

# SHABBOS STORIES FOR YOM TOV SHAVUOS & PARSHAS NASSO 5785

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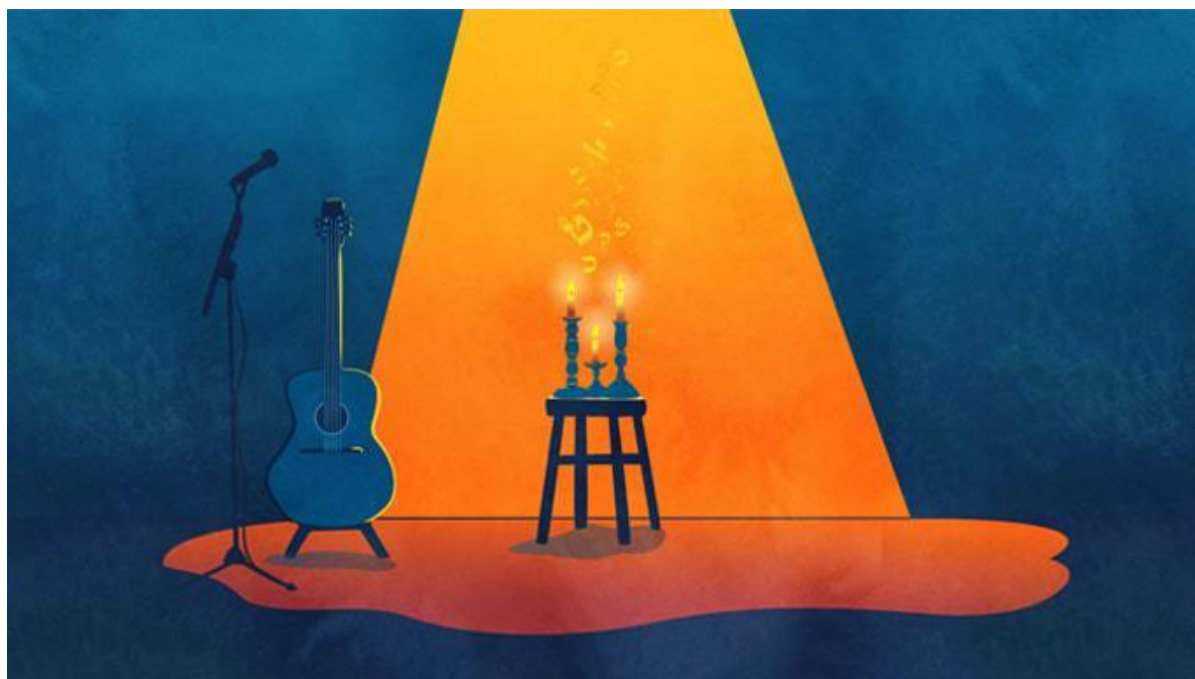
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*Past emails can be found on the website – [ShabbosStories.com](http://ShabbosStories.com)*

## The Tour That Couldn't Compete with Shabbat

By Shlomo Horwitz



*Art by Sefira Lightstone*

Michael grew up in a completely secular Jewish home in Brooklyn. At a fairly young age, he discovered that he was musical, and set his mind to becoming a successful musician, focusing on guitar and bass. After playing with a succession of

bands, Michael joined a band called The Triplets, which featured a trio of singers and other talented musicians. He composed, arranged, and played guitar and bass for the band.

In the early 1980s, The Triplets were at the cusp of becoming very famous. They were getting ready to record a studio album followed by a tour around the country. Michael had worked his entire life for this very moment—to make it big on the national music scene—and now, that dream was within reach. But his heart was being tugged in another direction: toward Torah and Judaism.

It happened gradually. To help make ends meet, Michael was the manager of a music store. One day, he walked Yossi Piamenta, a famous NY-based guitarist from Israel. The two struck up a conversation, and Yossi mentioned that he was looking for a bass player. Michael said, “I play the bass.” He had an audition—and he got the job. He began playing all over New York City and beyond with the Piamenta brothers. Michael loved the music, he loved the company, and he loved the Jews with whom he had come into contact.

He found himself bouncing back and forth between two very different worlds—one, the secular music scene of The Triplets, which had been his lifelong pursuit, and the other, the energy-filled, passionate world of Middle-Eastern-style Jewish music, performed for warm, welcoming audiences who radiated spiritual joy. He found his heart being tugged toward G-d and His *Torah* and realized that he wanted to become a committed Jew.

