**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas Vayeira 5776**

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**Story #934**

**The Judge with an**

**Excellent Memory**

**From the desk of Yerachmiel Tilles**

[**editor@ascentofsafed.com**](http://webmailb.juno.com/webmail/new/21?folder=Inbox&msgNum=00012sW0:001M9qBk00000Xrs&count=1445434019&randid=1432213691&attachId=0&isUnDisplayableMail=yes&blockImages=0&randid=1432213691)

**Yair Eitan's** father ran a produce distribution business in Northern Israel. When Yair was old enough, he began driving the delivery truck.

One of his regular deliveries was at Yeshivah Lev V'Nefesh, whose student body was primarily comprised of *ba'alei teshuvah*. Yair's parents had carefully shielded him from his religion; his upbringing was strictly secular. Much to his surprise, the joy and excitement Yair saw within the *yeshivah* walls aroused his curiosity. He allowed himself to be drawn into conversation with a few *yeshivah* students. On his third trip there, Yair was already sitting down for a few minutes to sample Torah study.

When Yair finally told his parents what he had discovered in the *yeshivah*, his father became enraged. "No son of mine is going to become a backward, bearded *chareidi*! You are no longer to deliver to that route and you are forbidden to visit that *yeshivah*, or any other *yeshivah*, ever again!"

Yair knew that one must obey one's father, except when a parent explicitly commands a child to disobey the Torah. He continued to clandestinely visit the *yeshivah*. But his father found out, and he reacted violently. Yair, however, was determined. He inquired as to other available *yeshivas*, left a note wishing his parents well, and left without revealing his destination.

His father searched for him and forced him to return home. Not only that, he blamed the *Rosh Yeshivah* of Lev V'Nefesh and filed charges against him of brainwashing his 18-year-old son and of engineering his flight from home.

The trial aroused great interest, and the trial date found a packed courtroom eagerly awaiting to hear the proceedings. Yair's testimony did not help the prosecution at all. Yair insisted that he had not been coerced to attend the *yeshivah*; it was of his own volition.

While Yair was recounting his story, the judge presiding over the case, an elderly man, seemed a bit distracted. He would intermittently take his eyes off the speaker to gaze intently at Yair's father.

When Yair left the witness stand, the judge announced, "I would like Mr. Eitan to step forward."

Yair's father was surprised as he stepped up to the witness stand. The judge asked if he was of Eastern European descent, and if his name back in Europe was perhaps "Stark".

Mr. Eitan was clearly taken aback, and he stammered that the judge was indeed correct.

"And are you originally from Pinsk?" asked the judge.

Mr. Eitan nodded meekly.

The judge continued, "I remember you well. You come from one of the finest homes of pre-War Pinsk. Your father was a deeply religious and highly respected man. Your mother was renowned for her kindness. She would cook meals for the poor and the sick regularly.

"I remember well when, as an 18-year-old, you openly departed from your parents' ways. When you publicly desecrated the Shabbat for the first time, your father aged overnight and seemed to be constantly in mourning.

"Your mother would shed a river of tears every Friday night when she lit the candles. I often wondered what became of all her tears. I'm not the most religious person, but I know that there is a G-d who runs this world, and I could not understand how the tears of so righteous a woman could be ignored in Heaven.

"Today my question has been answered. I see that her tears were not shed in vain. Today, almost 50 years later, her grandson has returned to the ways of his ancestors.

"Mr. Eitan, I'm sure you recall that on more than one occasion, friends of your parents pleaded with you that for your parents' sake you should at least refrain from public transgression.

"As I recall, your response was, 'I'm now eighteen and I make my own decisions. I can live my life any way I please.'

"And you dare to file charges because your eighteen-year-old son has chosen to return to the ways that you abandoned? Case dismissed!"

***Source*:** Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from the rendition by Rabbi Shlomo Price on // nevehzion.org. Submitted by Rabbi Shaul Leiter, executive director of Ascent-in-Safed.

***Connection*:** [Midrash on] weekly reading-Terach abandoned the ways of his holy ancestors, and Avraham turned from the ways of his father, Terach, and cleaved to the One G-d.

*Reprinted from last week’s Parshas Lech Lecha email from KabbalahOnline.com, a division of Ascent of Safed.*

**Why Some Torah Scholars Are More Popular**

A certain “Torah scholar” once posed a (loaded) question to Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer of blessed memory.: “Why do people come to talk to you in learning more than they come to me?”

