

# SHABBOS STORIES FOR PARSHAS VA'ESCHANAN 5785

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## Better Later than Never

By Rabbi Yechiel Spero



Having gotten his Tefillin from one of the most prominent scribes of his time, Reb Michel Prager was quite proud of them. He would always point out how dear they were to him and how rewarding it was to wear them.

Throughout his lifetime he had been faced with numerous challenges and difficulties, but never did he miss the opportunity to wear his tefillin. As a Chassidishe Yid, Reb Michel's davening played a major role in his life, and knowing that his tefillin were so special made it all the more gratifying.

Although he knew that there were some opinions that encouraged checking tefillin every so often, Reb Michel was careful not to have the sealed boxes opened for fear of exposing them to air and dust, and perhaps ruining them. And so, the tefillin were never checked.

One day, however, seventy-two years after he first put on the tefillin for his bar mitzvah, someone inadvertently switched their tefillin with his, and this man gave what he thought were his tefillin to a sofer (scribe) for checking.

The sofer (scribe) carefully checked all the words, scrutinizing them to ensure their validity. Suddenly, he let out a gasp. "Oy Gevalt! These tefillin are missing an entire word!" He continued to check the shel yad (hand) portion of the tefillin and found a missing word in them as well, rendering the entire pair pasul (invalid).

The man who had brought the tefillin to be checked was quite upset, but soon realized that these were not his tefillin at all. Upon closer examination he was able to determine that they were Reb Michel's tefillin. It was unbelievable! Reb Michel's tefillin were posul.

How would they break the bad news to the elderly man? He was 85 years old and the shock, horror, and disappointment of never having fulfilled a mitzvah of which he had been so proud could possibly cause him enough grief to endanger his life.

Several of the elderly members of the shul conferred and decided that they had no choice but to tell him. A doctor was brought along just in case Reb Michel experienced any medical problems. "Reb Michel," one of the elder gentlemen said, "we have something important to tell you,"

Slowly they spelled out the story — how the tefillin were switched, how the tefillin were taken to a sofer, and how Reb Michel's tefillin were found to be posul - invalid. They didn't have to explain further. Reb Michel understood that he had never properly fulfilled the mitzvah of tefillin. Not even once.

At first Reb Michel sat there frozen. They worried. Had he heard them? How was he going to react? They were wondering what else they should do when suddenly Reb Michel stood up and started smiling. At first Reb Michel began to laugh and then he started to sing and dance, instead of joining him they watched with pity, assuming that he was "losing it,"

This was someone who took more pride in his tefillin than in any other mitzvah. Who could blame him now for losing control? He sang and danced around the room, skipping with joy. To see an 85-year-old act this way was quite unusual and, under the circumstances, very sad. But, no one dared to interfere. After all, he was entitled.

Finally, he finished dancing and singing. Suddenly he looked up and noticed everyone staring at him. He then explained. "Do you know what this means? Had my tefillin never been checked, I never would have had [the opportunity to fulfill this precious mitzvah. But now I will. For this, I am very grateful."

And then, with tears streaming down his eyes, he began to unwrap a pair of kosher tefillin and put them on his head and on his arm. With a smile on his face and tears running down his cheeks. 85-year-old Reb Michel Prager fulfilled the mitzvah of tefillin for the very first time. (Excerpted from the ArtScroll book – "Touched by a Story", p. 205, Reb Yechiel Spiro.)

*Reprinted from the Parshas Balak 5785 email of Good Shabbos Everyone.*

# Sharing an Umbrella



**Rav Asher Arieli**

The Gemara in *Avodah Zarah* (17b) states clearly that one who engages in Torah alone but neglects *chesed* is like one who has no G-d:

The Maharsha explains that this is because *chesed* lies at the heart of Hashem's *midos*, and our role is to follow in His ways.

A Rosh Chaburah from the Mir Yeshiva was recently riding in a taxi when the driver, who didn't appear overtly religious, asked him, "Do you know a Rav Asher Arieli from the Mir?"

"Yes, I do," the Rosh Chaburah replied.

The driver nodded and said, "He played a major role in my family's life."

He went on to share the story.

