



HELPED BY A HIGHER POWER

*In a recent interview with A Chassidisher Derher,
Rabbi Levi Yitchok Gurkow, Shliach in Oceanside, Long Island,
related the following episode about one of his Mekuravim*

Meir, a respected member of our community, is the owner of the trucking company “Moe’s Trucking” in Oceanside, Long Island. When he began exploring Yidishkeit more seriously about five years ago, he started paying occasional visits to the Ohel and as his Shliach I would always accompany him.

One day, during a conversation with Meir, I told him, “The Rebbe belongs to everyone personally, you don’t need me to come with you!” This statement really had its desired effect on Meir and he began visiting the Ohel on his own and increased his visits to about twice a month.

As the successful owner of a thriving business, Meir won the respect and esteem of many members of our community. As a result, Meir also gained the ability to influence people he knew from the community, whom he brought along with him on his visits to the Ohel.

The spiritual bond that Meir and his

family developed with the Rebbe and the Ohel made the trip to Queens an integral part of the family routine.

During Chanukah of 5771, Meir experienced a miracle of his own at the Ohel.

THE THREAT MATERIALIZED

The United Parcel Service (UPS) is one of Meir’s most lucrative clients. Among other services, Meir rents out trucks and drivers to companies for short-term jobs in the New York area. The work between Meyer’s local company and the international UPS was conducted successfully and smoothly, keeping both sides very satisfied.

One day something went wrong. One of the senior employees at UPS, who was known to be somewhat unscrupulous in character and dubious in his actions, started harassing Meir to join him in some shady business. The harassment worsened, until it began sounding like real threats. He put forth an ultimatum to Meir, “If you fail to cooperate with me

in this illegal activity, I will make it my business to end agreements between yourself and UPS”.

Meir found himself in a difficult position. He was unable to approach superiors at UPS because surely they wouldn’t believe him. Getting the authorities involved could make things difficult for Meir as well.

Cooperation with UPS was a decent share of his income which he had no desire to give up. On the other hand, as an honest and truthful person, he refused to cooperate with the crooked actions of this man and break the law. So he tried to appease him, hoping that he will reach into his heart and convince him to retract his threats. He sent gifts for his birthday, and invited him along to the baseball game they both enjoyed.

But to no avail. Meir was at a loss. He did not allow himself to be drawn into crime, and as a result, just watched despairingly as UPS slowly severed ties with

him and turned to his competitors.

Meir, depressed as he was, did not lose his temper. He knew where the address was to pour out his heart regarding his difficult situation. He headed for the Ohel, secluded himself in a corner of the tent, and began to write a pan to the Rebbe. He laid out all the details that transpired, not leaving anything out. The pages filled up quickly, and he held nothing back.

Towards the end, when he felt he had finished transcribing the entire incident, he recalled his two sons, young men in their twenties and thirties, who helped him in his trucking company, and his heart ached.

“They do not show any emotion or connection for Yiddishkeit,” he wrote in his pan. In every such letter he made a point to mention them, and ask the Rebbe’s blessing that at least they marry a Jew. With a broken heart, he walked into the Ohel and immersed himself in prayer, his tears flowing freely. Meir came out of the Ohel with his heart several tons lighter. His future was in the best hands. Henceforth, the Rebbe will certainly take care of him.

A SURPRISE VISIT

Less than 24 hours later, the phone in Meir’s office rang. When the caller identified himself Meir was astonished, almost falling from his office chair. He can barely believe it - the CEO of a major truck selling company, which provides



MEIR IS HONORED WITH LIGHTING THE MENORAH AT CHABAD OF OCEANSIDE’S CHANUKAH PARTY.



RABBI LEVI GURKOW THE SHLIACH IN OCEANSIDE.

thousands of trucks annually to other shipping companies throughout the U.S., is asking to speak with him!

To put things into perspective, all of Meir’s business operations does not amount to much of the national, interstate company of the caller. The only communication ever made between the companies, was when Meir joined the long list of customers and purchased several trucks. It’s unheard of that such a distinguished CEO would speak with such an insignificant customer.

