**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas yisro 5782**

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**The Tenth Man**



Rav A. Leib Scheinbaum relates the following story. In a resort hotel in Eretz Yisroel outside Yerushalayim, the Mashgiach, the Kosher supervisor, would see to it that there was a daily Minyan for Minchah. It happened that one day he had a very difficult time completing the Minyan, and he decided to go outside to search for a tenth man.

He soon met a Jew who neither had a clue about what a Minyan was, nor about what the Mashgiach wanted from him. After the Mashgiach explained the significance of Minyan and the incredible reward in store for those who participate in a Minyan, the stranger agreed to join them as the tenth person. He went with the Mashgiach into the building and began walking up the stairs to the dining hall, where the Minyan took place.

Suddenly, someone told the Mashgiach that the son of one of the regular people at the Minyan had arrived, and they now had a Minyan. The Mashgiach turned to the Jew who had only walked up the steps, and told him that their Minyan problem had just been solved. He thanked him for his good intentions and wished him a good day.

**Appeared to the Mashgiach in a Dream**

Ten years went by. One night, when the Mashgiach was sleeping, he had a dream. In the dream, the man whom he had called in to be the tenth man appeared before him, and his face was shining brilliantly. The man related to him that he had passed away from this world during the previous month.

***“I Have One Favor to Ask of You.”***

He said, “I have come to thank you for attempting to include me in your Minyan. You have no idea of the incredible spiritual reward I have received because of the few steps I walked up in order to complete the Minyan.”

He added, “I have one favor to ask of you. I have one son who lives in Yerushalayim. He is non-observant. In fact, he is very estranged from a life of Torah and Mitzvos. Please go to him and ask him to recite Kaddish for me. It will mean so much.”

**Just Imagine How Great the Reward**

**Is for Actually Fulfilling the Mitzvah**

The Mashgiach, of course, met with the son of this man, and was successful in convincing him to say Kaddish for his father. Rav Scheinbaum commented, “This man got great reward, and it was all a result of him going a few steps out of his way. Can we even begin to imagine the reward for actually completing a Mitzvah? The S’char must be astounding!”

*Reprinted from the Parshas Mikeitz 5782 email of Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg’s Torah U’Tefilah*

**The Frankfurt Rabbi**

**And the Blood Libel**

**By Rabbi Shalom Klass**

As we mentioned in part I, Rabbi Yosef Shmuel of Cracow, the modest teacher of young children, became the rabbi of the prestigious city of Frankfurt.

The very day that he arrived, he plunged into a critical situation that threatened the very existence of the Jewish community there. This is the story of that crisis.

**A Blood Libel**

The Jewish section of Frankfurt was bedecked with flowers and radiated happiness, as they awaited the arrival of their new rabbi. Amidst this joy however, came great terror as the body of a young Christian boy was found in the Jewish ghetto.

To the horror of the Jews, certain priests in the city raised the blood-chilling libel, "The Jews killed him for his blood." Ritual murder.

The obscene accusation, which threatened hundreds and thousands of innocent Jewish victims in the past, now incredibly achieved a measure of belief in the progressive German city of Frankfurt. The town council demanded that the Jews produce the murderer within three days or be expelled from the city.

**Jews In Terror**

Rabbi Yosef Shmuel arrived from Cracow for the greatest day of his life. He still could not believe that he was worthy to be rabbi of the great city of Frankfurt, but he was determined to serve the community to the best of his abilities.

When he arrived, however, he was stunned to see that the communal leaders who had come to greet him appeared haggard and depressed.

"What has happened?" he asked. He listened in horror as the whole story was unfolded before him.

"We cannot tell you, rabbi," they said, "how sorry we are that this has happened on the very day that you arrived to be our spiritual leader."

"That is nothing," answered Rabbi Yosef Shmuel. "The main thing is that we find the real murderer and save the community from expulsion."

"But how can this be done? We have not the slightest clue to the identity of the murderer!"

"Have faith in the Almighty," said the rabbi. "I will go myself before the court three days from now and with His help, I will uncover the real killer."

For three days, the Jews of Frankfurt sat in prayer and fasted, beseeching the Almighty to help His people in their time of need. Finally, the time given by the authorities was over. The Jews watched with pounding hearts as the police came to lead the communal leaders and the rabbi to the court for the great confrontation.

**The Main Accuser**

Rabbi Yosef Shmuel watched silently as the main accuser stood before the judges, made an impassioned accusation and demanded vengeance against the Jews. He was none other than one of the priests in the city. He was a well-known anti-Semite and agitator, and all his hatred and poison now emerged.

