**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas vayishlach 5782**

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**‘In Its Proper Time’ –**

**'ובזמנו בעיתו'**

**By Rabbi Gamliel Rabinowitz**



 The driver was already on his way to get me to take me on a long trip, but the person we had asked to help us with the suitcases had not yet arrived. He was not answering his cellphone. I tried to call some other friends hoping that perhaps someone could help us bring down the suitcases before the car arrived.

 In the meantime, I received a call from someone who wanted to ask about a boy for a shidduch for someone. On the one hand, I was in a hurry to get downstairs. On the other hand, this boy was very dear to me with exceptional midos. We waited to talk about the boy, when suddenly the boy showed up in our house and began to carry down the suitcases.

 I was speechless. I told my friend on the other end of the line what had just happened, he warmly felt that this was Heaven hinting him to go ahead with the shidduch. How likely was it that we should be talking about him and he shows up to help bring the suitcases down to the car with hashgacha.

**Amazed by the Hashgacha of Hashem**

 What happened was that my friend went out on the porch and saw the boy we were discussing. My friend called to him, and he ran to do the mitzvah. We were speechless from the hashgacha of Hashem to have him show up just then to help us. Hashem had mercy and the driver was stuck in a little traffic which caused him to be a few minutes late which coincided with our being a few minutes late.

 When the hashgacha became clear, we understood why the person we had reserved did not show up. After a short while, the shidduch was made in the best possible way. I am adding one interesting point: The boy is 23 years old. By us that is already considered old as he has already been looking for his match for a few years. Of course, these have been very frustrating days with all of us davening, but the salvation was delayed.

**We Do Not Know the Reasons for Delays**

 But now that he was engaged, it was clear that the girl was too young to date and he had to wait for her until she was ready. Had he known this, he would have lived with joy and patience, but we do not know the reasons for delays, and he just had to daven, believe, and wait patiently since it was clear that he could not marry her until she was old enough.

*Reprinted from the Succos 5782 email of Tiv Hakehillah in Yerushalayim.*

**Finding that Special River in Nepal’s Katmandu Valley**

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**Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Horowitz, zt”l (the Bostoner Rebbe)**

 When the Most High gave the nations their portions, when He separated the children of man, He set the borders of nations according to the number of Bnei Yisrael. (32:8) Following the Flood that devastated the world, the few survivors rebuilt, and all the people who lived together sinned once again by creating the Tower of Bavel.

 Hashem dispersed and divided them into seventy nations, with seventy distinct languages corresponding to the number of souls that had descended together with Yaakov Avinu to Egypt. The Torah is conveying the message that when the nations sinned again, they forfeited their chance to be the human bearers of Hashem’s mission for humanity. Instead, Hashem selected Klal Yisrael to replace the larger, more populous nations with the much smaller, but more distinct and holy Klal Yisrael.

 This means that as we are the bearers of His mission to the world, history will work in consonance with our needs. It, therefore, stands to reason that in all our subsequent wanderings/travels among the (seventy) nations of the world, wherever we may be, the potential to live a Torah life is preordained and will thus be available to us.

**An Urgent Cable to the Bostoner Rebbe**

 To underscore this idea, the Bostoner Rebbe, zl, relates how one day in the late 1970’s a Harvard doctoral candidate sent him an urgent cable. Apparently, his brother and sister-in-law were involved in a six-month engineering project in Nepal. They wanted guidance on how to construct their own personal mikvah! Obviously, they were unaware that building a mikvah, even for someone with an advanced engineering degree, is not a simple task.

 Furthermore, it was not an endeavour that had the likelihood of being completed within their time frame. The Rebbe sent someone to Harvard’s main research library with the task of poring through atlases to locate a river near Katmandu (where they were staying) that met the specific halachic criteria for immersion. This meant identifying the river’s sources, specifically to determine how much was spring water and how much was rain water. (The waters of a mikvah must gather together naturally, thus obviating tap water.