His son, a talented and capable soldier, was finishing his service in the Israeli army. The army wanted him to stay on in an advanced position, and he also had the option to attend university and pursue any career path he wanted.

One day, this young man was in Yerushalayim to take care of some personal matters it began to pour, he took shelter near a building on Rechov Shmuel HaNavi not far from the Mir Yeshiva. That building happened to be where Rav Asher Arieli gives his Hebrew shiur twice a week.

The soldier, curious and with nothing else to do, stepped inside and began listening to the shiur. He was instantly captivated. **It was the first Torah shiur he**

**had ever heard, and he stood there, completely absorbed, for the entire duration.**

When the shiur ended, he was still standing motionless, processing the profound experience. Rav Asher Arieli exited the building and noticed the soldier standing there. In his characteristic humility and kindness, **Rav Asher instinctively offered to share his umbrella with the young man.**

They began walking together, and the soldier struck up a conversation discussing the shiur, asking questions, engaging in Torah. That conversation and that shiur changed his life.

The taxi driver finished his story with pride: **“Today, my son is an avreich in the Mir Yeshiva, learning in the Beis Shalom building.”**

This is the formula that creates the most powerful Kiddush Hashem: Torah and middos tovos. A shiur and the simple kindness of sharing an umbrella - it was that combination that changed a life forever.

*Reprinted from the Parshas Balak 5785 email of Rabbi Shraga Freedman.*

## **A Touch of Class**

**By Rabbi Paysach J. Krohn**



**Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky and Rabbi Pinchas Hirschprung**

Rabbi Pinchas Hirschprung, a prominent student in the Lubliner Yeshivah was asked to travel to America to solicit funds for the yeshivah. He thought it would be helpful to get a letter of recommendation from Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky, a leading Torah scholar of the generation. He traveled to the town of R' Grodzinsky,

and explained to him the nature of his visit. R' Grodinsky readily agreed to write the letter on behalf of the yeshivah.

After R' Grodinsky completed the letter, the two began to discuss Torah topics. A number of people gathered around to listen as dozens of *Talmudic* passages were cited and countless commentaries were quoted verbatim - from memory! The people listened with astonishment as the great sage verbally fenced with the young student.

Then R' Grodinsky quoted a passage from *Masechet Yoma*. He cited it as being on page 49. The young student suggested that it was actually on page 48.

"No," insisted R' Grodinsky, "if I remember correctly, it's on page 49."

The young man, who was already known as an accomplished *talmid hacham* with a phenomenal memory, was positive it was on page 48. He asked R' Grodinsky, "Perhaps we can check it out. Is there a *gemara* readily available?"

"It's not necessary," said R' Grodinsky as he touched the student's arm gently, so as not to let him get the *gemara*. "I see your mind is young and sharp, and I am already an old man. You're probably right. Why look it up? I might be embarrassed."

The young student felt bad for R' Grodinsky. The conversation continued, and eventually the student left.

Shortly after he left, the young man went to check the *gemara* to see who was right. When he found the passage, he was startled. He was wrong, and R' Grodinsky was right! The passage was indeed on page 49.

R' Hirschprung says it was then that he understood why R' Grodinsky didn't want him to check it out in front of those assembled in the room. For it was he, the student, who would have been embarrassed, and R' Grodinsky, in his kindness, wanted to save him from that humiliation. So instead of checking the source, R' Grodinsky made a disparaging comment about his own (non-existent) failing.

*Reprinted from the Parshat Balak 5785 email of Rabbi David Bibi's Shabbat Shalom from Cyberspace. Excerpted from the ArtScroll book – "Around the Maggid's Table by Rabbi Paysach J. Krohn.)*

## The Holy People

I'd like to share how our commitment to *kedusha* specifically, our practice of not shaking hands with members of the opposite gender resulted in a true Kiddush Hashem.

About twenty years ago, we found ourselves in a specialized hospital in Nashua, New Hampshire, where our seventeen-year-old son was scheduled for surgery. When we met the doctor for the first time, he extended his hand toward me.

I politely explained that among religious Jews, we do not shake hands with people of the opposite gender. My husband and son then shook his hand warmly.

