**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas Chaya Sarah 5772**

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**Good Shabbos Everyone**

**Deal Direct**

In this week's Parsha Chayei-Sorah, the Torah tells in great detail the account of Avrohom buying the burial plot for his recently deceased wife Sorah.  The Torah describes how Avrohom did not bargain on the price; how he paid right away; and how he paid in cash.

The Sages tell us that the deeds of the Avos - patriarchs are a sign of the proper behavior for us, the children of the patriarchs.  We can therefore learn a lesson from the Torah's lengthy account of Avrohom's honest business dealings; namely, we must always be honest in business.  The following two stories illustrate how being honest in business causes Hashem's name to be sanctified in the world.

**Rushing to Mt. Sinai**

**Hospital in Manhattan**

A number of years ago, the Kleinbarts of Boro Park were expecting their sixth child. When labor began one morning, she told her husband, Yidel, that they had to rush to Mt. Sinai Hospital in Manhattan to deliver their child. "It's rush hour. How will we get there on time?" Yidel asked anxiously. "Don't worry, we'll get there," his wife assured him, a little nervous herself.

Driving through the streets of Boro Park was manageable, but the Prospect and Gowanus Expressways toward Manhattan were frightening. The roads were clogged. Every passing minute increased Yidel's fear and trepidation that they would not get to the hospital in time.

The quickest way to Manhattan is through the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel, but the lines of cars bottlenecking toward the tunnel seemed endless. In desperation, Yidel turned illegally into the lane reserved for buses and taxis, and sped along, a lone car among yellow cabs and commuter buses. When he reached the tollbooth, Yidel sped into the tunnel, without paying the toll.

As they emerged from the other side, a policeman, notified of Yidel's "crime" by tunnel authorities, flagged down the car. "What's going on?" the officer demanded. "My wife is in labor. We're rushing to the hospital to have a baby," shouted Yidel. "Why didn't you call us?" the policeman called back. "We would have given you an escort. Go!"

**Handed Two Tokens**

**To the Toll Collector**

The Kleinbarts resumed their rush and made it to Mount Sinai Hospital on time. The baby was born that morning. That night Yidel returned to Boro Park from Manhattan via the Battery Tunnel, and when he reached the tollbooth, he handed two tokens to the toll collector.

"What's this?" the toll collector asked. "I was here this morning and I was rushing — " Before he could finish the sentence, the toll collector said excitedly, "Oh, what did your wife have?"

Yidel was stunned. "How did you know?" he asked the toll collector in amazement. "They told us that a guy like you (a religious Jew) would surely come back and pay!' replied the toll collector. The officers in the tollbooth and the patrol car had seen Yidel for merely moments and yet were confident to make their evaluation of an Orhodox Jew! (p. 130 Echoes of The Maggid Rav Paysach Krohn.)

**The Importance of**

**Dealing Honestly**

Before we continue with our second story, let us mention the words of the Sages:  "In three ways does a person reveal his true nature:  in his drunkenness, the way he spends money, and in the time of his anger."  (Eruvin 65b)  The Sage also tell us that the first question one is asked when he arrives to his Beis Din - Rabbinical court in heaven, is whether he dealt honestly in business.  (Shabbos 30a)  Let us now tell the second story.

One early afternoon, a eight year old boy Chaim Sholom boarded the Number 3 bus on Rechov Panim Meirot in the Mattesdorf section of Jerusalem, heading downtown.

Noticing the unusually long line of people waiting to board the bus, the driver opened both the front and back doors and called out, "Tell everyone to get on, and let those in the back pass up their money or cartisiot - bus cards." People jostled their way onto the already crowded bus. Those who entered through the front door had their cartisiot punched as they passed the driver, while those who entered through the back doors passed their cards or money forward.

The eight-year-old boy made his way up to the driver and extended his cartisia to have it punched. "I already punched your card," said the driver. "No, you didn't," protested the boy softly.

It was hot. The driver had lost his patience a few stops earlier and was in no mood for an argument. "Get inside," he ordered. "You are blocking the people behind you." The little boy looked up to the stern-faced driver and said softly, "Am lo yachol, zeh geneivah. (I can't. It's stealing.)"

**Bus Driver Commands**

**Boy to Move Away**

"I told you, I punched your card," repeated the driver. "Get inside." The little boy walked towards the middle of the bus, downcast. The bus began moving, and after a few hundred feet the driver stopped the bus. He had looked into his rearview mirror and noticed that the young boy was leaning against a pole in the back, crying.