Rav Meltzer answered as follows: “When someone tells you a novel Torah thought that’s off the mark, you tell him pointblank that he’s missed the point. If it’s a pedestrian thought, and not particularly dazzling, you tell him that his thoughts are average. And should a person make an excellent point, you tell him ‘that’s not bad.’

“On the other hand, when someone comes to me with a pretty good insight, I tell him how extraordinary his ideas are. If the concept he is presenting is not so solid, I tell him it’s pretty good. And if his words have no basis or support in reality, I tell him ‘you probably meant to say this’ and guide his words along until they reflect accurateness even if his intention was never these words.”

Comment: When people share with us, they knowingly (and perhaps hesitatingly) make themselves vulnerable. Those who “tell it like it is” should know that less people will feel comfortable coming to them to share their thoughts and emotions. After all, who wants to deal with criticism and negativity on a regular basis?

The key to having great interactions and having people WANT to have a relationship is rooted in the ability to hear others out and build them up. Rav Meltzer’s genius was – among many other things – finding greatness latent in each and every person. What a lesson to take with us as we navigate “relationships.”

*Reprinted from the Parshas Bereishis 5776 email of Torah’s Sweets Weekly.*

**How Rebbetzin Jungreis Changed My Life**

**Now it’s Our Turn to Help Her.**

**By Dr. Yvette Alt Miller**



Can a book change your life?

One book changed mine. Years ago, I wandered into a bookstore with a young doctor I'd recently started dating. He picked up a volume from a table marked "new releases" and gave me his first gift, [*The Committed Life: Principles of Good Living from our Timeless Past*](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0060930853/friendsofaishhat) by Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis.

As I flipped the pages, I experienced a curious feeling that I was making a new friend. Soon, I longed to meet the people populating the chapters, to be a part of the large, loving community the book described.

Esther Jungreis introduced herself on the page. The scion of a prominent Hungarian rabbinic family, as a child during the Holocaust she was imprisoned, with her parents and siblings, in Bergen Belsen. After surviving those unfathomable horrors, the Jungreis family moved to New York, where they dedicated themselves to rebuilding the Jewish community they'd lost and to helping American Jews learn about their heritage. Rebbetzin Jungreis founded the Hineni educational center in New York in the 1970s, and helped teach generations of Jews eager to learn about their heritage. Reading each new chapter about her life and work, how I yearned to be a part of her world.

One of my favorite chapters began with a cry of "Rebbetzin!" A young Hineni student's fiancé had jilted her, and she phoned the rebbetzin late at night. Without a second thought, Rebbetzin Jungreis drove over to her apartment and comforted her. There was no one I knew who would drive over to help me out at a moment's notice like that. Despite all the wonderful things that were happening in my life, I recognized I was reading about a world that offered things I'd never had – bonds of love and friendship and a depth of responsibility that I'd never truly known.

In another chapter, Rebbetzin Jungreis described a young woman she counseled, someone who seemed uncomfortably like me. Unable to commit to marriage or anything else, the woman she described said the only thing she was able to make a commitment to was a cat. I put down the book and looked around my apartment, a new awareness creeping over me. I didn't even have any houseplants, I realized, so wary was I of taking on anything I had to commit to nurturing long-term.

Slowly, with the guidance of this remarkable woman I'd only met in print, I started making some changes.

I finished reading *The Committed Life,* then immediately read it again. Living in a new city knowing few people, the book seemed to give me a sense of community that I didn't have. Many of the vignettes in the book described people who were alone and I relished reading how the Rebbetzin helped them with a supporting word or piece of advice.

Slowly, with the guidance of this remarkable woman I'd only met in print, I started making some changes. I made giving *tzedakah* – charity – a bigger part of my life, and enjoyed the feeling that I could help others. Inspired by the Rebbetzin's example, I started making a habit to reach out to my family more, phoning and visiting. I started praying with more intensity, unafraid to ask for the things I really hoped for in life.

My greatest evolution, perhaps, was how I looked at the biggest commitment of all: marriage. By now, the doctor and I had known each other for months, and he was eager to set a date for a wedding. I'd never pledged myself to anything permanent before in my life and couldn't imagine doing so now. Rebbetzin Jungreis' book came to the rescue.

