

SHABBOS STORIES FOR PARSHAS TOLDOS 5786

Volume 17, Issue 10 2 Kislev November 22, 2025

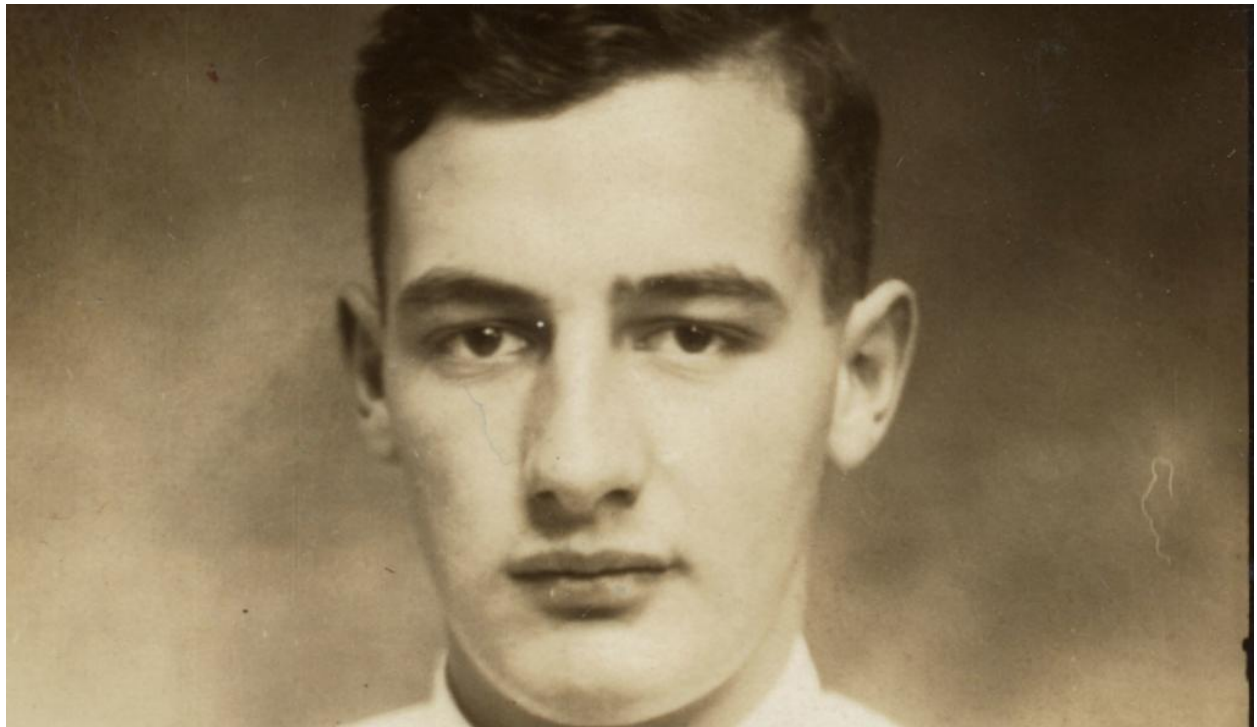
Printed L'illuy nishmas Nechama bas R' Noach, a"h

For a free subscription, please forward your request to keren18@juno.com

Past emails can be found on the website – ShabbosStories.com

Herbert's Roommate

By Rabbi Boruch Brull



Herbert's roommate in 1935

Palestine was a haven for thousands of European Jewish refugees escaping from the Nazis, yemach shemam. Among these refugees was Herbert Froehlich, a young man who arrived from Germany in 1935. He rented a room in Haifa from a woman who owned a boarding house. After Herbert had lived there for many weeks, the woman asked him if he would accept a roommate. Realizing that his landlady

needed the extra income to offset the difficult economic situation, Herbert readily agreed.

As fate would have it, his roommate turned out to be the only non-Jew in the boarding house. Being a good-natured fellow, Herbert welcomed his roommate warmly and they established a close friendship as well as a mutually deep respect for one another. Herbert learned that his roommate's parents had sent him to Palestine from Sweden in order to learn the British banking system. After being invited to join in various Jewish trips and activities, including Shabbat meals, Herbert's roommate gained an appreciation for the Jewish religion and the Jewish people.