The driver turned to the boy and called him up front. "What's the matter, young man?" he asked. "Why are you crying?" The little boy came forward, looked up at the driver, and repeated softly, "Ani lo yachol, zeh geneivah. (I can't. That's stealing.)" The driver took out his puncher, took the cartisia from the child, punched it, and gave it back.

He then patted the boy on the forehead and said with amazement and Jewish pride, "Zeh yafeh. (That's beautiful.)" (p.124 Along the Maggid’s Journey, Rav Paysach Krohn)

Through dealing honestly in business we will make Jews look good.  And more importantly, we will make our Father in Heaven - Hashem look good.

*Reprinted from this week’s email of Good Shabbos Everyone.*

**Story #729**

**The Dreams of**

**The Angel’s Wife**

**From the desk of Yerachmiel Tilles**

[editor@ascentofsafed.com](http://webmailb.juno.com/webmail/new/21?folder=Inbox&msgNum=0000beW0:001Ekwok00002zJh&count=1321499711&randid=522801727&attachId=0&isUnDisplayableMail=yes&blockImages=0&randid=522801727)

In 1764, Rabbi Avraham the Malach (the Angel), the pure, holy son of Rabbi Dov-Ber of Mezritch (the successor to the Baal Shem Tov as the leader of the Chassidic movement), became a widower. His father, the Maggid, sought a second partner for him as soon as possible.

The idea was suggested of a match with the daughter of the important sage, Rabbi Meshulam Feivish HaLevi Horowitz, the author of Mishnas Hakhamim. The Maggid sent two respected messengers to Kremenitz to try to arrange the shiduch. The two men traveled there in a large, beautiful carriage and wore expensive holy mission.

**Mother Isn’t Ready for Her**

**Daughter to Get Married**

When they arrived at the Rabbi's house they were told that he was engaged in Torah study in the nearby Study Hall. They began to negotiate with his wife, who had invited them in and also sent word to her husband. She, however, refused to take them seriously, saying, "Not only don't I know your Rebbe, but I've never even heard his name. Also, my daughter Gittel is only twelve years old and I'm not ready for her to be married."

But the two men were not put off so easily and they kept describing the holiness of their Rebbe and his only son. Finally, she warmed to the idea and said, "I have a brilliant husband, thank G-d. Let him decide what is best for our daughter."

**The Father Agrees to the Shidduch**

When R' Meshulam Feivish returned from the Bais Midrash soon after, he agreed to the shiduch and the writing of the tenaim (marriage agreement) right there and then. When they reached the paragraph relating to the date of the wedding, the messengers said that it was necessary for the marriage to take place right away, and so the bride should travel back to Mezritch with them.

But R' Feivish and his wife resisted. "Our Sages ruled that one should allow a girl twelve months after her betrothal. Besides, we never planned for our daughter to be married so soon and she has no dowry or a bridal gown, or any other appropriate clothes and jewelry."

The messengers responded, "We'll provide for all her needs but the Rebbe insists it is absolutely impossible to postpone the date of the wedding. She must come with us immediately."

**Clearly the Will of G-d**

Rabbi Feivel said that he and his wife would have to discuss this with each other in private. After only a short time they returned and announced, "As it seems clear that this has come from G-d, we accept."

They decided that since R' Feivish was unable to travel at that particular moment, the bride should journey to Mezritch in the company of her mother. The very next day, the Rebbetzin and her daughter with the two men left for Mezritch.

During the trip, the mother and daughter began to wonder how they had allowed themselves to be talked into the wedding.

**Greeted By All the**

**People of the Town**

But then, when they arrived at the outskirts of Mezritch, the carriage was greeted by all of the men and children of the town. The crowd was so large that the carriage could hardly move. And when the carriage finally reached the town, all the women came out to greet them. It was a joyous moment and the mother and daughter felt themselves become completely at peace about the intended marriage.

Next the carriage stopped in front of the Maggid's house and the Maggid and his son Avraham came out to welcome them. When Gittel saw her bridegroom she modestly showed no reaction, but she was thrilled inside. The bride and her mother stayed at the local inn while the whole town got involved in preparing for the wedding. The marriage took place soon after that. The celebrations lasted for seven joyous days, filled with endless discussions of Torah.

