**Shabbos Stories for**

**Parshas pinchas 5781**

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**Judging Favorably #137**

**The Jar of Honey**



I sent my daughter to the farmer’s market to buy a jar of honey. Local stores sell a small half-kilo jar for 10 shekels. I asked her to bring home a large one-kilo jar. I figured it should cost less than 20 shekels since the market prices are known to be lower than the local stores.

Was I surprised when she came home with a one-kilo jar and said that it cost 27 shekels! I had thought we would save money; instead, we ended up spending more. What bothered me the most was that “that man” saw a young girl and overcharged her.

**Not All Honey is the Same**

Several days later, a friend of my daughter’s came over, and during her visit she noticed the jar of honey on the counter. She told us that her father works with honey, and added that although all honey might look similar, there is a very big difference in quality. “That honey on the table,” she pointed, “is one of the best.” And when I told her how much we paid, she said it was a bargain at 27 shekels! (The Other Side of the Story)

*Reprinted from the Parshas Shelach 5781 email of The Weekly Vort.*

**Summoned by a Soul**

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



A strong, healthy and successful butcher lived in the city of Kozhnitz.[1](javascript:doFootnote('1a5144820');) He owned and ran a successful shop, until, out of the blue, his luck began to fail. More than half of the animals he bought and had slaughtered were deemed non-kosher, and he started to incur substantial losses.

To try to offset them, he worked harder and longer, often remaining at work late at night, doing tasks he would have once paid others to do. Eventually, the stress affected his health, and he died prematurely, broken-hearted and physically exhausted.

His widow and children were left burdened by debt. At first, the creditors were polite, but before long they began to pressure the widow to pay up. The odd jobs she managed to find were barely enough to feed her children, leaving nothing with which to pay her late husband’s debts. Sad and bitter, she went to his grave and begged him to plead with G‑d for help.

Soon, she was summoned to the town rabbi, Rabbi Yisrael Hopsztajn,[2](javascript:doFootnote('2a5144820');) known as the Kozhnitzer Maggid.

She feared that her husband’s creditors had summoned her to a court case before the rabbi, but the rabbi simply took out a sizable sum of money and said, “This is for you. Take it and use it. You will receive more each week.” He told her that whenever a creditor asked for money, she should refer them to him, and he would pay off the debts.

**Couldn’t Understand Where the Money was Coming From**

The woman could not understand how the rabbi, who was not known to be wealthy, had the money to help her, but she did not ponder the matter too deeply.

It was only after the *shochet*(ritual slaughterer) of the town passed away that she found out where the money had come from.

After the butcher’s tragic death, the [*shochet*](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/222243/jewish/Can-Anyone-Perform-Shechita.htm)started experiencing disturbing dreams in which the butcher would come to him and tell him that he was summoning him to a *din torah* (court case) in heaven. The dream happened once, twice, and then a third time, and the *shochet*feared he may soon pass on so he could face the butcher before the Heavenly Court. Worried, he went to consult with the Kozhnitzer [Maggid](https://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/1788/jewish/Maggid.htm).

The maggid told him: “Next time he comes to you in a dream, tell him that according to Jewish law, a plaintiff must appear before the court in the location of the defendant, and your case must therefore be heard here in Kozhnitz. After this happens, come to me and we will arrange the court date.”

It was not long before the shochet had another such dream, and he passed on the maggid’s message.

**A Court Date was Set**

And so a court date was set.

When the day arrived, a partition was set up in the study hall. One side was empty, and on the other side sat the Kozhnitzer Maggid, the shochet, and the Kozhnitzer Maggid’s assistant.

The maggid handed his walking stick to his assistant, and instructed him: “Go to the cemetery, knock three times with my stick on the gravestone of the butcher, and tell him that he’s being called for the *din*[*torah*](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2126/jewish/What-Is-the-Torah.htm)held by the Kozhnitzer Maggid in the town study hall.”

A short while after the assistant returned, human wailing was heard from behind the partition.

The Kozhnitzer Maggid turned to the source of the noise and said: “Tell me, what is your claim against the *shochet*?”

The butcher explained the chain of events which had led to his mountainous debts, and eventually, his untimely death. “When I arrived on high,” he continued, “I found out that when the *shochet*was pronouncing my cows non-kosher, he was being overly stringent. Many of my cows were, in fact, kosher, according to a straightforward reading of the law. But because he chose to needlessly declare the animals unfit, my business was destroyed and I left this world with a miserable trail of debt. Since it was his wrongful judgment that brought about my family’s sorry state, I demand that the *shochet*pay off my debts and support my wife.”