“A Sign of Our Everlasting Friendship”

After several months, Herbert's roommate completed his education in Palestine and prepared to return to Europe. As the two friends tearfully bid each other farewell, Herbert's roommate removed his ski cap from his head, handed it to Herbert and said, “I want you to keep this as a sign of our everlasting friendship.”

Just a few years later, the world turned a blind eye as six million Jews were slaughtered in Europe during World War II. Only a small number of gentiles stood up to save Jewish lives. Among these heroes was a young secretary at the Swedish Diplomatic Mission in Budapest named Raoul Wallenberg. He was instrumental in saving thousands of Jews by securing visas for them. To this day his whereabouts are unknown, as Raoul Wallenberg was arrested by Russian soldiers during the last days of the war. It is believed that he died in one of Stalin's prisons or in Siberia.

He Never Forgot His Friend Raoul

Many could not understand Raoul Wallenberg's unusual sensitivity towards the Jewish people, but Herbert Froehlich did. You see, Raoul was Herbert's roommate. Herbert believed that Raoul's association with his Jewish friends in Palestine was instrumental in creating his tremendous desire to help the Jews. As for Herbert, he never forgot his friend Raoul and wore his ski cap every night, even as it tattered and frayed with age. Thousands of lives were saved, no doubt in part because one Jew made a Kiddush Hashem. (Excerpted from the Feldheim book – “For Goodness' Sake”)

Reprinted from the Parshat Noah 5786 email of Rabbi David Bibi's Shabbat Shalom from Cyberspace

The Simple But Wealthy Merchant Who Desired to Meet Eliyahu Hanavi

In Kosov, the home of Rabbi Baruch of Kosov lived a wealthy textile merchant named Reb Moshe. He lived in the better section of the city, in a luxurious mansion on a huge estate, on which grassy lawns, and orchards of fruit trees all flourished. Although a simple person, his innate humility seemed to remain unaffected even as his wealth grew from year to year.

But then, one day, an unusual idea entered his mind and took hold of his heart. Moshe had become obsessed by the desire to experience a revelation of Eliyahu Hanavi. Not that he was under the illusion that because of his wealth he was entitled to see Eliyahu. He knew better than that.

So, to become "worthy" of attaining his objective, he undertook a series of fasts and other forms of self-afflictions, hoping that would enable him to fulfill his wish. But to no avail. He started to keep company with the Chassidim and the other great people in the community, emulating their ways. He hoped that their superior spiritual attainments would rub off on him and result in elevation that would allow him to attain his goal. But that also didn't work.

Unsure what to try next, he decided to consult the local Tzaddik, Rabbi Boruch of Kosov. The Rebbe listened intently, but then, to Moshe's dismay, said, "Reb Moshe, why are you trying to pursue such lofty matters? Your task is to perform acts of kindness and charity, that's what your soul requires for its rectification."

Moshe left the Rebbe's room, frustrated. He still felt sure that he knew what he really needed. From that day on, Moshe the merchant's behavior changed radically. He abandoned his business for hours at a time in order to be in the Beis Hamedrash. He no longer paid much attention to his personal appearance or the upkeep of his estate, abandoning almost completely the aristocratic lifestyle he had adapted over the years.

After some time, he went to visit the Tzadik again. Eyes downcast, the dark shadow of depression on his face, it was clear he was deeply troubled. His desire to see the prophet left him no peace. As he told the Rebbe of his frustrations, he involuntarily emitted a deep sigh. The Rebbe repeated his advice that the proper path for Moshe was that of kindness and good deeds. This time, however, he seemed to

accept Moshe's sincerity, and advised him to greatly increase his distribution of Tzeddaka.

Then, after a pause, the Rebbe added mysteriously, "If a poor man should approach you and request even a thousand gold pieces, don't refrain from granting his request."