In her opening chapter, she describes her beloved husband Rabbi Meshulem HaLevi Jungreis, "a paradigm," she beautifully writes, "of commitment in public as in private life, in war as in peace, in health as in illness, in life as in death. His dedication never faltered. In forty years of marriage I never heard him utter an unkind word, raise his voice, or lose his temper. He was a true reflection of his name, Meshulem, which in Hebrew means 'complete,' and indeed, he was a complete man."

Here was a world with different values to any I'd ever known: a world in which people were judged on their deepest merits, a world in which people strove to grow, to help others, to make a difference – in which they tried to fulfill their fullest potential. How I longed to be a part of it! I knew my now-husband was a wonderful person and Rebbetzin Jungreis' words and example somehow gave me the courage to say "Yes," to look forward to marriage not as a source of constraint, but as a chance to grow.

Rebbetzin Jungreis' books have accompanied me over the years as I've made my own commitments to having a family and embracing a community. I felt she was a friend, always there, cheering me on.

From time to time, I thought of reaching out to Rebbetzin Jungreis, even visiting her Hineni Center in New York, but life was always too busy. I knew she often gave public talks, but in those years of early marriage and motherhood, I could never find the time. Then one day I saw an ad: Rebbetzin Jungreis was going to be speaking around the corner from my home. This was too good an opportunity to miss. I picked up my beloved books by her and went to her lecture, planning to ask her to sign them afterwards.

It was thrilling to see Rebbetzin Jungreis and hear her speak. By the end of her lecture, tears were rolling down my cheeks. Afterwards, clutching my books, I got in line, ready to meet her and tell her that her writing had changed my life.

I never did get those books signed. The line took hours. As it snaked around, I got a chance to hear what everyone in front of me was saying. "Rebbetzin, your books changed my life." "Rebbetzin, your words gave me hope." "Rebbetzin, I don't know what I'd have done without you." Rebbetzin Jungreis had enriched us all.

By the time I finally met the elderly Rebbetzin, she was clearly exhausted. I looked into her twinkling eyes and smiled. "Thank you," I said. "Your books changed my life." She smiled warmly back at me. I didn't want to make another demand on her time. Picking up my precious books, I slowly walked home. I'd thanked Rebbetzin Jungreis at long last.

In the past few days, I, like countless others touched by her work, received a worrying note in my in-box: [Rebbetzin Jungreis](http://www.aish.com/sp/ph/When-the-Tests-are-Miracles.html) hasn't been feeling well the past few weeks and needs a *refuah sheleima*. After so many years of benefiting from her wise words and caring example, we now have the chance to come to her aid in return.

Please pray for the complete recovery of Esther bat Miriam. Take on an extra mitzvah: commit to studying a Jewish text, to lighting Shabbat candles (or, if you are already used to lighting candles, light them early this week in her merit.) In Rebbetzin Jungreis' own words from *The Committed Life*: please "storm the Heavens with our prayers."

*Reprinted from last week’s email of Aish.com*

**Caught with Tzitzis**

**By** [**Hilel Zaltzman**](http://www.chabad.org/search/keyword_cdo/kid/20470/jewish/Hilel-Zaltzman.htm)

Remaining observant while attending a Communist school [in Samarkand in the Former Soviet Union] demanded much creativity on my part. When I would go to school on Monday, after my two-day absence, I was afraid that the other kids would openly laugh at me when they would see me again. I tried to arrive earlier and to walk around near the school so my classmates would see me around and become accustomed to my presence.



**Jewish children leaving public school in Samarkand.**

**Notice the red Pioneers tie worn by the boy in the center.**

Apart from being noticed for my irregular attendance, there was also the issue of my dress, specifically my headcovering and the *tzitzis*, the fringed garment that I wore underneath my shirt.

I did not remove the Uzbeki-style cap that I wore when I entered the classroom. However, sometimes the teacher would tell me to remove it. I did not try to defy her and to cause any trouble, but I would place my hand on my head to appear as though I was scratching my head, so as not to remain bareheaded. I would keep my hand in this position until I was seated on my chair.

Occasionally we would receive medical exams or vaccinations at school, organized by the government. Once, our teacher announced that a nurse would soon enter our classroom to inject us with a vaccine in our backs. Generally, the shots were given to the arm or shoulder, and I became terrified, wondering how I would hide the *tzitzis*. If I took them off, the entire class would see it, and who knows what would happen.

