**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas tazria-metzorah 5775**

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**L’Maaseh… A Tale to Remember**

**A Miracle with Gloves**

**By Rabbi Binyamin Pruzansky**

Rabbi Binyamin Pruzansky writes the following remarkable story, which took place in Israel with two bachurim learning in yeshivah. Duvi had a friend, Shlomo, who received a phone call from his wealthy uncle in America. The uncle told him that there was an orphanage in Chaderah which was in need of financial assistance. The orphanage had invited the uncle to take a tour of its facility, so he could consider offering his help.

The uncle told the orphanage that he would send his nephew who was in Israel at the time, and the nephew would tell him his impressions. Shlomo invited Duvi to join him, and they arranged that they would meet at the central bus station for the 2:00 bus to Chaderah.

Duvi wanted to take care of a couple of errands first, so he headed out early, and went first to the barber to take a haircut. He walked into the barber shop, took off his jacket and gloves, and sat down for a haircut. Fifteen minutes later, when the barber had finished, Duvi rushed out and went to the Machaneh Yehudah market to buy some candy for the children of the orphanage. He bought some chocolates and put them into his jacket pocket, when he realized that he did not have his gloves with him anymore, he had left them at the barber shop

It was a cold day, but he didn’t have the time to return to the barber shop and get his gloves. Instead he went to catch his bus, and two hours later he and Shlomo reached Chaderah. When they got off the bus, they saw a Yemenite man selling his wares out of a cardboard box, and Duvi noticed he was selling a very interesting pair of elbow-length gloves. They were peculiar, but Duvi was desperate for gloves, and he did not want to wait until he returned to Yerushalayim, so he purchased the gloves.

When they arrived at the orphanage, they were met with a very warm greeting, and began touring the facility. At one point in the tour, their guide escorted them to the director's office, and as they waited outside, a 10-year-old boy excitedly ran from the room with a huge smile on his face, announcing that he had received a 100 on his Chumash test.

Duvi went over to the boy to congratulate him, and asked if he could see his test. The boy happily agreed, and Duvi looked over the test paper and was very impressed, and further complimented the child. He then glanced at the name at the top of the paper, and noticed that the boy's name was Yitzchak Alfasi, which was the same name as the Rif, one of the most famous and influential Sephardic Sages, whose commentary is found at the back of every Gemara.

Duvi asked the boy, “Did you know you have the same name as the great Rif?” The boy replied, “Sure, he's my great-great-great-great grandfather. That's why my father named me Yitzchak.”

Duvi couldn't believe it. If this child was a descendant of the Rif, he figured that he must have great potential. Duvi then turned to meet with the director, who had come to join them, and he asked the director how much Torah was taught at the orphanage.

The director told him that they did not have sufficient funding for serious Torah instruction, and all they were able to afford was to bring a Rabbi in once a week to learn Chumash with the boys. Duvi then turned to the boy and asked him, “What would it take for you to agree to learn Torah every day, if I could find a Rebbi to come learn with you?”

The boy said, “Well, I really like the gloves you are wearing. If you give them to me, I’ll learn Torah every day.”

Duvi happily took off his elbow-length gloves and gave them to the boy. The boy was thrilled. He put them on, and they were so long they reached his shoulders. Duvi and Shlomo left the orphanage with a very good feeling about their visit, and especially their encounter with this promising young boy.

When they returned to Yerushalayim, Duvi went directly to the barber shop to see if his gloves were still there. He arrived just as the barber was closing his shop. He asked the barber if he had seen his gloves, and the barber went over to a drawer, pulled them out, and gave them to Duvi.

The barber proudly announced, “Everyone will know that Moshe Alfasi is an honest man!”

Duvi looked at him with surprise and said, “Your name is Alfasi? Do you happen to have a son?”

The barber said, “I prefer not to talk about it.”

Duvi persisted, “Please tell me.”

The barber sadly told of how he had once been married, but his wife had an illness, and mistreated their son. The courts stepped in and took their son away from them, and placed him in an orphanage.

Even after the couple had divorced, the courts refused to tell Moshe where his son was. He told Duvi, “I haven't seen him in five years.”

