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The Loyal Shepherd – Rabbi Menachem Perr

By Rabbi Paysach J. Krohn



For more than 40 years, R' Menachem Perr served as the rabbi of Cong. Bnei Israel in South Ozone Park, Queens. When he assumed his position in the 1930's, the membership consisted of both religious and non-religious people.

R' Perr made a concerted effort to bring each member of the shul closer to Torah and mitzvos. He tried to convince children from secular homes to attend yeshivos or Talmud Torahs; he tried to influence nonreligious people to observe Shabbos.

For years, he would walk every Friday to each Jewish store, reminding people of candlelighting time and asking, or pleading with, them to close before sunset. In the 1950's the neighborhood began changing and there were soon few Jewish families left in South Ozone Park. Those who remained were the elderly who could not afford to move. Though R' Perr had been offered positions elsewhere, he told his family that he would not abandon the shul as long as there was even one person who came to daven there.

When he was quite elderly, he one day told his son, R' Yechiel Perr, that after he passed away he wished to be buried in the Beth David cemetery in Elmont, Long Island. R' Yechiel asked about the plot that his father had with the Rayim Ahuvim group, which was reserved only for prominent Torah scholars and outstanding lay leaders.

R' Perr told his son, "I have decided against that. Our shul has a plot in Beth David, where many of the members of our shul are buried. I know their children; they are no longer religious, but they will, from time to time, come to visit their parents' graves.

"If I am buried in that area, they will see my grave and maybe they will remember something that I taught them about Shabbos or kashrus or the importance of learning Torah. Maybe it will ignite in them a spark of Yiddishkeit. For the sake of that possibility, it is important that I be buried there."

Indeed, R' Perr lies among his people. He taught them when he was alive, and hopefully continues to teach their children after his passing. (Along the Maggid's Journey)

Reprinted from the Parshas Korach 5783 email of The Weekly Vort.

Story #1332

Not Once, But Twice

From the desk of Yerachmiel Tilles

editor@ascentofsafed.com

A chasid from Antwerp whose first name is Yechiel was in Las Vegas to participate in a diamond convention. He ate his Shabbat meals in the Chabad House. During one of the meals, when the guests were encouraged to share a Torah thought or a story, Yechiel shared the following personal narrative:

In the late 1980's, my mother travelled to Brooklyn one Sunday, in order to see the Lubavitcher Rebbe (Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson) and receive a



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for Parshas Korach 5783 is sponsored by**

Mordechai Lach

in memory of his mother –

Faiga Rivka bas

Betzalel Eliezer, a”h.

dollar and a blessing, because there was a family member in need of an emergency healing.

After giving her the dollar and blessing, the Rebbe said: “Tell your son not to travel.”

The Rebbe Repeats His Warning

My mother was surprised. “My son is not traveling anywhere,” she clarified. But the Rebbe repeated: “Tell your son not to travel.”

As soon as she came outside from the encounter she contacted me, sharing the strange exchange that she had with the Rebbe. I was able to shed light on it.

“In fact,” I explained to her, “I had been planning a trip to Colombia, where a sale of emeralds was already arranged that would be worth a million dollars to me. I hadn’t told you about this because I didn’t want you to worry about my traveling to such a dangerous part of the world. But, if the Rebbe said that I shouldn’t travel, then I will immediately cancel my trip.”

I called my Italian partner and informed him of my change of plans. He became quite angry with me, warning me that I wouldn’t get any share in the profits if I stayed behind, but I was adamant. I told him he could take the entire profits, but I was not going to accompany him in Columbia.

“I subsequently learned what had taken place. The buyers handed the Italian the cash, he turned over to them the emeralds, and then, on the spot, they tragically shot him in the back, killing him instantly.

The Rebbe’s timely directive had saved my life!

A Fateful Call to a Brother in Texas

In 1995, one year after the Rebbe passed on *Gimmel Tammuz*, I was in the NY area. I have a brother, David, who lives in Texas, and it’s easier to call him from NY than to call him from Antwerp, so I decided, prior to departing back home, to use the opportunity to call him and say “Hello.”

