**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas Chukas 5772**

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**By Yehuda Avner**

**Recalling the day when Menachem Begin stopped Israel’s national airline, El Al, from flying on Shabbat.**

 For a long time Menachem Begin had been itching to take on one of the most powerful labor unions in the country – the El Al workforce. He wanted to put a stop to the operations of Israel's national airline from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday (the hours of the Jewish Sabbath), as well as on the major Jewish festivals.

**Leaning on the Arm of an Usher and Supported by His Cane**

 It was on this topic that Mr. Begin addressed the Knesset in May 1982, from the rostrum rather than from a wheelchair – the first time he had done so since breaking his hip almost six months before. However, since he was still in pain, it was with heavy steps that he mounted the platform, leaning on the arm of an usher and supported by his cane.

 For days, the Knesset had been permeated with a rising tension as muscular, stocky men roamed its corridors and canteens, and approached its committees, their numbers rising daily. These were the El Al union bosses, accompanied by their whispering lawyers, intent on scotching Prime Minister Begin's plan to halt the carrier's flights on holy days. Without letup, they pressured, pestered, and petitioned the parliamentarians...

 "Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, members of the Knesset," Begin began, "the government has decided that following a time lapse of three months, the aircraft of our national airline, El Al, will no longer fly on the Jewish Sabbath and festivals."

 This announcement resulted in looks of sheer hatred appearing on the faces of the union men, who sat watching the proceedings in the public gallery. The opposition benches erupted into paroxysms of heckling:

 "So why don't you shut down the television on Shabbat, too?" screamed one.

 “Are you going to stop Israel merchant ships at sea, too?" yelled another.

**Unfazed by the Derision**

 The derision fazed the premier not one bit. On the contrary, it supplied him with new inspiration. "Shout as much as you want;" he taunted… And then, changing his tone, altering his voice to a muted, sonorous pitch, this man who believed in oratory as the supreme weapon, an artful combination of style, cadence, and the application of formidable intellectual energy, argued,

 "Forty years ago I returned from exile to Israel. Engraved in my memory still are the lives of millions of Jews, simple, ordinary folk, eking out a livelihood in that forlorn Diaspora, where the storms of anti-Semitism raged. They were not permitted to work on the Christian day of rest, Sunday, and they refused to work on their day of rest, Saturday, for they lived by the commandment, ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' So each week they foreswore two whole days of hard-won earnings. This meant destitution for many. But they would not desecrate the Sabbath day."

 "So, stop soccer on Shabbat, too?" heckled one legislator, triggering off yet another squall of jeers, hissing and name-calling.

**Recalling the Example of Salonika**

 Adroitly, cutting through the pandemonium, Begin told the tale of Salonika, and as he did so the House listened. "In Greece there is a port city called Salonika, which had an extensive Jewish population before the war. Most of the port workers there were Jewish, and on Shabbat they did not work. Those stevedores would forego their pay rather than desecrate the Shabbat. Non-Jews goyim accepted this as a fact of life, and the port was closed on the Sabbath day. Imagine that!"

 “And you want to close down the whole country, turn us back to the Dark Ages," yelled somebody.

 "Ah, the Dark Ages," echoed the prime minister sarcastically, and to the delight of his supporters, he calmly raised his right hand as if to catch a ball, tossed it back toward the heckler, and resumed his rhetorical flow. "The Dark Ages, you say. Well let me tell you something, my dear socialist friend: Shabbat enshrines a social-ethical principle without peer. Shabbat is one of the loftiest values in all of humanity. It originated with us, the Jews. It is all ours.

 “No other civilization in history knew a day of rest. Ancient Egypt had a great culture whose treasures are on view to this day, yet the Egypt of antiquity did not know a day of rest. The Greeks of old excelled in philosophy and the arts, yet they did not know a day of rest. Rome established mighty empires and instituted a system of law which is relevant to this day, yet they did not know a day of rest. Neither did the civilizations of Assyria, Babylon, Persia, India, China – not one of them knew a day of rest."

 "So, put on a yarmulke," sneered somebody.