Rabbi Yosef Shmuel watched as the priest spoke and studied the man very carefully. Finally, he finished and it was the turn of the Jewish community to make its defense.

All eyes turned to Rabbi Yosef Shmuel as he moved forward to face the judges.

**Bring The Corpse**

"My lords," said the rabbi, "I contend that the entire accusation is a false and vicious attempt to wipe out Jewish community of Frankfurt.

"I can prove my words if only you will have corpse of the poor boy brought in."

"Your request has been granted, rabbi," said judge. "You may now attempt to prove your case."

"I thank you. I will prove my case and also name the real murderer. Furthermore, the guilt of the murderer will be proven beyond a shadow of a doubt by myself but by the murdered boy himself."

**Priest Laughs**

The spectators in the packed court gasped at the rabbi’s words. What could he mean? How could a dead boy name his own murderer?

The priest who had made the main accusation now stepped forward and laughed.

"My lords, this rabbi surely mocks us all. How can the Jew cause this boy to name his murderer?"

"Very simple," said Rabbi Yosef Shmuel. "I will ask each person in this room to lay his hand on the body of the boy. When it is the murderer's turn, he will be unable to remove his hand. In this way he will be discovered."

**Priest Vehement**

The priest, upon hearing these words, grew vehement in this denunciation of the plan.

"What nonsense is this? The Jews have brought a Polish rabbi here to mock us all. Let us stop this absurdity and expel the Jews immediately."

But the judges refused to listen to the priest and they ordered all the people to pass by and touch the child. The masses walked past fearfully, gingerly touching the corpse. Finally, it was the turn of the priest.

"I absolutely refuse to have anything to do with this farce," he cried, as his face turned red with anger and beads of sweat stood out. "This is witchcraft, and I demand that we stop it and throw the Jewish murderers out of the city"

But the judges demanded that he too touch the child.

"No, no. I will not touch the boy. I admit it. I admit that I had the boy killed in order to libel the Jews and expel them from Frankfurt"

Thus was the Jewish community of Frankfurt saved by Rabbi Yosef Shmuel as soon as he arrived to be their rabbi.

*Reprinted from the archives of The Jewish Press (Tales from Our Gaonim).*

**R’ Chaim Soloveitchik’s Act of Chessed to a Distraught Mother**



There are some misguided souls who feel that doing acts of chessed and helping another Jew is not as important as devoting oneself all day and all night to learning Torah.

In truth, some of the greatest Torah scholars with the most legendary intellects also spent time worrying about and helping the less fortunate. This pairing of Torah excellence and chessed was personified by R’ Chaim Soloveitchik (Brisker) zt”l.

He was one of the greatest Torah scholars of his generation, a visionary and possibly the most innovative thinker in several generations, but nevertheless, his house was open to all to the extent that it became a public thoroughfare where notices and advertisements were posted. Food was doled out in the kitchen almost on a non-stop basis, while R’ Chaim could often be found in a side room talking in learning with other Rabbanim or conducting a din Torah, with groups of people.

It should not be surprising then, that he also spoke about the topic of chessed at the expense of Torah study with trademark clarity and wit. His grandson R’ Meshulam Dovid Soloveitchik zt”l recounts how R’ Chaim once told a group of Rabbanim, “A rabbi that doesn’t close his Gemara to do tzedaka and chessed – even when the Gemara is open in front of him, it’s as if it’s closed.

**The Converse is Also True**

“However, the converse is also true – a rabbi that does close his Gemara to do tzedaka and chessed, even when it’s closed, it’s as if it’s open!”

One morning, R’ Chaim was sitting with a few Talmidei Chachamim in his home and conducting a din Torah, involving a great deal of money and a number of colorful personalities. For hours, the case dragged on, when suddenly, a commotion could be heard outside R’ Chaim’s door.

A woman came running into the house and began screaming uncontrollably that she must speak to the Rabbi immediately. It was a matter of life and death, so to speak, and she refused to budge until she got her way. A number of family members tried to calm her down and offered her a seat where she can wait until the Rav was ready to see her, but she absolutely refused to sit down or be assuaged. Her voice rose again and again, mingling with heart-rending cries and wails, until finally, R’ Chaim himself opened the door and came out.

**“What is all the Commotion?”**

“What is going on here?” he asked softly, as was his way. “What is all the commotion?”

Instantly, the woman sprang forward and addressed the venerable rabbi. “Rebbi, please, I must speak to you right now. It cannot wait even another second.”

R’ Chaim found a quiet corner somewhere, as an empty room was out of the question, and he softly asked her how he can help.