**Spring Water or Rain Water**

 They must be derived either from spring water or rain water, which may then be combined with tap water. If spring water is used, it may be flowing. If, however, rain water is used, it must be stationary.)

 The student returned with a plethora of information concerning Nepalese geography, and they soon discovered a halachically appropriate river near their residence. Luckily, the Katmandu Valley enjoys nice weather throughout most of the year. Their problem was solved. Hashem had prepared the opportunity for a Jew to observe all the strictures of halachah, even in the distant Himalayan mountains.

*Reprinted from the 5782 Haazinu-Succos email of Rabbi A.L. Scheinbaum’s Peninim on the Torah.*

**Waking Up a Sleeping Giant Or Jews are Truly Insane**

**By Rabbi Yoseph Vigler**



**Rabbi Yoseph Vigler**

 Dear Chevre,

 Have you ever asked a random Jew - How much do you need to cover everything you need for Yom Tov? Is that a normal question? The past few days I discovered that Jews are insane. I have no other word to describe it.
 On Friday night a lady came over to us to say thank you. For the past few days she had been toiling to find $24,000 to pay tuition for a single parent child she didn't know. Yet she was mobilizing her entire family to help. And she was grateful for the privilege.
 It all began on Erev Yom Kippur. I was preparing for the holy day - Kaporos, mikvah, the works, I thought I felt ready.

 Then I got a game changer Whatsapp from a friend, a sicha of the Lubavitcher Rebbe 66 years ago, 6 Tishrei 5716, He suggested that we must earn the right to beg G-d for a good year, when we may not be worthy, by seeking a Jew whom we have never met, find out what that Jew needs for Yom tov and give him EVERYTHING to celebrate in style. Then G-d will take care of us.

 I was inspired so I forwarded it on.

 Within minutes my WhatsApp was buzzing, I had woken up a sleeping giant.
 One Yid was exiting a store as he got the whatsapp. Just then a fellow asked him discreetly for help. How much do you need to celebrate the ENTIRE Yom tov? The guy bashfully replied, $300. This yid got the cash from an ATM. The stranger says, to tell you the truth I was praying to G-d because I had no money for rent due today. The Yid returned to the ATM and withdrew the entire $2500 this fellow needed.

 I know of tens of thousands of dollars that transferred hands from that text, in the hours before Yom Kippur till now.

 I was privileged to be asked by some people to serve as an agent to give money to families I know. One lady raising her six children alone heroically said: I cannot believe I am part of this Jewish people. Why would a stranger give me $4,000 to cover my entire Yom Tov?!

 A young father alone with his kids received Yom Tov ready-made, because cooking was not his forte.

 One mother was crying as I called her. I already received funds from you, from the My Extended Family vouchers, she says. But to tell you the truth it's all used. I went to the Ohel of the Lubavitcher Rebbe to daven. "I am sending you everything to cover it. FYI, this is a gift from the Lubavitcher Rebbe, from a sicha 66 years ago that inspired Jews today"

 One particular Yid asked whom he could sponsor. My wife whispered to me: - tell him about the kid who needs $24,000 to have a chance at life. I thought that was astronomical. But she insisted I try.

 Next thing I knew he and his sister were working tirelessly to raise those funds. As she walked in grateful, I saw the Majesty of the Jewish soul. It is NOT normal, It thrives on Tsedaka, on G-dly acts. Only that gives her TRUE satisfaction
Permanent concrete homes will not give a Jew satisfaction. Tsedaka is to let go and let G-d in, to step out into G-d's space, the glory of your neshama
 Yidden, you are meshuga but you are special. I stand proud!

Gut Yom Tov!

 Rabbi Vigler

*Reprinted from the Sukkos 5782 email of Rabbi Yoseph Vigler’s Mayan Yisroel Center in Flatbush.*

**The Lesson of the Five-Story Building Purchased to Only**

**Be Knocked Down**

 In his short life, Moishele had experienced more trauma than most people experience in a lifetime. His father had been killed in an automobile accident when Moishele was just a toddler, and his mother became ill two years ago. She fought valiantly, and Moishele prayed with all his heart that she should be cured, but it was not meant to be.