“And what do you have to say?” the maggid asked the *shochet*. The *shochet*, being a G‑d-fearing Jew, readily agreed to pay the butcher’s debts and support his widow and orphans.

In order to protect the dignity of the *shochet*, who had meant no harm, the story was kept quiet for the remainder of his life.

*Are we sometimes overly zealous at the expense of others? Have we caused financial distress to another? If the answer is in the affirmative, let us ensure we work to correct this.* (Source: Tzaddikim Lemofet, pg. 154)

**FOOTNOTES**

[1.](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/5144820/jewish/Summoned-by-a-Soul.htm" \l "footnoteRef1a5144820) Kozhnitz is the Yiddish name of Kozienice, a town in present-day Poland.

[2.](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/5144820/jewish/Summoned-by-a-Soul.htm" \l "footnoteRef2a5144820) 1737–1814. A disciple of a number of great chassidic Rebbes, including Rabbi Dov Ber, Maggid of Mezeritch. A famed miracle worker, he authored the work Avodat Yisrael and was one of the disseminators of Chassidism in Poland.

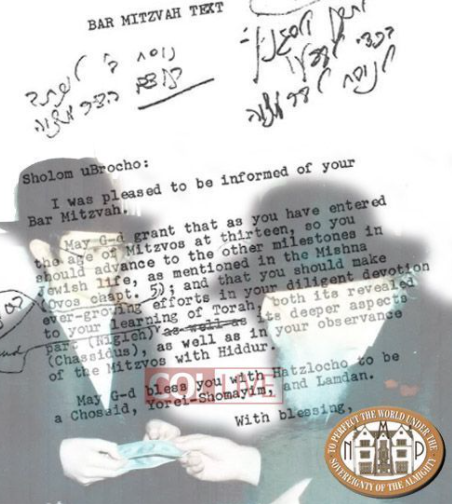
*Reprinted from the Parshat Shelach 5781 email of Chabad.Org Magazine.*

**Message to My Son**

**For His Bar Mitzvah**

**By Rabbi Yosepf Vigler**

*The Al-mighty has granted us the privilege of our son Sholom's bar mitzvah, it is an exciting simcha to us as parents to reach this milestone. I wanted to share with you here my message to my son as he becomes an adult.*



My Dear beloved Sholom,

Ima and I are kvelling with nachas as we watch you grow into a man.Your excitement is refreshing, as you caress your Tefillin with purity, as you go to mikvah and minyan daily, and cover so many masechtos Mishnayos, you even give a nightly shiur to your Talmidim in shul. I look at you. You are so holy.***But you know Sholom, being "holy" or being perfect is not a virtue.***

What then are we striving for? Well, remember how you were triggered the other day for a triviality, when you lost in ping pong, (before you taught yourself to curve a ball like a champion). Or how jealous you were of your brother when he learned a Masechta you hadn't. You know how sometimes you are not in the mood to daven or how you bother your siblings for no good reason? When you become an adolescent, those struggles increase. And if you are under the false impression that they detract you from your self-worth, you get ashamed and depressed chasvshalom.

I have some news for you, Sholom, dealing with those battles is precisely why G-d created you. Perfection is only for angels.

***The Zohar says: Each and every time you succeed in warding off the Yetzer Hara, even in the smallest measure, you reveal G-d in the world..******Embrace your imperfection. When you do fall, don't be afraid to apologize. Then get up and continue with simcha.***

When having a one-on-one session with a mentor or Mashpia you trust, be honest and genuine. Notice as you get jealous and angry, and learn to laugh at your yetzer hara - it's embarrassing, yes, but it's the life that G-d wants us to lead, then Torah can teach you and instruct you in your real life.

My dear child, I daven that as you head into that confusing stage called adolescence, you have the fortitude to realize you are special, not because you are perfect, but because you are a Yid and are trying to fulfill the will of Hashem.May you grow up to be a, a [Jewish] soldier, that you see yourself in terms of your mission, to fight the battle against all negative forces, until the final Geulah and only then will the world find its perfection!

With all our love,

Aba and Ima

Reprinted from the Bar Mitzvah Invitation email of Rabbi Yoseph and Tzippy Vigler on the recent Bar Mitzvah of their son Sholom. Rabbi Vigler is the Rav of the Maayan Yisroel shul in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn.