Once again, Moshe felt belittled by the Rebbe's reply. Nevertheless, he decided to adhere closely to his counsel. Any poor person that crossed Moshe's path was immediately endowed with a generous contribution, without any delay to check the recipient's worthiness. For several years, Moshe conducted himself in this manner, but still there was no revelation of Eliyahu. His frustration gave him no rest.

One day, while he was busy at work with a number of different customers, a messenger arrived from his house, sent by his wife. A poverty-stricken man, related the messenger, had knocked on the door of the house, begging for help. The pauper, however, had refused to accept the food that a servant had brought. Instead, the pauper had insisted that he be invited into the dining hall so he could sit and eat there. Reb Moshe's wife wasn't sure how to handle the situation, so she had sent to ask her husband's advice.

At first Moshe was outraged by the needy man's chutzpa. But then, remembering the Rebbe's counsel, he instructed the messenger simply to tell his wife that he would come home as soon as he could, and that in the meantime she should fulfill the stranger's unusual request and invite him in.

When he arrived about an hour later, he found his wife pacing near the entrance, in a bad state, impatiently awaiting him. As soon as she saw him she burst out bitterly, "Not even sitting in our dining hall satisfies this beggar; he demanded to take a nap in our bedroom!" Moshe dashed upstairs to the master bedroom. He could barely believe the sight that greeted him, a disheveled crude-looking person, wearing what seemed to be more rags and patches than actual clothing, sprawled across his bed, with the stains and remains of his meal spread all over himself, and the fresh linens, along with some of the mud on his worn-out boots.

As Moshe stood there with bulging eyes and mouth opened wide, the "guest" looked up at him and drawled, "Nu? So how about a little donation? A modest, insignificant sum only a measly thousand gold pieces."

Moshe wasn't sure whether to erupt in anger or burst into laughter. He was so taken aback, he felt powerless to move or speak; he could only stand there in stunned silence. "If you won't give me right now one thousand cash, I won't leave!" announced the strange beggar defiantly.

Moshe calmed down a bit from his initial shock. Deciding to ignore the insult to his honor, he simply offered the man a lesser sum. "Fifty...a hundred...one hundred fifty..." Eventually he offered him 200 gulden-not at all a small sum. It was if the

man on his bed had sealed his ears. He kept arrogantly asserting he would take 1000 gulden and not a penny less.

Moshe finally lost all patience with this rude man and signaled his servants to remove the impudent guest from his presence. But the target was much too quick. Before they could lay a hand on him, he climbed out of the window and disappeared. All this occurred just a few hours before Lag ba'Omer.

That night all the chassidim gathered at the Tzaddik's table in honor of the occasion. Moshe, our textile merchant, was among them. Rebbe Boruch spoke about the divine revelations that are manifested on this special day, but that not everyone merits to recognize them.

Moshe decided that this must certainly be an auspicious moment to mention his burning request. The Rebbe's response shocked him like an icy hand squeezing his heart: "But didn't you already meet a poor person who requested from you one thousand gold pieces?"

Moshe quickly told the Tzaddik about the impudent beggar who had so crudely pushed his way into his house earlier in the day.

"Ach. What a pity!" the Rebbe sighed softly. "You saw Eliyahu Hanavi but didn't recognize him."

"That was Eliyahu Hanavi?!!" Moshe screamed in dismay.

"Yes," explained the Rebbe. "He appears to people according to the root of their souls and the level of their deeds."

Moshe was truly broken-hearted. He and his wife decided to move to the Eretz Yisrael. They settled in the holy city of Tzefas, where a change came over him almost immediately. He no longer sought greatness or extraordinary revelations. He served Hashem simply and whole-heartedly. Before Lag ba'Omer he would go to Meron and devote himself to serving the attendees that crowded in to Meron round the clock. He rubbed shoulders with the masses of simple Jews that came to honor Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, taking pleasure from their company and helping to take care of their needs.

Several years later, at Meron on Lag ba'Omer, as Moshe was hurrying to and fro to help serve the many guests, he suddenly saw in front of him a face that was burned into his memory: it was the "beggar" who had appeared at his house so many years ago! Moshe froze in his tracks. He stared in amazement at the person in his path. This time the eyes that looked back at him were no longer outraged and challenging; they were bright and shiny in the midst of a smiling face.