After we discussed the details of the surgery, the surgeon asked if we could speak for a few minutes about this custom. I explained the basics of our boundaries in *kedusha*: how we study separately, maintain modest interactions, and avoid unnecessary closeness between men and women outside immediate family. He was deeply impressed and remarked that everyone should really live this way that such a moral life is the most beautiful, and that we cannot even imagine how many problems we avoid by upholding these values.

The next day, the surgery went smoothly. During the following days in the hospital, the staff treated us with exceptional respect. They provided us with an extra room so we could be together comfortably and repeatedly referred to us as “the holy people.”

*Reprinted from the Parshas Balak 5785 email of Rabbi Shraga Freedman. Excerpted from the Doeihu Daily Halacha – Doeihu.org*

# Becoming a Partner in a Deal with the Yismach Yisrael

By Yehuda Z Klitnick

A group of Alexander Chassidim once traveled and spent a Shabbos with the Yismach Yisrael, Harav Yerachmiel Yisrael Yitzchok Danziger. On their way home, they stopped at a hotel to rest. There, they met a Yid who got excited when he heard they were coming from Alexander.

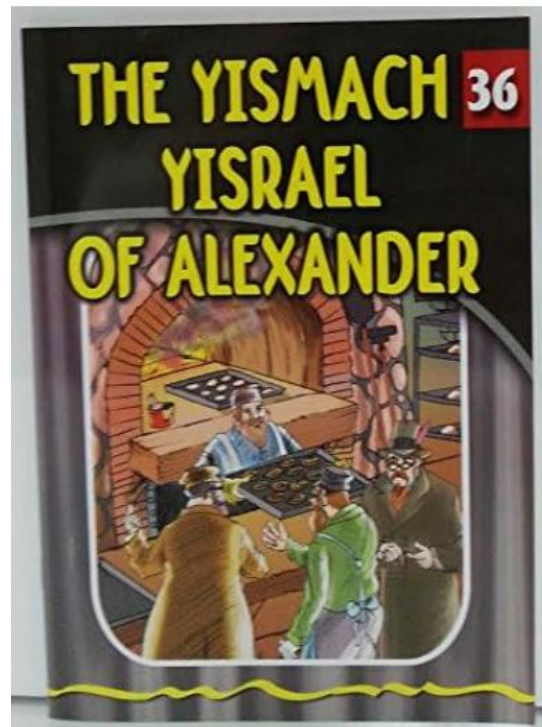
I will tell you something that happened to me personally with your Rebbe.” The chassidim gathered around to listen to the shoemaker tell his story.

“I live in the town of Kaluzshin. It has always been difficult for me to make a living. They were offering a shidduch for my daughter, but I had no money for dowry to offer the chosson.

“I heard that in Alexander there was a tzaddik that would bentch every Yid, no matter how heartbroken he was, and everyone who received his brachos was helped. I therefore decided that I would travel to Alexander and get a brachah from this tzaddik.

“When I went in to this tzaddik in Alexander, I told him my story, and told him of the trouble I was in. I begged him to give me a brachah that I should be able to marry off my daughter.

“The tzaddik gave me a bracha “Hashem will help you!’ The winter passed without my being helped. Not only that, but things got worse. Every year I would rent a field from the poritz. I would grow lots of fruit. I would sell the fruit and there would be enough money and fruit for my family to eat. But now I lost that, because a goy came and rented the field from the poritz.



“I decided then and there to travel a second time to Alexander. When I got in to see the Rebbe I had tears in my eyes, telling the tzaddik my problems and complaining that I had not yet been helped, and in fact my problems had increased! A goy had rented the field and now I was left with nothing.

“The Alexander Rebbe told me, ‘Go home and You will rent the field, not the goy. And you will marry off your daughter without any problems.’ “I was amazed to hear these words from the tzaddik. I traveled home with my emunah in the Rebbe complete.

“When I reached home, I found out that the goy had paid the poritz in full for the field. “A few weeks later, the poritz called for me. When I came to him, he told me that he wanted to order a pair of shoes for himself. While I was measuring his feet, we got into a discussion. He asked me if I was prepared to rent his field again for that year.



