**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas vayakhel 5782**

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In Yerushalayim, there lived a man who became a master plumber and opened his own company. He was so good at what he did, that it wasn’t long before he developed a reputation as an expert in all matters related to plumbing. On numerous occasions, he was brought in to figure out how to expertly handle a delicate situation, or to correct someone else’s mistake. He was creative and had “hands of gold” with whatever he worked on.

One day, he was called to an apartment where he found a complete and utter mess, and the job he was shown was no small task. It was a large project that would require hours of labor, and considerable expense and ingenuity. The man spoke to the lady of the house, and it soon became clear to him that she was a widow with many small children, and very little money.

She asked him if he could fix the problem, and he told her that he would, but he was wondering how he could do such a massive project for her, as she didn’t have any money to pay him. He decided that he would do the job for free, and earn some S’char in Shamayim. The problem was, he didn’t know how to tell the widow in an honorable way, that he wasn’t charging her. He pondered this the entire day as he worked.

Late into the day, he completed the job, and the thankful woman asked how much she owed him. “Nothing,” he said, with a grin.

“How is that possible?” she asked, “You worked here all day.”

The man created a story and said that for these types of jobs, the local municipality reimburses him for his time and labor. He claimed that since he is improving the quality of the city’s pipes, the property values go up, and the government is happy to cover the cost.

She was pleasantly surprised and very grateful to him, and he walked away with the satisfaction that he had done something really good. The man ran his successful business for many years, and when he got older, he purchased a vacant lot in a section of Ramat Gan, where he intended to build himself a house to retire to. As an expert craftsman, he was involved in every stage of the planning and construction, as well as the pricing out of the various supplies that would be needed.



In the process of purchasing his construction materials, he went to one of the largest suppliers of building goods and materials, a company named Itzik and Zuri Commerce, located in Bnei Brak. He spent considerable time there pricing out many items that would be needed once the construction began. He didn’t make any purchases yet, because he still wished to price out other supply companies so he could get the best deal.

He was shocked when one morning, he found trucks from Itzik and Zuri Commerce unloading all the building material he would need for his home. It was all top-quality material, but he knew he had never ordered it. He ran over to one of the drivers and yelled, “What is this? What is going on? I never ordered this!”

The driver just shrugged and showed him the purchase order, where it listed quite clearly all the items being unloaded, and that they were stamped “Paid in Full.” The man was confused and upset. The driver said to him, “I am just the driver, but you can take it up with the main office.”

Immediately, he drove to Itzik and Zuri’s, and went straight to the manager’s office, where he demanded answers. He said he never ordered the supplies because he was just pricing them out, and he certainly never paid for them!

A kind man behind a desk asked him to calm down. “My name is Zuri, and no one ever said you paid for anything,” he said with a smile.

The man was startled and asked, “Well then, who paid for all of that?”

Zuri replied, “Actually, I believe the municipality paid for everything.” Zuri explained, “Many years ago, you came to my mother’s apartment and worked on a massive plumbing project, and you didn’t charge her for your work. I know that you told her the municipality was reimbursing you, but I know you did that job for free. I never forgot that act of kindness that you did, and now, I am in a position where I am able to pay you back. It is my pleasure to reimburse you for that great act of chesed!”

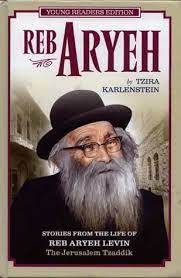
*Reprinted from the Parshas Tetzaveh 5782 email of Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg’s Torah U’Tefilah.*

**The Gaon (Genius) in Chesed**

The one Torah giant most identified with devoting his life and energy to the needs of his brothers and sisters – even at the expense of his own ruchniyos – was Horav Aryeh Levin, zl, known by his nom de plume, the Tzaddik of Yerushalayim. His utter dedication and willingness to give of himself, to sacrifice himself in his love for all Jews and Jewry, were legend.

As his biographer observes, he was simply referred to as “Reb Aryeh,” because no adjectives were required to know to whom one was referring. He ministered to those living in restricted environments, i.e., prisoners, lepers who were contagious, despite the personal danger involved. He encouraged and gave hope to the unfortunate, the downtrodden, the needy – materially, physically and emotionally.