Duvie softly asked, “Is his name Yitzchak?”

Surprised, the barber said, “Yes. How did you know that?”

Duvi said, “I just saw him today! He’s in an orphanage in Chaderah. He looks terrific, and he’s doing great! He showed me that he just got a 100 on a Chumash test, and he agreed that he would learn Torah every day!”

The barber was overjoyed at this news. He ended up moving to Chaderah to be with his son, and became very involved in his son’s life. Hashem brought the boy and his father together through an extraordinary sequence of seemingly insignificant, and unrelated events.

Nothing in life is random. Everything that happens has a purpose, and has been carefully orchestrated by Hashem!

*Reprinted from Parshas Shemini 5775 edition of “Torah U’Tefilah: A Collection of Inspiring Insights” compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.*

**Rabbi Shimon Duran (1361-1444) and His Commentary to Pirqe Abot**

**By Rabbi Bitton**

Rabbi Shimon ben Tsemah Duran (1361-1444), also known as the "RASHBETS" was born in Majorca, Spain.  In his youth he studied with the famous Rabbi Efraim Vidal,  the head of the Yeshiba of Majorca.  Besides his profound studies in Tora, and following the classic educational method of  Spanish Jews, he acquired a thorough knowledge of mathematics, astronomy, philosophy and particularly medicine. In Majorca, Rabbi Duran practiced as a physician and a surgeon in the city of Palma.

The Jewish community of Majorca was prosperous, and before the massacres of 1391 the Jewish community there consisted of more than 1,000 families. In 1391 the anti-Jewish riots sweeping Spain also reached Majorca. In the city of Palma the riots broke out on July 10.  The mob broke down the gates of the  Jewish quarter (known in Spanish as the "Call" =Qahal)  and massacred scores of Jews, pillaging, and stealing their possessions.

Many Jews were forced to accept baptism in order to save their lives. Other Jews were tortured to death for not accepting baptism, among them Rabbi Duran's old teacher, Rabbi Vidal. Those who "converted" were subjects to the scrutiny of the Inquisition who persecuted them. If a "converso" was found practicing Judaism ("judaizando") he will be burned alive.

The descendants of Majorcan conversos kept Judaism in secret for centuries. Until the close of the 15th century, 346 trials of the Inquisition were held in Majorca and 257 "conversos" (popularly known as "marranos") were condemn to death by fire. By 1771 the Inquisition had sent a total of 594 "conversos" to the stake. The Majorcan "conversos" are known by a specific name "chuetas" (see  [**here**](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=9363259&msgid=323640&act=MGCI&c=777927&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fr20.rs6.net%2Ftn.jsp%3Ff%3D001aZvHJkE4WAtn0SvKOLWbOQ5cGknLi7jhPoh6sByWXfaep-GfKXbjGUXIyDpbgO2nsKGY-A8Qy9N2OFsXFnSKP2OP0rot6TRoHPmT0SiL1PBqVuR3aLzgzjw9jgKhe40pUh-Yw4xFDezAiZizKgJztz0nH2u2UeNAa_Motyxxunm-Wkccaxdw90xHbW3U6RNtuoHhBBiyxeTXeUVX5K3bhA%3D%3D%26c%3DSeT8Hs87F5HQzbyQMEqi3oeRXtfWtQ3qmroeXEtlLFOSlVX0DsQqdw%3D%3D%26ch%3DSUHe0wUzJsIQpcezPOkVjOBJapBd9ukrqAdTs_fwe3alP7a-CoUrjA%3D%3D)).

Back to Rabbi Duran, in September 1391 he escaped to Algiers, in North Africa. In Algiers Rabbi Shimon was unable to earn his livelihood from his medical profession, since the native population resorted to "healers" rather than to professional doctors.

Reluctantly, he was forced to accept a salaried office of rabbi.  Rabbi Shimon Duran joined the Bet Din of the famous rabbi Isaac bar Sheshet, (RIBASH). These two Rabbis and later on Rabbi Duran's son, Rabbi Shimon Duran (RASHBASH) established  the foundation for the "Sephardic" customs and traditions of Algerian and most North African Jews.