**One Nation Alone Sanctified the Shabbat**

 "Chutzpah!" boomed Begin, bristling. "I speak of our people's most hallowed values and you dare stoop to mockery. Shame on you!" With arms held high, he thundered, "One nation alone sanctified the Shabbat, a small nation, the nation that heard the voice at Sinai, ‘so that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as well as you.’

 “Ours is the nation that bequeathed to humanity the imperative of a day of rest to apply to the most humble of beings. Ours is the nation that gave the laborers the dignity equal to that of their employers, that both are equal in the eyes of G-d. Ours is the nation that bequeathed this gift to other faiths: Christianity – Sunday; Islam – Friday. Ours is the nation that enthroned Shabbat as sovereign Queen.”

**Hero of the Common Folk**

 A chorus of approval from the government benches went up, muffling every last vestige of dissent. Begin, hero of the common folk, caught up in his enthusiasm and sense of mission, rose to a crescendo. "So are we, in our own reborn Jewish State, to allow our blue and white El Al planes to fly to and fro, as if to broadcast to the world that there is no Shabbat in Israel?

 “Should we, who by faith and tradition heard the commandment at Sinai, now deliver a message to all and sundry through our El Al planes – 'No, do not remember the Sabbath day. Forget the Sabbath day! Desecrate the Sabbath day.' I shudder at the thought that the aircraft of our national carrier have been taking off the world over on the seventh day over these many years, in full view of Jews and Gentiles alike.”

**Restoring a Nation’s Soul**

 The ensuing rumpus was terrific. The Speaker sat, vainly banging his gavel, which thudded as soundlessly as a velvet mallet. So Begin himself raised his palms and then lowered them gently, once, twice, thrice, until the furor quieted. Once it had, he fixed his eyes on the public gallery and cast a solemn stare at its occupants.

 There is no assessing the value of Shabbat by financial loss or gain.

 "Let me say this to you, the good workers of El Al. The government has been the object of threats from some of you if we go ahead with our decision. We disregard these threats. In a democracy, government decisions are not made under threat. We cannot engage in profit-and-loss calculations when it comes to the eternal heritage of the Jewish people. There is no way of assessing the religious, national, social, historical, and ethical values of the Sabbath day by the yardstick of financial loss or gain.

**Saved Us from the Lowest Levels of**

**Materialism and Moral and Intellectual Decay**

 “In our revived Jewish State we simply cannot engage in such calculations. If it were not for the Shabbat that restored the souls and revived the spiritual lives, week by week, of our long-suffering nation, our trials and vicissitudes would have pulled us down to the lowest levels of materialism and moral and intellectual decay."

 And to hammer his point home, he ended his speech with the celebrated saying, "More than the Jews have kept the Sabbath day, the Sabbath day has kept the Jews."

 With that he turned to limp back to his seat, amid cheers and jeers. But hardly had he taken a step when, struck by a sudden additional thought, he hobbled back to the microphone, and declared:

**Not Necessary to be Pious to Accept the Cherished Principle of Shabbat**

 "Mr. Speaker, allow me just one further point. This House should know, it is not necessary to be an observant Jew to appreciate the full historic and sacred aura that enshrines this ‘perfect gift' called Shabbat. Its prohibitions are not arbitrary.

 “They provide insulation against corrosive everydayness, they build fences against invasions by the profane, and they enrich the soul by creating a space for sacred time. In a word, one need not be pious to accept the cherished principle of Shabbat. One merely needs to be a proud Jew."

 The Speaker bellowed that he was putting the prime minister's statement to a vote, and instructed the tellers to start counting. The tally was 58 in favor and 54 against, and Menachem Begin exhaled a long sigh of relief as he limped his way out of the hall.

*Reprinted from last week’s email from Aish.com and excerpted from “The Prime Ministers” by Yehuda Avner, with permission from the* [*Toby Press*](http://www.tobypress.com/)

**It Once Happened**

**A Seeming Miscarriage**

**Of Criminal Justice**

 Reb Shmuel Brin sat in a waiting room packed with chasidim who had traveled from far and near to seek the advice of the Rebbe Maharash--the Fourth Lubavitcher Rebbe. A tense atmosphere prevailed and showed itself in the serious and worried faces of all. Reb Shmuel was well known, the owner of a distillery which produced vodka, and an ardent follower of the Rebbe Maharash. He had been waiting to see the Rebbe for days, and now his turn had come, and he sat reciting Psalms with a broken spirit.