It turns out, that one of the main company divisions of this large trucking company is located in Long Island, and the owner is Jewish. Meir’s astonishment, however, increased sevenfold, as the man politely inquired as to the location of Meir’s office and whether he is now speaking from his home or office. Surprised, Meir answers the question and he hears the caller say “So, I’m coming to visit you in your home. Maybe we’ll have a Chanukah party together”.

Meir, still trying to digest this strange conversation, does not believe what he’s hearing. “What? You are coming to me?” he asked to make sure that he’s not imagining. “Yes,” the caller answers calmly, “I want to meet you.”

When Meir heard the ‘click’ on the other end, he thought to himself, “there is no way that it was in jest”. “For comparison sakes”, he told me, “it’s as if the airline which you purchased a ticket from, would come visit you in your



home.”

Meir’s home stirred in excitement. His astonished sons were already making preparations for the planned celebration and reception for their esteemed guest.

The man arrived, and all those present greeted him politely. Everyone is eagerly awaiting some sort of explanation for this sudden visit.

“Listen,” begins the man, “I will tell you what is behind the visit.”

URGE FROM ABOVE

“Today, I decided to take a break from my busy schedule and browse through the list of my customers. I did this as part of a common practice to improve business and customer relations, and there’s nothing very unusual with that. Then however, I noticed your name and the fact that you are a relatively new client.

“This is my neighborhood, I grew up here” the man continued. “I knew you were Jewish, because I realized the name of your company, ‘Moe’s Trucking’ is from the Jewish name Moses, and I decided I would like to meet you.”

After the strange background surrounding the visit became somewhat clear, the man moved on to talking business. “I know things are tough in business right now,” he says. “If I may, allow me to give you some advice that will benefit you in the field.”

Meir listened to the man in silence, as he began to lay out advice for him from his experience over the years in dealing

with customers. Afterwards, the Jewish CEO focused on various problems that may come up in this kind of business with different companies and commercial entities. Meir suddenly realized that the man speaks exactly of the problem which he was suffering from, and offered him a magic solution that can solve the whole problem with a wave. He was beside himself with awe.

The CEO casually concluded his remarks by saying that an inner impulse urged him to come out and share this information for the benefit of someone. “This ‘impulse’”, he said, “sent me to contribute to the training of someone who must have needed it.”

He did not know how right he was.

Meir’s shocked wife recovered first. She was always more skeptical than her husband regarding Tzadikim and spirituality. She turned to the guest and insistently asked him: “Tell me, who sent you to us? Was this a conspiracy concocted by the crook from UPS or perhaps the Lubavitcher Rebbe? This is all quite unbelievable”...

“I have no idea what you’re talking about, I do not know the man from UPS,” the visitor replied calmly, “but the Lubavitcher Rebbe I actually do know. I’ve prayed at his grave a few times, and I also recognize him from his picture hanging here in your home.”

“Actually,” he admitted, “I got up this morning and asked G-d that I should

have an easy day. I was suddenly inspired by a “push”. I decided I had to help a Jew with his livelihood, and, going over the list of names, randomly chose you.”

THE SECOND REQUEST

Meir’s next step, besides for implementing the guidelines of the experienced CEO, was to dial my cell phone number and share this miraculous occurrence. “Not even a day has passed since I prayed at the Ohel and I already got a response,” he said excitedly.

But this story still hasn’t ended. Meir remembers the additional lines he added at the end of his pan, the lines that were repeated in every letter to the Rebbe in which he requested and begged for the Jewishness of his children and their descendants.

A short while after, I met with Meir and his family in their office. One of the sons turned to me and asked to say a few words. His bewildered face indicated that something very sensitive was lying on his conscience.

“Recently,” he said, “I feel bad for my intention to marry a gentile. Somehow it bothers me - I do not know why - and frankly, I have never had any problem with Gentiles or qualms about marrying one, until now.”

His father, Meir, was astonished. Here - even the last request has been answered.

To date, Meir’s older son is married to a Jewish girl. ■