“I told him yes, I was ready, willing, and able to rent the field. He explained that the goy had backed out of the deal, and the field was now available. I rented the field from the poritz, promising the poritz thirty ruble for rent for the field.

“When I went to the field to check it out, I was in shock. I saw immediately why the goy had changed his mind and why the poritz had been in such a hurry to rent it to me. The trees had dried out completely, and there was no fruit on them at all. I would have no fruits to sell, and I owed the poritz 30 ruble! Now my troubles were even greater.

“That very same day I traveled a third time to Alexander. I told the Rebbe my problems had gotten worse than before. I had agreed to pay the poritz thirty rubles that I didn't have. Where was I going to get thirty ruble, when the trees were not going to give me any fruit? “Rebbe!” I cried out. “I have no dowry for my daughter, no parnassah for my family, and an empty field that will cost me more money for nothing!”

“Immediately, the tzaddik opened his drawer and took out fifteen rubles and said to me, ‘Take this half of the money you owe the poritz for the field. In return for this money you have to take me as a partner to share the profit with when the field brings you all the fruit!’

“I was happy to get that money, since my house was empty of food. “I came home,” continued the shoemaker, “and in my house they were sitting and waiting for a yeshua. “I couldn't bear to visit the field anymore. I couldn't go and work in the field, because I felt it was a waste to put work and money into a lost hope. The trees had shown me that they would not give me any more fruit, and it was obvious that this was the reason the goy had backed out of the deal.

“A few days passed, and a merchant from Lodz came to my house. Every year, this merchant came to me to buy fruit from the field and sell it back in Lodz. I was ashamed to go to the field with him. But my wife had more emunas tzaddikim than I had, and she told me to go to the field. ‘Go with the merchant to the field! You have a partner already, the Alexander Rebbe! He will certainly be a brachah to you!’

“When I arrived at the field, I was amazed. I saw that the trees were full of healthy, very nice fruit. They looked like they came from Gan Eden! The fruit was so ripe that some of them had already fallen off the trees. I collected the fruits and the merchant paid me very well for them. I took more fruit off the trees and sold it to more merchants who heard of the good fruit I produced. The more I took off the trees the more grew back. The profits were enormous!

“This kept up the entire summer. I sold all the fruit, and more grew back. The money from the profit I put into the box. “So much fruit grew, that I couldn't leave my house to go to the Rebbe because I had to go every day and pick the fruit. This continued happening until after Sukkos.



“After Sukkos I took the box of money and I traveled to Alexander. I went to the tzaddik and I opened the box of money and poured out the money onto the Rebbe’s desk. It was 900 rubles! I wanted to take 450 rubles, as that would have been my half, and that would have been a lot of money and certainly enough for me.

But the tzaddik said, ‘Take 700 rubles. From that money you will have enough to live, and a dowry for your daughter. The 200 rubles that belong to me I’m handing over to you to give to a certain kallah, an orphan that I have agreed to marry off, and I want you to be the shliach to do that mitzvah.’”

*Reprinted from the Parshas Balak 5758 of Pardes Yehuda*

## The Reward for Proper Davening

Rabbi Yitzchak the author of the Ohr Zarua told over the following story and vouched for its authenticity. Rabbi Bunim was the Gabbai of the Shul and also a member of the Chevra Kaddisha that bury the dead.

One morning Rabbi Bunim came into Shul and saw a Jew sitting there with a crown of nice smelling plants on his head. He looked to see who it was and to his horror he recognized him to be the man he had buried the day before.

He asked the man, “aren’t you the person I buried yesterday?”

“Yes I am,” replied the man.

“And what has happened to you in the Heavenly Court?”

“I was given entry to Gan Eden and I was welcomed with honor,” replied the man.

“But here you were such an ordinary person,” said Reb Bunim. “What merit did you have to get such a special Gan Eden?”

“Because I used to say Berochos in Shul sweetly and carefully. In that merit I was given a respectable place in Gan Eden.”

“And what is the crown of plants on your head,” asked Reb Bunim?

“Since I came down to this world again to tell you, I was given these sweet smelling herbs so I shouldn’t have to smell the bad odor of this world.”