**Explaining His Serious Problem to the Rebbe**

 He entered the Rebbe's study, and was overcome with emotion--what had he done to bring this terrible calamity upon himself? He began to explain the situation to the Rebbe: "As the Rebbe knows, I earn my livelihood from my distillery. A certain tax is paid to the government for the amount of liquor produced, and a special meter attached to the fermenting vat measures each quart. From time to time an inspector comes to assess the taxes due.

 "Until now there has never been any trouble, but it seems that one of my employees has found a way, through making a small hole in the vat, of siphoning off some of the vodka, and thereby bypassing the meter. The vodka he managed to steal he sold to his friends, and so he cheated both me and the government. I have no idea how long this has been going on, but this is how it came to my attention:

**A Second Worker Informed the Police**

 "A second worker caught the first thief red-handed, and demanded a share in the take. The first thief agreed, but later they had an argument and the second "partner" went to the police. Upon investigation, the police discovered the swindle and arrested the thief. When questioned, he admitted the theft, but he claimed that it was done on my orders.

 "I don't know why, but then the police freed the thief and arrested me instead. My family barely managed to bail me out and I came here right here away to seek your advice. The penalty for cheating the government is very severe--there is even the possibility of life imprisonment or slave-labor in Siberia."

 With that, Reb Shmuel broke into uncontrollable sobs, crying "Rebbe! Help me! me'ayin yavo ezri--From where will come my help?"

 The Rebbe was thoughful for a while, and then responded: "Yes, your help will come from me'ayin, from the Unknown, from G-d. Return to your home, and when you will meet a Jew in trouble who will say: 'Me'ayin yavo ezri' help him; then G-d will also help you."

**Hears of His Friend’s Terrible Misfortune**

 Reb Shmuel left very much encouraged. Not long after, Reb Shmuel heard about a terrible misfortune that had befallen his old friend Reb Chaim. He had become destitute in a devastating fire which destroyed his entire inn. With a house full of children, Reb Chaim was desperate.

 Reb Shmuel went seaching for his friend, and found him sitting near some scorched wooden logs where his inn had previously stood.

 The two friends greeted each other warmly. Reb Shmuel eagerly offered his friend a loan, but he shook his head. "Where would you get the money? You have troubles enough of your own," he replied. "As we say in Psalms: 'From where will come my help? My help will come from G-d.'"

 As soon as he heard the words of his Rebbe echoed by Reb Chaim, he was even more anxious to extend his help. He didn't let Reb Chaim go until he finally accepted the proffered money.

**The Day of the Trial Finally Arrives**

 Weeks passed and finally the day of the trial arrived. Many members of the community appeared to testify on behalf of Reb Shmuel, but things didn't go well for him. The two accusers swore that they acted under orders of their boss, and the prosecutor made a fiery speech denouncing Brin as a swindler of the worst type. Brin could only repeat over and over again that he was innocent of the charges.

 After the lawyers had concluded their arguments, the judge proceeded to summarize the case and instruct the jury. He concluded his speech saying, "I want to recount the following episode which has a bearing on the case: Once, the young son of a nobleman was traveling by train. He left his luggage on the platform to get some refreshment. On his return it was missing, and along with it, all of his money and ticket. For a couple of days he hung around the station hungry and miserable, noticed by no one.

 "Then a man descended from an incoming train, and with one look at the boy, invited him to partake of a meal at his expense. The boy accepted gratefully and told the stranger about his predicament. The man reached into his pocket and gave him money for a ticket. When the boy requested his name, so that he could repay him, he refused, saying that one day the boy would pass on the favor to another, and that would be his reward.

