**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas NOACH 5778**

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**Inspirational Stories**

**How Disconnecting**

**Saved Their Lives**

**By Naamah Green**



**Scene of the attack (Israel news photo: Flash 90)**

**“How else can you explain the Rabbi's cell phone working where there was no reception?"**

 Rabbi Eliyahu Amar in a speech explained a great strategy to silence the prosecution in the Days of Awe. He recounted a story of Rabbi Moshe Moreno and his wife who were saved by a miracle from certain death. They were driving toward their town of Maale Ephraim in the Shomron.

 A car was trailing them and shining its bright headlights so Rabbi Moreno allowed the car to pass. This kind gesture was almost the end of the lives of the rabbi and his wife. The car passed and blocked the road. 3 terrorists with automatic rifles came out of the car and started spraying them with gunfire. All the tires were shot out and not one window or windshield was intact. Miraculously, the rabbi and his wife were still alive.

 The terrorists finished up their cartridges of bullets spraying them on the car. They ran back to their car to get new cartridges to finish off their murderous work. At that moment the rabbi and his wife took advantage of the ‘temporary cease fire’ and they ran out of the car and threw themselves into the wadi (valley) of the side of the road hoping to find cover in the brush.

 They rolled downhill for 30 meters through rocks and thorns getting bruised along the way. Rabbi Moshe even got a bullet in his foot from the terrorists shooting at them in the dark. But in the end the terrorists left and the rabbi and his wife were still alive.

 But what could they do in this situation? Their cell phone despite all the gunshots, bumping and rolling was intact in his wife’s pocket. They called the military security in the area which came quickly and whisked them off to the hospital. The security also sealed off the roads and managed to apprehend the terrorists.

 A few months later the Rabbi and his wife made a “Thank You” meal to thank G-d for saving their lives from what should have been certain death. One of the rabbi’s family friends spoke emotionally: “The army upon investigating this incident was left with one unanswered question. How did you make a phone call from your cell phone deep in the wadi? There isn’t even any reception on the road where the car was, let alone in the wadi!”

 “But I think I know the answer. Rabbi Moreno accepted upon himself to turn off his cell phone upon entering the synagogue. Now the rabbi is talking to G-d and everyone else can wait, not like some people who come to pray but somehow forget about G-d, leave him on ‘call waiting’ and talk to their friends instead.”

 “If you go into an embassy, the phones are put away in storage. If your phone rings in a court room you can get fined for irreverence to the court. So why should a synagogue where the Divine presence rests be any less? Should our cell phones be on there? When Rabbi Moshe disconnected his phone for G-d’s honor in the synagogue, G-d gave him a special connection in the wadi, measure for measure.”

 Concluding the story Rabbi Amar says: “If someone is silent from saying mundane things in the synagogue G-d will, measure for measure, silence the prosecutors that want to slander us in heaven and cause us harm. May G-d silence the Satan from speaking ill of us.”

*Reprinted from the website of Hidabroot.*

**The Valuable Advice**

**Of the Stretner Rebbe**

 A man once approached the Stretner Rebbe and asked him for advice on how he can come to love Hashem. He said, “How can someone love Hashem when He can’t be seen?”

 The Rebbe answered, “The best way to love Hashem is to first love other people. By loving other Jews it expands his heart, and it teaches him to be less self-centered. This will ultimately lead one to love Hashem as well.

 “We learn this from the Gemara (Shabbos 30a) where Hillel taught that one should not do to others what they themselves would not like to be done to them. He said, ‘This is the entire Torah, everything else is commentary.’

 “How can we understand this statement? What does concern for others have to do with all the Mitzvos that are between man and Hashem, like Shabbos, Kashrus, and so many others?

 “The answer is that if one shows concern for others, he learns to become less focused on himself. This change makes him sensitive to the needs of other people, which leads him to do the will of Hashem and learn more Torah, and he will then come to love Hashem more and more!”