From this marriage of the Malach, the son of the Maggid, and Gittel, the daughter of R' Meshulam Feivish, were born two sons, Sholom Shachna and Yisrael Chaim. [Rabbi Sholom Shachna had a son, named Yisrael after the Baal Shem Tov, who became one of the most highly regarded Chasidic rebbes of all time, the holy Rhizhiner.

During the first year of their marriage, the new wife of the Malach had a dream. In it she entered a large chamber where she realized it was the Divine Tribunal sitting in session. They ruled to take her husband away from her. She shed hot tears before them and presented many arguments in her attempt to dissuade them. She had the same dream the following night too, but again told no one.

**Revealed that Her**

**Arguments Were Accepted**

On the third night the dream came again, but this time they told her that they had accepted her arguments and that they would extend her husband's life another twelve years. She told this to her father-in-law, the Maggid, the next morning, and he told her that she had done very well, he blessed her exceedingly because through her pleadings she had extended the life of his son another twelve years. And so it happened exactly.

Several years later, after the Maggid had already passed away in 1772, he appeared in a dream to his daughter-in-law Gittel one Shabbat night. He told her that her husband should move into her room, or at least she should move his books from his study into her room. In the morning she came to inform her husband of this. He did not consider it significant, however, because his father had not told him but only her. The very next night, a fire broke out in R. Avraham’s study, and by the time it was extinguished, all of his books were burned and lost.

**Husband Accepts Position**

**Of Rabbi in Hvastov**

In the summer of 1776, several years after the death of the Maggid, Rabbi Avrohom the Malach traveled to the city of Hvastov where he accepted the position of Rabbi of the city. The elders of Hvastov sent a messenger and several wagons to inform Rebbetzin Gittel of her husband's new position and to help her pack and move in time for the High Holy Days.

That night, when the messenger arrived at her home, she had a dream in which her father-in-law, the Maggid, came to her and told her not to travel in these wagons to Hvastov. In the morning she accordingly refused to travel. This upset two of her husband’s closest associates, the tzadikim, Rabbi Zushya of Anipoli and Rabbi Yehuda Leib HaKohen of Puma, because they felt strongly that she should travel with the messenger to join the Malach. Nevertheless, she remained adamant in her refusal.

About two weeks later, R' Avrohom the Malach fell ill and died. A messenger was dispatched to Anapoli to inform her of his death. The two tzadikim, however, did not want her to know as yet, and they hid the news from her. They did, however, tell her son, R' Sholom Shachna, who was only a small child of about eight at the time, so that he could say Kaddish for his father.

His mother soon noticed something unusual in her son's behavior, in that he was getting up very early in order to go to synagogue, something he hardly ever did before. One morning she decided to follow him and stood outside the wall of the synagogue.

**Discovers the Truth from Her**

**Son’s Recital of Kaddish**

From there she thought she heard him saying the mourner's Kaddish, but she was not sure. After the prayers were concluded, she asked her son why he was saying Kaddish and why he had hidden from her. He had to answer her, so now she knew the truth.

After her seven days of sitting shivah were over, she traveled to the town of Hvastov to take possession of her husband's effects. She was received there with great honor. They prepared a special meal for her at the inn where she was lodging, and many townspeople came out of respect and to console her. But she was inconsolable.

**Comforted By Her Dream**

At the third meal of that Shabbat, nearly every inhabitant of the town was present. As they sang the customary Shabbat zemirot songs, Rebbetzin Gittel, still filled with sorrow and sadness, sat on a comfortable couch next to the innkeeper's wife. Suddenly, and without transition, she was dreaming! She found herself in a great palace. The doors opened, and her husband, R' Avrohom the Malach, came out. His face was shining and he seemed to be very happy. Behind him trailed a number of wondrous-looking venerable old men. They sat around a long table. He said to them, "Here is my wife, may her days be long.

"During my lifetime I was quite ascetic, as you know, and so I denied my wife many things that she was really entitled to. I want to beg her forgiveness before you."Gittel immediately interjected, "You are forgiven wholeheartedly."

Rabbi Avraham continued, "The Torah allows that she remarry, especially since she is a woman of only twenty-four, and I can not prevent her from doing so. But if she agrees not to marry anyone else, I pledge to fulfill all her needs, and each of our children will be assured of a good life."