**Walking Back from His Mother’s Funeral**

 As he walked back from his mother’s funeral, accompanied by his rebbe, the dam that had heretofore kept his emotions in check burst, and Moishele broke down. His rebbe also wept, because he understood what this young boy was now up against. He prayed that he would have the right words to say that would provide some sort of comfort to him.

 “Do you see that construction site across the street? A group of contractors purchased that five-story building. They are knocking it down and are planning to build a twenty-story apartment complex in its place. If an unknowing person would walk by and see them knocking down a perfectly fine building, he would surely wonder why they were doing this.

 “The answer is simple: They want to build a larger building. If this is the case, why not simply add fifteen stories to the original building? The answer is: The taller the building, the deeper and stronger must be its foundation. “Likewise with you, Moishele. Hashem has put you under incredible pressure, as you have lost both your parents and theoretically are alone in the world. (He did have elderly, loving grandparents.)

 “Hashem obviously is preparing your foundation for extraordinary greatness. He is putting you through very difficult travail in order to temper and strengthen your faith in Him.”

 “Why me? Why does He not choose someone else for this mission?”

 “That is a good question, Moishele. A similar question can be asked concerning why the contractors must knock down this building. Why can they not simply go to the outskirts of the city and choose an empty lot and build there? The answer is simple: This is the centre of town, the mercaz, where everything happens. People want to live here, not on the outskirts. To build here makes the most sense and will incur the greatest profit. Likewise, Hashem sees something special in you, Moishele. This is why He is preparing your spiritual foundation to achieve greatness.”

 Hashem has a plan. It is neither for us to understand, nor is it for us to conclude. We ask no questions, because the chances are we will probably not grasp the answers.

*Reprinted from the 5782 Haazinu-Succos email of Rabbi A.L. Scheinbaum’s Peninim on the Torah.*

**A Person’s Face**

**Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l**

**By A. Ben-Ami**



**Illustration by: Yocheved Nadell**

 “Woh-ahhh-ow!” yelled Dovid as he went flying through the hallway after slipping in the puddle that the school janitor had left in the hallway. Dovid landed on his back with a big thud on and lay there for a few seconds wondering why he had never noticed that the ceiling was painted light beige.

 But he recovered quickly enough to run over to Elazar and Yehuda who had seen everything. “How can the janitor be such a shlemazel and wet the floor without warning us?!” Dovid said to his friends. “And he knows that we’re coming up from lunch now! Why didn’t he put down the caution sign?! He’s a waste of the school’s money!”

**The Janitor was Embarrassed**

 Even though Dovid was only whispering, Pinny the Janitor knew exactly what he was saying and the blood drained from his face in embarrassment. He wanted to apologize but Rabbi Hertzberg, the elementary school principal, had already grabbed Dovid by the hand, pulled him into the office and asked if he was OK.

 “Yeah,” said Dovid. “Just very wet, I guess. Boruch Hashem for that. I could have broken my back because of that janitor!”

 “Actually Dovid, that’s why I called you in here to speak with you in private. I’m sorry it had to happen this way, but I think that your slipping in the ‘janitor’s water’ is a good opportunity for you to learn a lesson. And that is that that man outside mopping the floors is not just a janitor. He’s a person! His name is Pinny Ben-Ami.

 “That’s what you wanted to tell me?” said Dovid. “That he’s a person? Aren’t all janitors people?”

 “Exactly!” said Rabbi Hertzberg. “That’s exactly what I wanted to speak to you about – what it means to be ‘a person’.” Rabbi Hertzberg opened the chumash Bereishis that was on his desk and looked at Dovid. “I’m going to read to you an interesting possuk in this week’s parsha and then we’ll figure out together what it’s teaching us. Listen to these words carefully:

**Adam was Made in Hashem’s Image**

 ‘And Hashem made Adam in His image.’ Hashem is telling us here that when He created man, He didn’t just choose to make him like He made the elephants and the kangaroos and the caterpillars. He made Adam look like Him!”