He loved them all with his all-encompassing heart. He showed that just as one can be a gaon, brilliant towering ability in Torah (which he certainly was), one can also be a gaon in chesed. He was the patriarch of the most distinguished families in Yerushalayim. When his neshamah left its mortal abode, thousands of Jews from all walks of life paid respect to him: from the greatest Roshei Yeshivah and rabbanim, to the leaders of the Israeli State; the officers of the defence forces; and the throngs of hamon am, the average Jew, whose lives he touched in some manner.



Rav Aryeh preached that sacrifice is not limited to the relinquishing of one’s physical self, energy, effort, time money and property, but includes the readiness to sacrifice one’s spirit, one’s soul.

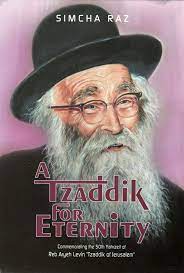
Rav Aryeh said that he derived this lesson from a story that took place concerning two pious brothers, disciples of the Gaon, zl, m’Vilna, named Rav Moshe and Rav Yitzchak. Rav Moshe spent the entire year traveling all over, teaching the children in rural areas where schools were a luxury. He barely eked out a livelihood from the paltry payments he received. He would return for the primary Yomim Tovim, Festivals, to share the material “bounty” that he earned with his family. In earlier generations, the custom was to select one specific mitzvah and devote oneself to executing it to the fullest letter of the law.

Rav Moshe had chosen tzitzis. As a result, he refused to walk four amos, cubits (six feet), not wearing his tzitzis. He adhered to this self-imposed obligation religiously. Once, early in Nissan, as Pesach quickly approached, he hired a wagon driver to take him home. With his few belongings and his small bag of earnings, they set out for Vilna.

Along the way, Reb Moshe asked to stop so that he could daven Minchah. He stood near a large boulder to the side of the road. He did not notice that one of his tzitzis/fringes had become entangled in a crevice of the stone and tore. He was stuck, since his tzitzis were no longer kosher.

He asked the wagon driver to go to the nearest Jewish home or town and either borrow or purchase a pair of tzitzis for him. The man agreed for the exorbitant price of the contents of Reb Moshe’s money pouch.

What could he do? He gave up all of his Pesach funds for a pair of tzitzis. This would not have been so bad had the wagon driver kept his end of the deal. He did not, as he took the money and disappeared.



Reb Moshe stood in place for twenty-four hours until someone came by and brought him a pair of tzitzis. So ends part one of the story.

Part two begins with Rav Yitzchak, the saintly brother who spent the entire day and a good part of the night engrossed in Torah study, becoming gravely ill.

A few days into his illness, the doctor despaired for his life and directed the family to summon the Chevra Kaddisha, Jewish Burial Society. It was time. They also called Rav Moshe to be at his brother’s side. Rav Moshe came without delay. When he entered the room in which his brother lay comatose, he asked everyone to leave. He removed his tallis katan and laid it upon his brother’s motionless body.

He cried up to Hashem: “Ribono Shel Olam! There is one mitzvah to which I have adhered with all my strength. That is the mitzvah of tzitzis. I hereby give all of my reward that I will receive in Olam Habba, the World to Come, to my brother, so that he will recover from his current illness.”

Rav Moshe prayed passionately amid profuse weeping, so that his brother would emerge from the imminent crisis. Hashem listened, and, not only was Rav Yitzchak cured; he lived fifteen more years. After Rav Aryeh related the story, he concluded with his summary:

“This incident taught me that a Jew must be prepared to give up his spiritual ascendance and reward to help his brother. Physical well-being, life and wealth are important fundamentals to relinquish on behalf of one’s fellow. To give up the spiritual reward which one has earned and the opportunity for spiritual growth, however, is true self-sacrifice.”

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

**The Disco Rebbe**

Kiruv richokim, outreach to the unaffiliated, requires intense commitment, extraordinary love and a heavy dose of common sense. Rarely does a “one size fits all” approach work successfully. The expert outreach professionals who succeed in their field are individuals who innovate and devote themselves caringly and lovingly to their work and to their charges. Clearly, every culture, every environment - both geographical and societal- presents its individual challenges, but through deft skills and dedication, one can successfully maneuver himself to surmount them.