**The Judge Identifies His Old Benefactor**

 "Members of the jury," concluded the judge, "this man that you see before you is the very man who helped me so many long years ago! Such a man could not be liar and a thief! A man who could so graciously help a complete stranger with no thought of recompense could never commit this crime! I leave it up to you to decide!"

 In a few minutes the verdict was returned. "Not guilty!" Reb Shmuel Brin did not immediately hear the verdict. His mind was on the words of his saintly Rebbe: "Fill the void of another in distress, and G-d will fill yours."

*Reprinted from Issue #222 of “L’Chaim,” a publication of the Lubavitch Youth Organization in Brooklyn, New York that was published almost 20 years ago for Parshas Korach 5772 (July 3, 1992.)*

**The Human Side of the Story**

**Pomegranate Piece Peace**

**By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach**

 A Moslem neighbor of the rabbi of the Jewish community in Djerba came to him with his tearful story. “My beloved wife,” he said, “insisted on paying a visit to her father’s home against my wishes. I couldn’t budge her but I demanded that the visit be a very brief one. If she would not be back home before I finished eating the pomegranate I had just started, I warned her, she would be divorced.

 “This apparently upset her and she intentionally came back much later. According to Moslem law, she is no longer my wife and the truth is that I want her back.”

 The rabbi, author of a commentary on *Mesechta Me’ilah* called “*Me’il Yaakov*”, came up with a brilliant idea.

 “It is well known,” he said, “that when one eats a pomegranate, some of the pieces which make up its fruit fall to the floor. Go back home and search the floor under your table if there are any pieces there. If so, you did not complete eating

that pomegranate and your divorce declaration is not binding.”

 The fellow followed these instructions and indeed found some of the pomegranate seeds on the floor. The local Moslem kadi absolved him of his vow to divorce his wife and praised the brilliance of the rabbi whose fame subsequently

spread throughout the entire region.

*Reprinted from last week’s email of OHRNET, the Ohr Somayach Torah Magazine of the Internet.*

**Not an Ordinary Shepherd**

 Once there lived in the Land of Israel a very wealthy Jew. Upon his death, he passed on to his wife all of his great wealth. The widow decided to leave her city in search of a place with less memories. Her main concern before going on her journey, was to find a place where she could safely leave her vast inheritance. She came upon the idea of hiding her gold coins in earthen containers, which she filled with honey. She then asked one of her late husband's close friends if he would watch over her jars of honey while she was away. The friend was happy to oblige.

**The Friend Runs Out of Honey for**

**His Son’s Marriage Celebration**

 Months passed. One day, the friend was preparing a festive meal for his son's forthcoming marriage and they had run out of honey. The friend remembered the honey which had been left in his safekeeping by the widow. "Certainly there can be no harm in my borrowing some of the honey," the friend conjectured. "I will replace it tomorrow," he assured himself.

 Imagine the friend's surprise when he dipped a large spoon deep into the honey and it came out with two gold coins stuck to it. Again and again the friend dipped the spoon into the honey, and each time it came up with a small fortune. "No one but the widow and myself know that there is money in these earthen jars," thought the friend. And with that, he emptied the jars of all the gold. The next day he quickly refilled the jars to the very top with the sweet, golden syrup.

**Widow Returns to Her Home Town**

 A few weeks passed and the widow returned to her home town. She had found a suitable home in a different village where she was certain she would be able to start a new life for herself. When she asked her husband's friend for the honey jars back he was only too happy to return them to her. She thanked him for having "guarded" them for her all this time

 The widow hurried home with the jars and, once inside, set out to retrieve the gold coins she had placed there months before. At first, she did not become alarmed when the spoon came up empty. But as the minutes passed, and she did not come up with one gold coin, she became hysterical. She took each jar to the back of the house and poured out the honey. She searched inside the jars but found nothing.

 Beside herself with grief, the widow ran to the "friend's" house, only to find that he denied any knowledge of the gold coins. "You left jars of honey in my care and I have returned the exact jars of honey that you gave me."