Reprinted from the Parshas Lech Lecha 5786 email of Inspired by a Story by Rabbi Dovid Caro.

The Broken Shiduch – Part 2

By C.B. Weinfeld

Chana* began volunteering in the pediatric oncology ward, sitting beside frail little patients, holding their hands, softly singing. Soon she became one of the most devoted volunteers—staying overnight so exhausted parents could rest, spending Shabbos in the hospital when needed, and becoming a familiar face at Sloan Kettering and Hackensack. It was emotionally draining, yet it filled her with purpose. She laughed and cried with “her” children and their families, celebrated small miracles, and davened through setbacks.

Slowly, a thought began to take shape: Maybe this is what I’m meant to do. Accounting had never made her heart come alive like this. Despite her parents’ hesitation—“After all that schooling for accounting, now this?”—she enrolled in nursing school. The workload was grueling, but her determination never wavered.

Nurses told her that her volunteer work was the best training she could have for her chosen specialty, pediatric oncology. During that time, she met eight-year-old Hudis*, whose smile could light up a hospital room. When treatments stopped working, Chana became like family—playing games, making her laugh, and sitting through long nights at her bedside. Hudis’s parents, overwhelmed with seven other young children, leaned on Chana for help.

Often, she’d relieve Hudis’s uncle, Sender*, a quiet man who learned or said Tehillim beside her bed. When she took over his shift, he’d greet Chana with a soft nod—“Rough night. She coded twice.”

Chana once commented to Hudis’s mother how she marveled at how Sender, a young married man, was so devoted to Hudis, leaving his wife and children to sit nights in the hospital.

Hudis’s mother told her, “Sender isn’t married. He got divorced right after his chasunah—his wife had hidden a severe mental illness. He never speaks badly of her. Such a tzaddik.”

Chana was stunned. She assumed he was married because of the tallis bag he always carried, on his way to Shacharis after a night’s shift. She would have never guessed. She had always recognized Sender’s calm strength and shining middos. Now she saw him differently—someone who’d endured pain yet carried himself with quiet dignity. Half-jokingly, she told her parents, “If he weren’t divorced, he’d be perfect.” Her mother was not amused.

Hudis’s condition worsened, and unfortunately, she was niftar. Chana was heartbroken and stayed close to the family through shivah. Weeks later, Hudis’s

mother called. “Chana... my brother Sender would like to meet you. Would you consider it?”

Chana froze. She thought long and hard, sought hadrachah, and everyone said the same: Sender was exceptional. His divorce wasn’t his fault. His middos and devotion to learning spoke louder than anything else. Chana agreed to meet him. When they met—something just clicked. Their values aligned. A while later, they were engaged.

It’s been ten years. They have built a beautiful family. Sender learns in kollel; Chana works part-time as a pediatric oncology nurse. Every day she thanks Hashem for orchestrating events to bring her together with Sender, and for giving her the clarity to see beyond externals.

Reprinted from the Parshas Vayeira 5786 email of The Weekly Vort. Excerpted from the ArtScroll book – “Another Handful of Stars.”

Reprinted from the Parshas Vayeira 5786 email of The Weekly Vort.

JUST FOUR SHEKELS

The office of Lev L’Achim hummed with quiet rhythm — phones ringing, papers shuffling, lives being changed one small act at a time. **Rav Uri Zohar**, one of the legendary founders, was seated nearby when he overheard the secretary take a call.

“Yes...of course,” she said, scribbling a note. “So you’d like to increase your monthly donation from ten shekels to fourteen? Wonderful, I’ll update that right now.”

Four shekels. Barely more than a cup of coffee. Yet, something in that number made Rav Uri pause. Why fourteen? Why not fifteen — or twelve? It was too specific, too deliberate.

He looked up. “Who was that?” he asked.

The secretary shrugged. “A regular donor. Just wanted to raise his contribution.”

Rav Uri smiled, a spark in his eyes. “No one raises their donation by four shekels without a story behind it. I want to hear that story.”