**The World was Created**

**For My Sake**

**By Rav Gamliel Rabinovich**



Since my doctor who has been treating me for several years left to work in another hospital in the middle of the country, I called the Rav of the hospital before I went in to have a stent put in. I wanted to inquire about the hospital, were there warnings for Kohanim, since I am a Kohen and it is important to let the children know if they can come to the hospital, and also about minyanim for Tefillah.

On the day of the procedure, the Rav was concerned for me and waited for me until 2:00 in the afternoon for Mincha so that I should not miss davening with a minyan. After davening, I was told that the mother-in-law of the Rav and my wife were good friends for many years, and he knew me, and he went above and beyond to take care of all of my needs.

I told him that one of the reasons he was made Rav of the hospital was to help me with the minyan now. He replied that his father had also been the Rav of the hospital. I told him with a smile, that one of the reasons his father had been made Rav of the hospital was so that you would be the Rav after him and take care of me now.

The point and the lesson I want to say is that a person must always think this way about everybody in the world, that Hashem created him, and he does everything to help you, and if you think like this, then you will thank the Creator of the World and see the good in it.

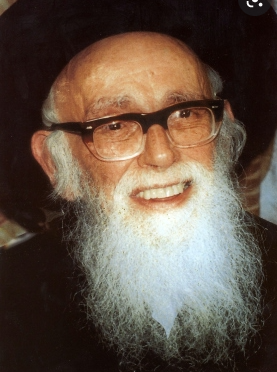
As it is written, a good guest says that all the trouble the host went to was only for my sake, and a bad guest says that all the trouble the host went to was only for himself. We are guests in this world, and we must look at things with the eyes of a good guest and thank Hashem for all that He has bothered for us and be grateful for it.

The Rav cited another example out of many. In the middle of cooking and preparing for Shabbos, the gas tank ran out of gas. The Rebbetzin asked me to open another gas tank. I went down to the room where the tanks were kept, but it was closed and I did not have the strength to open t it.

Just then I noticed a yeshiva bochur sitting with a cup of tea in his hand. I asked if he could help me, and with his youthful strength, he easily opened the gate. Who sent him to drink tea by the gas tanks? Only the Creator, and the reason was to help me… how grateful we must be when we see this!!! - Moreinu HaRav shlita

*Reprinted from the Parshas Shelach 5781 email of Tiv Hakehila*

**A Time for Lashon Hora**



When a bochur from Yeshivas Kol Torah in Bayit V’gan, was mentioned for the daughter of a sister of R’ Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt”l, she wished to speak to her brother, the Rosh Yeshivah, to find out what type of boy he is. She came to R’ Shlomo Zalman’s house one evening, and waited until all the other people had left. When only she and the Rebbetzin were in the room, she turned to her brother and asked about the boy and if it was a good shidduch.

R’ Shlomo Zalman immediately replied, “He is a good bochur.” Then, before she could leave the room, he asked his sister if she was planning to go visit another sister (Rebbetzin Laizerson) who lived just a few blocks away. She said she was on her way there to visit right now. She left and went to her sister’s home. She remained for a short while and as she was walking out of the house, she saw her brother, R’ Shlomo Zalman, standing at the corner, apparently waiting for her to come outside.

She walked over to him and he said to her in a soft and pleasant tone, “You asked me about that certain bochur. One does not ask such questions in the presence of other people. Only when one is alone.”

His sister was surprised. “Other people? It was just you, me and the Rebbetzin in the room.”

R’ Shlomo Zalman replied, “What? Do you think my Rebbetzin should hear lashon hara about bochurim in the yeshivah? This boy is not for your daughter!” The parsha of the Meraglim comes on the heels of the previous parsha involving the lashon hara that was spoken about Moshe Rabbeinu. There are so many instances in daily life where a person can speak or hear lashon hara, and even something so innocent, can turn into something so dangerous. A person must be so vigilant about the words he speak.

*Reprinted from the Parshas Shelach 5781 email of Rabbi Dovid Hoffman’s Tavlin Torah.*

**A Medal for McGillicuddy**

**Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l**

**By A. Ben-Ami**

**Sunday Afternoon, University City, Missouri**

BAP BITTY BAP DITTY BOP BA!!!! Moishy and Dovid Friedman ran to the window at the sound of trumpets blasting. What was going on??? “Mommy, Totty!” they cried.

“Look! It’s a marching band coming down our street! When was the last time you saw a marching band in University City?”

The Friedman family all hurried outside to get a better look. It seemed like the entire neighborhood was out watching the spectacle. “It’s Mayor McGillicuddy!” someone shouted. “He just came back from Washington DC - look! He’s wearing the Presidential Medal of Freedom! President Carritz just awarded it to him because of his program to distribute free copies of the book he wrote to poor immigrant children!”