*Reprinted from the Parshas Ha’azinu 5778 email of Torah U’Tefilah: A Collection of Inspiring Insights compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.*

**Rav Gamliel Rabinowitz’s Secret To Climbing a Tall Building**



 Rav Gamliel Rabbinowitz taught a Mashal. A certain town once built a very high building, and in order to reach the top of the building, one had to climb thousands of steps. An announcement was made that whoever could make it to the top floor by climbing the stairs would win a large reward.

 Many people came to test their ability to climb the stairs. The first one made it to the tenth floor, and he then gave up. The second one made it to the twentieth floor and the third person made it to the thirtieth floor, but then they had to stop. This continued with all the competitors, and not one of them was able to make it to the top floor.

 Finally, a Jew came along and he began to climb the steps. He was much slower than the others, but amazingly, he did not get tired and he did not give up like the others did. He was able to continue climbing until he was able to reach the top floor!

 After he received the reward, everyone asked him, “How is it that you were able to succeed in climbing when no one else could?”

 He replied, “When I first started climbing, I did not plan or expect to climb to the top of the building I just wanted to get to the first floor. However, when I saw that I could do this, I decided to climb just one more floor. I kept telling myself to climb just one more floor, and I continued to climb in this way. Although I was exhausted, each time I pushed myself to go just one more floor, I was eventually able to reach the top of the building!”

 Rav Gamliel teaches that Tzadikim have written that in regard to any matter of Kedushah, the proper way to overcome it is ‘little by little’. Chazal have taught us (Rosh Hashanah 4b) that if you grab a large amount, then you have not taken anything at all, but if you have taken a small amount, you will at least have taken that amount.

 Sometimes a person has a strong desire to grow a lot in Ruchniyus, even ‘to conquer the entire world in just one day’, however, this can only be from one’s Yetzer Hara (Evil Inclination) who is trying to get him to take short cuts in his service to Hashem.

 The Satan is hoping that he tries to change the world in a moment, and then, when he sees that he has failed, he gives up hope completely and he won’t even make a small change in himself.

 However, if a person decides to do it ‘little by little’, then he is much more likely to succeed. This is similar to going up a ladder— one can’t skip any rungs. Rather, he must go up ‘little by little’, so that he doesn’t slip and fall all the way down the ladder!

*Reprinted from the Parshas Ha’azinu 5778 email of Torah U’Tefilah: A Collection of Inspiring Insights compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.*

**A Specially Reserved**

**Place in Gan Eden**



**Rav Michel Yehudah Lefkowitz, zty”l**

 Rav Shlomo Levinstein, Shlit”a, relates the following story. Rav Mordechai Rabinowitz is the Rosh Yeshivah of Yeshivas Oheiv Yisroel in Petach Tikvah. It is a school that caters to highly motivated students, and it is very difficult to gain entrance to this Yeshivah.

 One day Rav Mordechai received a call from Rav Michel Yehudah Lefkowitz, zt”l, who asked, “Rav Mordechai, would you like to sit together with me in Gan Eden?”

 Rav Mordechai said, “Of course I would like that!”

 Rav Michel Yehudah continued, “There is a young student in one of the Yeshivos who refuses to attend any school but yours. Will you accept him?”

 Rav Mordechai replied, “Yes, Rebbe. I will accept him— no questions asked.”

 A few weeks passed, and Rav Michel Yehudah called again to inquire about how the boy was doing. However, Rav Mordechai informed him that although the boy had been accepted, he never arrived at the Yeshivah.

 When Rav Michel Yehudah heard this, he began crying. He said, “Oy! We lost a child to Torah! How sad that this boy will not attend Yeshivah!”

 Rav Mordechai felt terrible about the boy. Nonetheless, Rav Mordechai asked Rav Michel Yehudah if the fact that the boy did not show up at the Yeshivah would affect their pact, and he asked if he could still look forward sitting together with the Gadol in Olam Haba?

 Rav Michel Yehudah said, “Absolutely! Our deal still stands!”