At the last minute, instead of waiting for the nurse, I decided to lift my own shirt for the injection, and tried to hide the *tzitzis* underneath. It didn’t quite work. The nurse, who was a Bucharian Jewess, noticed the strings of the *tzitzis* protruding from under my shirt and whispered to me in Russian, “You are a good boy, a*chachamtchik* (little rabbi).”s

After that incident I was afraid to wear *tzitzis* to school. From then on I would wear them until I arrived at school, and before I entered the classroom I would go to the bathroom, take it off and hide it in my briefcase. At the end of the day, before I left school, I went to the bathroom again and put the *tzitzis* back on.

Another disguise I put on in the bathroom before I entered the classroom was a red tie, or as we referred to it, “the red rag.” In those days, every child had to register for the Pioneers, the Communist youth group. Every Pioneer received a red tie that he would wear to school. Since the registration was done automatically, I too was registered for the Pioneers, and received my tie. Every morning I went into the bathroom, removed my *tzitzis* and put on the red tie. In the afternoon I took off the tie and put on the *tzitzis*.

*Reprinted from last week’s email of Chabad.Org Magazine. Excerpted from the upcoming book*[*Samarkand*](http://www.chabad.org/3058550)*, by Hilel Zaltzman. Hilel is the director of Chamah, an organization which works to share the beauty of Judaism with immigrants from the former USSR.*

**Henny Machlis: A Truly Great Jewish Woman**

**By** [**Sara Yoheved Rigler**](http://www.aish.com/authors/48865432.html)



Photo credit: Joan Roth

**How did an ordinary Jew from Brooklyn become one of the greatest lights of our times?**

What qualified [Henny Machlis](http://www.aish.com/ci/w/Hennys-Secret.html), who passed away this past Friday [5 Cheshvon/October 16th] at the age of 58, as one of the world’s greatest Jewish women?

Jerusalemites would say it was her cooking for and serving up to 300 guests every Shabbos in her cramped Jerusalem apartment. The guests – almost 150 for the Shabbat night meal and over 100 for the Shabbat day meal – ranged from curious tourists and university students to lonely widows and singles to drunks and mentally ill people who considered the Machlis family’s love and warmth more delectable than even their ample food.

Henny cooked 51 weeks a year (except only for the week of Pesach) from her tiny kitchen. Starting as newly-weds 35 years ago, the [Machlises’ open Shabbos table](http://www.aish.com/sp/so/48900627.html) expanded gradually over the years until the overflow of guests had to be seated in the courtyard and outside the front door. Henny’s great dream was to enclose the courtyard so guests could sit there even in the winter. Alas, she never lived to see her dream’s fulfillment.

The Machlises’ *chesed*was not restricted to Shabbat. Homeless people slept on their couches, some for weeks at a time, and those whose mental instability might have endangered the Machlises’ fourteen children were accommodated in the family van. When Rabbi Mordechai Machlis would leave for work as a teacher in the mornings, he would know how many van guests he had by the number of shoes in the windshield.

For those who gauge greatness by the level of selflessness a person attains, Henny also scored off the charts. At her funeral her oldest son Moshe recalled how, after he got married and moved away to start Kollel (full-time Torah learning), his mother encouraged him: “If you ever aren’t making it financially, tell me and I’ll sell my jewelry.”

“Ima,” Moshe called out in a tearful voice, “you forgot that you didn’t have any jewelry. They had all been stolen by the guests over the years. And your diamond ring – you loaned it to someone twenty years ago, and never got it back.”

Being treated for cancer in New York’s Sloan-Kettering, Henny was sometimes visited by the unfortunates who – even those decades older than she – considered Henny their mother. When one homeless woman came to visit, Henny gave her her bed. A relative discovered Henny, wrapped in a hospital blanket, wandering in the hospital corridor looking for a place to lie down.

Henny’s son Moshe was pushed aside at the crowded funeral by one of the Machlises’s mentally ill “regular guests,” who proclaimed, “I have to get closer. She’s my mother.”

For those who equate spiritual greatness with God-consciousness, with the ability to see God’s hand always and everywhere, Henny had indeed achieved those spiritual heights. At the funeral, a tearful Rabbi Machlis related just one story: He invited a destitute man whom he always saw at the Kotel (Western Wall) to come home with him to eat.

