



דער רבי וועט געפינען אַ וועג...

לזכות החיילת בצבאות ה'
רבקה גיטל תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה י"ד שבט

נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' חיים אפרים וזוגתו מרת ח' מושקא
ומשפחתם שיחיו
גאלדשטיין

“You Can Go Yourself”

AS TOLD BY RABBI ELIEZER LAINE (BROOKLYN, NY)

It was the spring of 5733* and I had just finished two years of learning in kollel. I was approached by the administrators of a school in Flatbush with an offer to lead a new summer day camp for their school.

On Shavuot the Rebbe started a tremendous campaign to encourage every Jewish child to attend a Jewish summer camp, which several months later we understood to be a spiritual preparation for the Yom Kippur War.¹ I was ambitious and surprised the administrators by launching the camp with triple the amount of campers they had initially expected. I had a list of 50 more children who wished to attend the camp but their parents were unable to pay the tuition. I asked the administrators to allow them to participate in camp free of charge and they agreed.

I wrote a letter to the Rebbe about the fact that we were

accepting these 50 children to camp free of charge and the Rebbe responded with a lengthy response of *brachos*. I know that the Rebbe had tremendous *nachas* from this camp since that summer there was a unique rally arranged for the local Lubavitcher day camps in 770 and the Rebbe specifically instructed Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht (who was in charge of arranging the rallies) to invite our camp to the rally. We were the only non-Lubavitch camp there and the Rebbe distributed coins to our camp first.

Two years later I was able to open a second camp with an associated yeshiva in Long Island and maintained friendships with several of the leaders of both schools, especially with a certain *rosh yeshiva* from Long Island.

Many many years later, late one evening the phone



rang at my home and when the answering machine turned on I was able to hear the voice of the *rosh yeshiva* from Long Island sobbing, “Rabbi Laine, Rabbi Laine, please answer the phone. It’s urgent!”

I immediately picked up the phone and asked him what could possibly be so urgent after eleven o’clock at night.

“My grandson is very ill,” he said crying. “He has *yenne machlah* in his brain and the doctors gave up hope.”

“I’m so sorry to hear this and I hope he has a *refuah sheleima*, but how do I come into the picture?”

“I heard that people daven at the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s Ohel for *brachos* and are helped in that way. Can you please urgently drive over to the Ohel and daven on behalf of my grandson?”

“Listen here,” I said. “You live barely a 15 minute drive from the Ohel. I suggest you get into your car and drive over to the Ohel yourself and ask the Rebbe for a *bracha* for your grandson. When the *tefilah* will come from the grandfather it will certainly be most effective.”

“But I don’t want anyone to see a picture of me davening at the Ohel. Is there any way to go so that no one will see me?” the Rosh Yeshiva asked.

“The only ones that have photos are the ones who bring photographers. If you don’t bring a photographer you can be sure no one will take your photo,” I assured him.

“Can I go after midnight?” he asked.

“Absolutely. The Ohel is open 24 hours a day.”

“But I don’t know what to do there.”

I explained to him how to write a *tzetel* to the Rebbe by including his name and mother’s name, the name of his grandson with his mother’s name, to briefly describe the situation and ask for a *bracha*. When standing at the Ohel he should say the Rebbe’s *kapitel*, his *kapitel* and his grandson’s *kapitel*.

“I can do all this. Is there anything else I should do?” he asked.

I must explain that for a while I had been avoiding this

rosh yeshiva and I would not approach him even on the rare occasions I saw him at events because I was aware that he had spoken very negatively about the Rebbe on certain occasions. Although I would never say the following to someone on a regular basis, once he was asking me what to do at the Ohel I decided to diplomatically persuade him to change his ways.

“Unfortunately there is a practice among certain circles to speak disparagingly about the Rebbe. If you might be guilty of this conduct, or perhaps witnessed such behavior and did not protest against it, it would be appropriate for you to ask the Rebbe for *mechilah*.”

“Yes, I think I might need to do that,” he said.

The next day the *rosh yeshiva* called me and shared that he went to the Ohel at two o’clock in the morning, he asked *mechilah*, wrote a *tzetel* and said Tehillim with bitter tears.

“I hope the Rebbe will daven to Hashem on my behalf for a miraculous *yeshuah* for my grandson.”

For years I did not hear what actually happened to this *rosh yeshiva*’s grandson, until once I gave a ride to Rabbi Zalman Bluming, a shliach in Durham, NC. He shared with me that years earlier there was a frum teenager from New York who was a patient at the Duke Cancer Center. His father would come to visit every week and over time they became very good friends.

Out of curiosity I asked him if the last name matched that of my friend the *rosh yeshiva* and it turned out that this patient was his grandson.

“He made a miraculous recovery,” Rabbi Bluming told me. “He is already married and the father of two children.”

1. See *Stop the Enemy*, Derher Tishrei 5781.

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