When the Rebbetzin awoke from the dream, she felt consoled by her husband's words. Everyone noticed that her face lost its sad expression. Soon after Rebbetzin Gittel returned to her home in Annipoli. She was able to maintain herself with honor and respect, and she lacked nothing. With help from the tzadik Rabbi Shlomo of Karlin, her two sons received fine educations and desirable marriage proposals.

**A Suggested Proposal of Marriage**

On occasions when she needed advice, the Maggid would never fail to appear to her and advise her as to what course of action she should take. More years went by. The wife of Rabbi Menachem-Nochum of Chernobyl passed away. Rabbi Nochum expressed his wish to remarry with the Malach's widow, Rebbetzin Gittel.

He spoke with her son Rabbi Sholom Shachna, who was also his grandson-in-law, who agreed it could be a good idea because his mother was still young. So R. Nachum sent R' Sholom Shachna to speak to his mother. His first night on his way, R' Sholom Shachna had a dream. A great palace was standing before him, and his father, R' Avrahom the Malach, appeared at the door of the palace with his two hands stretched to the roof, crying out in a loud voice: "Who is he who dares to enter into my chamber?"

**Son Refuses to Make the Suggestion**

Immediately Rabbi Sholom Shachna awoke and understood the meaning of the dream. He returned to his house and refused to complete the trip. In any case, Rebbetzin Gittel was not interested in remarrying at that time. At a certain point she decided to move to the Holy Land. There she declined to reveal her relationship with the Maggid and his descendants, which could have benefitted her, and instead supported herself on her earnings as a laundress. She lived the rest of her life there and is buried in the Old Cemetery of Tiberias.

**Sources:** Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from the renditions in "The House of Rizhin" by Rabbi Menachem Brayer (Mesorah) and on //baalshemtov.com by Tzvi Meir Cohn.

**Connection:** Weekly Torah (3) - The passing of Sarah, the shiduch negotiations for the match between Yitzchak and Rivka, and the remarriage of the patriarch Avraham.

**Biographical notes:** Rabbi Dov Ber (c.1700-19 Kislev 1772), the son of Avraham and Chava, known as the Maggid of Mezritch, succeeded his master, the Baal Shem Tov, as the head of the Chasidic movement. Most of the leading chasidic dynasties stem from his disciples and his descendents. The classic anthologies of his teachings are Likutei Amarim and Torah Ohr (combined by Kehas Publishing as Maggid Devorav l'Yaakov), and Ohr HaEmmes.

Rabbi Avraham the Malach ("the Angel") (1739- 12 Tishrei 1776). Son of Rabbi Dov Ber (the Maggid) of Mezritch. While still a young man he committed to an ascetic and secluded lifestyle. Upon his father's passing in 1772 he declined to assume leadership of the chassidic movement, even though he was held in high esteem by all of hisfather’s main disciples. He wrote a work entitled Chesed L’ Avraham.

Rabbi Shalom Shachna (Friedmann) of Probisht (1766-1803) was the son of R. Avraham the Malach and grandson of Rabbi Dov Ber (the Maggid) of Mezritch. His wife was the granddaughter of Rebbe Nachum of Chernobyl. One of their sons was the famed Chasidic leader, Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin.

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**Israel Forever**

**Negotiations Then and Now**

**By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach**

The government of Israel is constantly being maligned by the Arabs and their sympathizers as stubbornly refusing to negotiate with the Palestinian Authority for a settlement to end the conflict which has become the most discussed issue in world affairs.

The truth, of course, is that the Palestinians are willing to negotiate only if all their outrageous demands are met. They may make a show of desiring a peaceful settlement but what they really want is to have the entire land.

In the negotiations between the Patriarch Avraham and Ephron, which is recorded in this week’s Torah portion, the Hittite prince starts off with a generous offer to give Avraham a burial plot for Sarah free of charge. But when Avraham insists on paying him, he is charged an exorbitant price, indicating that the original offer was nothing more than a show by a greedy landowner.

True negotiations today can only succeed if the other side can make peace with the fact that Israel is the homeland of the Jewish People forever.

*Reprinted from this week’s email of OHRNET, the Ohr Somayach Torah Magazine of the Internet.*

**The Human Side of the Story**

**“Give Me Back My Son!”**

**By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach**

This outcry from Leah Aks came as she saw a woman approaching her on the deck of the ship “Carpathian” carrying an infant. Both of these women were among the 750 survivors of the “Titanic” shipwreck in April 1912, which claimed the lives of 1,500 people.

