**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas lech lecha 5781**

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**I Ate Non-Kosher**

**Food, Now What?**

**By** [**Aron Moss**](https://www.chabad.org/search/keyword_cdo/kid/8051/jewish/Moss-Aron.htm)



**Dear Rabbi,**

**I am so embarrassed; I don’t know what to say.**

**Last week, I bought a tomato sauce that I thought was**[**kosher**](https://www.chabad.org/generic_cdo/aid/113424/jewish/Kosher.htm)**. I always buy this brand, but this time it seems I chose a different flavor than usual. After cooking with it and feeding my family, I read the ingredients, and to my horror, the sauce wasn’t kosher!**

**I will do whatever I need to**[**make my kitchen kosher**](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/134484/jewish/The-Kosher-Kitchen.htm)**again. I know that can be fixed.**

**But what devastates me is that I ate it and fed it to my family. Is there anything I can do about it now?**

*Answer:*

You have a rare opportunity before you, one that even the holiest people never have. You can transform that [non-kosher food](https://www.chabad.org/library/howto/wizard_cdo/aid/113425/jewish/What-is-Kosher.htm) into something positive. Here’s how.

While every food has its nutritional value, certain foods have the capacity to provide us with spiritual nutrition too. This is kosher eating. The Torah allows us to eat certain foods, not because they are healthy for our body, but because they are healthy for our soul.

**Non-Kosher Foods that Block the**

**Connection between Body and Soul**

On the other hand, non-kosher foods block the connection between body and soul, deaden our perception of holiness and desensitize us from the world of spirit.

But there is a way that non-kosher food can elevate you. This can happen when the eating of non-kosher food itself stirs you toward spiritual growth. When you regret what you have done and resolve to be extra-cautious in the future, and when you commit to being more careful in your general observance of the dietary laws, reviewing the relevant laws, then you have made the non-kosher food a means for growth.

Since returning to G‑d needs some action, resolve also to place some coins in a charity box (preferably affixed to the wall of the kitchen) before cooking, and refrain from some of your favorite foods for a few days—an exercise that helps one gain mastery over one’s desire for physical pleasures. These actions and intentions will serve to transform what was a fall in spiritual observance—even an unintentional one—into a step towards a higher spiritual plane.

**An Amazing Turnaround**

This creates an amazing turnaround. The item you ate actually made you more spiritual. The sin had the same impact usually reserved for the observance of a positive commandment: it made you closer to G‑d.

This is the law of transformation. A dispute, when resolved, makes friends closer. An argument, when handled correctly, makes a marriage deeper. A mistake, when seen as a learning tool, makes you smarter. And a piece of ham, when you regret eating it, makes you more kosher.

You should never deliberately start an argument, and you should never choose to eat non-kosher food. But if it already happened, don’t spend too much time feeling down. Make the turnaround and elevate it.

*Reprinted from the Parshat Noach 5781 email of Chabad.Org Magazine*

**Goldberg’s Shoe Repair...**



Going through an old drawer, Yankel found a 40-year-old ticket for shoe repair. He remembered bringing in his third best dress shoes for new heels and realized he’d forgotten all about them.

“I wonder if old Goldberg is still repairing shoes? I haven’t been in that neighborhood in ages!”

So Yankel drove over, and to his amazement, Goldberg’s Shoe Repair was still there, with old Mr. Goldberg working behind the counter. Yankel figured his shoes were long gone, but it couldn’t hurt to ask, so he walked in, greeted Mr. Goldberg, and showed him the 40-year-old ticket.

“Any chance you still have the shoes?”

“Let me check.” Old Goldberg toddled off into the back. A minute later, he called out, “Here they are!”

“Wow, this guy is amazing,” thought Yankel. Old Goldberg came back out, and handed the ticket back to Yankel.

“They’ll be ready on Tuesday.”

*Reprinted from the Parshat Noach 5781 email of Lekavod Shabbos Magazine.*

**Story #1193**

**Laser Vision**

**From the desk of Yerachmiel Tilles**

**editor@ascentofsafed.com**



After the Six Day War, in 1967, my wife and I decided to move from the United States to Israel with our young family. Before the move, I went over on a pilot trip and was granted a job interview at the Israeli Ministry of Defense. After they conducted a lengthy investigation I was hired, to my great joy. I went to work for the Ministry of Defense using my skills as a Harvard-educated lawyer to negotiate contracts for the purchase of defense equipment including submarines. After three years of doing this, I got a better offer; I went to my boss, the general counsel of the Ministry of Defense, Joseph Ciechanover, and told him about my plan.