As soon as I reached him, my brother David exclaimed to me excitedly, “Yechiel, how amazing that you’re calling me, I’ve been trying to reach you all day. I need to tell you about a dream that I had last night!”

He related the following: “Last night in my dream I saw a painting, and in the painting, I saw the Lubavitcher Rebbe. All of a sudden, the Rebbe in the picture spoke to me “Tell your brother Yechiel, *‘Zachor v’al tishkach et hadevarim’* [‘Remember and don’t forget the words’]. That was the dream, I don’t know what it means, but I felt I must share it with you.”

“I thought to myself, ‘what words does he mean?’”

Then I recollected the last words, the last communication that I had from the Rebbe! Why, it had been when he had instructed me through my mother not to travel.

And here, I was about to fly back to Antwerp, and the Rebbe sent me a message to remember his words. The Rebbe must be telling me again not to travel!

I decided immediately to cancel my travel plans.

Supposed to Give a Ride to the Airport to a Friend's Wife

But there was one problem. I was supposed to give a ride to the airport to the wife of a friend, who was supposed to be on the same flight as me. But if I shouldn't be taking the flight, surely neither should she. But how can I stop her? If I tell her my brother had some kind of a dream, she'll think that I'm crazy; so she definitely won't change her plans because of that.

I decided that there was only one solution: I would have to ensure that she misses her flight! So, I picked her up on schedule, but instead of driving her directly to the airport, I pretended to get lost and kept on making wrong turns. She kept on screaming at me that I didn't know what I was doing -- now she really thought I was crazy! -- but I just continued to feign confusion.

Only when I was certain that it was much too late for any chance at the flight, did I finally let her off at the airport. At that point she was furious with me. She stomped out of the car in a rage without a backward glance, and headed straight for a phone to inform her husband of her predicament (and what a mess *his* friend had gotten her into).

She Let Out a Horrified Shriek and Fainted

However, when she finally reached her husband and heard what he had to say, she let out a horrified shriek and fainted. The flight that we had been scheduled to take was TWA flight 800, which had exploded into a fireball 12 minutes after takeoff, killing all 230 people on board.

Yechezkel concluded his remarkable narrative with these words:

“The advice of the Rebbe miraculously saved my life *twice*, thank G-d, once before Gimel Tammuz, and then again afterwards!”

Source : Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from a post on the WhatsApp group, “Amazing Neshei Chabad” [of Safed]. (I have not yet been able to ascertain the print source.)

Connection: The 29th yearzeit of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Reprinted from the Parshat Korach 5783 email of KabbalaOnline.org, a project of Ascent of Safed.

Only Hashem is in Charge

By Peshy Horowitz

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And I hated all my toil that I toil under the sun, that I should leave it to the man who will be after me. – Authored by the wisest of all men, Shlomo HaMelech.



This week I called Gitty and I told her, “Guess what?! What we studied in *Koheles* actually happened to me!”

While Gitty tended to her children, I began my tale.

This past week my husband decided he needed a break from work. He rented a room in the Clove, a lovely hotel in Palm Tree (aka Kiryas Yoel or Monroe), upstate NY. The plan was that I would teach on Thursday in Brooklyn and then take a bus to Monroe to meet up with my husband and stay for Shabbos.

My Married Daughter Would be Spending Shabbos with My Younger Children

Wednesday found me deep in cleaning, cooking, and baking. My married daughter would be spending Shabbos with my younger children at home. I wanted to prepare Shabbos for them, as well as set aside food for me and my husband for Shabbos.

I come from a family of professional cooks. Several of my nieces sell their baked goods professionally. We're really serious about our challahs. I baked two types of sourdough, spelt, and hi-gluten challahs. I baked and cooked salmon and gefilte fish, with a variety of dips. I prepared different types of kugels. You get the drift. At four in the morning, I called it a day or a night, perhaps?!