 “But Rabbi Hertzberg, that’s impossible! Nobody knows what Hashem looks like. I’m sure He doesn’t look like me. I have big ears and freckles. And He probably doesn’t even look like you, even though you have a beard and everything.” “Exactly!” said Rabbi Hertzberg. “That’s why the mefarshim spent a lot of time trying to understand what this possuk is talking about. Because it’s not letting us know that Hashem has a nose and lips and ears – that’s for sure! So, what does it mean that we are all made in His image?”

 “I’m not sure,” said Dovid. “Maybe it’s one of those secret things like kabalah; the mysterious stuff that most people are not able to understand.”

 “That’s true, Dovid,” said Rabbi Hertzberg. “I’m sure it also has some very deep meaning that only special tzadikim understand, but my rebbi, Rav Avigdor Miller zatzal, taught us that every possuk in the Torah is meant to be understood by everyone even on a simple level. And he said that some of the most important secrets for how to see things in this world the way Hashem wants us to see them are in the simple pshat of the pesukim.

**The Simple Secret of the Possuk**

 “So, what is the simple secret of this possuk?” asked Dovid. “Am I allowed to know?”

 “Sure,” smiled Rabbi Hertzberg. “That’s why I called you into my office. And you’ll be very surprised to hear that this possuk is talking about Pinny! The possuk is telling us that Hashem made Pinny in His image.”

 “Pinny?! The janitor Pinny?! Hashem doesn’t look like me or you, but He looks like Pinny?! You mean Hashem is bald?!”

 “No, Dovid. The possuk is not talking about how we look. It’s not saying that every person looks like Hashem but that every person has some of the greatness of Hashem in them. When Hashem made Adam, it says that “He blew into his nose”. And that means that Hashem put a little bit of Himself, a little bit of his infinite perfection into every human being. And because of that every person you see should be treated with great respect.

**The Man Mopping the Floor is a Real Person**

 “That man mopping the floors is not “the janitor.” Just the fact that you’ve been in yeshiva for a month already and don’t know his name means that you haven’t fulfilled this possuk in our parsha. He’s Pinny – a real person, with real feelings, who has greatness within him and that’s something to think about every time you see him.”

 Dovid walked out of Rabbi Hertzberg’s office knowing that he had some work to do. What good is it to learn the secret of a possuk if you’re not going to fulfill it? And so Dovid walked to the hallway where Pinny was mopping, and called out with a smile, “Hi Mr. Pinny! Thank you for keeping everything so clean! We appreciate it!”

 And Dovid walked away knowing that from now on he was going to treat everyone with a smile and respect – because that’s the only thing that a person made in the image of Hashem deserves.

*Reprinted from the Parshas Bereishis 5781 email of Toras Avigdor Junior.*

**Special Guest Treatment**

**A tale of a *tzadik* saved by a zealous disciple.**

**By [Yerachmiel Tilles](https://www.chabad.org/search/keyword_cdo/kid/1080/jewish/Tilles-Yerachmiel.htm%22%20%5Co%20%22Browse%20more%20articles%20by%20Tilles%2C%20Yerachmiel)**



**Art by Yitzchok Schmukler**

 Rebbe Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev once set out on a journey, accompanied by two attendants. On Friday they arrived at a small town, and, since the *tzadik* made a point of never traveling on Friday afternoon, they decided to stay there for Shabbat.

 It so happened that over the months before their arrival, this town had been visited by a series of charlatans. These resourceful gentlemen had provided themselves with the retinue of two attendants expected of a visiting *[tzadik](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2367724/jewish/Tzaddik.htm%22%20%5Co%20%22Tzaddik)* and, through carefully studied theatricals, had managed to dupe the simple folk who lived there.