**The Upcoming Wedding**

**Of Her Daughter**

“Rebbi,” she began, in a strong and brave voice, “tonight is my daughter’s wedding. I should be happy in the midst of such a wonderful celebration, and yet, I am scared of her future. Last night, I dreamed that my daughter suddenly went crazy! From a fine and refined kallah, all of a sudden, she began acting crazy and it appeared to me in my dream that she lost her mind! What can this mean?

“I feel like canceling the entire wedding right now, for how can I allow my daughter to go forth in marriage, when she will become sick and crazy in her head?”

**A Fresh Burst of Tears and Wails**

Her bravery cracked and a fresh burst of tears and wails emanated from the hapless mother of the bride.

R’ Chaim stood next to her quietly, as she cried. Then, he smiled and whispered something that only she was able to hear. Instantly, she stopped crying and wiped away her tears. She smiled and nodded her head, and thanked the Rabbi emotionally before hurriedly heading out the door.

R’ Chaim shrugged and went back to the din Torah. Later in the day, some family members questioned R’ Chaim about what he whispered to the hysterical woman, that made her calm down and even smile happily as she left the house.

**R’ Chaim’s Explanation**

This time, R’ Chaim smiled broadly. “I told her that from the story of Yosef HaTzaddik in Mitzrayim, we learn that all dreams follow the interpretation. This means that however the dream is explained, that is how it will turn out.

“So, I said that I am qualified to interpret her dream and I am of the opinion that her daughter will become exceedingly rich. Not just wealthy or

comfortable - rich beyond her wildest imagination. The reason is because most super rich people have quirks and ‘meshugasin’ that they live with, so when she saw that her daughter was going to go crazy, it meant that she too, will become very rich and have a lot of ‘meshugasin’!”

*Reprinted from the Parshas Mekeitz 5782 email of Rabbi Dovid Hoffman’s Torah Tavlin.*

**The Lashon Hara Story in Israel That Went Viral**

An astounding incident happened recently in Israel to a principal of a Talmud Torah and the story was publicized by his friend HaRav Menachem Weiss, and it quickly went viral, *Hidabroot* reported.

The principal, his wife, and his family are known to be extremely careful about Shemiras HaLashon and are constantly reviewing the halachos.



Recently, the wife was in a situation where it was incredibly difficult for her to refrain from speaking lashon hara but thanks to the family’s constant review of the halachos, she withstood the nisayon and remained silent.

A half-hour later she went into her kitchen and was horrified to find her two-year-old holding a sharp knife between his teeth. After freezing for a second, she spoke softly to him and managed to distract him enough to carefully extricate the knife from his mouth.

After she calmed down, she couldn’t help but draw the connection between her decision to keep her mouth closed and her rescue of her son’s mouth from serious injury moments later.

*Reprinted from the November 15, 2021 website of Yeshiva World News.*

**The Fierce Black Dog**



We have no dearth of Torah stories, but I could not resist the following story. A young couple living in an upstate New York community enjoyed the peace and quiet that was one of the caveats of living in a near-rural community.

On the other hand, while there was a sizable Jewish population in the town, they had yet to succeed in establishing a viable Jewish day school.

The parents were frustrated that, like the others, they were forced to send their children to the local public school and augment their religious education at home.

One day, the father met what appeared to be a devout religious Jew. After speaking with him, he acknowledged that this man was a bona-fide scholar. After sharing with the man his problem concerning his sons’ lack of a meaningful Jewish education, the man offered to tutor the boys on a regular basis. The father was overjoyed. His sons would finally receive a Jewish education.

The next day, the father accompanied his sons to the man’s home for their first Torah lesson. A few hours later, the boys left for home. It was not a long walk. It was marred, however, by the presence of a group of teenage delinquents who were bent on harming the young boys.

**Punched and Slapped Over**

They punched and slapped the two boys, pulled their peyos and stole their yarmulkes. They topped off their malevolence with name-calling. The two boys ran home, dirty and tear-streaked.

After relating the incident to their father, he explained to them that the alternative was not learning Torah and growing up ignorant of Torah, which ultimately would affect their entire religious outlook and practice.

**Froze in Their Tracks**

Tomorrow, they would return to the rebbe. Hashem would protect them. Baruch Hashem, they were more humiliated than hurt. Things would work out. The next day, as the previous day, the father accompanied them on their walk to the rebbe’s home. Five minutes into their walk, they froze in their tracks as they saw a large black dog preventing them from going forward.

Their father assuaged their fears, “A dog will not bother you if you leave it alone.” They continued walking, albeit nervously, and they looked back to notice the dog walking obediently beside them. The hoodlums, who had yesterday ruined their day, were out in force, but stood by without making a move for fear of the dog’s reaction.