They had been picked up from lifeboats to which women and children had

been given first access. One male passenger on that ill-fated ship had become so

incensed by the crew refusing him entry to the lifeboats that he seized Leah’s baby and threw it overboard, yelling “Women and children first, eh?”

A despondent Leah had to be forced into a lifeboat when her turn came. She had virtually given up on ever seeing her Efraim Fishel again and now that she finally saw him she encountered resistance from the woman holding him and insisting that it was her child.

The commotion arising from their argument brought the captain of the ship aboard. He summoned them to his quarters and listened to the impassioned stories of two women who had been separated from their babies.

Then came an inspiration to Leah. “I can prove that I’m right,” she cried. “Since I’m Jewish, if the baby is mine it would be circumcised.”

**As Heard from Rabbi Avigdor Miller, Zt”l**

**The Greatness of Sarah**

**Adapted by Sam Gindi**

 “*And Sarah died*” (Bereishit 23:2)

This was the destruction of the first and greatest Bet Hamikdash.  “The wise woman builds her house” (Mishle 14:1), and “the heart of her husband safely trusted in her” (ibid. 31:2), “she stretched out her hand to the poor” (ibid. 31:20), “she opened her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of (G-d’s) kindness was on her tongue” (ibid. 31:26); “she looked well to the ways of her household” (ibid. 31:27); “her husband (arose) and praised her” (ibid. 31:28); “many daughters have done valiantly, but you excelled them all” (ibid. 31:29).

**A Greater Loss than Even the**

**Destruction of our Holy Sanctuaries**

Such a house never reappeared. Abraham continued in all his personal excellence, but with the passing of Sarah there came an end to the unsurpassed achievement of the first and greatest house of Israel. The destruction of the Mishkan of Shiloh was a sad day for our nation, and we forever mourn the loss of the first and second Sanctuaries of Jerusalem.

But the end of Sarah’s house was an event of far greater import. The era that blessed the world with the combined idealism of Abraham and Sarah was never repeated. Although their tent serves forever as a model, yet it was in itself an eternal achievement. Rabbi Yochanan declared:  “G-d shall restore the habitations of the righteous” (Berachot 58B).

**The Holy Tent of Sarah will Be Restored**

Whatever is inscribed in the Torah is forever. Although Hashem wishes that men continue to make every effort to uphold and to disseminate His ways in the land of the living, yet the achievements of the righteous live on forever. Just as the holy tent of Sarah lives on in our Torah, so does it continue to exist in an indestructible manner until Hashem shall restore it to a more glorious physical existence.

This is one of the purposes of inscribing these matters in the Torah, to point out that they are permanent. We must note that also Sarah is indicated as a model for those that pursue righteousness and seek Hashem.

*Quoted from “The Beginning” by Rabbi Avigdor Miller, Zt”l. Reprinted from this week’s email of “As Heard from Rabbi Avigdor Miller, Zt”l.”*

**The Pure Reason for Belittling the Good Deeds of Their Colleague**

**By Rabbi Reuven Semah**

“*And Abraham came to eulogize Sarah and to bewail her*.” (Beresheet 23:2)

The perashah begins with a sorrowful event, the passing of our matriarch Sarah. The Midrash comments that when the Torah says that “Abraham came,” it means he came from the mountain of Moriah after the test of the sacrifice of Yitzhak. Her passing occurred when she heard that Yitzhak was almost slaughtered.

When the pasuk says “Abraham came,” it doesn’t only mean that he physically came from there, but it also is a hint of the subject of the eulogy Abraham gave. He came, meaning, his approach to the eulogy was that her greatness was that she brought up a son who happily went to be potentially slaughtered for a sacrifice to Hashem. This was a great accomplishment on the part of Sarah. Upon reaching this great level of accomplishment, she attained her goal in life and therefore left this world.

**An Explanation of the Hafess Hayim**

The Hafess Hayim brings us an amazing story on this subject. It is stated in the Talmud Yerushalmi (Peah 1:1) that Rabbi Tarfon became very ill. When the great Rabbis came to visit, his mother cried to them that they must pray for him. She began describing to them the amazing extent he went to observe the misvah of honoring her, his mother.