R’ Yitzchok Dovid Grossman shlit’a, through his life’s work, has saved thousands of young, unaffiliated and alienated men and women from both physical and spiritual disaster. His approach has always been to attempt to understand the person whom he is trying to win over - neither threaten nor castigate, sympathize, care and show love, and, above all, be sincere.

When R’ Grossman arrived in Migdal HaEmek, the city which he almost singlehandedly transformed, he discovered that many of the stores were open on Shabbos. He recognized that taking on all the stores at once would be a lesson in futility. He would begin with one popular restaurant that was near his shul.

He entered the restaurant at Mincha time on Erev Shabbos to find an establishment filled with young people playing games, listening to music, and engaged in various other acts of chillul Shabbos. However, most of them adhered to the Sephardic custom of calling out “B’oi Kallah” - “Welcome, Bride,” in reference to the Shabbos Queen, who was soon to make her appearance.

**The Example of Rav Aryeh Levin**

All this was done amidst flagrant chillul Shabbos. R’ Grossman reminded himself of a similar incident with the famed Tzaddik of Yerushalayim, R’ Aryeh Levin zt”l, who fruitlessly attempted to convince a certain barber to close his shop before Shabbos. The man refused to listen and brazenly kept his shop open to the chagrin of the Rav and his kehillah.

Finally, with no other recourse, R’ Aryeh took a seat on erev Shabbos near the shop’s entrance, hoping that his presence would inspire unwitting customers to return home and observe Shabbos. The potential customers saw him and demurred from entering the barber shop out of embarrassment in front of the great rabbi.

**The Barber Noticed the Trend**

He continued this practice for a number of weeks. Within a short period of time, the barber noticed that his business was suffering due to R’ Aryeh’s intervention and in due time, he closed his barber shop prior to Shabbos. With this in mind, R’ Grossman entered the discotheque restaurant and was overwhelmed by the cacophony of sound, the clinking of beer bottles, and the calling out of “B’oi Kallah.”

Alas, welcoming the Shabbos bride in such a manner defamed it. Clearly, these young men and women were clueless concerning the meaning of Shabbos, its sanctity as an integral aspect of Judaism. The rabbi was in a quandary.

**Not Open to a Lecture**

This group was not open to a lecture on Shabbos. They would ignore him, laugh at him, or throw him out. Unless he showed that he respected them despite their present alienation from religion, he was wasting his time.

He decided on a brilliant ploy. He walked into the center of the room and recited the final verse of Ashrei – “Va’anchnu nevareich Kah m’atah v’ad olam Hallelukah.” Without waiting for anyone to react, he immediately commenced with Kaddish, “Yitgadal V’yitkadash Shmei Rabba”!

Immediately everyone - boys and girls - in the restaurant screamed out, “Amen” at the appropriate place. As soon as he concluded Kaddish, he began Shemona Esrai, followed by Chazaras Ha’Shatz, the repetition of the Prayer. When it was time for Kedushah, everyone participated. He finished Mincha, and, while he had their attention, he called out, “Chevrah, Shabbos Kodesh! Shabbos Kodesh! Holy Shabbos!”

**Offered an Insightful Story**

Now, he had their attention, and he followed it up with an insightful story which inspired the entire group. Needless to say, R’ Grossman had caused a stir, which became a movement that catalyzed the return to religion for these and other young people. He was unable to convince them to come to shul, so instead he brought the shul to them - and others, as he went from restaurant to restaurant to daven with the customers. He understood them, he respected them. They, in turn, realized that he sincerely cared for them. This, more than anything, brought about their “homecoming” to Yiddishkeit.

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

**The Pious Peddler**

**By**[**Hillel Baron**](https://www.chabad.org/search/keyword_cdo/kid/24128/jewish/Baron-Hillel.htm)



A wealthy businessman in Frankfort, Germany, lost all his money and started accumulating tremendous debt. Bitter and despondent, he fell ill and passed away, leaving his wife and children in great poverty.

His widow resolved to go to work to support her children, but there was one creditor who pursued her ruthlessly for payment of her late husband’s debt. He eventually took her to court, and the court ruled that if she did not pay the debt, he was entitled to all her belongings.

With no one to turn to amongst the living, she went to the cemetery to pray at her husband’s grave and asked him to intercede in heaven on behalf of his family. She spent a long time crying over his gravestone, pouring out her sorrows.