After the death of Rabbi Isaac bar Sheshat (1408) Rabbi Duran was appointed as the Rabbi of Algiers. His Halakhic decisions were a guide to later posqim who frequently quote them, including rabbi Yosef caro in the Bet Yosef/Shulhan 'arukh.

Reprinted from the April 15, 2015 email of Shehebar Sephardic Center.

**Short Story of the Week**

**Who is Truly to Blame?**



The Chafetz Chaim was once traveling through a town and saw a commotion in the street. Upon closer inspection, he saw that a money forger was caught and being sent to Siberia. As he was set to leave, he had one request: to speak to the Rabbi of the town.

The Rabbi arrived only to hear the thief burst out: "You knew what I was doing, but you never tried to stop me or admonish my actions! My tragic fate is all your fault because you didn't tell me anything!"

Witnessing these events unfold, the Chofetz Chaim remarked that when this criminal dies and is forced to give a reckoning in Gehenom, he will continue to blame the Rabbi of the shul for not rebuking him.

*Comment: There are two pertinent lessons here. For the Rabbis, leaders and all those whose words carry weight, should know that that silence in the face of wrongdoing is an approval of sorts. At the same time, each person should find himself an approachable Rebbi (Avos 1:6), life coach, and friend who will serve as an advisor for the many questionable situations a person faces daily.*

*Reprinted from last week’s Torah Parsha email from Mendel Berlin.*

**Pearls of Wisdom – A Word for the Ages**

**A Lesson from**

**The Silversmith**

Rabbi Paysach Krohn related that once a seminary class in England was trying to understand the pasuk in Mishlei (25:4) which refers to Hashem as purifying the waste out of the silver as a metaphor for purifying Klal Yisrael, so the class decided to go on a field trip to visit a silversmith.

They watched as the silversmith held the silver in the hottest part of the fire, and one of the girls asked if he could just leave it there instead of standing and holding onto it.

He answered, “No, it had to be watched meticulously because if it was left in too long, it would lose its structure and get destroyed.”

Another girl asked, “How long should it be left in?” and the silversmith responded, “Until it’s ready”.

She persisted and said, “How do you know when it’s ready to take out?”

He answered, “It’s ready to come out when I see my reflection in the metal, and that means that the process is done.”

His words echoed within the girls as they gained understanding to the words of the pasuk. The girls realized that Hashem sometimes has to put a person through a refining process, and has to “hold him to the fire”. However, Hashem is always watching him meticulously in order to purify him, and not to destroy him.

When is this process done? Only when Hashem sees the reflection of His Image in us. When Hashem sees us acting in His ways, we can be removed from the “fire”. The way we act and behave will demonstrate to Hashem that we have been purified and refined!

*Reprinted from Parshas Shemini 5775 edition of “Torah U’Tefilah: A Collection of Inspiring Insights” compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.*

**Sensitive and Important Information**

**By Robin Meyerson**

*(Editor’s Note:* ***Partners in Torah****, a project of Torah Umesorah is a program that matches frum (Orthodox Jews, both men and women) known as mentors with more assimilated Jews who have a desire to study an hour a week (usually on the telephone) on various Torah subjects (i.e. Chumash, Jewish law, philosophy, etc.) The following letter although addressed to Mentors in the Partners in Torah project should be read by all Jews, including in my opinion subscribers to the Shabbos Stories for the Parsha email. Maybe you know someone like Eric who needs to be made aware of the Jewish prohibition against cremation.)*

**Dear Mentors, עמו"ש**

My name is Robin Meyerson and I became a *Baalas Teshuvah* through Partners in Torah.

One Sunday afternoon, I received a call from Mr. Mermelstein; a Partners in Torah mentor from Brooklyn. He and his partner Eric had studied together for 12 years and enjoyed a close and growth-filled relationship. Sadly, Eric's wife had just emailed to tell him that Eric died suddenly in his sleep.