 When Rav Eliyahu Mann heard this story, he approached Rav Chaim Kanievsky, Shlit”a, with a question:

 “How was Rav Michel Yehudah allowed to welcome a guest to Gan Eden?” Rav Chaim opened a Sefer of Midrash Agadah on Sefer Bereishis (84:1) where it says: “Rebbi Avahu said, ‘In the future, people (Neshamos) will wonder at the seating arrangement in Gan Eden. Individuals who had never studied Torah will be sitting in close proximity to the Avos!

 Hashem will explain His choice for including these seemingly simple people together with the most elite of the nation. These people listened to Me with whatever I asked of them, and they immediately carried it out.’”

 Rav Chaim said, “Someone who listens to Hashem's call to save a Jewish child from falling, will surely have a special place reserved for him in Olam Haba. After all, this person is following in the ways of Hashem. This is how Rav Michel Yehudah knew he was able to do this!”

*Reprinted from the Simchas Torah 5788 email of Torah U’Tefillah: A Collection of Inspiring Insights compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.*

**Stay Pure**

**By Rabbi David Ashear**

 When a person buys a new car, he's very careful to keep it clean and tries his hardest to protect it from damage. That is how we're supposed to feel right now about our souls. We have just been forgiven and cleansed from our sins.



 Our souls are pure, and we should do everything in our power now to stay that way. A person who is free of sin has no barriers between him and Hashem. His prayers are more effective; his spiritual senses are working at full capacity. He's able to enjoy the Torah and Mitzvot more; he's able to enjoy Shabbat more, and he's overall a happier person.

 And if a person does fall and sin, he can always repent right away and remove it. Nobody is perfect. If we humble ourselves and say we're sorry and accept not to do it again, we can always stay clean. We are the ones who gain by being pure. Following Hashem brings blessing both in this world and the next.

 Rabbi Yoel Gold told a story about a couple whose last name is Ashkenazi who was waiting on line to valet park their car at a Chinese Auction on a very busy block in Brooklyn. The couple in the car in front of them, whose last name was Beyda, was talking to a person standing in the street there. The Ashkenazis waited for them to pull up, but they weren't moving. They thought perhaps they're not using the valet, because there were other retail stores on the block open at the time. So after a couple of light honks with no response, they went around them and valeted their car and went inside. About ten or fifteen minutes later, the Beydas came in to the auction and went straight to the Ashkenazis, expressing their anger about what they did.

 They said, "You cut us off and took the last spot in the valet. We had to park three blocks away." The Ashkenazis apologized, but it didn't matter. The damage was done, and the Beydas were hurt. Five months later, Mr. Ashkenazi [on the morning before Yom Kippur] picked up the phone and called the Beyda home, sincerely expressing his remorse and asking for their forgiveness. The Beydas were happy with that apology, and they wholeheartedly forgave the Ashkenazis.

 Three years later, a girl's name was suggested for the Beyda's son as a Shidduch. When they inquired about the parents, they were surprised to hear that it was none other than the Ashkenazis. But because of their phone call a few years before, they happily agreed to the Shidduch. Not too long afterwards, their children got married.

 Looking back at it now, more than 18 years later, the Beydas and Ashkenazis have so much joy from their children marrying each other. They have many grandchildren, and they enjoy family events together. The Ashkenazis made a mistake, and although at the time they honestly felt they didn't do anything wrong, they humbled themselves to ask for forgiveness and ultimately, they were the ones who gained from it.



Rabbi Zamir Cohen

 Rabbi Zamir Cohen told a story which took place a few years ago. A man who we'll call Yosef and his sons built their Sukkah in their shared driveway, the first year living in that location. Their neighbor came home that night, and when he saw the Sukkah, he yelled at them, "You can't put the Sukkah here. This is exactly where I park my car every day."

 Yosef politely responded, "I'm sorry, I didn't realize. It's a very big driveway; there's so much more room here. Can't you put your car in a different spot for the next eight days?"