Once her shoe strap broke while she was walking outside. He bent down and made her walk on his hands in order that her feet wouldn’t get dirty. Also, one time the small ladder she used to climb onto her bed broke, so he bent down so she could climb on him to get onto the bed! The Rabbis responded that if this is all he did he didn’t reach even halfway what the Torah requires of him!

Their comment was very strange; after all, at this time it would seem right to praise Rabbi Tarfon’s great level in order to build up his great merit to come forth and save his life. Instead they belittled his level and said it was not so great?

The answer is that every person comes to this world to attain a certain goal in spirituality. Once the person has success and reaches those goals, he goes up to heaven to receive his rewards in the Next World.

At the moment the Rabbis heard his amazing performance in honoring his mother, they were afraid that that was the reason why he was about to leave the world and he would not become healed from his illness.

Therefore they belittled his deeds and were making a statement that he needs to get well in order to continue to attain higher levels of honoring his mother which will take many years! Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

*Reprinted from this week’s email of the Jersey Shore Torah Bulletin*

**Why the Rush for**

**The Jewish Funeral?**

**By Aron Moss**

**Question:**

What is the reason behind the Jewish custom of burying a person almost immediately after he or she passes away? Other religions wait a few days, or sometimes weeks, before laying their dead to rest, yet we seem in a hurry to get them buried, often within 24 hours of death. What is the rush?

**Answer:**

A [speedy burial](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/281551/jewish/Timing-the-Funeral-Service.htm) has benefits for the living and for the dead, while delaying a funeral unnecessarily is no good for either.

Between death and burial, the soul of the departed is in limbo between two worlds, neither fully on earth nor ready to be admitted into heaven. The soul no longer inhabits the body after death, but until the body is laid to rest, the soul cannot fully leave the body either. So it hovers around the body, in a state of disorientation at its sudden expulsion from the body that was its home for a lifetime.

**The Importance of a Quick Burial**

Once the body returns to the dust from whence it came, the soul can return to the heaven from whence it came. And so, only after the burial does the soul begin its climb to higher realms. The soul’s onward journey can’t begin until the body is interred. We do not want to delay this process, so we hasten the funeral to the earliest opportunity.

This is not just for the good of the departed soul. It is also for the benefit of the mourners.

Just as the soul is in a state of confusion after death, the bereaved family goes through a stage of uncertainty immediately after the death, as they grapple to absorb what has happened. For many who experience loss, it seems unreal. They feel that they are dreaming, and the person will soon walk through the door as if nothing happened.

**The Mourners Can Begin their**

**Journey Towards Consolation**

But reality hits at the funeral. That painful sound of [dirt hitting the coffin](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/266285/jewish/Who-Should-Fill-in-the-Grave.htm) evokes the raw pain of bereavement like nothing else can. It hurts, but it is necessary. Just as the soul cannot start moving upwards before burial, so too the mourners cannot start their long journey from grief to consolation until the grave is filled in.

This pain cannot be avoided. Only after we have allowed ourselves to grieve can we allow ourselves to heal. Only when the finality of the body’s death is accepted can the eternality of the soul be experienced. The body returns to dust, the soul returns to G‑d.

*Reprinted from this week’s email of Chabad.Org Magazine.*

**What Was So Special**

**About Ephron’s Cave?**

**By Rabbi Menachem Posner**

**Question:**

So Sarah dies, Abraham needs to buy a burial plot for her, and he asks for a cave in a field belonging to Ephron the Hittite. What did Abraham know about that cave that he was willing to pay 400 shekels for it?

***Answer:***

Allow me to share some history as it is recorded in the mystical texts.

Rabbi Rechumai taught that after Adam was banished from the Garden of Eden, G‑d Himself hewed out of rock a place near the entrance to the Garden where he would bury Adam, the patriarchs and the matriarchs.

(Rabbi Kisma added that when Eve died and Adam buried her there, he smelled the tantalizingly familiar aroma of the Garden and wanted to burrow further, but a voice rang out telling him to stop. When Adam died, he was buried there as well.)

**Eventually the Location was Forgotten**

Eventually the location was forgotten, and not a soul knew about it. Until Abraham, who entered the cave, saw it, sniffed the scent of Eden, and heard a voice saying, “Adam is buried here, and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob should be prepared for this place as well.” He saw a candle burning there, and left.