At the end of their learning session, the boys were surprised – but heartened – to see the dog waiting for them under a tree situated on the rebbe’s lawn. This went on for one year, with the dog meeting them daily, accompanying them to their Torah lesson, and then walking them home.

**Incredible Postscript to the Story**

At the end of the year, the boys went off to yeshivah. Shortly after the boys left, their father discovered the dead carcass of the dog on the street. He had served them well. There is an incredible postscript to this story. Apparently, this was no ordinary dog. When the story of the dog was related to the Ribnitzer Rebbe, Horav Chaim Zanvil Abramowitz, zt”l, he remarked that the dog was a gilgul, transmigration, of a Yid who had not spent sufficient time learning Torah during his lifetime.

By accompanying the boys, thus enabling them to learn Torah, he restored and fulfilled his own mission, and was now granted entry into Olam Habba, the World to Come, where he received his due reward.

Reprinted from the Parshas Vayishlach 5782 email of Rabbi A.L. Scheinbaum’s Peninim on the Torah.

**The Illiterate Millionaire**

**By Rabbi Yehoshua Zitron**



Following the Second World War, one man [a survivor of the Holocaust] moved from Europe to America and attempted to gain a job to support his family. He didn’t speak a word of English, so it was a significant challenge.

However, that didn’t stop him from searching for a job within the Jewish community, where the language barrier wouldn’t be a hindrance to hiring him. But that was to no avail either.

**Aiming for a Job in a Shul**

At that point, he figured to himself that he’ll be the attendee in one of the local shuls who would put all its different affairs in order and see through all that is needed to keep it clean and organized.

After approaching one of the directing members of the local shul, it looked promising that he would be able to earn the job.

“Just tell me,” asked the board member before leaving, “do you speak English?”

**Why the Need to Know English?**

“I don’t,” the fellow responded. “Do I need to know English for this job? I’m just organizing and cleaning the shul.”

But the main members of the shul did not like that answer. The man, though, couldn’t understand the concern. Why did he need to know English in order to put books away, sweep floors and organize and arrange the shul’s seating?

“If people will come inside and need to ask you something, we need you to be able to respond in English.” And with this, it was crystal clear. The fellow couldn’t even obtain a job within the Jewish community, being a janitor of all things in a shul.

**Purchased a Pushcart**

At this point, he borrowed a small amount of money from his friend and purchased a pushcart and some items. His plan was to go door-to-door and attempt to sell whatever houseware items the local townspeople were interested in purchasing from his collection. And thus began his small, private business.

He bought some houseware, loaded in into his pushcart and went from house to house and sold it as a drop higher of a price than he purchased himself.

**Sold His Items One by One**

And quite to his surprise, he was successful. He sold his items one by one, little by little. Eventually, his clientele base grew and he was able to buy two pushcarts and hire someone else to also go door-to-door and work under him.

This eventually turned into five pushcarts, and from there, his business continued growing surprisingly until he decided to close the pushcart business and open a storefront which sold these same houseware items. He became very successful, and continued opening one store after another.

**Developed a Chain of Several Stores**

Within a few years, he had a chain of several stores. One day, he was invited to partner with another large corporation and do business together with them. After reviewing all the details, he decided to go through with the joint venture.

And there he sat along with the members of the other company in a luxurious skyscraper in Manhattan. After reviewing the documents, all that was left was to sign it and seal the merger. The man began looking through all the paperwork and appending his signature where indicated.

Yet, seeing this, the other partner stood up and waved him down. “Don’t just sign the paperwork. I want you to read everything and agree to it all.”

The Jewish businessman let out a smile and let his future partner know that it was no problem, he was just going to sign it as he’d been doing. But the other partner was adamant. “I refuse to go into business until I know that you read it. I want everything to be straight, clear and on the table.”

**The Jewish Businessman’s Confession**

Finally, the Jewish businessman explained. “I would love to read this all…”

“So go ahead,” said the other partner. “Take all the time you need. “But that’s not the problem,” the frum man continued. “I don’t know how to read.”

The partner was stunned. “You don’t know how to read? You are a multi-millionaire, and have tons of employees working under you. What do you mean that you don’t know how to read?”

“Exactly that,” he replied.

And then the other partner continued. “Do you understand that you have made so much money, and if you knew how to read, you would have made even more?”

The Jewish businessman knew what to reply. “Do you know what would have happened if I knew how to

read? Or even better, if I knew how to speak English properly? If I knew, I would be a janitor. Because I couldn’t get a job years ago, even as a janitor, I am where I am today.”

