?

 “You know that I have included in the sefer chiddushei Torah from the other Roshei yeshiva of Chevron, Rav Aharon Cohen and Rav Yechezkel Sarna. Rav Moshe Chevroni is the only one I have excluded.’

 “But he won’t mind” said the rebbetzin. ‘I cannot do that to him’, said Rav Issur Zalmen.

 “I will not print the sefer without including a chiddush from Rav Moshe Chevroni.”

 The rebbetzin was ready to cry but then thought of a brilliant idea.

 “Go to Rav Moshe, and ask him a kashya you have on the Rambam even though you know the answer.

 “Erase the answer you have already written and put in his answer instead.

 “That is why Rav Issur Zalmen showed up at the yeshiva at 2 A.M. in the morning. He came to you and told you that he couldn’t sleep. This was the truth. He would not put out his sefer unless he would be able to get an answer from you on the Rambam. Heaven forbid to even take a chance that Rav Moshe may be hurt ever so slightly.

 “After Rav Issur Zalmen received the answer from you, which he basically had already written on his own, he hurried home to write it down and prepare it to be printed.”

 Yes Rav Issur Zalmen had a great love for Torah, but he had a great love for others as well. (Aderaba page 642)

*Reprinted from the Parshas Emor 5776 email of Peh Tahor.*

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**Unusual Mexico City**

**Kosher Grocer**



 There’s a beloved kosher grocer in Mexico City who’s an expert on Kosher law and Jewish holidays. When Passover rolls around, he scrubs his shelves and keeps his small store kosher for Pesach. He stocks his store with Jewish foods that can be hard to find in Mexico City.

 The store, “El Tope” is owned by Noe Trinidad Chavez. Although his knowledge of Jewish food and culinary traditions is extensive, he’s not a Jew but was born and raised Catholic.

 Coming from humble surroundings in a small town, he went to Mexico City at the age of 10 to find work. He started out by cooking and cleaning for Jewish families. Mexico City’s tight-knit Jewish population is around 40,000. Many of their ancestors immigrated to Mexico from Eastern Europe and Russia in the 1880s. The area is also home to a number of Sephardic Jews from the Middle East. [myjewishlearning.com]

*Reprinted from the Parshat Emor 5776 bulletin email of the Young Israel of Flatbush’s “BITS of INFO” submitted by Sherine Levine.*

**Brooklyn Restaurant Gives**

**Special Needs Teen's Family**

**Unforgettable Dining Experience**

**By Reuven Blau**



**Ari Cohen (center) was able to enjoy dinner with his family at Kasai restaurant in Brooklyn. (COURTESY OF LEAH COHEN)**

 A Brooklyn restaurant dished out a healthy serving of compassion for a family with a special-needs teen.

 Leah Cohen, 38, of Boca Raton, Fla., wanted to go out for dinner with her family during a visit to New York for a family wedding.

 But she was concerned that her son, Ari, 13, would upset other diners due to his uncontrollable flailing and grunts and that his behavior would attract uncomfortable stares.

 So she reached out to the owner of Kasai — a kosher Hibachi eatery in Flatbush — with the help of Elan Kornblum, who runs the popular Facebook group [Great Kosher Restaurant Foodies](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gkrfoodies/?fref=nf).

 She asked if it was OK to visit the popular eatery with her son.

 "I told her she could come whenever she wanted," Kasai owner Victor Ebadi, 30, recalled. "I'd send any customers away if they had a problem."

 Still, Cohen didn't want to inconvenience other diners and was worried how they'd react.

 So Ebadi offered to open the restaurant an hour before the dinner rush Tuesday for Ari and the rest of the family.

 "Your son is our son!" he told Cohen.

 The experience was unforgettable.

 "Right from the beginning they made us feel like more than VIP," Cohen said.

 Restaurant staffers set up a table in the back and catered to Ari's unique food needs. They served him scrambled eggs and cut cucumbers exactly to his liking.

 Ari was born with a chromosomal abnormality called Trisomy 9 Mosaic, and doctors predicted he wouldn't live past his first year.

 "The first doctor told us he was just like a lump of clay," his mother recalled. "Ari proved them all wrong. We celebrated the bar mitzvah in February."

 But the boy suffers from a long list of ailments and the family has had a hard time going out without being looked at strangely.

 "We go to restaurants all the time and have not had very good experiences," Cohen said.

 To thank the Kasai staff, she posted her story on the kosher Facebook food group with a set of happy pictures.

 "They made us feel special," she said. "They catered to my son's every need — even preparing things not on the menu."

 "For once my husband and I sat and enjoyed," she added.

 The post has gotten more than 1,000 likes and close to 150 comments in support.

 "This totally made me cry," wrote Nadine Teitelbaum.

 Now, the group's organizer, Kornblum, is working to arrange similar nights at Kasai and other restaurants for other people with disabilities.

 "I have a lot of friends with children with special needs who don't ever leave home because they can't take the stares or are unable to physically," Cohen said. "This will change that."

 Kornblum hopes the idea takes off nationally.

 "I've already spoken to restaurants around the country and we're going to set up more designated nights for special needs families," he said. "So they can go out stress-free. This will turn into a big movement."

*Reprinted from the May 19, 2016 edition of the New York Daily News*

**Shabbos Treasures…The Precious Gift of Shabbos**

**The Power of Heartfelt Prayers**

**At the Time of Candlelighting**

 Jewish mothers around the world Daven for their children’s growth in Torah and Mitzvos. We can never underestimate the power of a mother’s prayers! Moshe was 10 years old and he was struggling in school. He tried very hard to pay attention and follow what was being taught in class, but he just wasn’t getting it. Why was it so easy for his friends to learn Torah, and for him it was so hard? Why couldn’t he understand what the Rebbi was saying?