He called the man himself.

“Shalom aleichem,” he began warmly. “This is Uri Zohar from Lev L’Achim. I saw your note — you raised your donation from ten shekels to fourteen. I wanted to personally thank you — and, if I may, ask...why four?”

On the other end, there was a soft chuckle, then a sigh.

“Well, Rav Uri,” the man said, “I’m in kollel, baruch Hashem, with a large family. For years, I gave fourteen shekels each month. But about six months ago, my wife became ill. She needed me home in the evenings, so I stopped attending night kollel. That meant losing that little bit of extra income. I called your office and asked them to reduce my donation to ten shekels — it was all I could manage then.”

He paused. “Now, baruch Hashem, my wife is doing better. I’m back at night kollel. So...I can give the extra four again.”



Rav Uri Zohar and Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman

Rav Uri was silent for a moment. He could almost feel the weight of those four shekels — heavy with gratitude, sacrifice, and ahavas Hashem.

A week later, he was in America, sitting across from a philanthropist known for his generosity. The man filled out a check — fifty thousand dollars — and handed it over with a proud smile. Rav Uri looked at the check, then at the man, and said, “Let me tell you a story.”

He recounted the phone call — the kollel man, the illness, the four shekels that meant everything. “You know,” Rav Uri added softly, “Hashem doesn’t count the coins. He counts the heart behind them. You can’t imagine how the Heavens must shake from that increase — not for its size, but for its sincerity.”

The philanthropist sat still for a long moment. Then, slowly, he tore up the check. Rav Uri blinked — uncertain. Without a word, the man reached for his pen again and wrote a new one — this time for a hundred thousand dollars.

Rav Uri smiled. It wasn’t about the number on the paper. It was about the number that had reached his soul.

When he returned to Eretz Yisrael, he shared the story with Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman, who listened intently, his eyes moist.

“Can you imagine?” Rav Shteinman said, his voice trembling. “That kollel man — when he arrives in Shamayim after one hundred and twenty years — he’ll be greeted by dozens of Yidden who became observant because of those four shekels.”

Four shekels — pocket change, yet enough to ripple across eternity.

Reprinted from the Parshas Lech Lecha 5784 email of Zichru Toras Moshe.

The Promise of the Chofetz Chaim



The Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation shared a story. Shaya sat across the table from the nice young man who was engaged to his daughter, Dassi. The Choson had asked for a meeting, and it was short. He said, “This is nothing against Dassi, it’s just a feeling inside me that this marriage isn’t right for me.”

Shaya assured the boy that there were no hard feelings. Better a broken engagement than a broken marriage. He wished the Choson well and went home to deliver the news.

Dassi was devastated. The whole family wandered around in a state of disbelief. Then Shaya got a call from an old friend of his who said, “You don’t know this, but my daughter also had a broken engagement. I’m going to tell you something that helped us. At the time, we made a Kabalah that when people would ask us what happened, we wouldn’t speak any Lashon Hara about the Choson. In that merit, we asked that the Chofetz Chaim should intervene for us and help our daughter find her Bashert quickly. And she did.”

Shaya knew this was the right way. He gathered his family together and said, "We all know that we'll be getting questions from people about the Choson. He's going to be dating, Dassi's going to be dating, and people are going to ask what happened. We're going to be tempted to vent our pain. I want us to agree right now that there will be absolutely no Lashon Hara said about him. In that Zechus, I believe that the Chofetz Chaim himself will intervene for us and Dassi will soon be a Kallah."

The family accepted this Kabalah, and it was one that was difficult to keep. But Shaya knew they had made the right decision when, on the 24th of Elul, which is the Chofetz Chaim's Yahrtzeit, Dassi became engaged!

Reprinted from the Parshas Vayeira 5786 email of Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg's Torah U'Tefilah.

The Great Desire to Help Another Jew

Some thirty years ago in New York, a certain Mr. Fogel (fictitious name) - a middle-aged Chassid - was listening to a Torah tape of the Lubavitcher Rebbe while driving home late one evening from work. He had heard this one particular one tens of times but for some reason he liked it. But suddenly one sentence really struck him. It was as though the Rebbe was speaking to him directly: "As is known, the Baal Shem Tov said that a soul can come into this world for seventy, eighty years just to do a favor for someone, especially a fellow Jew."