She further shared that it was Eric's will to be cremated! Mr. Mermelstein loved Eric dearly and could not hold back the tears. Over the years, he and Eric had met a number of times and Eric's wife had joined them too. He knew that her heart was in the right place, but that unless he could come up with a winning argument, she would honor what she believed were Eric's wishes that he be cremated.

He called me and Rabbi Elchonon Zohn from NASCK [National Association of Chevra Kadisha] seeking assistance in this matter after being referred to us by his son, a rabbi in Bucks County, PA, who "just happened" to be giving a class on the importance of burial vs. cremation.

This may come as a surprise to you, but did you know that 50 Jews are cremated every single day! Sadly, members of my own family have chosen cremation despite my efforts to dissuade them. Thankfully I've succeeded in changing the minds of some, but others have been more insistent. Although it's rare in Torah-observant families, it's unfortunately all too common in non-observant families and it's a problem that Rabbi Zohn and I deal with daily.

We discussed with Mr. Mermelstein the most frequently raised objections to Jewish burial and he then crafted these ideas into a personalized email to Eric's wife.

**Burial Is a Waste of Land** - Actually burial uses very little land! If ALL Americans were buried, it would take 10,000 years to use up just 1% of America's land.

**Burial Pollutes the Environment** - False. Environmentalists worldwide actually choose green burial (with no embalming or metal caskets - both in line with Jewish tradition) Cremation is what actually causes pollution by releasing mercury and other toxins into the air.

**Who Will Visit the Gravesite** - this line of reasoning reckons that by keeping the ashes, one can always visit them and pay respects to the departed. The reality, however, is that over the long term, people don't retain ashes. Our homes and our lives aren't designed for storage of ashes and since they have no human DNA and can be thrown away, they usually are although it may take a generation or two. Burial gives closure to family for generations and a place to visit.

**I'm Scared of Decomposing** - Burial respects the cycle of nature. Our bodies return and give back to the Earth from whence they came. Burial represents a calm acceptance of death and an eventual rebirth; a fundamental Jewish belief. Cremating a body means that it will burn for hours and the bones are then ground up and placed in an urn. Cremation is a violent and unnatural end. Furthermore, according to Jewish tradition, it causes great anguish to the soul and hinders its return to G-d. "The dust returns to the earth as it was and the soul returns to G-d who gifted it." (Ecclesiastes)

**Cremation is Less Expensive** -Sometimes, but not always. Once you add the cost of the funeral service and the hidden costs, cremation is often the more expensive option. Furthermore, price aside, important life events are not the time to worry about obtaining the cheapest option. Burial is a decision that has ramifications and one must prioritize other more important considerations. Additionally, pre-planning and seeking guidance from a Chevra Kadisha can make the cost of burial much more affordable.

**Tradition** - For more than 3,000 years, Jews have avoided cremation and chosen burial. In the final act of the Torah, G-d Himself buried Moshe. Burial respects and honors the body that housed the holy soul - the Divine Spark - "*Chelek Elokah Mi'Maal*". Jews go to great length to bury a Jewish soldier's remains even when it entails great hardship and danger. We bury worn out Torah scrolls and other sacred ritual objects.We bury our treasures and we burn our trash. Like the Nazis, throughout history our enemies sought to destroy the Jew through fire and cremation. We ought not follow in their traditions!

Jewish Law - Although Jewish law mandates that we follow the wishes of the deceased in many important matters such as inheritance etc., it forbids us from doing so in regard to cremation. Even if the deceased requested to be cremated, we must proceed with a burial instead.

As mentors for Partners in Torah you are in an excellent position to prevent another Jew from *chas v'chalilah* being cremated; your very own study partner. You are teaching your Partner the laws of*Shabbos, Kashrus*, and *Taharas Mishpachah, Gemara, and Chumash with Rashi*and Talmud. Have you ever considered having a discussion about the importance of being buried?

This discussion, while possibly initially uncomfortable, is an important one to have. You can gently explain that Jewish tradition teaches that we can look forward to life in the World-to-Come. We are not only a body, but primarily a soul housed in a temporary body which must be returned to its origins.