Thursday morning, I deliberated whether to pack the food in a box or a suitcase. I like packaging food in boxes, but how would I transport it to school and then to a bus. I opted for a large purple suitcase. Each pan was wrapped in Saran Wrap and the dips and fish were put into special plastic containers. I checked the fridge and freezer to make sure no dish was left behind. I zipped the suitcase and off I went to teach.

Asked Permission to Leave Her Suitcase on the First Floor

When I entered the school building, I asked the front desk secretary if I could keep the suitcase in her office. I teach on the fourth floor and in addition to not wanting to drag the valise up four flights, I didn't want my students speculating about whether I was headed to the Bahamas or the Dominican Republic. The secretary was quite gracious and showed me where to park the luggage.

At four-fifteen, after dismissal, I ran down the stairs and grabbed my suitcase. I had a five-minute window to catch the bus to Monroe. Huffing and puffing I put the valise in the special luggage compartment, paid the driver, and looked for a seat to settle myself in. Then my cellphone rang. It was my principal.

"Mrs. Horowitz, did you leave a purple suitcase in the front office?" she asked.

"Yes, I did," I responded. "O.K.," she continued. "Your suitcase is empty."

"Empty?!" I asked, all shocked. "Are you sure?"

"But don't worry," my principal Mrs. Schwartz resumed. "I will bring all the food that was taken out to your house."

"Mrs. Schwartz, I'm on the bus right now to upstate New York, very far from my house," I responded. "What should I do?"

How Did This Happen?

At this point we got cut off. Now how did that happen?

I listened to my voicemail. This is what I heard:

"Hi Mrs. Horowitz! I opened your suitcase and thought it was for me. I took the *Reziel HaMalach* (a tiny *sefer* in a plastic holder that many people keep on them when they travel as a *shemira* – protection), the challahs, and the apple kugel. It's so lovely that you label each packed food with '*L'kovod Shabbos Kodesh*' (in honor of the Holy Shabbos). If you call me, I'll tell you my version of the story."

I adjusted my seat and dialed the number on my call log. Mrs. Rosner, a senior staff member at my school, answered on the second ring.

“Can I tell you my version of what happened?” Mrs. Rosner asked. “I’d love to explain what transpired.”

“O.K., let’s hear,” I replied.

Mrs. Rosner’s Explanation of the Mishap

Mrs. Rosner’s sibling was marrying off a child overseas. Our school was deep in production practice and Mrs. Rosner felt like it was not the right time to travel, yet her husband encouraged her to attend the family simcha. Mrs. Rosner mentioned her dilemma to Mrs. Stern, another senior staff member who advised her to fly just overnight and offered to bring her a hand luggage so she wouldn’t even have to check in her luggage.

Mrs. Stern told Mrs. Rosner, “I’m leaving the hand luggage in the front office and I’m even putting a treat inside. You must go!”

Mrs. Rosner spent the day supervising practice and at four o’clock ran into the front office to look for a small valise. She only found a massive suitcase which she really didn’t want to take as she was sure the airlines would not let her keep it with her on the plane. She told herself, however, that she must open the suitcase and take out the treat and thank Mrs. Stern for her efforts.

Flabbergasted by What She Found

She opened the suitcase and was flabbergasted to find not only some cake, but an entire prepared Shabbos. She promptly tried dialing Mrs. Stern to thank her and tell her that so much food was so thoughtful, but unnecessary. After attempting several times and not getting through, she took out a few items and the rest of the food put on the side, as she noticed that some of the food was dripping. She left school to buy a smaller hand luggage and pack for her flight which would leave Sunday night.

When Mrs. Rosner was done with her account of the saga, I told her, “Mrs. Rosner, my food is really good. I want you to keep whatever you took and enjoy it in good health! Just remember to heat it up before Shabbos as everything tastes better when it’s warm!”

On Friday morning my husband and I visited a grocery and a takeout store in Monroe. *Baruch Hashem* there was a plethora of kosher choices. We would definitely not go hungry on Shabbos.