From then on, he had his heart set on that special burial plot. Many others attempted to be buried there, but the ministering angels guarded the place faithfully. The would-be buriers would see the fire burning and were unable to enter—until Abraham entered and purchased it.

How did Abraham come across the cave in the first place?

Rabbi Elazar revealed that Abraham first found this special place on the day that the angels came to tell him that Sarah would give birth to Isaac. When the three men (angels) visited Abraham, he chased after a calf to slaughter and feed his guests (see Genesis 18:7). The calf ran into the cave, and Abraham followed in pursuit. After that, he would go every day to that field from whence the heavenly aromas came. There he would pray to G‑d, and there G‑d would speak to him.

Now, the nature of the cave was such that only its true owner was able to see its special qualities. Where Abraham saw light, Ephron saw darkness.

Nevertheless, Abraham did not purchase the place until Sarah passed away, so as not to arouse people’s interest in the place. Only when he needed to bury his beloved wife did he buy Ephron’s field and its wondrous cave.

*Reprinted from this week’s email of Chabad.Org Magazine.*

**Do We Really Want or Appreciate G-d’s Help?**

The story is told of a man who is on the verge of drowning in the middle of the ocean. He prays, "G-d, I put my trust in You, save me."

Sooner than later a speed boat comes along and the crew throws the man a life-preserver. "That's O.K.," he shouts to them, "G-d will save me."

Once again the man prays to G-d to save him. Within a few moments, a raft floats by. But the man ignores it until it is beyond reach.

**Also Rejects the Help 0f the Helicopter Pilot**

For a third time the man prays, "Master of the World, I await Your deliverance." Just then he hears a helicopter overhead and watches as a line is let down for him. Emphatically, the man shakes his head "No." He is waiting for G-d to save him.

The man waits and waits and waits for G-d, Himself, to save him. But He doesn't, and so the man drowns.

You can well imagine that at the first opportunity the man asks G-d why He didn't save him. "Oh, but I tried to," G-d answers. "You just didn't let Me."

What a schlemiel, we say about the star of this fictitious story. It was so obvious that G-d was trying to save him. Did he really expect G-d, Himself, to save him? A real blockhead he is!

But wait a minute, how do we react when similar, though less dramatic things really do happen around us and in our own lives?

**Do We Attribute Events to**

**Chance, Coincidence or Luck?**

How many times do we attribute events to chance, coincidence, luck? How many miracles take place unnoticed? Do we see G-d's saving hand in the near-accident that could well have been disastrous? Do we acknowledge that it is because of G-d's blessings that our next-door-neighbor, who really isn't all that bright or motivated, landed an excellent job, even in today's economy? Do we admit that Divine Providence is a big factor in why we're doing what we're doing when we're doing it?

**We Get G-dly Messengers Every Day**

Each and every day G-d sends us--albeit through messengers--rafts, life-preservers, and ropes. Sometimes we use them without even acknowledging their source. Sometimes we don't use them, all the while griping and grumbling that G-d has forgotten about us or doesn't care about us or doesn't hear our requests.

Once in a long while something takes place which can only be defined as a miracle. When that happens, we uncomfortably thank G-d. Uncomfortably because we're so unused to acknowledging the Divine hand. It makes us uneasy.

But we needn't wait for a miracle, nor persistently expect G-d Himself to get us out of the fine mess we've gotten into. We can keep ourselves from drowning by opening our eyes, by re-focusing ourselves and fine-tuning our vision so that G-d doesn't have to tell us, "Oh, but I tried to save you, you just didn't let Me!"

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**Inspiring Our Children**

**To Emulate Hashem**

**By Savta Kops**

What should our aspirations be with a newly born cuddled in our arms?

Firstly to thank our Al-mighty for the great miracle with silent psalms.

Then our focus to influence from birth, a love of our Creator Above

Assisting our children to study the Torah, enlightening their paths with love.

Every parent should strive to guide their child to observe and to know

That Hashem created this beautiful world for them, and as they grow

To understand that the world is lead with kindliness and to thank Him

Throughout one’s life to appreciate and understand He controls every limb.

We should be grateful to our Torah scholars who aim to teach us what’s right

By volunteering their knowledge, effort and time, every day and night.

To assist our children to understand once again, our generation’s past, today

To create a better nation by obeying our Creator’s plan as we pray.

We see our children’s dedicated Rabbeim teach and remain firm

To educate every student regardless of his ability to learn.