Suddenly Mr. Fogel became lost in thought. 'Could it be that I could live my entire life and never fulfill my purpose! Could such a thing really happen? After all who knows the secret ways of G-d if not the Baal Shem Tov?'

He became serious. His eyes even began to fill with tears and he began to pray. 'Please, Hashem, guide me to do what I'm supposed to do, I don't want to miss my purpose!' Deep in thought he began to imagine the hundreds (today there are thousands) of Chassidim all over the world going 'out of their ways' to wake up Jews spiritually. Nothing is more important. nothing!

When he came out of his reverie he realized that he was in a strange place and it took him a few seconds to figure out what happened. He had passed his turn-off,

gotten off the expressway several stops too late and now was in a different district of Brooklyn.

He was looking for a place to make a U-turn when something caught his eye. To his right, at the side of the road was an older man standing before the open hood of a stalled car.

The street was unusually empty so Mr. Fogel slowed down, opened his right-side window and had a better look. The fellow looked up at him and signaled. It didn't look suspicious so he pulled over and asked what was wrong.

"Ahh! What rotten luck! I can't figure it out." The fellow yelled out. "The thing just died on me! Now I'm really stuck!! A tow truck stopped about ten minutes ago but they wanted six hundred dollars to tow me home! Six hundred! And I only live fifteen minutes away!"

Mr. Fogel pulled his car even closer and the fellow continued. "And I'm stalled in a no parking zone. Look at this! Even if I caught a taxi. if I leave the car here . they'll tow it away." "Fogel pointed to a spot about fifty yards ahead and said, "Just don't worry. G-d will help. Here, look over there! About a hundred feet away is a place you can park. See! I'll push you. Get in your car and I'll push you. Then you can take a taxi home."

"Thanks!" he yelled back as he walked to open the door to his car. "But I've been waiting here for a long time and not one taxi has passed. look!The road is deserted. But I guess you're right. Worrying doesn't help."

Mr. Fogel was totally convinced that this fellow was telling the truth. So, after pushing him to the parking place and the fellow locked his car up, he offered to take him home. After all it was only a fifteen-minute ride. The old fellow couldn't stop thanking him. He got into Fogel's car and kept talking.

"Wow! Thanks a million! I really appreciate this!! Now all we have to do, my wife and I that is, is order a cab."

He looked at his watch, "Whew! It's really late! I hope we don't miss our plane. We're flying to Florida to visit our daughter and the plane is leaving in an hour."

"Listen" said Mr. Fogel "It's no problem. You know what. I'll take you to the airport, after all it's only a half hour drive and my wife won't worry. Just don't ask questions. As soon as we get to your house get your wife and suitcases and let's go! You have no time to waste."

The old fellow tried weakly to protest but realized that this Chassid was right, so in no time he and his wife were in the car and before they knew it were at the airport. "I can't thank you enough" said the old man as he pulled his suitcase from the trunk.

"Listen, you got to let me pay you! Here, do me a favor.. take a hundred dollars." He pulled a bill from his wallet. "Nu! It's the least I can do. Just take it! But Fogel would have no part of it.

"Sorry, my friend! First-of-all thank G-d I don't need the money. Second, it was a favor so I don't want the money. And third it was no big deal; the whole thing took less than an hour and I enjoyed it, so I don't even deserve the money." But the old man insisted, even took another hundred out and kept pushing it at Fogel saying "Just take it. Nu! Don't argue. Just take it."

Until finally Mr. Fogel said. "Excuse me but you're Jewish, right?" the fellow shook his head yes. "So, listen, if you really want to repay me then, you know what? Put on Tefillin. Do you put on Tefillin? Do it every morning for a month."

The man shook his head no. In fact, it was exactly what he did not want to hear. Tefillin?! No way!! I'm not doing no mitzvos! No MITVOS! Not me!"