There are many occasions to raise this important topic with your Partner and here are just a few suggestions:

*ParshasVayechi* when Yaakov tells his children his final wishes to be buried

*Parshas ChayeSarah* when Avraham buys the Cave of Mechpelah for the burial of Sarah

Just reflect on the news of the day...the three boys this summer were buried, the seven Sassoon children who were brought to Israel to be buried

The four martyred in HarNof were buried, the French Jews were buried in Israel

Anytime a prominent Jew is buried, or *Chas v'Shalom* cremated, is an opportunity to get into the discussion

Anytime a family member or someone close to you or your Partner passes away

When discussing the Holocaust, *Yom HaShoah* or even on*Tisha B'Av*

Don't be afraid, have the conversation with your study partner. That's what they signed up for.

Everyone needs a form with their burial wishes spelled out before there is a crisis. Aone-page burial form as well as numerous articles, videos, brochures and educational links are available for free at [www.peacefulreturn.org](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001qXhASbgKdKWZE5sP95H12PP2iY1jM8sGPS2cpQAndxWaItMRv3BFRGoLlEk-Q9x_qzeOA2J_GDjxDlNa1Vc4Vhbly7mnT2dJF2ywvE4CUomO1_6anhETaUQrECCcHg3B-B34110lmBOdnLzQw3QFfLYx6Dt484a6s7GhJ7Nl_-tfYjAMLfJn1A==&c=KjCx5zN5i-rwzFREhhlhLv5Bp9SMnSIPkUWDjr8cIWoIF1QwpfgOTg==&ch=eEopNWRurnsYUQfipAS5rgs6fbqwqm1M3qOobqVJUMV1pRJJbnpuaQ==).

For any study partner who wishes to read the book; *Cremation or Burial? A Jewish View*, we have a sponsor who will cover the cost of the book, plus shipping- it answers all these questions. Just send an email to [Partners@NASCK.org](http://webmailb.juno.com/webmail/new/5?session_redirect=true&userinfo=eff1e795994608ed6885dfdeac88e827&count=1429276434&cf=SP2&randid=1385074657) with your name and address to receive a free copy of the book.

Please have the conversation with your study partner; it might just be the most important conversation the two of you ever have. Ascertain the personal reasons someone might have chosen cremation instead of burial and sensitively and lovingly address their concerns; understanding that this is a process and not a quick decision. If you need any further assistance, please be in touch.

Sincerely,

Robin Davina Meyerson

[robin@Peacefulreturn.org](http://webmailb.juno.com/webmail/new/5?session_redirect=true&userinfo=eff1e795994608ed6885dfdeac88e827&count=1429276434&cf=SP2&randid=1385074657)

602-469-1606

The National Association of Chevra Kadisha (NASCK)

*Reprinted from the April 17th special email of Partners in Torah.*

**Intent and Tolerance**

**By David Bibi**

I am writing on Monday night from Salt Lake City Utah. I am deeply greatly to Rabbi Benny Zippel of the Chabad of Salt Lake City for putting together a minyan for me [to recite Kaddish for my father] (Any visitors to Salt Lake City or any friends of Rabbi Zippel, please send him my appreciation) and to my friend Jack Azizo for taking an earlier flight to Salt Lake to be part of the minyan and for taking me to dinner in Park City. It’s amazing to find such a nice kosher restaurant in the middle of the ski lifts and trails.

Rabbi Zippel invited me to speak to a rather diverse group of guys who were doing me tremendous favor in coming. We read [last] week of the Mishkan and the items Moses was assigned to make for it. One of the items is the Shulchan or the table where the Lechem HaPanim or the showbreads were placed.

I recalled a story that Rabbi Abittan told us about the showbreads. The story is brought in Moreshet Avot and by Rabbi Feinhandler in his “Beloved Children” series. A Portuguese Marrano, who had been raised externally as a Catholic with very limited knowledge of his Jewish roots was able to leave Portugal and travel east to the Holy Land. He settled in Safed.

One day he sat and listened carefully to the Rabbi's lecture about the Lechem Hapanim, which used to be offered in the Bet Hamikdash every Shabbat. In his lecture, the rabbi sighed and said with anguish that now, due to our many sins, we do not have the Bet Hamikdash and we do not offer Lechem Hapanim.

