



לזכות  
הת' מנחם מענדל שיחי'  
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות  
כ"ג שבט ה'תשפ"א  
נדפס ע"י הוריו  
הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק  
וזוגתו מרת רישא ברכה  
ומשפחתם שיחיו  
גורביץ

# The Price of a String

“Gone! Completely missing!” cried the distraught Chossid.

For Reb Meir Refoels, devoted Chossid of the Alter Rebbe, the business trip was routine. Sitting in his private wagon with his driver at the reins, things were going as usual, until he looked down and noticed that a full corner of his *tzitzis* strings had torn off.

“Stop the wagon immediately,” he called out to the driver up front. “I do not want to travel even four *amos* without *tzitzis*.”

What were they to do but wait on the side of the road waiting and praying that a passing peddler would have a pair of *tzitzis* somewhere between his wares.

The minutes turned to hours and still there was no hope in sight.

The sun began to set and twilight colors began to paint the horizon. Just then Reb Meir heard the sound of footsteps well off in the distance and the image of a man began to take shape.

Reb Meir began to scream at the top of his lungs, urgently trying to catch the man’s attention. His efforts seemed in vain, however, as the figure began to fade away into the distance.

In one final desperate attempt, he called even louder until this time his efforts paid off and the man came to inquire what they wanted from him.

“Do you have *tzitzis* with you?” asked Reb Meir holding his breath.

“Even if I did have I would not empty my entire sack for a few strings,” answered the stranger

angrily. “My goal was to reach the city before nightfall and now you have wasted my time on such a petty matter.”

And with those words he turned around and began heading back to where he had come from.

“Even if I pay you well?” asked Reb Meir.

Intrigued, he slowly turned around. “How much? A Ruble! That’s not worth it for me.” He blurted out and continued on his way.

“However much you want,” promised Reb Meir.

“If so...” he began, his greedy eyes lighting up, “Give me all that you have. Everything in your pockets and bags.”

Without hesitation, Reb Meir emptied everything he had and handed it to the

peddler who in exchange gladly gave him the *tzitzis*.

Some time later, Reb Meir traveled to the Alter Rebbe for *yechidus*.

As soon as he walked into the room, the Alter Rebbe got up from his seat. To the complete shock of Reb Meir, he began to remove money from between the pages of his *sefarim*. After counting all the coins he was amazed to see that it was the exact amount he had spent on his *tzitzis*.

It later became revealed to Reb Meir that the traveling merchant was none other than Eliyahu Hanavi who was sent to test him. ①

(Migdal Oz p. 177.)