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**Illustrated by Yocheved Nadell**

From all around came shouts of “Mr. Mayor, Mr. Mayor!” and wild cheering as the neighborhood all celebrated their generous leader who did so much to help the poor and the needy.

**Monday Morning, Torah Prep Boys’ School**

The recess bell rang and everyone ran to the schoolyard. All anyone could think about was the amazing parade for the mayor the day before. Moishy stood in the middle of the schoolyard, stuck a piece of aluminum foil on his shirt, and announced “I’m Mayor McGillicuddy!”

Chaim and Eli quickly ran next to him with imaginary trumpets. “Bap bitty bap ditty bop ba!!!” they chanted, in their best imitation of yesterday’s trumpets. The rest of the class quickly gathered behind them, each boy pretending to be another member of the marching band. As they marched around the schoolyard, the boys from the other classes gathered around. “Mr. Mayor, Mr. Mayor!” they chanted. Boys asked for Moishy’s autograph and everyone had a grand time pretending Moishy Friedman was Mayor McGillicuddy.

When the end-of-recess bell sounded and the boys headed back to class, they were still talking about the mayor and his parade. “Isn’t it so cool?” Chaim was saying. “Our very own mayor got the medal from President Carritz himself! I can’t wait until I go to camp this summer and tell all my friends from Cleveland and Chicago. Their mayor didn’t get a medal!”

The boys were all so busy laughing and talking happily about Mayor McGillicuddy and his medal, that they hadn’t noticed Rabbi Pentelnik enter the classroom.

“Kinderlach,” Rabbi Pentelnik interrupted them, “I don’t understand why you’re so excited about the mayor - there are much bigger and better things to be excited about!”

“You mean like the President?” asked Shmuli. “Because he’s in charge of our whole country?”

“No, no,” smiled Rabbi Pentelnik. “I’m talking about all of you wonderful kinderlach! You all have a medal that is much more important than the one the mayor received!

Everyone looked around. Nobody was wearing a medal, unless you counted the bit of aluminum foil still stuck to Moishy’s shirt.

“Look!” cried Rabbi Pentelnik, gripping his tzitzis in his hands. “We are all wearing tzitzis - this is a much greater medal than the mayor has.”

Moishy raised his hand. “But anyone can just go into the Kollel bookstore and buy tzitzis for just a few dollars - you can’t buy the Presidential Medal of Freedom just like that.” he said.

“Ah, but that’s where you’re wrong,” said Rabbi Pentelnik. “Not anyone can just wear tzitzis. Only a Yid gets to wear that special badge. Of course a goy can figure out how to get his hands on some tzitzis, but just like nobody would respect anyone who makes a fake Presidential Medal of Honor, so too, tzitzis only means something when worn by a Yid.

“Our goyishe neighbors, they are proud to have a mayor who did some small good deed and they think he’s a tzadik. But even you young boys in school are bigger tzadikim than any goy. And we aren’t led by some goyishe mayor - we are led by the Gedolei Yisroel and the Melech Malchei Hamlochim - Hakadosh Boruch Hu!

“Now think - you saw a magnificent parade for the mayor. But that is nothing compared to the parade that we deserve for being the children and servants of Hashem! Bimheira b’yomeinu when Moshiach comes, we will have such magnificent honor, and all of the goyim of the world will be singing our praises and how great Hashem, our King is. But for now, we have to keep that in mind - any time we see someone getting kovod for something other than being a Yid - that our kovod for being the Am Hashem is millions and millions of times greater than that!”

When the bell rang at the end of the school day, the boys all walked out with their hearts bursting with pride. Not because they were pretending to be Mayor McGillicuddy, but because they were actually special, and whether or not the goyim on the street knew it, they knew it and it felt so good to wear a medal that even the mayor couldn’t wear.

*Reprinted from the Parshas Shelach 5781 email of Toras Avigdor Junion.*

**Trapped in a Hezbollah**

**Mine Field**

**From the Desk of Yerachmiel Tilles**

After the passing of HaRav Mordechai Eliyahu in 2010, former Israeli Defense Forces General Effi Eitam came to the rabbi's home and told the mourning family this story, in which he was personally involved.



In the mid and late 1990's, he was the commanding officer of a brigade within "Utzvat HaGalil" - the Israel Defense Forces division that is responsible for the ongoing security in the western sector of the border between Israel and Lebanon. One time, a squad of fifteen soldiers from his brigade entered Lebanon in the middle of the night on a secret mission. As they were crossing a certain low area between hills, the officer in charge suddenly signaled them urgently to halt. In a fear-filled whisper he informed them that they were within a life threatening mine field.