This Marrano, who had not learned Torah and was very naive in his service of Hashem, heard this, went home and innocently told his wife that every Friday she should prepare for him two loaves of bread sifted thirteen times. He requested that she knead the dough in purity and bake it well in the oven, because it was his desire to offer the bread before the Aron Kodesh, and perhaps Hashem would accept the loaves which he would set before Him.

His wife baked him the loaves, and every Friday he would stand before the Aron Kodesh in the synagogue and pray and plead with Hashem to accept his offering. He would offer his supplication like a son entreating his father, after which he would set the two loaves down and leave. The shamash would come every Friday and remove the two loaves, without inquiring where they came from. After Arbit, this G-d-fearing Jew would run to the Aron Kodesh, and since he wouldn't find the loaves, he would be elated and full of joy, and he would go home and tell his wife, "Praise and thanks to Hashem, may He be blessed, for He has accepted the bread. For Hashem's honor, don't be lax in making the loaves next week and be very careful, because we do not have any means of honoring Him other than with these loaves. And so we are obligated to give Him pleasure through them."

This custom of the Marrano couple continued for a long time. One Friday, the rabbi who had given the lecture about the Lechem Hapanim lingered in the synagogue. At the same time, this man came into the synagogue, as he did every Friday, with the two freshly-baked loaves. He approached the Aron Kodesh, and began to pour out his heart in prayers and supplications, without noticing that the rav was present.

He was filled with such enthusiasm and happiness as he brought this gift before Hashem that he didn't pay attention to anything else. The rabbi kept quiet, and saw and heard everything the man said and did, and it angered him greatly. He called to him and rebuked him: "You fool! Does Hashem eat and drink? Of course it is only the shamash who takes these loaves, and you are foolish enough to think that Hashem is the one who accepts them."

The rabbi continued to rebuke the man until the shamash came as usual to take the loaves. The rabbi called the shamash over and he admitted that he was the one who removed the two loaves every week. Upon hearing this, the poor simple Jew began to cry and asked the rabbi to forgive him, since he had erred in understanding his lecture. Although he thought he had been doing a mitzvah, he now understood that he was really doing an aveirah – a sin.

Immediately after this, a special messenger came to the rabbi from the holy Ari – Rabbi Isaac Luria, and told him: "Go home and leave a will for your household, because tomorrow, at the time when you are scheduled to give your lecture, you will die, for this decree has already been set."

Upon hearing these dreadful tidings, the rabbi was frightened and went to the holy Ari to ask him what had happened. The Arizal replied: "I have heard that your sin was that you have put a stop to Hashem's pleasure. From the day that the Bet Hamikdash was destroyed, Hashem never experienced pleasure as he did when the Marrano in his innocence would bring the two loaves of bread and offer them to His Aron Kodesh with the conviction that Hashem accepted them from him. Because you stopped him from bringing the loaves, death has been decreed upon you, and there is no way to avert this decree."

The rabbi went home and left a will for his family. On Shabbos, when it was time for him to give his lecture, he died, just as the holy Ari had foretold. It’s a crazy story, but it gives us insight and a tremendous lesson in two areas. Intention often outweighs actions. Look how powerful our intentions are. It was the intent of the Marrano that “pleased” Hashem.

This makes me think about my own way of doing misvot. When someone is called to Shamayim, we talk about doing misvot Le’Iluy Nishmato, to raise up his soul in heaven. Thus we have prayers in the home, reading Tehilim, learning Mishnah, giving charity and saying berachot or blessings. Considering this I realize how often my blessings sound like huhmahnah huhmanah without clear words. Grab something to eat, mumble some words with little thought and bite.

But with this concept of raising the soul, we stop. We lift the food, we say that the blessing I will make to raise the soul of my teacher, father Yosef ben Esther and then eat. That’s kavana and in fact we should do this every time we do a misvah. When we don a talet, or light candles or pray, we should begin by saying that I am coming to do the misvah of such and such and even if I don’t understand all the details, may Hashem accept my prayer or blessing or action. Intent is so powerful.