Another Jewish band went on tour in Israel and brought Michael with them. Inexplicably, he kept running into a young Jewish woman named Nancy. She wasn’t observant herself, but she had relatives who were. In Jerusalem, their paths crossed. In Tel Aviv, again. It was too much to be a coincidence. They both took it as a sign from above that *G-d* had plans for them together.

Very quickly, Michael and Nancy decided to get married and embark on a shared journey of becoming Torah-observant. But there was one big problem.

Michael was just about to hit his big break with The Triplets—a studio album followed by a national concert tour. The album wasn’t an issue—they could record during the week. But the tour was a different story. Almost all the concerts were scheduled for Friday nights and Saturdays. For someone who had just committed to keeping Shabbat, this posed an enormous dilemma.

Michael took a deep breath and called Len, the owner of the band. “I’m so excited to be part of the studio album,” he said, “but I’m really sorry, man. I can’t go on tour with the band. I’ve decided to keep Shabbat and live a religious lifestyle. Sorry, buddy ... but I do look forward to seeing you in the studio.”

Len wasn’t having it. “Dude, we have a commitment to make this band work. You’re part of that commitment. You can’t be with us in the studio unless you’re with us all the way—including the tour.”

Michael tried one last time. “Why can’t we compromise? Let me do the studio piece and you get someone else for the tour. It’s the best of both worlds.”

But Len shook his head. “You know, Mike, I grew up in an Irish neighborhood right near Borough Park. I was a *Shabbos goy* for some of the Orthodox Jews. So, I know your culture better than you think. And I know all about the snake in the Garden of Eden.” He paused, then added, “Well, Mike, I am the snake. And it’s my job to seduce you away from this utter nonsense.”

Then he sweetened the deal. “I’m willing to throw in a tremendous cash bonus if you promise to come on tour with us. I’m going to make it worth your while.”

Michael could barely resist the temptation. The offer was generous. The dream was right there. He had no religious parents egging him on. He had no observant siblings offering moral support. Even his fiancée was new to Shabbat, so Michael was really challenged. But he had already made his choice. His heart belonged to the Creator and His day of rest.

He took another deep breath and said, “Len, you’ve been a dear friend. But I’ve made a decision—and no amount of money is worth giving up Shabbat. Thank you for your friendship, and I truly wish you the best of luck.”

And so, Michael became Moshe and Nancy became Neshe, and they pooled their enormous talents to build a beautiful Jewish family, first in Brooklyn, and now in Northern New Jersey. The tour never happened, but their lives are filled with G-d’s music.

*Reprinted from the current issue of Chabad.Org*

## **Do You Really Live in Gibraltar?!!**

Rav Eliezer Abish told a story. A fellow visiting Eretz Yisroel seized the special opportunity and made his way, like thousands of others, to go see Rav Chaim Kanievsky, zt”l, and perhaps even merit to receive a Brachah from him.

Rav Cham’s eyes lit up when he heard the Gabbai mention that the fellow lived in Gibraltar.

Rav Chaim asked, “Really? You live in Gibraltar?”

The fellow, as well as the Gabbai, wondered what it was about the small island of Gibraltar that excited Rav Chaim so much. Rav Chaim shared his excitement with his visitor from Gibraltar. He explained, “The Halachah states (Brachos 58b, Mishnah Brurah 228:2) that a Brachah is recited when you see the Yam HaGadol, the great ocean.

“However, there is a disagreement in Halachah if this refers to the Atlantic Ocean or to the Mediterranean Sea. Because of this disagreement, you cannot make the Brachah when seeing the Atlantic Ocean, because perhaps the Halachah is that the Brachah is to be said upon seeing the Mediterranean Sea. The same issue would apply upon seeing the Mediterranean Sea. You can’t make the Brachah because perhaps the Halachah is that the Brachah is really to be said upon seeing the Atlantic Ocean.



**The Rock of Gibraltar**

“However, from the Rock of Gibraltar, one can see both the Atlantic Ocean, as well as the Mediterranean Sea at the same time. Therefore,” a visibly excited Rav Chaim concluded, “you can say the Brachah upon seeing the Yam HaGadol! How fortunate you are!” The fellow later told his wife as they drove back to their hotel in Yerushalayim, “Wow! I am living in Gibraltar my entire life and have always enjoyed watching people’s reactions when they hear where I live. People would express their interest and curiosity in the island and ask all sorts of questions about life there and about the ‘Rock.’ Yet, no one has ever mentioned to me a word about the special merit of having the opportunity of reciting the Brachah upon seeing the Yam HaGadol. I guess it all depends on your attitude and outlook in life as to what is important and special to you!”