The mine fields in Lebanon were a clever plot by Iran's militant terrorist force, called Hizbollah, to kill and maim Israeli soldiers. They would surround an area with a large number of powerful bombs, which they painted and camouflaged to look like ordinary big stones. They would place these bombs among the natural stones of the area, and wait for IDF forces to enter the "mine field" and be encircled by the bombs.

What makes this type of mine field so especially dangerous is that it is not a matter of an individual touching or stepping upon a single bomb and the hair trigger fuse causes it to explode immediately. Rather, all the bombs were connected together. Not by wire or anything else physical; a hidden laser "arc" surrounded the entire area, and any attempt to cross the perimeter created by the unseen arc would detonate all the bombs simultaneously.

Also, on top of the hill nearest to the 'field' was situated a lookout station of Hizbollah soldiers. If any one of the terrorist watchers noticed Israeli soldiers having entered the area, he could activate the encircling laser arc. The densely packed powerful explosives were capable of killing large numbers of soldiers at once and injuring many more.

The officer leading the mission, who had identified the mine field, having been taught about them in a course, sadly told the squad there was no way to exit the mine field without being killed. Furthermore, he said, the Hizbollah soldiers positioned on the surrounding hills could open fire at any time.

With a trembling voice he called "Pikud Hatzafon" - the northern Israel IDF command center, located in Tsfat[1] -- and reported their dire situation. The brigade commander, Effi Eitam, was immediately informed. He grasped right away that the lives of 15 of his soldiers was hanging by a thread. But what could he do to help?  
\* \* \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

At 3:00 AM the house phone started ringing in the home of the former "Rishon L'Tzion" (Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu). He was already awake and studying Torah. He picked up the receiver and on the line was Effi Eitam. As concisely as possible he described the deadly situation of his soldiers. He concluded with "Great Rabbi, we need the power of your honor's prayers."

"Wait a few minutes, but stay on the line," was Rav Eliyahu's reply, and he turned away to immerse himself totally in prayer.

After the few minutes he returned to the phone, and said in a gentle tranquil tone: "I'm holding tight…take them out now!"

Eitam, who understood only too well the lethal destructiveness of this type of bombs, of course realized the implications of giving the command to flee. On the other hand, he had complete pure faith in the power of true Torah sages, and he knew Rav Eliyahu well enough to know that he would never dare utter such a demand if he wasn't fully confident that his prayer had been accepted.

He called back the squad leader. "Go! Leave! Right now! This instant! Start running!"

One of the Military Intelligence officers at the Northern Command Center was listening in on the terrorists' communication network. He put his phone on speaker so that everyone nearby could hear the quarreling voices and the screams. The local Hizbollah commander was shouting over and over again that the terrorist on watch duty should activate the laser arc. The latter yelled back, "I'm doing it! I keep pressing the button but it is not working." The commander roared at him that he was a traitor and 'decorated' him with numerous elaborate and eloquent Arabic curses.

Effi Eitam reported back to Rav Eliyahu that right after the last soldier had crossed the perimeter and sufficiently distanced himself, all the bombs began exploding one after the other around the four sides of the mine field. All the stones in the area were now specks and the trees had become sawdust. More importantly, all the Israeli soldiers made it back to their base, healthy and whole and unharmed.

**Footnote**: [1]And thus the prime target for rockets fired from Lebanon…and walking distance from my house!

**Source:** Translated-adapted and supplemented by Yerachmiel Tilles from the written account of Rabbi Yisrael Abergel in his weekly publication, "Mesilot El Nefesh" (#163), based on a report in the book, Avihem Shel Yisrael l'Yeledim by Rabbi Hanoch Rigel.

**Biographic notes:** HaRav Mordechai-Tzemach Eliyahu [of blessed memory: 5689 - 25 Sivan 5770 (1929-2010)], the Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Israel from 1983 to 1993, was born in Iraq. A noted sage in all areas of Torah study, as well as a significant kabbalist, he was considered to be one of the leading authorities on Jewish law in Israel. His son, Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu, is currently the popular Chief Rabbi of Tsfat.

Efraim "Effi" Eitam was an Israeli brigadier general from 1993-1999 and a member of the Knesset between 2002 and 2009, where he also served as a government minister and cabinet member from 2002-2004.

Connection: This Shabbat Shelach was the 11th yahrzeit of Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu.

*Reprinted from the Parshat Shelach 5781 email of KabbalahOnline.org*