His response to me was, “Did you ask the Rebbe about this?”

I almost fell off my chair. Here was a man who was not religious, sitting in front of me without a yarmulke, and he was telling me to ask the Lubavitcher Rebbe!

He went on to explain, “There are a number of us who have worked for the Ministry of the Defense for a long time and we also want to leave, but the Rebbe won’t let us.”

I didn’t know what to make of his statement at first, and only later did I figure it out. This was in April of 1973, six months before the devastating Yom Kippur War. The Rebbe obviously anticipated that something ominous was on the horizon. A departure of key personnel in the Ministry of Defense at such a time would have been disastrous. They consulted the Rebbe – as apparently was the practice of certain Israeli government officials – and they followed his advice.

**I Was Not Yet a Chasid**

As for myself, since I was not yet a chasid, I didn’t ask the Rebbe; I simply left and took the better paying job, as general counsel at Etz Lavud, a big Israeli company then selling mostly wood and plywood.

While at Etz Lavud, I came across a difficult personal issue, involving Yosef Kremerman. He was the company’s CEO as well as one of the principal shareholders, and my boss. Being a former member of the Irgun (the forerunner of the Israel Defense Forces), he had signed guarantees for monies paid out to the widows of Irgun fighters, and that put a tremendous amount of financial pressure on him.

I saw that this situation was affecting the company, and I was actually considering leaving. I really didn’t know what to do, so I consulted my uncle, Rabbi Leibel Kramer, who said, “This kind of question you ask the Rebbe.”

He asked on my behalf and quickly came back with an unbelievable response. The Rebbe had said, “Since this is something which is dependent on the situation in Israel – when you will need to make this decision, you should consult with a friend who understands the matter. I will pray for you at the resting place of my father-in-law, the Previous Rebbe.”

**The Rebbe’s Response Influenced Me**

The Rebbe’s response influenced me to stay. I understood him to be telling me that quitting was something far in the future and that when I must eventually leave, it should be done with the advice of a friend.

As it turned out, a year or so later, in 1977, Menachem Begin became prime minister and took over the obligation of supporting the widows of Irgun fighters; this relieved Kremerman of his financial burden and the pressure on the company. Then there came a time, some years later, when I had to decide if I should stay at Etz Lavud or join Laser Industries, a start-up subsidiary working on developing a medical laser. And that is when I remembered the Rebbe’s advice and consulted “a friend who understands the matter.”

The advice I got was that the future was with Laser Industries, and I followed this advice, which proved to be completely correct. The company became highly successful. It is now known as Lumenis Ltd. and is a recognized leader in the hi-tech medical field. From the stock options, I was able to marry off most of my children.

**I Met Professor Herman Branover**

After seven years, I changed jobs again. This was in 1987, when I met Professor Herman Branover, the scientist and famed refusnik, who told me that the Rebbe was predicting a huge influx of Russian immigrants into Israel. At the time, Russian Jews were virtual prisoners of the Soviet Union and nobody could imagine such a thing. But Professor Branover believed the Rebbe, who knew better.

The Rebbe also apparently knew that when the exodus of Russian Jews would begin, there would be many highly-educated, scientifically-oriented immigrants who would need a place to incubate their ideas, inventions, and innovations. And so, on the Rebbe’s advice, Professor Branover set up SATEC (Shamir Advanced Technology Engineering Company), one of the first science-based incubator companies in Israel, for Russian Jewish scientists who would soon be coming out.



**The Lubavitcher Rebbe, zt”l**

People still don’t realize how much new technology in Israel and worldwide is the result of the Russian aliyah. But in my opinion, the Rebbe understood that it would happen before it happened. SATEC, which I assisted Professor Branover in founding, was developing products such as heating elements and power meters.

I went to see the Rebbe while he was giving out dollars for charity to ask him for a blessing for SATEC to succeed. He responded, “Minoga Hatzlachah! – Great Success!” using the Russian word for “great” and the Hebrew word for “success.”

**A Personal Audience with the Rebbe**

And, indeed, SATEC has become a success. In 1978, my wife and I were fortunate to have a personal audience with the Rebbe, which I remember vividly. The audience lasted five minutes but it was life-changing. I recall that his office was a simple, small room, but at the time it seemed to me enormous, and I was keenly aware of the Rebbe’s dominating presence.