**Judge Sends the Case to King Saul**

 The widow had no choice but to take him to court. The judge, however, noting that there had been no witnesses to the widow's claims that she had put gold in the jars, could not come to a verdict. He sent the case to a higher court, which eventually referred it to King Saul, himself. King Saul, however, also had no clue as to how to decide the case.

 While on a walk in the countryside, the widow began to sob bitterly. A young shepherd noticed her bent and broken figure, and approached to offer his assistance. The widow smiled at this innocent lad, and told him her sad story.

 "I have an idea that might help prove that the jars were filled with gold," said young David. "Go to King Saul, and tell him that David, son of Jesse, would like to come to his court and to help settle this matter."

 The widow was touched at the young boy's sincerity. "My dear child," she said, "I have been sent to the King by the highest court in Israel, for they could not reach a decision. How, then, do you think that you will be able to help me?"

**Assures Her that G-d Will Help**

 "Certainly G-d will help you. Just maybe, that help is meant to come through a young, simple shepherd such as I," David replied. The woman went to King Saul with David's request.

 King Saul was intrigued with the young boy's offer and invited him to come to the court. The `friend' was also summoned to the court. Over and over, the thief swore on all that was holy that he had returned the exact same jars that he had been given.

 "What do you say about this, my son?" asked King Saul to the young shepherd.

 David asked that one of the jars be brought to him and in this way he would be able to prove the truth in the widow's words. David lifted the jar above his head and smashed it against the floor. He then carefully inspected the shards of pottery that were at his feet. Triumphantly, he help up one piece of the jar and waved it in the air. Stuck to the pottery was a gold coin that had been overlooked by the thief, and the widow. Next to the gold coin were circle marks which proved other coins were once there.

 The thief's evil deed had now been proven. All of Israel heard of the wisdom of the young shepherd, David, who later became one of the greatest kings of the Jewish people.

*Reprinted from the website of Chabad of Bel Air.*

**Story #760**

**Four Days in Brussels**

**From the desk of Yerachmiel Tilles**

[**editor@ascentofsafed.com**](http://webmailb.juno.com/webmail/new/8?folder=Inbox&msgNum=0000lWW0:001FsPzo000019Zp&block=1&msgNature=all&msgStatus=all&count=1340251048&randid=1811036878&content=central)

 My name is Meir Zeiler. My business is manufacturing and selling velvet fabric. I live in Kiryat Malachi in the south of Israel and travel extensively around the world for trade fairs and exhibitions to market our products.

 For 25 years I made business or exhibition trips outside of Israel only after consulting with the Lubavitcher Rebbe and, thank G-d, I’ve experienced great success in these efforts.

 During flights and exhibits there’s plenty of free time, and I take advantage of it for the Rebbe’s Tefillin Campaign [which began during the Six Day War in 1967]. When setting up exhibits I always arrange a small cubicle for myself to which I can invite Jews to put on tefillin conveniently, and drink light beverages if they wish. I’ve kept up this custom through the years, and in this too I’ve met success.

**They Discover Someone Proud of His Jewishness**

 Generally speaking, Jews relate to me as a solid businessman, and when they meet me personally, they discover someone proud of his Jewishness, with a full beard. I’ve always felt that in this way I’m able to add some holiness to the world.

 In late 1994 [a few months after the Rebbe passed on away] we learned of an

international textile exhibition to be held in Brussels for four days, two days of which coincided with Rosh HaShanah. That left one-and-a half days for a presentation. I felt very uncertain about participating: the sum needed to set up a pavilion and pay the staff, plus hotel accommodations, would be in the vicinity of $30,000.

 In situations like this I always directed my questions to the Rebbe through Rabbi Binyamin Klein [one of the Rebbe’s main secretaries], so once again I turned to him first for advice. Rabbi Klein’s response was that the Rebbe always encouraged me to participate in exhibitions, and thank G-d I’ve always been successful. Go along your time-proven path, he said. For sure you’ll succeed as you have until now.

 I took the advice, got organized, and set out. Armed with an additional pair of tefillin, a shofar, a Machzor, and a stockpile of kosher food, we opened our exhibit in Brussels.