**Noticed a Nearby Plot with No Gravestone for a Poor Peddler**

When she finished, she looked up and noticed a nearby plot that had no gravestone. She asked the custodian about it, and he explained a poor peddler was buried there, having died without leaving enough money for a stone to mark his grave.

However, he said, many people, mostly the poor who remembered his kindness, came from time to time to pray and light candles in his memory. Upon hearing this, the woman took one of the candles she had brought to light at her husband’s grave and lit it by the grave of the peddler.

The widow went home and almost forgot about the debt until the day came when the agents of the court arrived with a cart to take away all their belongings. She pleaded with them, but was told that they had no choice; it was an order of the court. In short time, they emptied the contents of the home amid the cries of the widow and her children.

**“How Much is the Debt?”**

Suddenly, a ragged stranger appeared and asked the officers what was going on. After learning they were taking the belongings from the widow to pay her husband’s debt, the poor man asked, “How much is the debt?”

“More than you could possibly have.”

The poor man insisted that they tell him the amount, and then took out a large bundle of money and gave it to the officer, who counted out the amount that was needed. They asked for his name but he insisted that they write the receipt in the name of the widow.

**Returned the Widow’s Belongings**

The officer went back to the widow’s home to return her belongings and told her to thank the stranger who had paid off her debt. But much as she searched, she could not find him. After inquiring, she found out that no one had seen him besides the officer. The conclusion they all came to was that it was the pious peddler who had come from his grave to help her!

The widow could not rest after this incident, as she wanted to express her gratitude to her benefactor.

**Spoke to the Baal Haflaah**

She went to Rabbi Pinchas Horowitz, known as the Baal Haflaah, who was the city’s rabbi at the time, and told him the whole story.

He praised her for her noble intentions, blessed her with success in raising her children, and told her that if she should one day have enough funds, she should build a monument on the peddler’s grave and see to it that Kaddish and Mishnah be said on the anniversary of his passing.

*“Therefore, when he requests something from someone, he should consider the weak and the strong person equally able to perform his request. He should rely on G‑d that his request will be fulfilled. Then he should thank the Creator who fulfilled his wishes and also thank the person through whom the favor is done, for the fact that the Creator brought his benefits through him. For it is well known that the Creator causes good to come only through the Righteous.” (Gate of Trust (Kehot), Chapter 4, Page 159.)*

*Reprinted from the Parshat Ki Sisa 5782 email of Chabad.Org Magazine.*

**Giving the Benefit of a Doubt**

The Gemara in Shabbos (127b) illustrates how far one must go to give someone the benefit of the doubt. The Rabbis taught that one who judges his fellow favorably, is himself judged favorably.

There was an incident involving a certain man who went down from the Upper Galilee and began to work for a certain homeowner in the south for three years.

On Erev Yom Kippur of the third year, the worker said to the employer, “Give me my wages and I will go and provide for my wife and children.”

The employer replied, “I have no money.”

The worker said, “Then give me my wages in the form of produce.”

The employer responded, “I have none.”

The worker suggested, “Give me land,” and the man said, “I don’t have any.”

“Then give me livestock,” the worker proposed, “I have none,” was the reply.

The worker finally said, “Then give me pillows and cushions,” to which the employer responded, “I have none.”

**Returned Home Dejectedly**

Unable to obtain any of the wages due to him, the worker took his belongings, hung them over his back, and returned home dejectedly.

After the Yom Tov of Succos, the employer took the worker’s wages in his hand, along with three donkeys loaded with goods. One donkey was loaded with food, one was laden with drink, and one with various sweet delicacies, and he traveled to his former worker’s home in the Upper Galilee.

After they had eaten and had something to drink, he paid the worker his wages. He said to the worker, “When you said to me, ‘Give me my wages,’ and I said, ‘I have no money,’ what did you suspect of me?”

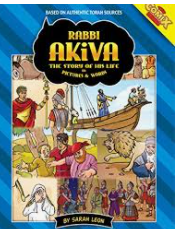
The worker replied, “I said to myself that perhaps an opportunity to buy merchandise at a low price came your way, and you bought it with the money that you would have otherwise used to pay my wages.”

The employer then asked, “And when you said to me, ‘Give me animals,’ and I said, ‘I have no animals,’ what did you suspect me of?” The worker answered, “I said to myself, perhaps the animals are rented out to others.”