During that audience, the Rebbe said to me, “You are a lawyer and lawyers are used to making compromises. But you should always show the world that Torah is truth and that Torah is life.” He used the words Torat emmet and Torat chaim. This was a message that I have carried with me ever since.

It was clear to me that the Rebbe did his best to infuse people like me who were involved in hi-tech industries with the desire to bring Torah into their workplaces because he understood that hi-tech would be the future of Israel. The country wouldn’t be exporting oranges as much as start-ups.

**Israel is the World’s Leading Hi-Tech Innovator**

And we have all seen that. Israel is the leading hi-tech innovator in the world (except for the United States). There’s no other country that does anything like it with a population of only 8.5 million people. So it’s obvious to me that Israel has been especially blessed in this regard, and I do believe that the Rebbe has had a hand in that blessing. Israel has no significant natural resources – except for gas, but that is in a relatively early stage of development – and so all it has besides agriculture is Jewish brains.

What do Jewish brains do best in the modern world? Hi-tech. There is no question in my mind that the Rebbe anticipated that. While the Rebbe did not live in Israel physically, he lived in Israel spiritually. And he understood everything that was going on and what was best for the country. These are the reasons why I became a chasid of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. And I consider myself such to this day.

*Reprinted from the Parshat Noach 5781 email of KabbalaOnline.org, a project of Ascent of Safed. Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from a mailing of "JEM - Here's My Story” (JEmedia.org), as part of their extraordinary “My Encounter with the Rebbe” project, documenting the life of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi M. M. Schneerson of righteous memory.*

**A Desire for Coffee**



‘He who trusts in them, grace will surround us’

On Motzei Shabbos and Simchas Torah I heard Havdalah in shul along with many friends who stayed waiting for second hakafos that continued late into the night.

So as not to waste precious time, I sat with my chavrusa to learn in the Bais Midrash. A short while later, I wanted to drink a cup of coffee to revive myself, but where would I find coffee now?

**Ein Od Milvado**

My friend told me that there was no way I would find coffee now in that area, and as for me, when I hear that there is ‘no way’, it is enough for me to jump and I told him that ‘ein od milvado’ – ‘there is none other beside Him’, and if the Creator of the world wanted, then I would have an abundance of coffee!!!

I immediately began thinking of ways that Hashem could send me coffee, and after discussing it, we agreed that in the end Hashem will send the coffee only in a way that we did not think about.

After learning a little, we went out to get some air, and to our great amazement, diagonally across from the Bais Midrash was a ‘coffee room’ all set up. The problem was that it cost one shekel for a cup of coffee… I was still wearing Shabbos clothes and I did not have a shekel on me.

My friend turned and noticed a small sign that read: “Coffee tonight is reserved for those who are learning, free!!!”

I was very happy, and I thanked Hashem for His many kindnesses.

My friend was also happy, and he reminded me that a few months ago, an incident happened also while we were learning and there was no milk for the coffee. I told him that Hashem would send it, and he thought it would never happen.

I asked him, “Is Hashem’s arm short?”

He told me that it was not, but there would not be milk for the coffee in a normal way. A few minutes later, an older man who I help called me and asked for a favor. I went up to his home for a moment and when I turned to go, he asked that I do him a favor and donate his milk to the yeshiva since he is not allowed to drink milk and it came in his food package. I was so excited then!!!

*Reprinted from the Parshas Noach 5781 email of Tiv Hakehila.*

**Short and Sweet Story of the Week**

**How a Horse Drinks Waters**

A man once came to Rabbi Meir of Premiszlan, OB”M, seeking advice. His neighbor, he complained, opened a store right next to his and was ruining his business by stealing his customers. Rabbi Meir asked him, “did you ever notice how a horse drinks from the river?”

The man replied in the negative. Rabbi Meir explained, “before a horse takes a drink, he first kicks at the water. He sees his own image in the water and thinks that another horse has come to take away the water that he is about to drink. A person, however, is not like a horse. He should realize that, in this great wide world of Hashem, there is enough water to quench the thirst of all the horses, enough to support all living creatures!”