*Reprinted from the Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5785 email of Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg’s Torah U’Tefilah.*

# The Rabbeinu Tam Tefilin

**By Yoni Schwartz**



It was a regular weekday morning, but the sight they saw was rather unusual. For the first time in his life, people saw Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky, ZT”L, putting on the Rabbeinu Tam Tefillin. Curious, especially since he was no longer young, people began to approach him and ask why he was suddenly wearing Rabbeinu Tam Tefillin.

Rav Yaakov explained: “Some fifty years ago in Europe, someone asked me, ‘Why don’t you wear Rabbeinu Tam Tefillin?’

I told him why. However, he responded, ‘Okay, still - the Chofetz Chaim wears them.’ I said, ‘The Chofetz Chaim is ninety. When I turn ninety, I’ll also wear them.’”

Rav Yaakov continued, “Today is my ninetieth birthday, and I never forgot what I said. An oath came out of my mouth.”

*Reprinted on the Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5785 email of Torah Sweets.*

# The Lost Memory Card

The Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation shared a story. Eleven-year-old Boruch Liederman\* loved his digital camera. On a family trip to Har Hermon, he snapped 567 pictures. On the way home, his younger brother begged to see the pictures.

“Not until they’re uploaded onto the computer,” Boruch said sleepily. Dozing off, he didn’t notice his curious little brother taking the camera. Boruch awoke to frantic conversation among his family.

“Where are the pictures? Did he delete them?” His siblings were desperately pressing the camera’s buttons, hoping to retrieve the missing pictures. Boruch took back his precious camera, only to discover that the memory card was gone! “It’s lost!” he cried, “and it must have happened when Tzviki took it without my permission!”

Seeing the fury on Boruch’s face, his older sister Rivky asked her father to pull the car over. Rivky was 27, kind and wise, and was still waiting for her Bashert. Rivky took Boruch for a walk alongside the road.

“I know how angry you are,” she said, “and it’s now that I need a favor from you. I once heard that if someone overcomes his anger, even when he’s right, he can ask Hashem for something really big.”

Baruch said, “I understand, Rivky. As a Zechus for you to get married, I’m going to control myself.” Boruch took a deep breath, and soon, a very calm Boruch and his sister returned to the car.

Two weeks later, Mr. Liederman received a call from an acquaintance. “An American Bachur who I learn with found a memory card on Har Hermon. I immediately recognized your family in the pictures. Here’s the Bachur’s phone number. His name is Eliezer.

Boruch and his father picked up the memory card from Eliezer, and he impressed Mr. Liederman as a mature young man with fine Middos, and perhaps he was a suitable match for his daughter. The Shidduch was arranged, and he turned out to be just perfect for Rivky. Shortly afterwards, the two were engaged! The lost memory card that led Eliezer to Rivky was Hashem’s clear message that nothing is lost, and everything is gained, by letting go of one’s anger, even when he is right!

*Reprinted from the Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5785 email of Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg’s Torah U’Tefilah.*



# Counting

By Aharon Spetner



Illustrated by Miri Weinreb

“I see an airplane!” Shmuli said excitedly, as the Goldsteins approached the airport. “Maybe Zaidy’s on that plane!”

Chavi peered out the window. “Zaidy can’t be on that plane. He’s flying a different airline.”

“What’s an airline?” asked Shmuli.

“It’s a company,” explained Boruch. “You know how in Yerushalayim we see Egged buses, Kavim buses, and Superbus buses? Each of those is a different bus company. So, airlines are like bus companies but for airplanes. You can tell what airline a plane is by looking at the colors and the words on the plane.”

“How do you know what color Zaidy’s plane is?” asked Shmuli, not fully understanding.

Totty parked the car in the parking garage and they entered the airport. The arrivals hall was full of people waiting for their family members to arrive. Some

were holding balloons, others were holding flowers. Chavi unfurled the large “welcome Zaidy” sign she had made and held it up so Zaidy would see it as soon as he entered the arrivals hall.

### **Forty-Nine Minutes Delay**

“Oy, his flight is delayed,” Totty said, looking at the arrivals board. “His plane is only going to land in another forty-nine minutes.”

“Zaidy! Zaidy!” shouted Shmuli, running towards an elderly man with a white beard pushing a luggage cart in their direction.