The homeowner asked, “When you said to me, ‘Give me land,’ and I said, “I have no land,’ of what did you suspect me of?”

The worker replied, “I said to myself, perhaps the land is leased to others.”

The homeowner asked, “And when you said to me, ‘Give me produce,’ and I said, ‘I have no produce,’ what did you suspect?



The worker responded, “I said to myself, perhaps Maaser wasn’t taken from them, and that was why you could not give them to me.”

The employer then asked, “And when I said, ‘I have no cushions or blankets,’ what did you suspect?”

The worker answered, “I said to myself, perhaps he made all of his property Hekdeish, and sanctified everything to the Bais HaMikdash, and therefore, he has nothing presently available for me.”

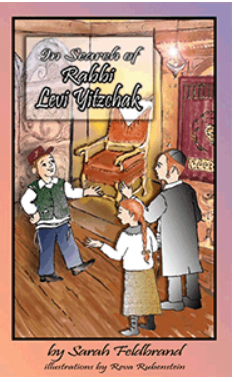
The employer took an oath and said, “By the Divine Service! So it was! I had vowed all my possessions to the Bais HaMikdash, because of my son Horkenos, who did not occupy himself in learning Torah, and I did not wish to leave him an inheritance. “However, when I visited my colleagues in the South, they annulled the vow for me. And as for you, just as you have judged me favorably, so may Hashem judge you favorably as well!” The employer in this story is Rebbi Eliezer ben Horkenos, and the worker was Rebbi Akiva, before he became a Tamid Chacham.

The Chasam Sofer points out that even before he became a scholar, Rebbi Akiva possessed the sterling character trait of judging others favorably!

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

**Two Stories of the Legendary Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev**

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev was justly known far and wide for the tremendous hospitality he extended. In his endless kindness, he would take anyone into his home; a poor man felt just as welcome and was honored in the same way as a wealthy man. Whoever crossed Rabbi Levi Yitzchak’s threshold left satisfied in body and in spirit.



In that town, however, there was a wealthy man whose ways deviated completely from the Rabbi’s. He had no time for the common people. On the contrary, he would accept only the famous or wealthy as house guests.

When word came to Rabbi Levi Yitzchak about the rich man’s conduct, he was horrified, and he set out to remedy his character flaw. When the next Shabbat arrived Rabbi Levi Yitzchak was prepared to deliver his customary sermon, but this time it was pointedly directed to one particular member of his congregation.

**The Difference Between**

**Abraham and His Nephew Lot**

The rabbi began: “As is well known, it is a basic tradition that our ancestor Abraham was very hospitable, a trait that has been greatly praised and has been ingrained in the character of the Jewish people in his merit. But wasn’t his nephew Lot also hospitable? Why then is all the credit given to Abraham?

“The answer is that there was a tremendous difference in the kind of hospitality each of them demonstrated. Lot would allow only angels into his home; simple folk were refused. Abraham, however, led any person to his table with acceptance and even honor. In this merit Abraham earned his reputation and set the example we still follow today.”

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During the time when Rabbi Levi Yitzchak was serving as rabbi in Pinsk, Reb Shlomo Karliner, a disciple of the Maggid, lived nearby. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak sent a messenger requesting Reb Shlomo to come to him. The two tzadikim sat for many hours looking intently at each other, but saying nothing at all. After hours had passed, they began laughing out loud.

**Rabbi Levi Yitzchak’s Aide**

Then, suddenly, Reb Shlomo stood up and took his leave. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak’s aide had been watching the whole time and was completely baffled. Finally, he asked the rabbi to explain.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak replied: “For some time I have known that the Jews of our province have been under the threat of a terrible decree. I had discovered that the great nobles of the region were about to meet in order to confirm this edict. I tried my hardest to bring all their plans to nothing, but to no avail. One day I prayed with such extreme fervor begging G-d to crush the evil plan, that I felt my soul almost depart from my body.

“But, try as I might, I received no answer to my prayers. I then received a message from G-d that if Reb Shlomo would join me in my petition, it would surely be granted, for isn’t it true that Elijah the Prophet himself often visits Reb Shlomo? “I lost no time in summoning him to me. He arrived at the exact same time the evil noblemen were gathered at their meeting, discussing the final implementation of their terrible plan. We were paralyzed with fear as we observed the meeting in a vision. The evil nobles were unanimous in their decision to expel the Jews from the entire province, and we were helpless, unable to utter a word.