*Comment: In the times of Noach, the masses ruthlessly stole, killed, and committed many other terrible sins. They believed, “If I don’t steal, I won’t have what I need! I need to plunder this person’s crop, take another one’s wife, and kill a third one’s son.” However, Hashem really can give everyone whatever they need in life, and there is no need to resort to foul play. May we learn from this that Hashem will always give us whatever we need, and there is no need to steal in order for us to get it.*

*Reprinted from the Parshas Noach 5781 email of Torah Sweets Weekly edited by Mendel Berlin. Originally printed in Shloimy Weber’s website* [*shloimy.yweber@gmail.com*](mailto:shloimy.yweber@gmail.com)

**The Brilliance of**

**Mrs. On Ben Pelet**



The Torah says, “*It is not good for man to be alone, I will make for him an ezer—helpful mate, k’negdo—opposite him (Beresheet*2:18).” The *gemara*clarifies that if a person merits finding the right wife, then he will have a spouse who will be his helper. If, however, he does not have that merit, he will have a wife with whom he is constantly arguing.

Rabbi Frand brings down an interesting explanation on this *gemara* by Rabbi Reuvain Katz. He writes that this *passuk* is not referring to two different types of wives. The *passuk* is explaining that a good wife must perform two roles for her husband, even though the two roles are sometimes opposite in nature to one another.

**Doing the Right Thing in Life**

If a person is doing the right thing with his life, then Hashem wishes that his wife help him reach his goal. However, there is another aspect to why Hashem created wives. *Chazal* explain that when Hashem took the rib from Adam and created Chava, a *Binah Yeterah—extra level of intuition* was given to women.

The word *binah* comes from the word ben—between, which means women have an intuition that helps them distinguish between two *opposing* matters (*k’negdo—opposite him*). Sometimes it is the function of the wife to use her *binah yetera* to tell her husband “Excuse me my dear husband, but this is NOT the way to go!”

The classic example of this is the famous *gemara* that states, “The wife of On ben Pelet rescued him (*Sanhedrin* 1090b).” Even though he had initially joined Korach’s rebellion against Moshe, he didn’t follow through with his plan. Why? His wife, who used her *binah* to understand exactly how to convince her husband not to join Korach, pointed out to him the folly of his ways. She said, “What does it matter to you? Now, Moshe is the leader and you are a follower. If Korach is successful, he will be the leader and you will still be a follower. Stay home.” Even though this wasn’t a compliment to On ben Pelet, she spoke to his logical side and saved him from destruction.

**Playing the Role of His Opposite**

Mrs. On ben Pelet was not playing the role of the dutiful wife who always reinforces her husband’s decisions and choices. She was not playing the role of the “helpful mate;” she was playing the role of his “opposite.” She saved him with her *binah yeterah*, with her extra intuition, in this world and in the next! This is the exact role of ,“*if he does not merit*.”

Meaning, if a husband is not acting in the meritorious way Hashem would want him to act, then his wife should stand up in opposition to him and save him from his foolishness!

*Reprinted from the Parshat Beresheet 5781 email of Jack E. Rahmey based on the Torah teachings of Rabbi Amram Sananes.*

**The Pair of Socks**



I once heard a story about a famous big g'vir who left a tremendous yerusha for his children. After he was niftar they found that he had left two Tzvaos. They opened the first one and found written that the g'vir requested to be buried wearing his socks, and their receiving the yerusha depended on if they listen to his request. The second point was that they were forbidden to open the second tzava'ah until after the burial. The family gave over the request to the Chevra Kedisha, but they were turned down.

The Chevra Kadisha explained that they were forbidden to heed to the request. The family was frantic since they knew the entire estate depended on this request – but the Chevrah Kadisha would not budge.

Left with no choice they obeyed the Chevra Kadisha and ignored their fathers last request, knowing the consequences of losing perhaps millions of dollars.

**The Family Opened the Second Tzava’ah**

After the levaya the family opened the second tzava'ah and they were in for a big shock. In the tzava'h, their father wrote that the reason he requested to be buried in his socks was just to teach his children a vital lesson; that all their possessions will not go with them down to the grave – not even a pair of socks! Only their good deeds what they do with their possessions is that will continue on with them in the world to come.

Once they internalized the lesson, they received the entire Yerusha.

There was a story with a different very wealthy individual who was getting on in his years. One day, he called the Rosh Yeshiva of the Daf HaYomi Yeshiva and told him that he wanted to support his institution and at the same time he wanted to join the Daf HaYomi.