This man was given the opportunity to come back down to this world to tell the Gabbai the power of making a Berocho carefully and how powerful it is in the world to come.

*Reprinted from the Parshas Balak 5785 email of Inspired by a Story by Rabbi Dovid Caro.*

# The Blessing for a Brilliant Surgeon Professor

Shimon (name changed) was very sick. He had been diagnosed with a severe illness and needed to be operated on. Shimon was a Talmid Chacham living in Eretz Yisrael who spent his day in Kollel learning. The operation was very complicated and Shimon was advised to have the operation in America by a world-famous professor.

The cost of the operation was hundreds of thousands of dollars. Shimon had no way of getting that kind of money together. Shimon's family was very worried. Shimon needed the operation and needed it very soon, but the funds were beyond their capabilities. Shimon had faith and the finances didn't seem to bother him. But he had a different problem.

Shimon heard that the Surgeon was a world-famous professor. He wasn't sure if on such a brilliant professor he could make the special Berocho 'He who gave wisdom to human beings' a blessing when seeing a very wise non-Jew. Shimon spent days studying the Halachos of this Berocho until he came to a clear ruling that this professor was in the league that this Berocho could be said in his presence.

Now Shimon was calm and ready to travel. Shimon arrived in America and continued on to the hospital. He waited in the doctor's office waiting for him to enter. As soon as the professor walked in Shimon stood up and made the Berocho with great concentration, so loud that he could be heard all the way down the corridor.

The professor looked at Shimon and asked him what's going on. Shimon explained the meaning of the Berocho how Hashem gave wisdom to human beings and this Berocho was only said when seeing special people.

The doctor listened and was nearly hypnotized from such honor. It took a few moments to recover. He turned to Shimon and said, "I am so taken by your blessing and honor that you will be my personal guest during your whole stay here in America. And in appreciation the operation fees will be waived."

*Reprinted from the Parshas Balak 5785 email of Inspired by a Story by Rabbi Dovid Caro.*

# The Joy Of Giving

By Eliana Klein

Unfortunately, as the well-known saying goes, “All good things must come to an end.” So, although we are all beyond grateful for the three years that our wonderful in-laws were *zoche* to live in and enjoy the beautiful garden apartment they rented soon after their *aliyah*, their landlord ultimately decided to take advantage of the robust housing market and put it up for sale.

It did not take long before the law of supply and demand and the realtors' magic formula of “Location, location, location” proved themselves once again, and the property was sold for a hefty profit. Alas, the lovely landlord's good fortune meant that the proverbial clock simultaneously started ticking for my in-laws to commence the search for another rental.

Needless to say, the very same dearth of apartments and sellers' market that fetched their landlord such a hefty price, meant that rentals were exceedingly few and far between, and listed for obscene price tags. Ever the uber-mensch, their balabus gave them several months to stay on, but between the war and consequent building slowdown, their options were slim indeed.

The rental had come partially furnished, which proved to be an asset when they first arrived. But, as they bought and ‘inherited’ nicer items, the extra furniture metamorphosed into somewhat of a nuisance instead. Fortunately, they had ample storage space, including a large outdoor shed, so they were able to transfer the extra dining room table and chairs and other unnecessary pieces there and promptly forget about them.

However, as their moving date approached, they suddenly remembered all the furniture they had stored in the shed and *machsan* a couple of years earlier. They had no desire to take those pieces with them, but were at a loss as to what to do. Needless to say, they already had their hands full enough with all the house-hunting, sorting, and packing.

What most people would have done is to leave all those items behind, to become the next guy's problem. But my incredible in-laws are definitely not most people. Despite being busy with family, work, and their imminent move, they genuinely cared about matching up the discarded furniture with people who could benefit from it. You know: One man's trash is another man's treasure, and all that. So now they had another time-consuming activity to add to their already overly full list.

First we called the city sanitation department to find out the weekly schedule for bulk pick-up. As soon as that miraculously fell on their targeted moving day, we

knew that we would ultimately not go that route. In any case, junking old but perfectly serviceable furniture was absolutely a last resort.

I posted photos and information about the available items on our local email and WhatsApp groups, and we received a number of responses. Most were from people who were interested in seeing the furniture, while one or two offered helpful suggestions.