In life, our biggest failure could be our biggest success, and our biggest downfall, our biggest windfall.

*Reprinted from the Parshat Vayeitzei 5782 email of TheTorahAnyTimes Compiled and Edited by Elan Perchik*

**The Baal Shem Tov and**

**The Robber Band Leader**

The Baal Shem Tov loved the hours and days he spent wandering alone through the beautiful and isolated forests and hills of the Carpathian Mountains. There, in solitude, he could think, learn and meditate on the greatness and the revealed wonders of the Creator.

**The Haunt of a Cruel Band of Robbers**

This beautiful corner of the world was lush with the bounties of nature, but virtually empty of humanity. However, it was the haunt of a cruel and vicious band of robbers and murderers who attacked any hapless soul who happened to be passing through the countryside. This robber band had been preying on travelers for many years, and they and their terrifying chief had become a frightening legend.

The chief’s name was Dabash -- and he was, strangely enough, a Jew, albeit one who had descended to the lowest levels of humanity. The very mention of his name struck fear into the hearts of the villagers who lived in the settlements dotting the mountains, for no one who had fallen into his clutches had ever escaped alive. Dabash had gotten word of a strange individual who dared to wander the mountain passes of his private domain. Summoning his most loyal followers, Dabash cried, “Find this arrogant fool who dares invade my province, and bring him to me!”

**He Always Eluded their Grasp**

The robbers quickly set out to capture the Baal Shem Tov. But try as they might, they could not find him. Whenever they were sure that he must be right around the next bend, he eluded their grasp. “It’s downright spooky,” remarked one of the robbers, and they all nodded in agreement. This man was definitely something out of the ordinary.

Finally, after scouring the surroundings for miles around, they were forced to report back to Dabash that they had failed in their mission. He was furious, for never had his will been thwarted. “I’ll have your heads for this!” he screamed at the shaking men. Slowly they managed to calm the robber chief.

Finally, at the end of their tale, Dabash was curious enough to set out himself to try to capture the elusive Jew. Dabash led the way scaling rocky precipices and bounding over swift running streams. Suddenly, a man appeared before them emerging from the distant trees.

“That’s him,” they said in awe.

**The Baal Shem Tov Spoke First**

Dabash was happy at the opportunity for confrontation at long last, but the Baal Shem Tov spoke first: “I have come to save you the trouble of looking for me.” “Do you know who I am?” queried Dabash boldly.

“Of course. I see it written all over your face! And not only that, but I know that you have regrets very often for the terrible sins you have committed. Is it not true that after you drink you always cry?”

“That’s true,” Dabash answered, “but it’s not unusual. Lots of people do the same, although I don’t understand why I cry when I do.”

The Baal Shem Tov replied, “I will explain it to you. When a person is drunk, his essence, his innermost feelings that are normally hidden, can be revealed. Even inside you, a man who has abandoned the most basic human rules of life, burns a tiny spark. That spark is called the ‘pintele Yid,’ and it is the cause of your regrets. Why, even now, you feel bad that you have approached me with violent intentions.” When Dabash heard this he felt a stab of recognition deep inside.

**Why Are You Roaming These Hills**

“Whoever harms this holy man will feel my sword!” he barked at his men. “Just one question,” said Dabash. “I and my men roam these mountains in search of victims to rob, but you? Why are you wandering about in these hills?”

“Let me explain it to you in this way: “Once a king announced that he would grant any request his subjects made. Two of the king’s subjects wanted the same thing – to visit the royal palace. The king granted them both their requests. “They were allowed to enter the palace for only one hour.

“But the men had different reasons for desiring to enter the palace. One wanted to take as many treasures as he could fit into his pockets. The other wanted only to be near his beloved king.

“G-d fills the entire world, but here, surrounded by the wonders and beauties of nature we can feel the closeness of G-d. You see, Dabash, you and I are both here in the ‘royal palace,’ but our reasons are quite different.”

With those words, the Baal Shem Tov turned and disappeared among the dense trees. Dabash was confused. He felt a surge of shame, but at the same time, he cried to his men to pursue the Jew.

Again, there was no trace of him. In his rage, Dabash massacred a score of his men. Legend has it that afterward Dabash fled far away and became a penitent. In any case, the people of the Carpathian Mountains never heard of him or his robber band again.

*Reprinted from the Parshat Va’eira 5782 edition of L’Chaim, a weekly publication of the Lubavitch Youth Organization in Brooklyn, NY.*



**Photo of a local water carrier in Lublin, Poland, circa 1937**