 On each occasion, the crooks swiftly slipped away, with even more resources than when they had come. The abused townspeople therefore suspected Rebbe Levi Yitzchak too, and, to make matters worse, one of their number claimed to have once seen the Rabbi of Berditchev, and his memory told him that the newcomer did not resemble him in the slightest. His cronies therefore decided that in the synagogue the next day, on Shabbat, they would call this scoundrel to the Reading of the Torah and then and there abuse him and beat him up so heartily that he would be lucky to get out of their town alive.

 The two attendants of the *tzadik* sensed that something was wrong and begged him to set out in time to reach some other township before Shabbat. But the Rebbe was insistent: he had never traveled on Friday afternoon, and he was not going to relax his principles now.

**Making His Way to the Local Synagogue**

 Dusk settled over the township, and Rebbe Levi Yitzchak made his way to the local synagogue in order to join the congregation in welcoming Shabbat. Unable to contain the rapture and ecstasy that engulfed him in prayer, he prayed as he always did - with animated gesticulations and the voice of one possessed with a love for G‑d. Having made up their minds about him before they had as much as seen him, the congregants sarcastically marveled: "Now this one is a real expert at making an impression on people!"

 The unusual sounds emanating from the synagogue were overheard by a gentile who was driving by the doorway on his way through the township to a village some miles away. He asked the nearest Jew: "What's all the noise about?"

 "We've got some character visiting our town," said the local Jew, "who says he is the rabbi of Berditchev. That's him shouting his way through the prayers."

 The gentile continued on his way until he arrived at the village of his destination. At his lodging place, the Jewish innkeeper asked, "What news did you pick up on the way?"

 "I passed through a little town," replied the new arrival, "and heard the weirdest screaming coming out of the synagogue. So I asked one of your people what it was all about, and he said they have some rabbi visiting them, and that's how he prays."

 "Any idea where the rabbi is from?" asked the innkeeper.

 "Berditchev, I think they said," answered the gentile.

**The back door burst open….**

 Now this conversation was heard by the teacher who was employed by the innkeeper to tutor his children. The teacher had once met the *tzadik*, and his heart was instantly kindled with a desire to see him again. If it was true that Rebbe [Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/1007538/jewish/Rabbi-Levi-Yitzchak-of-Berditchev.htm) was actually in the neighboring town, how could he not go to visit him?! There was no choice: he would set out at once.

 After he had already made some headway, a thought that crossed his mind suddenly stopped him in his tracks: "What on earth am I doing? Tonight is Shabbat! It's absolutely impossible to walk the whole distance to that town without exceeding the permissible Shabbat limits. How can I keep going and desecrate Shabbat?"

 So he stood, giving this objection weighty consideration. He finally decided: "No matter what! If the *tzadik* is so near, I just *have* to go ahead and greet him!"

 After having gone a little further he stopped again.

 "Come now," he told himself, "you're acquiring a mitzvah by paying with a sin. Where does it say you're allowed to desecrate Shabbat in order to be able to earn the [mitzvah](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/1438516/jewish/Mitzvah.htm) of paying your respects to your rebbe?"

 He stood stock still, thought it through again from all angles, and then decided: "Onward!"

**They Strode and Stopped, Stopped and Strode**

 And so right through the night he strode and stopped, stopped and strode, until by daybreak he was on the outskirts of the town. By the time he found the synagogue, the congregation was ready for the Reading of the [Torah](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/1426382/jewish/Torah.htm), and, as he peered eagerly through the window, he saw the *tzadik* himself, making his way towards the Torah. Just as the long-awaited moment arrived for the irate townsfolk to teach their newest impostor a lesson he would never forget, the back door burst open, and the teacher from the nearby village, who was known by them to be some kind of scholar, ran in a frenzy up to the *tzadik*, and wailed: "Rebbe! Oy, Rebbe! I've desecrated the Shabbat!"

 "Not so, my son," the *tzadik* assured him quietly. "You have not desecrated the Shabbat, because your walking to here can truly be called a life-saving mission. If you had not arrived at this very moment, my life would have been in real danger."

The townsfolk, overhearing, realized that they had suspected an innocent man - and that this time a genuine *tzadik* was in their midst. They hastily begged his forgiveness.

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