 But the neighbor angrily replied, "No, this is my spot. Move the Sukkah." Now this was after a whole day of labor, but Yosef said to himself, "Why should I have a fight now with my neighbor as a result of this? I'm going to give in and take down the whole Sukkah and rebuild it in a different spot."

 On the first night of Sukkot that year, Yosef and his children were woken in the middle of the night from a loud bang while they were sleeping in their Sukkah. They found out shortly afterwards that a large piece of the building next to them fell and smashed the car in the driveway there. They were so thankful that they moved their Sukkah and were no longer in that spot.

 Humbling ourselves, giving in, asking forgiveness will only benefit us. We hope to stay pure as long as we can, but if we fall, we can always repent right away and start again anew.

*Reprinted from the October 4. 2014 email of Emunah Daily.*

**Requesting a Note**

**To Give to Hashem**

 In 1945 when the Holocaust finally ended, a thirteen-year-old boy who managed to survive the war alone, landed safely on the shores of America. Because of the war, this boy missed out on his early schooling years as a child. This boy had a very strong desire to go to yeshiva and study Torah but he didn't even have an aleph bet education.

 He was fortunate to befriend a family that took him in. He tried to enroll in one Yeshivah after another but none of them would allow a thirteen-year-old boy to sit in the first grade class to learn the basics.

 After many attempts, he decided that he would try one last school and again the principal turned him down. After that final rejection, he turned to the principal and made this somber request...He asked the Principal with tears in his eyes..."Can you please write me a note stating that I came to you and asked to be accepted in your Yeshivah, so that I could learn Torah and you told me that you couldn't accommodate a thirteen-year-old boy to sit in a first grade class. Please see to it that when I die, the Chevrah Kadisha buries me with that note in my hand, so that I can come before Hashem and tell Him that at least I tried to the best of my ability to learn Torah but wasn't able to because of my dilemma".

 When the principal heard this heartbreaking plea from the boy, he jumped from his chair, embraced the boy and together they both cried. The very next day, this boy was learning Torah with boys who were nine years younger than him. He was finally doing what he has been striving to do...to Learn Torah!

 Today this boy is a Talmid Chacham, who for almost 50 years has been teaching Torah to eager young men in Yerushalayim, who like himself, have a strong desire to achieve Torah knowledge!

*Reprinted from the Ve’zot Haberacha/Simchat Torah 5778 email of Jack E. Rahmey with the Guidance and Teachings of Rabbi Amram Sananes.*

**Two Stories about**

**The Holy Sefer Torah**

**By Rabbi Tuvia Bolton**



 The section always read just before Rosh Hashanah contains the last, and perhaps the most important, commandment in the Torah; that every Jew must write, or at least participate in writing, a Sefer Torah (Torah Scroll).

 This painstaking commandment of writing Torah Scrolls has been observed meticulously and continuously by the Jews since it was given on Sinai over 3,300 years ago.

 Since then, against all odds, millions of huge scrolls exactly like the one Moses received have been written and preserved throughout the ages by Jews in all corners of the globe and under the worst conditions possible.

 And to assure their accuracy and relevancy they have been read in public four times a week every week in every congregation since then, and any mistake or mispronounced word is immediately pounced upon by all those present.

 Not only that but, the law is that if even one letter from the entire scroll is missing or incorrect the entire thing is disqualified for reading until it’s fixed.

 This, at first glance, makes no sense. A Sefer Torah can take over a year to write, costs tens of thousands of dollars and often are in short supply. Why would one letter render it unusable.

 Perhaps these two stories about Sefer Torahs, each with the same message, will help us to understand.



**Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi**

 The first happened over 200 years ago.

 Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder and first Rebbe of the Chabad movement personally wrote his own Sefer Torah. The holiness of the Rebbe was incomparable and this Torah that he wrote was, needless to say, the same; precious beyond value.