“You should really tell Rav K and *tzedakah* X. I’m sure they will find someone very quickly. It seems to be in very good condition,” read one particularly specific reply. I immediately made a mental note to explore that option, but my train of thought was interrupted by the shrill ring of the phone.

Remarkably, it was the first *tzedakah* organization on the line. The woman on the phone asked whether my mother or father was available, as she was seeking donations for that very worthwhile *mossad*. I happily reported that we were long-time regular contributors, and that I was not only the mother of the house, but *baruch Hashem*, a proud grandmother as well. She sheepishly admitted that she had thought I sounded twelve years old, and we both had a good laugh.

As soon as I hung up, I had a belated lightbulb moment, and quickly called her back.

“Hi,” I said, “It’s the twelve-year-old Savta. We just spoke,” I giggled. She joined in the joke, and then I told her about the furniture, the suggestion, etc. “We don’t usually do that,” she confessed, “But I can think of a few people who may be interested, and I’ll try...”

We hung up, still giggling like schoolgirls, and I could not help but marvel at the incredible timing.

Long story short, a procession of prospective “buyers” came to check out and potentially take possession of the furniture. One woman eagerly claimed the table and chairs, taking some on the spot and returning for the rest.

Predictably, while we were up to our ears in last-minute packing, the calls and visitors came at a steady pace. I would have been frazzled and impatient, but my in-laws remained as gracious and welcoming as ever.

In the end, only one large cumbersome wooden breakfront and one sleek corner curio remained. Alas, moving day came, and, despite all their efforts, those two items had still not found a new home. However, in a belated moment of clarity, they realized that the sleek corner curio would actually fit quite seamlessly into their new scaled-down apartment, providing a touch of class and some much-needed additional storage and display space. One down, one to go.

They moved into the new place, temporarily leaving the large breakfront behind in the shed at their former address. The new owners were not scheduled to move in quite yet, so they had a bit more wiggle room to decide its fate, plus pack and schlep the last few items that they preferred to personally move by car.

On *Motzaei Shabbos* they returned to their former apartment to gather the last remaining items and do a final check of the property. While they were there, one of their neighbors stopped by to say hello and wish them luck.

“Is there anything I can help you with?” he inquired.

They were about to decline his kind offer, when realization dawned, and they instead responded, “Any ideas for this breakfront that we left behind?”

The neighbor followed them to the shed and took a long look at the imposing piece of furniture. Then he brought his wife to check it out as well.

“Our daughter is *be'H* getting married in a few weeks, and we both think it will be perfect for her!” they shared.

“*Mazel Tov!*” It truly was a match made in heaven!

*Reprinted from the March 16, 2025 website of The Jewish Press.*

## A Distinct Nation

The Torah instructs us to be holy nation, living distinct from the nations that surround us. We must not mingle with them or mimic their ways for we may become influenced by their lifestyles. Instead, we should focus on our unique mission of Torah and mitzvos.



At the age of fourteen, Reb Boruch, the Alter Rebbe's father, lost his parents. He traveled from town to town for three years until he arrived in Liozna, where he was employed to guard an orchard that two Yidden held on lease from the local poritz. Young Boruch enjoyed the peace and quiet and would spend his time davening and learning, without anyone detecting his greatness in Torah and avoda.

At harvest time he would help his employers, Reb Avraham and Reb Ezriel, and their families and other workers who would gather and pack the fruits. The workers, including the goyim, were impressed by him, for he was well-built, handsome, had a sweet voice and spoke a fluent Polish.

One day, the poritz visited the orchard with his family and, noticing Baruch's capabilities, engaged him in a discussion. They were amazed to hear his rich language. Baruch felt very uncomfortable with all the attention he was receiving. The next day, the poritz and his family returned specifically to speak with him, and after their discussion, invited him to visit their estate. However, Boruch declined their invitation.

One evening, while alone in the orchard, Boruch was unexpectedly visited by the son of the poritz. "Good evening," said the young visitor. "My father would like to invite you to spend the night with us, for we know how lonely it is out here."