That day Henny served her homemade whole-wheat pizza. The man loved it. He came back to their house every day asking for a slice of whole-wheat pizza. Finally, Henny suggested that she could teach him how to make whole-wheat pizza himself. Painstakingly and with infinite patience, Henny taught him how. One night several days later, at 3 AM, there was a knock on the door. “Not on the front door,” Rabbi Machlis related. “Our front door is always unlocked. Someone was knocking on our bedroom door.”

The loud knocking woke them up. Alarmed at what must be an emergency, Rabbi Machlis went to the door and asked, “Who’s there?” When the man identified himself, Rabbi Machlis asked, “What’s wrong?”

The man replied, “I forgot how to make whole-wheat pizza. I need your wife to explain it to me again.”

Rabbi Machlis was exasperated. “At 3 o’clock in the morning, you need to remember how to make whole-wheat pizza?”

But Henny calmed him down. “It’s a test,” she assured him. “It’s from Hashem.”

Then Henny reiterated to the man, step by step, how to make whole-wheat pizza.

Henny emanated radiant joy all the time.

For me personally, the sign of Henny Machlis’s greatness was the radiant joy she emanated all the time. Whenever I ran into her, her wide smile and the joyful light she radiated conveyed that seeing me was the best thing that had happened to her all day. And although I knew that she greeted everyone the same way, I nonetheless was charged by this encounter with a holiness and saintliness that lit up the world – or that tiny piece of the world where Henny Machlis stood.

The last time I saw Henny was several months ago, when she was briefly back in Jerusalem between surgeries and treatments at Sloan-Kettering. She had already been battling metastasized cancer for a couple agonizing years. I decided to drop in at her house, and braced myself to see the battle-weary and fear-worn look that characterized other cancer patients I had known.

On the path to the Machlis house, there was Henny with one of her daughters, on her way to go to pray at the grave of the tzaddik Rav Usher. When she saw me, she gave me that same radiant smile and jubilant greeting that had always been her trademark – unmitigated by the cancer, the surgeries, the chemo, the long separations from her family, and the unexpected – and unwanted – turn her life had taken. Her joyful smile conveyed not just her stoic acceptance, but her happy acquiescence with the way God was running His world.

A mutual friend told me after Henny’s death, “When I was with her, I felt embraced by G-d.”

The question – indeed the challenge – of Henny’s life is: How did an ordinary Jew born to a regular middleclass family in Brooklyn in 1957 become so great?

Henny kept on going and giving and loving and inspiring.

Like the rest of us, she went to college. (She graduated Stern College with a B.S. in education.) Like most of us in our twenties, she had an ideal. Hers was to share the beauty and joy of Shabbos with the whole world. Like most of us, “reality” intruded in the actualization of the ideal.

For the Machlises, the tremendous scale of their success cost them over $2500 every Shabbat, a financial load that defied Rabbi Machlis’s modest salary as a teacher supplemented by donations from well-wishers. But unlike most of us, their adamantine faith in G-d and love for the Jewish people kept them from compromising on their ideal. They mortgaged their apartment to the hilt, took out personal and bank loans – and kept on going.

As Henny once told me: “We are living in the midst of a spiritual holocaust. Most Jews today have no idea of the beauty and depth of Judaism. How can we not do everything in our power, including going into debt, to reach out to our fellow Jews?”

The only difference between Henny Machlis and the rest of us is the voice that asserts, “I’ve done enough. I don’t have to do more.” Henny never harkened to that voice. She kept on going and giving and loving and inspiring – until last Friday, when she was called to her Heavenly reward.

Now it’s up to the rest of us.

*Tax-deductible donations to the Machlis Shabbat Project can be made at*[*http://www.machlis.org/donate.php*](http://www.machlis.org/donate.php)

Readers who have personal stories about experiences with Henny Machlis, ztz"l, please send them to [srigler@aish.com](javascript:location.href='mailto:'+String.fromCharCode(115,114,105,103,108,101,114,64,97,105,115,104,46,99,111,109)+'?').

*Reprinted from last week’s email of Aish.com*

**How to Feed a**

**Yeshiva Student**

Once, when Rabbi Elchonon Wasserman (may Hashem avenge his blood) finished delivering his class, he went down to the kitchen of the European Yeshivah he was teaching in. The student’s curiosity was aroused as to what the Rosh Yeshivah could need there and peeked through the window to “snoop.” R’Elchonon came over to the cook and asked for a portion of the midday meal students received. The cook complied and Reb Elchonon took the plate straight to the home of R’Lubchansky, Yeshivah director/Mashgiach.