 When he passed away in 1813 the Scroll automatically passed into the hands of his son and successor Rabbi DovBer who moved the Chassidim to the town of Lubavitch and made the city of Lubavitch the center of Chabad. But fourteen years later he too passed away, and because he died while on a journey he was buried many miles from Lubavitch in the city of Niajin. A synagogue was built near his grave and the holy Sefer Torah was kept there to be read from regularly by the Jewish community there.

 But one year, tragically, a huge fire broke out in the town and seeing that all the homes there were made from wood, it spread quickly, devouring home after home and approached the synagogue.

 Everyone was so occupied in either battling the flames, saving what they could or helping others that no one remembered the Synagogue. Except for one of the sons of the second Lubavitcher Rebbe by the name of Rav Menachem Nachum.

 He ran with all his might to the Synagogue with the intention of saving the Sefer Torah at all risk! When he arrived he discovered that he was alone. No one was there to help him, flames were already licking the outside walls and the heat was becoming unbearable. But without hesitation he dashed in.

 The room was filled with smoke; flames were already visible inside and it was becoming impossible to breathe or to see but he ran in the direction of the ark and then suddenly stopped in his tracks. He had forgotten the key to the ark door at home!

 To run back home was out of the question. In a few minutes the whole place would be an inferno; if he didn’t get the Sefer out immediately it would be too late. But there was little chance that the ark would be open, he had the only keys and the doors were always firmly locked.

 The room was aflame. He made a move toward the ark, hoping against all odds that.... when suddenly through a brake in the thickening smoke he saw a man standing before him, back to him opening the ark door!

 Where did he come from? How did he get in?

 The smoke and heat were unbearable. The man removed the Sefer Torah turned around and held it out to him and he saw that it was none other than the holy Rabbi Shneur Zalman, his grandfather who had departed this world over twenty years earlier!!

 Rav Menachem took the Scroll, took a few steps backward unable to remove his eyes from the Rebbe's radiant face, then turned and ran for his life, exiting the building miraculously moments before it burst into flames and collapsed.

 The second story happened much more recently.

 Rabbi Yosef Weinberg was a very active emissary of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. He had a very popular radio program where he explained ideas of Judaism and was often invited to speak in public.

 Once he was invited to be the main speaker at a large banquet made by a prestigious Jewish group in honor of their purchase of a new Sefer Torah.

 The last letters of the Sefer were written with great ceremony, and then it was carried through the streets to the Synagogue amidst music, dancing and rejoicing and afterwards at the festive banquet Rabbi Weinberg spoke.

 His words made a deep impression on the hundreds of people present and the next morning he flew back to his home in the Chabad community of Crown Heights in Brooklyn New York. As soon as he arrived he entered the Lubavitcher Rebbe's headquarters on 770 Eastern Parkway, he sought the Rebbe's secretary Rabbi Hodakov, and reported to him every detail of the previous night so that he could relate it all to the Rebbe.

 He reported that in his speech he likened the entire Jewish people to a Torah Scroll: Just as in a Sefer Torah if one letter is erased the entire Scroll is disqualified until fixed, so every Jew is essential to the Jewish people as a whole.

 If one Jew leaves Judaism or stops his observance of the Torah, then it is as though a 'letter' has been erased and the entire Jewish people suffer.

 The next day Rabbi Hodakov called Rabbi Weinberg and asked him if he could come to his office.

 "I told the Rebbe about the success of your speech and he was very pleased. But he said you could have used a different metaphor. Rather than comparing lost Jews to missing letters you should have likened them to letters that are covered with dust or dirt. In such a case you must stop reading, clean off the dirt and see that the letter is really whole before you can begin reading again but the Torah is not disqualified

 "A Jew can never be erased no matter what he/she has done!”.