Boruch knew that this visit would not bring good results, so he told him that he could not leave the orchard unattended. The visitor left but returned shortly with two men accompanied by huge watch dogs, saying, "Here, they'll take care of the job while you're gone."

Boruch was stuck. Personally, he had no qualms refusing the offer of the poritz, but he knew that a refusal could cause the poritz to pour out his wrath on the Yidden of Liozna. He therefore decided to accept the invitation, but resolved not display any fear and to present himself with Yiddishe pride, in the spirit of the Torah.

He was welcomed at the castle with great friendship which greatly displeased him, and he took the first opportunity to show his confidence by refusing to remove his hat. He explained in fluent Polish that a Yid is required to constantly feel HaShem's presence and hence cannot go bareheaded.

The poritz and his family were deeply impressed by the self-assurance and boldness of a simple Yiddishe watchman, especially since they were used to seeing Yidden trembling and behaving subserviently. In fact, the poritz showed such respect for his young guest that he covered his own head with his hat.

Boruch entered into a deep discussion about the value of Yiddishe minhagim, and emphasized the unfairness of using one's supremacy to interfere with another's beliefs and way of life. He displayed his wisdom and knowledge and explained many psukim and maamarei Chazal, all in fluent Polish, meanwhile contrasting the two worlds – the goyishe world of materialism and the Yiddishe world of ruchniyus.

The poritz thirstily drank all that Baruch said, but his children were unhappy with the direction the conversation had taken; they preferred lighter talk, so they decided to visit the orchard themselves the following day, just to schmooze. Foreseeing the possible danger in this friendship, Baruch was vexed, and tried to think of a solution to get out of it.

Meanwhile, he was invited to the dining-room that had been set up with dozens of delicacies, and although the food was kosher, he decided to eat nothing in order not to strengthen their relationship. Fortunately, he did not need to excuse himself, for at

that moment the youngest child of the poritz burnt himself with hot water, and the whole family ran to help with the emergency. Baruch took the opportunity to slip away and return to the orchard. That night he could not sleep.

What would he do if the children of the poritz came the next day to speak with him? All through the night he said Tehillim with tears. The next day he heard that the child had died, but he still felt restless, knowing that the other children of the poritz were likely to come despite the tragedy.

He decided to unburden himself to Reb Avraham and tell him of his decision to leave the job. Reb Avraham accepted his request and that night he and Reb Ezriel took over the task of guarding the orchard. It transpired that Baruch's suspicions were justified, for later that evening the son and daughter of the poritz came to the orchard, and when they heard that he was no longer there, they went home disappointed. As for Baruch, he received his wages from the partners and was now able to return to the beis midrash to immerse himself in davening and learning.

*Reprinted from the Pinchas 5785 email of The Weekly Farbrengen.*

## **The Zechus of the Chasam Sofer**

This concept of holy zealotry being passed down from one generation to the next is clearly seen in the following story (related in Sefer Meir Einei Yisroel):

The Chofetz Chaim zt"l once needed to plead to the government to annul a bitter decree against the yeshivos of his time, which had been enacted as a result of the mosdos haTorah being maligned and libeled by the maskilim.

Before leaving on his mission, the Chofetz Chaim asked a member of the Kornitzer family, a descendant of the Chasam Sofer zy"a, to come with him. This individual was confused. He didn't understand why the Chofetz Chaim chose him to accompany him on this mission but he reasoned that perhaps he wanted him to act as his spokesman and to speak on his behalf. However, he soon saw that this was not the case.

When they had their audience with the ministers, the Chofetz Chaim spoke on his own and beseeched them to annul the decree. His heartfelt pleas were accepted and the decree was cancelled.

On the way home, he asked the Chofetz Chaim why he needed him to accompany him. The Chofetz Chaim answered, "Your ancestor, the Chasam Sofer, exerted himself greatly to zealously battle for Hashem's honor against the maskilim who wanted to uproot Yiddishkeit. I wanted his descendant to come with me so that the zechus of the Chasam Sofer would be with me as I fought against the blasphemy of the maskilim."

*Reprinted from Parshas Pinchas 5785 edition of The Way of Emunah: Collected Thoughts on the Weekly Parshah from Rabbi Meir Isamar Rosenbaum.*