“Shmuli, that’s not Zaidy!” Chavi called, running after him. “Sorry,” she added sheepishly to the man, who gave Shmuli a warm smile.

“Forty-eight minutes,” Boruch said, staring at the flight board, as Totty pulled out his pocket Mishnayos and started to learn.

Chavi and Shmuli rejoined Totty and Boruch.

“I almost saw Zaidy,” Shmuli said proudly.

“Forty-seven minutes,” Boruch said, boredom in his voice.

“Totty, I’m going to take Shmuli to ride the escalators while we wait,” said Chavi.

“Good idea,” Totty smiled, turning back to his Mishnayos.

“Forty-six minutes,” intoned Boruch.

“Boruch, are you counting sefirah?” Totty asked, his eyes twinkling.

### **How Can I Count Sefirah Now?**

“What? No, how could I be counting sefirah?” Boruch said, confused. “I’m counting the minutes until Zaidy’s plane lands.”

“And why are you doing that?”

“Because I’m bored.”

“Do you count sefirah for the same reason? Because you’re bored?”

Boruch stared at Totty. “It’s a mitzvah to count sefirah.”

“Right, but did you ever think about why we have a mitzvah of sefiras haomer?” Totty asked.

“To count the days to Shavuos,” Boruch said. “Because Shavuos is fifty days after the second day of Pesach.”

“Very good, but there is a deeper meaning. Hashem is teaching us the importance of counting every day. Why does the sun set at night and rise in the morning? Do you know what a brocha it is that Hashem splits time into days? He could have made it daytime all the time. But every twenty-four hours we get a new day so that we can look back and say ‘what did I accomplish today? Did I do what Hashem wanted me to do in the past twenty-four hours?’



“And not just during sefiras haomer. Hashem wants us to count every day of our lives. And not just days. Minutes, hours, weeks, months, years, we need to be constantly looking and seeing ‘how did I spend this last period of time? Did I utilize it in the way Hashem intended?’”

Totty glanced at the flight board. “Zaidy’s plane lands in forty-five minutes. How are you going to use this time? Chavi is using it to keep Shmuli entertained - that’s chessed. I’m learning Mishnayos. I’m sure you can find something more useful to do than just stare at the flight board.”

Boruch looked around. Totty was right. But what could he do while he waited? “I know,” he finally said with a smile. “I will use the next forty-four minutes to think of forty-four things I am thankful to Hashem for.”

“What an amazing idea!” Totty said warmly, looking back into his Mishnayos once more.

\* \* \*

Zaidy finally emerged from customs into the arrivals hall. “That’s a beautiful sign, Chavi,” he said as he gave everyone a hug. “Thank you so much for making it. I hope you guys weren’t too troubled by my delay.”

“Not at all,” smiled Boruch, taking Zaidy’s suitcase from him. “I spent the time counting sefirah.”

“Sefirah?” asked Zaidy, alarmed. “But it’s hours before shkiah.”

Boruch laughed. As they walked to the car, he explained everything Totty said about sefiras haomer and all about the new things he thought of for which he was thankful to Hashem.

Have a Wonderful Shabbos!

*Reprinted from the Parshas Emor 5785 email of Toras Avigdor Junior based on the Torah teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller.*

## The Two Candidates for a Very Good Job

Rav Binyomin Rabinowitz shared a true story he heard about how when one does for others, he is really doing for himself. There is a company in Eretz Yisroel called HyTech, where the owner is a Shomer Torah U’Mitzvos. When he needed an administrator for his business, he put an ad in the Frum newspaper, and after filtering many applicants, he invited a few candidates in for an interview.

In his waiting room, a married woman sat next to a single girl, who was very talented in this field. While they were sitting there, they started a conversation. Each one told the other about themselves. The married woman explained that she is the wife of man who learns in Kollel, and has six children, and they really need the Parnasah that this job would provide.

The girl said that while she was still waiting for her Shidduch, she is looking for a job so that she could save money, and be able to support her and her future husband after she would be married.

The boss first called the married woman in, and he was very satisfied with how she answered his questions, which showed him that she would be very good for the job. He told her that he would be in touch with her.

### **The Single Girl was Called in for the Interview**

Next, the single girl was called in. After seeing her talents, and her abilities to making the company really successful, he offered her the job on the spot, and told her if she wanted, she could start the very next day. He made her an offer to have a starting salary of 10,000 Shekelim per month, a car, and various benefits.