**Arranging to Close His Pavilion Before Rosh Hashanah**

 In the afternoon hours of Erev Rosh HaShanah, we arranged to close our pavilion and adjust the curtain with a sign: Closed for the Jewish New Year, plus a notice that the stall would be closed two days. As we were finishing, a man, who appeared about 70, accompanied by a woman (his wife, we presumed), came toward us.

 As he become aware of the sign and the closed curtain, he looked angrily at my staff people and yelled: “What! What’s going on here? Who closes an exhibit for something as trivial as this? No one in 1994 relates seriously to Rosh HaShanah!” His anger and volume increasing with each passing moment.

 I came out from the pavilion when I heard all the noise outside, and introduced myself as the one in charge. “How can I help you?,” I asked him.

**Explodes is a Torrent of Yiddish**

 I barely finished the sentence, when he exploded at me in a torrent of Yiddish: “Who on earth appointed you to close an exhibit because of some insignificant Jewish holiday?! In the world of the 90s who still believes in this lunacy!

 “Days of Judgment? What we went through in Poland, myself, and my family who were destroyed on Rosh HaShanah in “Auschwitz ovens” confirms one thing only: There’s no judgment; there’s no judge! Drop this craziness! Throw it away! Leave your exhibit open, stay here, and let’s sit down to do some business.”

 “I want to tell you something,” I said to him, putting my hand on his shoulder. “There is a judgment, and there is a judge. Every last one of my family was also murdered in the Holocaust. But specifically doing this, closing on Rosh HaShanah is my revenge against Hitler, on the Days of Judgment. And specifically because there is a judgment and a judge, I’m going to do yet another mitzvah and help you put on tefillin. Here, inside...”

 That set him boiling again: “What! Tefillin? We left those back there. What worth, what point has any of this after the Holocaust?! How you waste your time...”

 This time I cut him off. “Come. Let’s talk,” I told him. “I’ll worry about my time. You saw I didn’t react when you wasted my staff’s time. Come. Nothing compares to putting on tefillin in the final hours before Rosh HaShanah, the Day of Judgment.”

**Suddenly He Becomes Compliant and Rolls Up His Left Sleeve**

 He was furious: “Forget it!,” he bellowed, but he followed me inside nevertheless. Finally we’re standing alone in my cubicle, away from the crowd gathered around the exhibit. Suddenly he’s compliant, like a child. He rolls up his left sleeve; I take the tefillin and start putting them on him, and he repeats after me word by word: “Baruch Atah...tefillin.”

 When he starts reciting the Shema Yisrael prayer [which twice mentions the commandment of tefillin], I turn away for a moment to answer a phone call from abroad. In the middle of the conversation I see him from the corner of my eye break down crying like a child, his whole body shaking. Then he stops. He can’t finish the Shema, and sits down completely drained, stammering, “I can’t...I can’t.” He’s sobbing, “It’s too much...I can’t any more,” and his hand moves over his heart.

**His Wife Was Stunned**

 It was a while before he calmed down. Someone brought him some cold water to wash his face, and a cup of tea. His wife, standing by him the whole time, was stunned, speechless; the crowd surrounded us, staring, tense.

 When he was composed I asked him what he did; what brought him to the exhibit. He told me his name was Lieberman, and said that at the age of 18 he had gone through the Holocaust. He managed to survive, and reach Chile, where the Jewish community put him back on his feet. But he fled from anything with the faintest scent of Judaism.

 “For 55 years I’ve avoided all this, he said. “I raised a small family, and

Didn’t worry about passing along any Jewish values. I live in an exclusive gentile

area. I built up a fish canning factory, and I’m quite successful in production and

marketing.

 “A few days ago the strangest feeling came over me. I felt a need, an internal push, to do something, that I couldn’t explain to myself. Without a great deal of thought, I decided to take a trip, and try my hand at opening some new business. I haven’t any idea at all how I wound up at this exhibition, and I have no explanation why I put on tefillin...”

 He finished speaking, and disappeared into the milling crowds. I stood there, awed by the Divine Guidance that takes a Jewish fish merchant from a deep abyss in Chile all the way to a Brussels textile exhibit to wake up his Jewish spark, and put on tefillin.