The second lesson is in tolerance. Saying Kaddish I am reminded of those who were not observant, but found their way back to Torah and Misvot through Kaddish. Many of those who worked on Shabbat and still came to early minyan to pray and say kaddish for a parent find themselves with observant children and even grandchildren studying in Yeshiva.

But imagine if when they came to the Synagogue on Shabbat they were rejected instead of being drawn in. Imagine if they were told that being nonobservant they had no place with the observant. In many communities this happened, but Baruch Hashem, Rabbi Yaakob Kassin, zt”l, [former Chief Rabbi of the Syrian Sephardic community in Brooklyn] set a beautiful example for many of us. I have heard he said that although I may not get the fathers, I will get the children and certainly the grandchildren. In contrast when one loses the father, he loses every generation to come.

Being in the Chabad of Salt Lake, I saw this message of outreach and tolerance. I saw a rabbi reach out and draw people in with love and with caring. The lesson of Rabbi Kassin, the lesson I see in Utah is a lesson played over and over again. It’s a lesson that must be played over and over again if we hope to overcome the tide of assimilation and intermarriage which cuts of people from the Jewish body.

Someone said to me that my father was a man who looked at people and sought to build and not to break. In a world where we think everything is disposable, my father always sought to fix. I saw it in the Sifrei Torah cases and the other Judaica on his workshop. Pieces sent by synagogues to the man who found time to repair these special objects. Very rarely is something beyond hope and until someone excludes themselves from the community we must strive with all we have to be tolerant and bring them back.

So this week let’s take upon ourselves to try having the proper intent and being more tolerant. Lets try it for a week or even a day. We’ll be the better for it.

*Reprinted from a recent email of Shabbat Shalom from Cyberspace*

**Lubavitcher Woman Saves Entire Airplane**



22-year-old Mussie Weinfeld most likely saved the lives of a plane full of people when she suspected a malfunction with the aircraft just moments before takeoff. Despite being mocked and ridiculed, her insistence led to the plane being grounded after a serious malfunction was discovered.

Mussie Weinfeld, 22, a member of the Crown Heights community, was scheduled to return from a trip to Israel, where she spent the holiday of Passover.

Her father, Rabbi Kalman Weinfeld, related the story to CrownHeights.info:

“My daughter was scheduled to return to New York on Motzai Shabbos from Israel with a stopover in Moscow on Russian airline TransAero. She boarded her flight at Ben Gurion Airport and was seated at the window.

Moments before takeoff, she realized that something was not right with the wing and heard noises that she believed were not regular noises. She first brought this to the attention of the passengers seated beside her, who in turn laughed it off and said it was just noise from the engines.”

Not deterred, she persisted, unbuckling her seatbelt and standing up. The flight attendants, who themselves were already seated and buckled in, instructed her to return to her seat. When she told them her concerns about the plane they too laughed at her. She insisted that she will not fly on the plane if they didn’t check it out.”

After shouting and threatening her, airline officials finally relented and went to investigate her concern.

After returning to the gate, a ground crew began checking over the airplane. At first they said it would be 45 minutes, but nearly two hours later they removed all the passengers from the aircraft, telling them that it did indeed require repairs.

An additional three hours later, the passengers were notified that a replacement plane would be necessary, since the problem was far more severe than originally discovered. Passengers were sent home and told to return the following day.

The issue was so severe that the plane, a Boeing 767, had to be grounded due to the fact that it could have had a mid-air emergency that would have threatened the lives of all those on board, airline officials explained.

The relieved passengers – many of whom had originally expressed irritation at the woman who caused the prolonged delay – came over to her and profusely thanked her for saving their lives.

***Update:*** The Israeli Airports Authority responded to our request for comment after publication with the following statement: “Shortly before takeoff the pilot requested to return to the gate due to a technical issue, after checking it was decided to keep the plane in Israel for service.”

TransAreo has yet to respond to our requests for comments.

*Reprinted from the April 14, 2015 Crown Heights.info/Chabad-news website. Thanks to my good friend Yisroel Federman for bringing this interesting story to my attention.*