One goal and mission is to inspire the hearts and minds of the young

As they climb the ladder of success content, rung by rung.

We pray that our children will grow to be sensitive and to understand others

By training them to perceive and live with love in a world as brothers.

May we as parents succeed from our Torah learning to instill in them

The love and kindliness of our heritage, and to remember and emulate Hashem.

**It Once Happened**

**The Gift of Successfully Blessing People**

Once, when Reb Elimelech of Lyzhansk was on his way to immerse in the mikva he heard a heavenly voice announce that the Rav of Nikolsburg, Reb Shmelke was having terrible problems with those who were bitterly opposed to his spiritual path. The heavenly voice promised great rewards in the Next World for the one who would extricate Reb Shmelke.

Reb Elimelech turned to his companion and asked, "Did you hear anything?" But his companion replied that he had heard nothing at all. From that, Reb Elimelech deduced that it was up to him to travel to Nikolsburg and offer his help. As soon as he arrived he asked Reb Shmelke's permission to address his congregation with a hearty sermon that would bring them to repentence. "My friend, I certainly have no objection. But, any criticism will fall on deaf ears."

**Delivering a Speech with Seemingly Brilliant Scholarship**

When it was announced that a visiting preacher would address the congregation, the synagogue filled to capacity. Reb Elimelech used his brilliant scholarship to deliver a speech using the most involved and seemingly erudite arguments to prove that many of the prohibitions mentioned in the Torah were actually permissible.

The congregants were very impressed with his great learning and skillful arguments. So, when they heard that he would speak the following day, they flocked to hear him. But this time he proved to them, now with genuine evidence, that all the precepts which he had so skillfully disproved the previous day were actually true. In fact, he stressed that any deviation from them went completely against the teaching of the Sages.

**Moved the People to Repent**

His words were received in the manner intended, as "words from the heart enter the heart," and the people were moved to repentence. When they realized that the words of their own rabbi had been echoed by this guest preacher, they went as a group to beg Reb Shmelke's forgiveness.

Reb Elimelech left Nikolsburg and continued on his way. Soon after he left the town, he again heard a heavenly voice, this time proclaiming: "Reb Elimelech, because you helped Reb Shmelke, whomever you bless within the next twenty-four hours will have the blessing realized."

Reb Elimelech's initial happiness over this marvelous gift gave way to bitter disappointment, when after many hours of walking he met not one person he could bless. He cried out his complaint to G-d: "Why did you give me this gift, when you haven't sent me anyone that I can bless?"

**Just Happy for the Chance to Bless Another Person**

as he finished his plaint he saw a lone woman walking toward him. He ran up to her and began to heap blessing on the startled woman. Seeing her fright, he reassured her that he meant no harm. He questioned her gently, and she told him about her life situation and the difficulties she and her husband were having with their livelihood. He finished blessing her, and they parted ways, each continuing on his own journey.

From that day on the woman and her husband experienced no more hardships and prospered in their endeavors. Their business grew more and more successful, until they had a comfortable life. They generously shared their blessings with those less fortunate and they were always sure that the stranger who had blessed them was none other than Elijah the Prophet.

**Travelling to Collect**

**Money to Redeem Captives**

Years later Reb Elimelech and his brother Reb Zusha were travelling to collect money for the mitzva of redeeming captives. They heard that in a certain city there was a very generous merchant who dispensed a great deal of charity.

When they arrived at his residence, they were ushered into his parlor where he was sitting with his wife. No sooner had they seated themselves, than the wife swooned to the floor. When she regained consciousness, she said to her husband, "That is Elijah the Prophet who blessed us, and I'm sure that he has come to remove the blessing."

**It is G-d Who Makes Blessings Successful**

Reb Elimelech had heard her comment, and he replied, "I am not Elijah, but just a simple Jew, and I am not here to take any blessings from you. Through G-d's will my blessings were brought to fruition."

The merchant turned to Reb Elimelech and asked him how much money he needed to redeem the imprisoned Jews. Hearing the huge sum of five hundred gold rubles, he went to his room and brought out the entire sum and handed it to the Reb Elimelech.

But Reb Elimelech was not willing to accept it; he preferred to give other Jews the opportunity of joining in that great mitzva. He accepted a large sum of money, bid a warm farewell to the couple, and continued on his travels.

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