“Yes,” I told Gitty. “A person can cook and bake and pack. He can have everything in his possession. If Hashem wills, it will all go to someone else. Only Hashem is in charge!”

Reprinted from the June 18, 2023 website of The Jewish Press.

Frozen Treats

By Boruch Brull



Anyone living in New York will long remember where he or she was at 4:11 P.M. on August 14, 2003. On that notoriously hot and muggy day, more than fifty million people were left without power in a huge blackout that abruptly halted the subway system and darkened homes, offices and businesses. While some people regained power within several hours, others waited days for their electricity to be restored.

Mr. Klein Felt Incredibly Grateful

When Klein's Kosher Ice Cream in Brooklyn lost its power that Thursday afternoon, Mr. Abba Klein, the owner, was understandably quite concerned. His freezers had the ability to keep ice cream frozen for about 24 hours given the 90-degree weather outside. Thankfully, power was restored to the Klein's warehouse early Friday morning, and none of the products were spoiled. As he watched other businesses losing thousands of dollars in ruined merchandise, Mr. Klein felt incredibly grateful.

Instead of continuing business as usual on Friday morning, Mr. Klein called his son Pinchas into his office. "Hashem has been very kind to us; we could have taken a huge monetary loss," began Mr. Klein. "I would like you to find out if our competitor, Mehadrin Ice Cream, has electricity in its warehouse. Please call them and see if they need our help. Whatever profit we make selling ice cream is determined by Hashem. Helping our competitor will not affect how much money we will ultimately earn."

After speaking with neighbors of Mehadrin, Pinchas ascertained that Mehadrin did not have any electricity, nor was there any power in the entire area. Pinchas then called Mr. Zalman Leib Farkas, the owner of Mehadrin, to offer him the use of Klein's frozen warehouse. Mr. Farkas could not believe his ears! His biggest competitor was making him an unbelievable offer. He thanked Pinchas for calling and accepted immediately.

Mr. Farkas sent two large trucks filled with ice cream to Klein's warehouse. The Kleins rearranged their warehouse to make room for Mehadrin's ice cream. In addition, they hooked up special cables to run power from the warehouse to the two Mehadrin trucks. Although this was a difficult and costly task, it was done without hesitation. Mr. Farkas was overwhelmed with the magnitude of Mr. Klein's kindness. Because of Mr. Klein's gracious offer, Mr. Farkas was able to avert monumental losses.

A shopper walking down the frozen food aisle of any kosher supermarket will see Klein's and Mehadrin ice cream displayed side by side. One might think the two companies are rivals, unless, of course, he knows the rest of the story...(excerpted from "For Goodness' Sake," Feldheim Publishers)

Reprinted from the Parshat Shelah 5783 email of Rabbi David Bibi's Shabbat Shalom from Cyberspace.

The Arrogance of a Rich Jewish Man

Rav Yitzchok Zilberstein relates a story. In Russia, during the times of Czar Nikolai, a great Talmid Chacham named Rav Eliyahu Leider came to a town, and was hosted by an incredibly wealthy man.

During his visit, Rav Leider heard the host boasting in a haughty manner about his great wealth. The man said, "I'm so wealthy that even if the government decides to confiscate my assets, I still have no need to fear! I'm well covered and diversified, and I'm very wealthy in cash!" Rav Leider trembled when he heard these words, and he urged his host to stop his arrogance regarding his wealth.

Many years later, Czar Nikolai passed through the town of this wealthy Jew, and to enter the town, he had to cross a bridge. All the bridges in the area were built by this Jew, as he was awarded the exclusive government contract to build them. These bridges were made for the average day loads of a carriage here and there. They were not built for the great mass of soldiers and royal entourage of the Czar.

After crossing some of the bridges in the area, they collapsed from the great weight, and ten of the Czar's commanders perished in the collapse. This crime was considered to be high treason in the eyes of the Czar. It didn't matter that the bridges were built properly for average loads.