After thinking for a moment, she said, "I'm really sorry, but I'll be happier if you give the job to the woman that was in here just before me, because she needs this job much more than I do. Also, after speaking with her, I think she sounded like an Eishes Chayil that would really add a lot to your company."

The boss tried his best to persuade her, but no matter how hard he tried to get her to change her mind, her mind was made up. She said, "I'm sorry, but this is my final decision." She got up and left the office, and the other woman got the job.

Two days later, this girl got a phone call. "Shalom, my name is Michal. I am the wife of the owner of HyTech. My husband told me about the unbelievable Chesed you did to give up such a lucrative job offer because someone else needed it more than you. I'm calling because I would like to let you know that we have a son who is a serious Bachur in Yeshivah. He is a Talmid Chacham who learns all day and has excellent Middos, and we would love to have you as a Kallah for him."

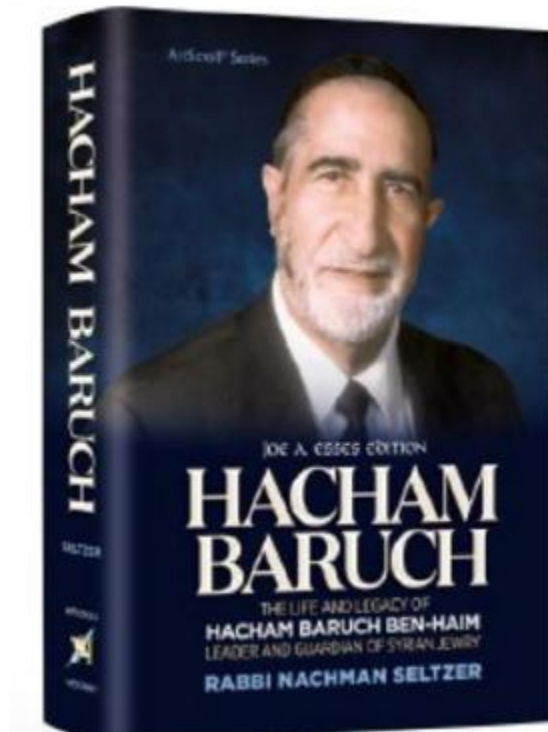
It was quiet on the other side of the phone for a minute or two. Then the girl replied, "Okay, I'll meet him."

A few weeks later, Mazel Tov! The couple was engaged! Because this girl did a tremendous Chesed by giving up the chance to have a fantastic job just to help a Kollel family, Hashem rewarded her with a wonderful Choson, whose family owned the entire company!

*Reprinted from the Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5785 email of Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg's Torah U'Tefilah.*

# The Million Dollar Barechu

By Rabbi Nachman Seltzer



The Rabbi ran the school minyan for many years,” R’ Eli Mansour said. “He might have been the rabbi of the community, but he was busy dealing with children every single day. It didn’t faze him. But then very few things did.

“It would be very difficult to find a man who is so great and yet so humble at the same time. “He was there every day of the week, running the minyan for the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Even on Sundays, the rabbi was at Magen David teaching Sunday school.

“I remember one day we were nearing the end of the tefilla,” R’ Mansour recalled, “and I was talking to one of my friends — just as the hazan said ‘Barechu,’ which I missed because I was talking.

“As always, Hacham Baruch saw everything that took place in the room. There was no question that he was going to teach me a lesson — in his unique and memorable fashion.

“Looking at the dean, R’ Moshe Greenes, the rabbi said, ‘R’ Moshe, Eliyahu Mansour just lost a million dollars!’

“R’ Greenes, who immediately understood what the Rabbi meant, caught the ball and ran a few steps further, saying, ‘At least a million dollars!’ “That was the

entire interchange. But there isn't a day that goes by when I say the words 'Barechu et Hashem' that I don't think that I just deposited a million dollars in my bank account. With that one line, the Rabbi changed my life forever!

"But the story isn't over. "Many years later, I was learning at Mercaz HaTorah in Yerushalayim. We were praying Arvit when someone came into the bet midrash to tell me that I had a phone call from overseas. In those days, that meant that your parents had called you on the yeshiva payphone — and because back then it cost a lot of money to call Israel from the United States, when you got a call from America, you picked yourself up and you ran to the phone.

"I stood in the bet midrash, struggling with myself. I wanted to run to the phone, but I also didn't want to miss saying Barechu. In the end, I stayed in my spot until the hazan said Barechu. Moments later, I was out the door of the bet midrash and running to the phone.