In an openly critical tone, R’Elchonon said, “Is it possible that we are serving students starvation rations like this? This will lead to them growing weak and falling sick!”

[](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Elchonon_Wasserman.jpg)

Rav Elchonon Wasserman, H”yd

Rav Lubchansky replied that the Yeshiva’s financial woes were common knowledge and all those who joined the Yeshiva were informed that the type of food provided will be far from five-star cuisine. He concluded: “I have every prospective student sign that he willingly accepts these conditions and all agree that they come with one intent in mind: only to hear the Rosh Yeshiva’s classes and develop into scholars!”

Reb Elchonon responded: “Such practice is a Torah violaton and their signatures are absolutely worthless!” Reb Elchonon immediately discontinued his classes, packed his bags and went off to America to raise money for the Yeshivah so that students would receive sufficient nourishment.”

**Comment:** We have no right to impose our own standards and expectations on other people, expecting them to “get over their needs.”

*Reprinted from last week’s (Parshas Lech Lecha 5776) email of Torah’s Sweets Weekly.*

**It Once Happened**

**Rebbe Naftoli Katz and**

**The Innkeeper’s Daughter**

When he was a youngster, Rebbe Naftoli Katz, the head of the Rabbinical Court of Posen, was once playing outdoors with his friends. They were throwing rocks, and Naftoli accidentally hit the passenger of a fine carriage that was nearby. Unfortunately, that passenger was none other than the High Prince of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The prince's guards arrested the boy for this act of "rebellion." He was brought to court and found guilty. His sentence: public execution.

Naftoli was to be escorted by a guard to the empire's capital, where his sentence was to be carried out. It was a difficult journey, and the stormy weather they encountered made travelling almost impossible. At one point they stopped at an inn that was owned by a Jew.

While the guard made himself comfortable in a corner by the stove, young Naftoli sat and listened to the innkeeper's sons studying Talmud with their tutor. Naftoli knew this tractate by heart, and when the boys and their tutor were stumped by a question in the tractate, Naftoli supplied them with the answer.

The innkeeper realized that this was a brilliant boy, and when he found out why Naftoli was being kept in custody, he thought of a plan to save the boy's life. The innkeeper offered the guard free food and drinks, thus convincing him to stay at the inn for a few days until the weather cleared up.

After a while the innkeeper approached the guard casually: "What would happen if a prisoner was to die in custody as he was being escorted from one city to another?" he inquired.

Replied the guard, "The escort would simply have to present a document testifying to the prisoner's death, signed by the local authorities."

Using his connections, the innkeeper obtained the required document and handed it to the guard, along with enough money to bribe him. The guard left Naftoli with the innkeeper, who took the boy in and raised him as if he was a member of his own family.

Years passed. Naftoli was of marriageable age, as was the innkeeper's daughter. The innkeeper proposed a match between the two young people and they both agreed. The wedding date was set.

One night, some time later, the innkeeper passed by Naftoli's room and heard him talking. He peeked through the keyhole and saw Naftoli sprawled on the floor, begging and pleading. "What can I do?" Naftoli was saying, "these people saved my life."

The scene repeated itself the next night. The innkeeper could not contain his curiosity, as he knew no one was in Naftoli's room, and he asked Naftoli for an explanation. "My parents keep appearing to me and telling me that your daughter is not my intended mate."

The innkeeper, realizing that a Heavenly hand was guiding the young man, told him to obey his parents' wishes, and that he bore Naftoli no ill will.

Before Naftoli left, he requested that the innkeeper give him a written account of the money paid on his behalf to bribe the guard so many years before.

"I have merited to fulfill the commandment of redeeming a hostage, and seek no reimbursement," exclaimed the righteous innkeeper.

Naftoli insisted and the innkeeper finally gave him a paper stating the sum paid to the guard. Naftoli left and became famous for his exceptional qualities. He married and was appointed the rabbi of the city of Posen.