**Surprised by Elijah the Prophet**

“It is known that, according to the law, if there is even one dissenting vote, the decree becomes annulled. Can you imagine our surprise when we saw Elijah the Prophet enter the meeting? Disguised as a white-haired squire, he sat down unnoticed. The noblemen were passing the document around the great table, and each one signed it in turn.

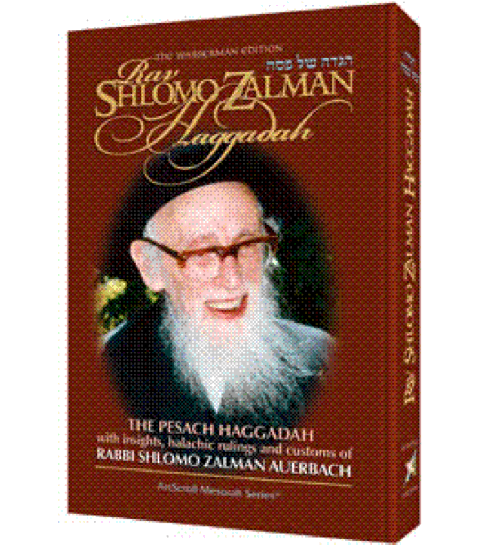
“When it was handed to Elijah, he began to object loudly: ‘I disagree with this whole idea! I refuse to sign this calumnious paper!’

“All of a sudden, their unanimity was destroyed; the verdict was overturned in a flash! A terrible commotion erupted in the hall and in the course of the demonstration, the document was torn up. Elijah vanished and there was nothing for the assembled noblemen to do but leave. This was such a completely amazing turn of events that Reb Shlomo and I both burst into laughter at the sight.”

*Reprinted from the Parshat Teruma 5782 email of L’Chaim Weekly*

**Rav Shlomo Zalman – Part 1**

R Shlomo Zalman Auerbach was born in 1910 to HaGaon R’ Chaim Yehuda Leib and Rebbetzin Tzivya, scions of great rabbinical families of Yerushalayim for generations. His father established the Yeshivah Shaar Hashomayim of Kabbalah at age 20, and later established a kollel of 70 members and a cheder for children. His mother was the daughter of the esteemed R’ Shlomo Zalman Porush.



R’ Shlomo Zalman grew up in poverty, often lacking basic necessities. As the oldest child, much of the burden of providing for the household fell upon him. There were times he forfeited his own portion of bread to a hungry sibling, and then engrossed himself in Torah, which stilled his nagging hunger.

**Very Close to R’ Isser Zalman**

As a young talmid, he became very close to R’ Isser Zalman Meltzer, who chose him as chavrusa. R’ Isser Zalman once remarked that as a 23-year-old, his talmid possessed elements that were rare among Torah scholars of 40. R’ Shlomo Zalman also became very close with two of the great poskim of the generation, R’ Zvi Pesach Frank and R’ Zelig Reuven Bengis, both heads of the Bateei Dinin in Yerushalayim. Through their influence, he was guided to his eventual role as poseik.

**Wrote First Commentary at Age 18**

At age 18 he wrote a commentary on the classical work “Shev Shemeitza.” His study of Beitzah culminated in the publication in 1935 of “Me’orei Eish,” a work of rare erudition on the then-undefined subject of use of electricity on Shabbos and Yom Tov. Upon learning that the author of this sefer was but 25 years old, R’ Chaim Ozer Grodzenski exclaimed, “Ohr chadash al Tzion Ta’ir! (A great light will illuminate Tzion).”

In 1944 he published “Maadanei Eretz,” a comprehensive work on the laws of shmittah, followed by two similar works on terumos and maasros. When the Steipler Gaon received these works shortly after the Chazon Ish’s passing in 1953, he said, “I thought that when the Chazon Ish died, Toras Eretz Yisroel vanished with him. Now I see that Toras Eretz Yisroel is still alive.”

**Strictly Kept Long Hours of Learning**

His renowned sefer “Minchas Shlomo” contains many of his teshuvos. R’ Shlomo Zalman once commented, “I was only able to continue to grow in learning because of my resolution to keep sedarim – set hours for learning – come what may, never to budge from those apportioned times, and to take care of all other matters – no matter how pressing – outside the framework of those set times.”