"Later that evening I was informed that the Rosh Yeshiva, R' Rotman, wanted to see me in his office.

"What do you know about Barechu that I don't know?" the Rosh Yeshiva asked me. I didn't understand what he was talking about.

"I don't know anything about Barechu more than the Rosh Yeshiva," I replied in confusion.

"No, you must know something."

"I didn't know what he was talking about, and told him so.

"Look, I know that I am correct about this," he said. "I watched you. You got a call from the States, but you didn't leave the bet midrash until the hazan said Barechu. So, I'm asking you the same question again. What do you know about Barechu?"

"Now I understood what he was referring to. "I have a rabbi in America. His name is Hacham Baruch Ben-Haim. And five years ago, my rabbi told me that Barechu is worth a million dollars."

"That's a good rabbi," the Rosh Yeshiva said. "If you are still affected by something that he told you five years ago — he's a very good rabbi!"

"That story happened forty years ago, and I'm still thinking about how every Barechu that we say is worth a million dollars! That was the power of the Rabbi and his unique ability to make the kind of comments that a person never forgot.

"For some reason, when Hacham Baruch taught you a lesson, it stuck. That is why I consider him a master mehanech. A master educator. "If I try to analyze why his words had such an impact, I must conclude that it had to do with the fact that he had yirat Shamayim.

As Hazal tell us, when someone possesses yirat Shamayim, his words make an impact. "Above and beyond that, when you were learning with Hacham Baruch you were also learning with his rebbi, Hacham Ezra Attieh, and his havruta, Hacham

Ovadia. Sitting with Hacham Baruch meant being connected to the Ben Ish Hai (whose derashot the Rabbi's grandmother had heard) and to his mother, who inculcated him with an understanding of what awaited him in Porat Yosef ('My dear son... you will see angels').

"Keeping all this in mind, we can understand why a few well-chosen words from the Rabbi had the ability to change a person's entire life."

*Reprinted from the Parshat Behar-Bechukosai 5785 email of At the ArtScroll Shabbos Table.*

# The Truth of the Matter

By Avrohom Barash



**The Satmar Rav**

A woman living in New Jersey became seriously ill. There was a certain machine available in New York which could help alleviate her condition, but it was expensive to use. She could not afford the cost on her husband's meager salary, and their New Jersey insurance company would not cover out-of-state treatment. People told the couple that if they gave a New York address and switched to a New York

insurance company whose policies did cover use of this machine, then they would not have to pay. There was not much danger that the company would investigate whether they indeed lived in New York.

They were reluctant to proceed with a falsehood, even if the treatment was life-saving, but a friend insisted, “You are required to use that address! This is a question of life and death!”

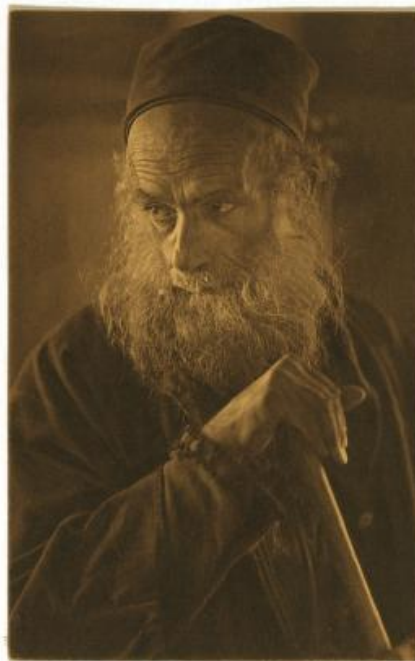
The woman was still reluctant to benefit from a lie, saying, “We have always been completely honest; shall we now save my life with a lie?” She and her husband decided to consult Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum, the Satmar Rav. Upon hearing the question, he asked incredulously, “You would say a lie?”

“But it is a question of pikuah nefesh, saving a life,” the man said.

“Do you mean to tell me that people die in New Jersey and in New York they live? It’s impossible! I am sure that if you are faithful to the truth, you will find that you can make use of the machine.”

The man investigated further and discovered that there was indeed such a machine in a certain hospital in New Jersey. His wife was treated there and cured.

*Reprinted from the Parashat Behar-Bechukotai 5785 email of Rabbi David Bibi’s Shabbat Shalom from Cyberpace. Excerpted from the book ArtScroll book – “Gut Voch.”*



**“A Spanish Jew in Jerusalem” (circa 1921) by the photographer Shlomo Narinsky. From the collection of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.**