The innkeeper's daughter married a storekeeper, and settled in a town near Posen. One night, as she was walking home from the store, she was kidnapped by a wealthy landowner and brought back to his estate with obvious intentions. Despite the dangerous situation, the young woman maintained her composure. "I will go along with all your wishes," she told the landowner, "but first you must go to town to purchase some fine liquor for me." The landowner readily agreed.

While he was in town, the clever woman looked for a means of escape from the mansion. The only window she found unbarred was very high up. Realizing the jump was dangerous, she looked for something to cushion her fall. She found the landowner's heavy lambskin overcoat and, wrapping herself in it, offered a prayer and leaped out the window. Miraculously, she was not hurt. She fled home, still wrapped in the coat.

The husband was thankful for his wife's narrow escape. He related the entire incident to the rabbi of Posen.

Rabbi Naftoli told the husband, "Your wife is a righteous woman and her level-headedness is admirable. G-d is truly with her. Open the seam of the landowner's coat, and you will find money that rightfully belongs to you and your wife."

A few days later, the landowner came into the husband's store to make a purchase. He complained about "some Jewish woman" who had not only outwitted him, but had managed to steal his overcoat that had a large sum of money sewn inside it. The husband returned to Rabbi Naftoli and told him what the landowner had said.

"This finally concludes a much longer story," Rabbi Naftoli replied, and proceeded to tell the husband the whole story of his arrest and ransom. "That landowner," he concluded, "was the guard who had escorted me. The amount of money in the coat is the sum that your father-in-law paid for my release. Here, I will show you a bill which confirms the figure exactly."

*Reprinted from last week’s (Parshas Lech Lecha 5776) edition of L’Chaim Weekly.*

**L’Maaseh… A Tale to Remember**

**Not Every Yarmulka**

**Wearer is a Jew**

Rabbi Hanoch Teller relates a story about how special it is to be a Jew. A Jewish man was once in his car riding down the highway, when he noticed a stalled car on the side of the road, with a man wearing a Yarmulka standing near the car. By nature, the man felt compassion for another Jew, and he stopped his car and pulled over to the side of the road to help his fellow Jew.

After looking at the broken down car, he was able to see what was wrong and fix the problem, but it was then that he noticed something in the car that shocked him. Right there on the dashboard, there was a cross that was prominently displayed, and this is not at all something that is a Jewish symbol!

The Jew started a conversation with this fellow, and asked him tactfully if he was Jewish. The man sheepishly admitted that he wasn’t. He explained, “I always noticed that whenever I saw a Jew stranded on the road, another Jew would always stop to help him, whether to give him a ride, or to help him with his problem. This type of thing doesn’t happen by the gentiles. Therefore, I decided to always carry a Yarmulka in my glove compartment and put it on whenever I was having car trouble and I was stranded on the road. So far it hasn’t ever failed me! Some kind-hearted Jew has always stopped to help!”

*Reprinted from last week’s email of “Torah U’Tefillah: A Collection of Inspiring Insights” compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.*

**New English Translation and Commentary of Tehillim**

**From Koren Publishers**

**By Daniel Keren**

Tehillim is one of the most beloved books in Tanach, the Jewish Bible and many of us have the custom of reciting sections of it daily and thereby completing the entire Book of Psalms once a month. Koren Publishers in Yerushalayim has come out this year with a special edition sponsored by the Rohr Family in memory of their parents – Mr. and Mrs. Sami and Charlotte Rohr – who were prominent Jewish philanthropists.)

In addition to the Hebrew Tehillim, the Rohr Edition reproduces the special translation of Rabbi Eli Cashdan, of blessed memory along with a new introduction and commentary by Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb, a former community rabbi and well-known former executive director of the Orthodox Union.

The publisher in his preface notes about Rabbi Weinreb’s special introduction and commentary that it benefits from his expertise “as a trained and practicing psychologist” that brings together a deeply rooted knowledge of traditional texts with a compassionate understanding of the human condition, to provide an insightful commentary that explores the specific meaning of each psalm.”

Rabbi Weinreb in his introduction declares “perusing the commentary will not suffice. The words must be recited, ideally, first in Hebrew, and then in the exquisite and inspiring translation of Rabbi Eli Cashdan, to whom I am personally indebted for his rich and suggestive rendition of these timeless words.”

“*The Koren Tehillim – The Rohr Family Edition*” (Koren Publishers) can be found in Jewish bookstores or by contacting the American distributor by calling (203) 830-8508 or emailing info@korenpub.com

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