"Alright, so then don't put on Tefillin." Fogel replied. "You were the one that wanted to pay. As far as I'm concerned you don't owe me anything but if you want to pay, this is what I want. Nu? What do you say? Just buy yourself a pair of Tefillin and put them on when you can. Okay?"

The old fellow looked at Fogel with foggy eyes for a second, shook his head reluctantly and said ."All right. I'll do it!" Then he half-heartedly shook Fogel's hand, looked at his watch and ran to get a luggage cart.

As soon as her husband was far enough away, his wife approached Fogel with tears in her eyes, dabbed them with a small kerchief and said, "Thank you! G-d just sent you!"

She spoke in a low voice, keeping an eye on her husband to make sure he was involved with the cart but, although she tried to hide it, she was obviously very emotional, her eyes were red from crying.

"You don't know what you just did. It was a miracle! We are holocaust survivors. We met after the war, got married, moved here to New York and agreed that we wouldn't do anything Jewish. Nothing. We were mad at G-d, you know."

She started crying again. "But as we got older I began to yearn for the things from my mother's house.. you know, like lighting candles before Shabbos. But each time I mentioned it my husband said 'NO MITZVOS!! Our children got married, we are alone in the house but he still says 'No Mitzvos''!"

"So, yesterday I felt so bad that .. I did something I haven't done since the war.. I prayed. "I begged G-d to send some miracle to change my husband's mind. And now you came .. You are a miracle!! "I'm sure that this Shabbos we will have Candles."

Reprinted from the Parshas Lech Lecha 5786 email of Good Shabbos Everyone.

Rav Avigdor Miller's Electioneering



The following story was told by a talmid of Rav Miller. It was the late in the evening on Election Day in New York City, sometime in the early 1980's. Rav Miller was very vocal about the upcoming election and had spent the previous four months storming about the importance of voting against the Democrat candidate for Mayor of New York.

The Rav was adamant that the frum tzibbur should come out to the polls in large numbers to fight against the immoral and dangerous ideology of the Democrat Party in New York. He spoke about it before shiurim, after shiurim, even during shiurim. He urged his mispallelim and shiur attendees to call friends and encourage them to vote Republican, and to go as far as handing out papers, leaflets, to others to make clear the importance of the election for the city on a whole and especially for the frum community.

Finally, the polls closed - it was Motzei Election Day, and the final results were coming in. A grandson of Rav Miller was visiting his grandfather in the Rav's apartment upstairs from the shul and he offered to do a favor for the Rav. "Should I go down to the shul and find out from someone there what the results were, if our candidate won?"

The Rav responded. "No, I'm not interested. It's fine. Whoever wins, wins."

"But Zeidy," said the grandson in shock. "What do you mean 'Whoever wins, wins'? This is all you've been talking about for months; about how important it is to vote in order to fight against the rishus, the wickedness, of these politicians! How can you not be anxious to learn who won? What do you mean you're not interested?"

"You have to understand," the Rav explained, "When I fight against the liberals and the enemies of the Torah, I'm doing it because they're waging a war against Hashem and part of my avodas Hashem is to fight on His side, to fight for what He wants. What the results will be, that's out of my hands; I just have to do the most I possibly can to battle for Hashem. Once I do that, I'm not interested in following the results, being nervous about it and wasting time with it. Our job is to serve Hashem and fight for Torah values as much as possible. The results? What will be, will be. But we can never stop doing our part."

That was R' Avigdor Miller's outlook on life. It's all about fulfilling the words of Dovid HaMelech, "Ohavei Hashem Sinu Ra" - if we love Hashem, we must despise evil. We have to do our utmost to be on Hashem's team. He could not understand how Jews can vote for a party whose platform is virulently anti-religious and anti-Hashem. How can Jews smile when corrupt individuals visit our community in an attempt to garner our votes? How can they justify voting in order to get money for yeshivos when those same votes will bring billions of dollars to the liberal anti-morality causes? Of course, so no matter the outcome of any election, we all must place our faith and trust solely in the One above.

Reprinted from the Parshas Vayera 5786 email of Torah Tavlin.