**A Desire to Learn the Daily**

**Daf with the Rosh Hayeshiva**

The Rosh Yeshiva was very impressed and wished him Hatzlacha. The Gvir explained to the Rosh Yeshiva that he wanted to learn the daily Daf b'chavrusa with the Rosh Yeshiva. The Rosh Yeshiva was a little taken aback, as he never even spoke to this fellow before.

"Where do you live?" he asked.

"I live in America" the gvir replied.

"Well I live in Eretz Yisroel," said the Rosh Yeshiva, "So how do you plan on learning together"

"Don’t worry," came the quick response, "If you agree, I will call you every night at nine p.m. in the U.S. (four a.m. in Eretz Yisroel) and we will learn over the phone. Of course I'll give a generous donation to your institution".

**The Gvir Called Every Day Punctually**

The Rosh Yeshiva agreed and the new seder began the following morning. For a half a year long, the gvir called every day punctually. One day, however, the Rosh Yeshiva received the terrible news that the gvir who he learned with for the last half a year had passed away. The Rosh Yeshiva received a mess age from the gvir's wife that they wanted to fly the niftar to Eretz Yisroel, and they wanted the Rosh Yeshiva to arrange the levaya.



The Rosh Yeshiva was very saddened that his special chavrusa was niftar and he arranged the levaya. After the burial, the Rosh Yeshiva noticed that his cell phone was missing. Someone called his phone, and in the grave down below they saw the Rosh Yeshivas phone vibrating in the dirt. The Rosh Yeshiva announced, "Raboisai, the very phone that was used to study the Daf HaYomi with this gvir every day, will now accompany him as his defender in the world to come."

*Reprinted from the Parshas Noach 5781 email of Eitz Hachaim.*

**The Very Sick**

**Father of the Baby Boy**

The Chofetz Chaim relates the following story: Rav Shlomo Kluger, zt”l, was once asked to be the Sandek at a Bris. He arrived at the house at the set time, but found that everyone was just waiting for a long while to start the Bris.

When he asked what the delay was about, the guests sorrowfully told him that the father of the baby was deathly ill, R"L, and the family was waiting for his Neshamah to leave in order to be able to use his name for the new baby.

When Rav Kluger heard these words, he ordered the Mohel to quickly perform the Bris without delaying another moment. After the Bris took place, he went into the adjoining room, where the father was lying in bed ill, to wish him a Mazel Tov.

He explained his actions to the father. "To bother the Malach that is appointed to heal to come specifically to heal someone is beyond my capabilities. However, the Malach of the Bris would come when a Bris is performed. He stands to the right of the Mohel to heal the baby from his Bris, and since he is coming here anyway, I would then be able to ask him to simply go into the next room to heal a sick person as well!"

"And so it was," said the Chofetz Chaim, "After three days, the father got up from his bed, with regained strength, and went to Shul on his own!"

*Reprinted from the Parshas Ki Savo 5780 email of Torah U’ Tefilah as compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.*

**The Definition of**

**Truly Being Sorry**

An elderly Jew once approached Rav Yissachar Ber of Belz, zt”l, and said that he wished to do Teshuvah for all the Aveiros he had committed when he was young.

Rav Yisschar Ber told him, "You can indeed do that, if you are truly sorry about your sins."

"But Rebbe," the man asked, "How can I tell what 'truly sorry' means?"

Rav Yissachar Ber answered him with the following story. "There was a merchant who would always come every year to the fair with many wagonloads of goods to sell. One year, he decided to arrive a little earlier than usual, and he was among the first to arrive at the fair.

Soon after he had set up his booth, it began raining fiercely. It rained so hard that no other merchant was able to get to the fair, and since he was one of the only ones there with goods to sell, all the buyers came to him, each trying to outbid the other.

However, instead of selling anything, the merchant decided to wait. That afternoon, the bids for his merchandise were even higher, but again he decided to wait and refused to sell anything. It continued like this for the next two days and the bids kept getting higher and higher, and finally, the merchant felt that the bids were high enough, and the next day he would sell his wares to the highest bidder. That night, as he slept well and dreamt of the wonderful profit he was going to make, the rains died away, and by morning, all the other merchants had arrived at the fair. With so much more competition, all the prices fell, and the merchant was forced to sell his goods at very low prices."

Rav Yissachar Ber continued, "Now, if you are as sorry about your previous sins as that merchant was for not having sold his goods sooner at the higher prices, you will know that you have truly repented!"

*Reprinted from the Parshas Ki Savo 5780 email of Torah U’ Tefilah as compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.*