*Reprinted from the Nitzavim Vayeillech 5778 email of Yeshiva Torah Ohr Tmimim in Kfar Chabad, Israel.*

**The Rabbi Who Cried**

**Over Spilled Ink**

**By**[**Blumah Wineberg**](http://www.chabad.org/search/keyword_cdo/kid/22236/jewish/Wineberg-Blumah.htm)



**Illustrated by Sefira Ross**

 It was the custom of Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Liska1 (father of the *tzadik*Reb Naftali of Ropshitz) to sign his letters with his name and follow it with the epithet *ohev Yisrael* (“lover of Israel”).

 Once it happened that when he was about to sign his name and write the words *ohev* *Yisrael*, the pen fell from his hand. He picked it up, and again began to sign the letter, when another mishap occurred and once again he was unable to sign. The*tzadik* understood that he was being prevented from signing. He began to cry profusely.

 “Just one good habit I have acquired, with which I pride myself, the mitzvah of loving my fellow Jews,” he sobbed, “and also this is taken from me.”

 He reflected on his actions of the day, wondering if perhaps he had embarrassed someone, but he could not think of anything that had been untoward. He called his family together and asked them if perhaps they had embarrassed someone or hurt someone’s feelings. It then became clear that indeed that was the case. In the morning, a simple, uncouth individual, dressed in the attire of ignorant and coarse individuals, came to the home of the *tzadik*and wanted to go into the *tzadik’*s room. The family pushed him off and did not allow him to enter. So he left, disgruntled.

 Immediately, the righteous man told his assistant to search for the man and bring him to the *tzadik*’s home. The aide went from home to home and from inn to inn, but he did not find him anywhere. Finally, someone told him that he saw such a person go into an inappropriate place. The rabbi’s assistant went there and found the man. He said to him that the *tzadik*asked to see him because he wanted to speak to him. The man refused to go. The aide then took him by the arm and brought him to the *tzadik*, telling the *tzadik* where he had been found.

 However, the *tzadik*did not pay any attention to this at all. He greeted the man pleasantly, asking forgiveness for the shameful way he had been treated that morning. He accorded the visitor great respect, and asked that food and drink be placed before him. When the man saw how much the*tzadik*loved him and how he treated him so warmly and respectfully, thoughts of *teshuvah* entered his heart, and he regretted his previous actions.

 When the man left, the *tzadik*saw that the people around him were wondering why he spent so much time and acted so nicely to someone so coarse and full of sins.

 The*tzadik*said to them: “The Prophet Isaiah prophesied about the days of Moshiach, saying: ‘And they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations a gift to G‑d.’2 The question can be asked: Who are the Jews who will wait till the non-Jews bring them to Moshiach as a gift?

 “The chassidim, when they will hear that Moshiach is here, will surely run towards him; and those who are not chassidim may not be running, but they will nevertheless be walking, and surely they, too, will not wait for the non-Jews to bring them to Moshiach.

 “So, the verse is speaking about those who have sinned and are immersed in the opposite of holiness. Thus, the verse says, that when the non-Jews will hear that Moshiach has come, they will search and find those Jews and bring them to Jerusalemas a gift to G‑d.

 “And it is such a ‘gift to G‑d’ which I embarrassed today, for which I am so sorry. And now that this ‘gift’ returned and came to me, shall I not shower him with love?”3

**FOOTNOTES**

[1.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/3779332/jewish/The-Rabbi-Who-Cried-Over-Spilled-Ink.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22footnoteRef1a3779332) Rebbe Menachem Mendel Rubin of Linsk, 1740-1803. Liske or Linsk is the town of Lesko in southern Poland. A collection of his writings was published by his descendant and called *Likkutei Maharam.*

[2.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/3779332/jewish/The-Rabbi-Who-Cried-Over-Spilled-Ink.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22footnoteRef2a3779332) [Isaiah 66:20](http://www.chabad.org/15997#v20).

[3.](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/3779332/jewish/The-Rabbi-Who-Cried-Over-Spilled-Ink.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22footnoteRef3a3779332) From Sippurei Chassidim, Moadim #234 by Rabbi Zevin.

Reprinted from the website of Chabad.Org