When the Czar demanded to know who had built such inferior bridges, and he was informed that the "scoundrel" was a Jewish man, it became clear to this Jew that his days were numbered. He grabbed a coat and filled his pockets with cash, and ran for his life. He was sure that with his money, he would still be treated with honor wherever he went.

However, in his rush, he accidentally filled his pockets with the wrong currency, and it was all useless. He had grabbed the wrong bills, and he now discovered that he was destitute. Having no choice, this Jew, who just a few hours before was amazingly wealthy, now had to start begging for money to live!

One Shabbos, this man went to stay by a poor man's home. That week, Rav Leider was also staying as a guest in the same house. They soon recognized each other, and then the wealthy man broke down in tears and said, "Your words to me about not showing off my wealth are still ringing in my ears!"

Rav Zilberstein would say, "The Chofetz Chaim used to repeat this story to his Talmidim to impress upon them that everything is in the hands of Hashem, and that He personally watches over each one of us with great exactness!"

Reprinted from the Parshas Korach 5783 email of Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg's Torah U'Tefilah.

The Rich Man's Donkey

Rav Chaim Kanievsky, zt"l, would teach from the Arizal, that when someone passes away and leaves debts in this world, he is not only forced to return in a Gilgul, as a reincarnation, but the one he owes money to will also have to come back as a Gilgul, so that he can be reimbursed by the one who borrowed from him. Therefore, it is critical for one to never leave a loan unpaid.

Rav Chaim reported a fascinating story about this, which occurred in the time of the Arizal. Once, the Arizal was invited to a wealthy man's home, and he made an unusual request of his host. He asked him if he could visit the stable.

The wealthy man was surprised, but he took the Arizal to see his stable. The Arizal scanned the animals, and then he pointed to one of the donkeys and said to the owner, "Would you give me that donkey?"

The rich man was again surprised and replied, “Do you want that donkey in particular?” He said, “I will not be able to give it to you, it is very hard-working and achieves the workload of several donkeys, so I get much benefit from it.”

The Arizal was quiet, and then returned to the rich man’s living room. He then asked to see a list of all the loans he had extended. The rich man took out a large pile of contracts and started going through them. He listed them off, “This one is from my neighbor, this one is from a friend, here’s one from someone notable from the next town who recently ran into some financial difficulties.”

The Arizal then pointed to a crumpled document. He asked, “Who is that one from?” His host answered, “This is from a Jew who passed away a long time ago. This money will never be reimbursed.”

The Arizal said, “Would you agree to give me this contract as a gift?”

The rich man agreed. The Arizal took the piece of paper and tore it into pieces. He then said, “Now, go outside and check on your donkey.”



The owner did just that, and came back inside, stunned. He said, “The donkey is dead. I don’t understand what happened. It was the best and strongest of all my animals!”

The Arizal explained, “That donkey was the Gilgul of the person who died before he was able to pay his loan back to you. It was decreed from Shamayim that his Neshamah return so he could pay back his debt. Now that you have forgiven him, his Neshamah has gone back to Shamayim, and it has found peace at last.”

Rav Chaim Kanievsky would say over this story to highlight the obligation to be extra careful concerning issues that are related to money, and the importance of reimbursing loans!

Reprinted from the Parshas Korach 5783 email of Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg’s Torah U’Tefilah.

The Lesson of Challah

By Aharon Spetner
Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l



Illustrated by M. Weinreb

“Wow, isn’t the weather beautiful?” Shimmy said as he walked home from cheder with his brother.

“Yeah, I told you that the low-pressure front passing north of us would bring cooler temperatures and nice breezes,” Yitzy said.

“Well thank you Hashem for low pressure fronts,” laughed Shimmy. “It’s nice to have a break from the recent heat wave.”

As the boys approached their house they noticed their next-door neighbor, Stevey Risnik, sitting on his front porch looking sad.

“Hi Stevey, is everything okay?” asked Shimmy.

“Hi Shimmy, hi Yitzy,” Stevey said glumly. “I just got home from school and the front door is locked. I don’t think anyone is home.”

“Oy, that’s terrible!” said Yitzy. “Why don’t you come over and use our phone to call your mother?”