 Source: Kfar Chabad Magazine - English (Spring 2002) edition, as retold by Tuvia Natkin, and lightly edited by Yerachmiel Tilles [including all the remarks in square brackets].

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**A Moment with Rabbi Avigdor Miller, Zt”l**

**The Test of Wealth**

|  |
| --- |
| **QUESTION:** |

Why was Korach blessed with such wealth if Hashem understood that this might be his undoing?

|  |
| --- |
| **ANSWER**: |

|  |
| --- |
| Personal_Wealth |

Not only Korach, all men are blessed with wealth although Hakadosh Baruch Hu knows that it might be their undoing.

 Here's a poor little grocer, and all his life he's decent. He can't afford not to be. So one day he is crossing the street and a car crashes into him, and the car owner has big insurance, and now he's rich!

 So he closes up his grocery store and now he begins traveling to glatt kosher hotels in the mountains. But according to his present circumstances it's not enough, so he goes to the Grossinger's hotel. From Grossinger's he graduates to Europe, and then when his wife is not around, he has plenty of money in his pockets, certain forbidden pleasures occur to his mind which never would have come to his mind in his poor days in the grocery.

 The end is however, he gets into trouble, he's ruined and he dies an early death. Now why did Hashem give it to him? The answer is, why did Hashem give anybody wealth? Because wealth is an opportunity.

 Suppose he would have taken all that money and he would put it in a bank and he would have continued in his grocery store! Only now, every Tuesday afternoon he brings in an assistant and he goes and sits in the bais hamedrash and says Tehillim, and from this money he can now give a lot of charity.

 So he can continue to live a quiet life. He could have been healthy and happy because now he's not worried if the customers don't come, and he could have given a lot of charity and have gotten olam habah and lived longer.

 Wealth is a blessing and a curse. It depends on the way you use it, and Hakadosh Baruch Hu gives it to a man as a test.

*Reprinted from last week’s email from “A Moment with Rabbi Avigdor Miller, zt”l.” The email is transcribed from questions that were posed to Rabbi Miller from members of the audience attending his classic Thursday night lectures in his Flatbush shul.*

**Kiddush Wine**

**Before You Dine**

 Shabbat enters with words of wonder poured upon rich wine, to fulfill the verse, “Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it.”

 We call it *kiddush*, a ritual of words and drink, a magical bridge from the harried weekday to the day of rest. So enchanted we are by the *kiddush* that we repeat it again in a different form by day. The *kiddush* serves as the kickoff for the evening and daytime Shabbat meals.

 The nighttime *kiddush* consists of three parts: 1) Three verses from Genesis that recount how G‑d rested on the seventh day and sanctified it. 2) The blessing for wine. 3) A blessing thanking G‑d for giving us the Shabbat.

A magical bridge from the harried

weekday to the day of rest

 The daytime *kiddush* consists of several verses from Exodus, followed by the blessing on wine.

**Kiddush how-to:**

 On Friday night, sing the *Shalom Aleichem*, to welcome the Shabbat angels, and the ode to the Woman of Valor.

 Rinse and dry the *kiddush* cup. Fill it to the brim with kosher wine.

Gather everyone to stand around the Shabbat table. Raise the wine-filled cup in your right hand (unless you are left-handed), and recite the *kiddush* aloud.

 On Friday night, gaze at the Shabbat candles as you say the first four words. Then look at the wine in the cup while saying the wine blessing.

 All in attendance answer “Amen” at the conclusion of the blessings.

 Drink at least 1½ ounces from the cup. Everyone else should also have a sip.

**Technical details:**

 Wine is preferable, but kosher grape juice is okay.

 Don’t eat or drink before *kiddush*—starting from sundown of Friday night, and after the prayers on Shabbat morning.

 If no wine or grape juice is available, recite the *kiddush* on *challah* or bread. Just replace the wine blessing with the bread blessing—and wash hands before the *kiddush*.

 Once someone has sipped from a cup of wine, the leftover wine should not be used for *kiddush* unless some fresh wine is added to the cup.

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