Even during his later years when he won the love and appreciation of the masses because of his accessibility to one and all, responding to every type of request and halachic query, he maintained a room in the Shaarei Chessed neighborhood, where he went daily to learn undisturbed, before his public hours.

Once a close talmid discovered the location of this hideaway and approached R’ Shlomo Zalman there to discuss a Torah topic. With his characteristic smile, he said softly to the talmid, “I came to this room to escape the crowds, including yourself.” At times people knocked on the door during morning hours with great insistence. When his chavrusa would rise to get the door, R’ Shlomo Zalman would say, “This is the time I learn. There are others whom they can ask. And if they need me, they’ll come back at 2:00.”

**How to Keep Children Quiet**

A kollel yungerman once complained to him that his children caused such a ruckus at home that it was impossible for him to learn. R’ Shlomo Zalman was surprised, saying that when his children were small, they were so well behaved and quiet that his learning was never disturbed. The Rebbetzin overheard their conversation, and interrupted saying, “Excuse me, but that’s not entirely accurate. Our children were as loud as any other kids. I just shielded you from the noise so you could concentrate.”

R’ Shlomo Zalman frequently mentioned his intense devotion to Eretz Yisroel. He was under great pressure to attend weddings of grandchildren in England, but once commented that one thing he would be taking with him (to the Next World) was that he never set foot outside of Eretz Yisroel. R’ Shlomo Zalman was invited to deliver a pilot shiur at Yeshiva Kol Torah, which would determine his suitability for the position.

Near the beginning of the shiur, one of the founders of the yeshiva interrupted with a question. After a few seconds, R’ Shlomo Zalman said, “Ta’isi – I made a mistake,” and went on to a different subject. He later told his Rebbetzin that it did not go so well, as he admitted to a mistake hardly into the shiur. He noted that although he had three answers to the person’s question, he felt the question was closer to emes than his answers.

**Perfecting the Element of Emes**

Later, when he was accepted to the position of Rosh Yeshiva, the founder revealed, “Do you know why R’ Shlomo Zalman was appointed to his position? When I asked him that question, and he answered ‘I made a mistake,’ it was clear to me that with that caliber of emes, he is our Rosh Yeshivah!”

When he married, he received a large dowry which he was advised to invest in a bank (owned by a non-Jew so it would be free of ribbis/usury problems). The principle would thus remain and he would not need to worry about earning a livelihood. He asked, “What would be involved in maintaining the fund?” He was told that he would be required to spend a half-hour or hour every Friday at the bank to take care of the investment. He answered, “If so, it’s not for me. That would take me ‘out of learning’.”

R’ Chaim Brim, a well-known mussar personality, once remarked that should one want to see how to speak to the Hashem, he should watch R’ Shlomo Zalman say “Shehakol” on a cup of water. He once overheard R’ Shlomo Zalman say “Asher Yatzar” with the intensity we associate with Ne’ilah on Yom Kippur.

On the way to daven an early Mincha in a Shaarei Chessed shul during bein ha’zmanim, R’ Shlomo Zalman saw a yeshiva bachur pass by and asked him when mincha was. The bachur did not know. R’ Shlomo Zalman turned to his companion and said, “That’s not good! Chazal say that one should prepare for an hour before davening. If one doesn’t know what time davening begins, how can he prepare himself beforehand?”

**Concentrating on Brachos**

When once asked by a man with formidable problems for a suggestion of some added stringency to assume, as a source of merit, R’ Shlomo Zalman replied that he could not tell others what to do; he could only share what he himself was working on presently: to concentrate on his brachos, “that my ‘Baruch’ should be a Baruch, that my “Atto’ should be an Atto, and that the ‘Shem’ [of Hashem] should be a Shem. If I can achieve this, it’s more precious to me than all that sifrei mussar offer.”

He did not consider himself a poseik, but a Rosh Yeshivah; he would not even allow the work “poseik” to be engraved on his matzeivah. This reflected his humility. But when he rendered a p’sak, it was with the full weight of his mastery of Torah, fused with the fear of Heaven not to err. R’ Moshe Feinstein, in “Igros Moshe,” stated that the halacha is like R’ Shlomo Zalman in Eretz Yisroel.

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