“That would be great!” said Stevey with a smile.

“Hi Mommy!” called Shimmy and Yitzy as they walked into the house.

“Hi boys!” Mommy said with a smile, as she came out of the kitchen.

“Mommy, we told Stevey he could use our phone since he’s locked out of his house.” “Of course!” Mommy said with a smile. “Go ahead, the phone is right there.”

A minute later Stevey hung up the phone with a frown.

“What’s wrong, Stevey?” Mommy asked.

Stuck in Downtown Traffic

“My mother is stuck in traffic downtown,” Stevey said. “Apparently there was a major accident and the road is completely closed because helicopters are landing on the highway to evacuate the injured people. She doesn’t think she will be home for at least another hour.”

“Oy, that sounds terrible!” Mommy said. “Why don’t you join us for lunch - you can wait here until your mother comes home.”

“Really?” Stevey said, surprised.

“Of course,” smiled Mommy. “It would be our pleasure.” - “Basya, Yaeli, lunch is ready!” Mommy called.

Stevy followed the Greenbaum children to the kitchen, where the table was set with a beautiful lunch.

“Why doesn’t everyone go wash,” Mommy suggested as she placed a steaming hot loaf of bread in the middle of the table.

“You guys wash for bread even during the week?” Stevey asked.

“Of course,” replied Shimmy. “You don’t wash when you eat bread?”

“We do on Shabbos. But during the week, we just hold the bread in a napkin so we don’t have to wash. Why don’t you guys do that?”

“Well,” said Yitzy. “You’re really only allowed to do that if you’re somewhere where there is no water and you don’t have the ability to wash. And besides, washing is a Mitzvah and we always want to do as many Mitzvos as we can!”

“Interesting,” said Stevey.

Everyone washed and made Hamotzi, and started eating the delicious food Mommy had prepared.

“Who wants to thank Hashem first?” asked Mommy.

“Wait, what?” asked Stevey, confused.

“Oh, I’m sorry I should explain,” Mommy said. “In our house, we go around the table and thank Hashem for something at each meal.”

“I don’t understand,” said Stevey. “We already thanked Hashem when we made Hamotzi. And we’re going to thank Him again when we bentch. Isn’t that enough?”

“That’s a great question,” said Mommy kindly. “Let me ask you, do you know about the Mitzvah of Challah?”

“Of course!” said Stevey. “We eat challah every Shabbos!”

“No, I mean the Mitzvah of taking challah.”

“You mean like when we buy it in the store?”

“No,” said Mommy. “When we make bread, there is a Mitzvah to take off some of the dough. In the time of the Beis Hamikdash, that dough would be given to the Kohein.”

“I thought Terumah was given to the Kohein,” Stevey said, remembering what he had learned in Hebrew School.

“It is!” said Mommy. “But even though Terumah was taken off of the wheat, when we make bread, we have to take off yet another ‘terumah’

Why So Many Mitzvahs for the Same Food?

“Why are there two Mitzvos with the same food?” wondered Stevey.

“Not just two,” said Mommy. “There is also Maaser, and Terumas Maaser, not to mention Leket, Shichichah, and Peiah. And of course, brachos before and after eating. Can you think of why we have so many Mitzvos with regards to food?” Stevey shook his head.

“Because when we do Mitzvos we think about Hashem. And there is so much chessed that Hashem does in giving us delicious, nutritious food, that we must never stop thanking Him for providing us with bread and all of the other yummy things that we eat.”

“So that’s why you thank the Hashem at every meal,” Stevey said, finally understanding.

“Exactly!” Mommy said with a smile.

“Well then,” said Stevey. “I’d like to thank Hashem for giving me such wonderful neighbors who graciously invited me to their home for supper and taught me such an important lesson!”

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!

Takeaway: The mitzvah of challah teaches us that Hashem wants to remind us constantly of his kindness. It is the greatest happiness for us to constantly thank Him.

Reprinted from the Parshas Shelach 5786 email of Toras Avigdor Junior.