 Moshe’s parents did what they could for him. They hired private tutors, consulted with teachers and educational specialists, but nothing helped him. Moshe just wasn’t succeeding, until sometime in the middle of the school year, when Moshe’s Rebbi noticed some positive changes.

 Moshe suddenly seemed to be able to sit and listen. A few days later, he asked a question on the lesson, and a week later, he answered one. Was all the extra help that Moshe was getting beginning to pay off?

 The Rebbi called Moshe’s parents to share the wonderful news of their son’s progress and find out what had finally made him turn the corner. Moshe’s mother explained the miraculous turnaround in her son’s learning. She said, “For months, Moshe came home crying, pouring out his heart to me. He wanted so much to learn Torah, to understand what was being taught, but nothing seemed to help him. How long can a mother see her son in such excruciating pain? I knew I had to do something for him.

 “A few weeks ago, I told Moshe that when a mother lights candles on Erev Shabbos, there’s a special Zechus in her Tefilos for her children’s achievements in Torah study. I explained that I had always Davened for his success, but that from now on I would Daven with even greater concentration and intensity. I suggested that the next time I lit Shabbos candles, he should stand next to me, and we would Daven together, in the hopes that both of our Tefilos would be heard by Hashem. The next Friday, when it was time to light the Shabbos candles, Moshe stood by my side. We then began to Daven together, and I heard Moshe, my little 10-year-old Tzaddik, cry out to Hashem, pleading for success in his learning. Moshe’s Tefilos and tears mingled with mine as we Davened together to Hashem, and pleaded for His help. This has been going on for the last few weeks, and Baruch Hashem, our Tefilos are being answered!” (Barchi Nafshi, vol. 4, p. 352).

*Reprinted from the Parshas Emor 5776 email of Torah U’Tefilah: A Collection of Inspirational Insights compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.*

**The Importance of Derech Eretz in Shiduchim**

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**Rav Chaim Kanievsky, shlita**

 Rav Chaim Kanievsky was once asked, if someone had agreed to a certain Shidduch and a better prospect came along, would it permissible to cancel the original date with the first person and pursue the second person that came along? Rav Chaim answered, “This is absolutely not allowed to be done.” Rav Chaim related, “There was once a case like this and a bochur cancelled a date with a girl he agreed to out with, in order to go out with someone else, and the Shadchan called him later and told him that the second date had cancelled for him. Just as you do to others, so will happen to you.

 There was also another case where someone wanted to take revenge on a bochur, and pretended to set him up on a date, while in reality there was never a date arranged. The boy showed up at the girl’s home at the ‘prearranged time’, and the girl’s father asked him what he was doing there. He responded that he was there for the date with his daughter, and the father told him that no such date was ever set up.

 Seeing how confused and embarrassed the boy was, the father felt bad for him and invited him inside. They had a conversation and spoke in learning and shared a few Divrei Torah. The boy was unaware that the man’s daughter happened to have been in a different part of the house listening to the conversation, and she was impressed by how the boy spoke with her father, and she told her father that she was interested in dating this boy.

 In just a short while, the Shidduch actually went through, and this couple became engaged! The “Shadchan” was playing a nasty revenge trick and Hashem ‘paid him back’ by making the Shidduch work out. The “Shadchan” had the audacity to ask for Shadchanus, and he wanted to get paid for setting this couple up!” Rav Chaim said, “His Shadchanus should be two slaps across the face, but not money!”

*Reprinted from the Parshas Emor 5776 email of Torah U’Tefilah: A Collection of Inspirational Insights compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.*

**Crying Over a**

**Future Salvation**

**By Rabbi David Ashear**

 Rabbi David Ashear relates how a man told him that a few years ago he was unemployed for an extended period of time and was struggling with his finances. Then, a businessman came along with an attractive job offer. It was exactly the offer he had been waiting for, and his life seemed to be changing. Finally, he had hope.

 Before he could even sign the contract, an adversary from his past bad-mouthed him to the businessman, and he was rejected. The man was stunned. The accusations were entirely false. He pleaded his case with the businessman, but to no avail. At that moment, he felt as though his world was crashing down. He went into his car and cried like a baby for a halfhour.

 After a half-hour, he said to himself, “What am I doing? Why am I crying? This is from Hashem. It must be for the best. I am not going to let this break me. I will just move on and do the best I can.”

 The next six months were extremely difficult, as he struggled to get by financially. Then, came Hashem’s salvation, arriving in the blink of an eye, as we are taught.” Someone else approached him with a job opportunity; he signed, and is now doing well.

 Meanwhile, the office of the man who had offered him the job a half-year earlier was raided by the police, and the entire staff was arrested on fraud charges. All the employees are in trouble with the law.

 “I was crying in the car,” the man reflected, “for something that ended up saving my life. I don’t know what I did to deserve such kindness. What I thought was my biggest problem was actually my biggest blessing. It’s so clear now.” **Comment:** It doesn’t mean that every airplane one misses is going to crash, or every opportunity that’s snatched away isn’t a consequence of one’s own mistakes. Rather, we should learn that when things

 do happen, we don’t need to feel helpless or utterly devastated. We are not in charge of our destiny.

 All we can do is try our best, stay confident, learn from our mistakes, and vow to not repeat them…and of course, pray to Hashem to help us emerge from all challenges with a healthy (and not bitter) attitude. Story Reproduced from "Living Emunah” by Rabbi David Ashear, with permission of the copyright holders, ArtScroll/ Mesorah Publications, Ltd.

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