



לזכות הילד לוי שי'
לרגל הולדתו, י"א שבט ה'תשע"ו, שנת הקהל, והכנסו בבריתו של אאע"ה
שיגדל להיות חי"ל כרצו"ק ולנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר
לזכות הוריהם, חבר מערכת של גליון זה הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו מרת יוכבד שיחיו מישולבין
נדפס ע"י חברי המערכת

Feel the Other

The Rebbe writes in Hayom Yom (6 Adar I):

It is a magnificent gift from Hashem to merit an innate sense - a "*geshmak*" - for doing kindness to another Yid. This can develop to the point that one cherishes the other more than oneself. He may find many explanations as to why he deserves his own tribulations, *chas v'sholom*, but to do so with regard to another's suffering - is absolutely impossible.

The following two stories illustrate this point; a lesson the Rebbe Maharash taught his Chassidim.

Story One

Among the Chassidim of the Rebbe Maharash was a businessman named Reb Michoel Aharon Pisarevski. He was what one can call an average man; he earned enough to support his family, and was even able to assist his children a bit in *parnassa*. When it came to knowledge of Torah, he had an average understanding, and was well respected by his peers who enjoyed and appreciated his *chassidische hartz*.

Some time before Pesach of 5640, Reb Michoel Aharon came to spend a Shabbos with the Rebbe Maharash. Upon entering the Rebbe's room for *yechidus*, he raised an urgent matter. His friend, Reb Nachman Lipa Zeltzer, needed help. Reb Nachman Lipa was a respected Chossid, father of a large family with several children of marriageable age, and he was having trouble making ends meet. Reb Michoel Aharon raised his concerns with the Rebbe, and the Rebbe responded with a *bracha* for *hatzlacha*. For Reb Michoel Aharon this wasn't sufficient and he begged the Rebbe to promise that Reb Nachman Lipa's troubles would end.

As the *yechidus* went on, Reb Michoel Aharon opened up about his own situation; he had fallen on hard times in business and was now caught up in some major debt. "Your worries sound so serious and urgent," said the Rebbe, "even more so than Reb Nachman Lipa's situation. Yet you seem more desperate and concerned about his problems." Reb Michoel Aharon humbly responded, "One knows himself and his shortcomings. I can appreciate what I really deserve and I'm happy with what Hashem has given me."

After a moment's contemplation, the Rebbe said, "כל המתפלל בעד חברו הוא נענה תחילה (One who davens for his

friend will be answered first)—Hashem should give you much *hatzlacha*."

Reb Michoel Aharon later related this *yechidus* to his *chaverim*, and added, "What do you think happened? Both me and Reb Nachman Lipa began to see amazing *hatzlacha*; within a short amount of time, our problems had mended themselves and had disappeared completely."

Story Two

Reb Leib Pazin was a successful businessman from Vitebsk. He was known as one of the stalwarts of the community, and for giving very generously to *tzedaka*. Despite not being the most learned man in town, he had great admiration for *b'nei Torah* and would spend time learning with them whenever possible.

Also living in Vitebsk, was a Chossid by the name of Reb Shmuel Brin. A friend of Reb Leib, he was highly respected in the community as a great *talmid chacham* and savvy tradesman. Although he was invested in his business for a large part of the day, Reb Shmuel was known to set aside a portion of his day to in-depth learning of *nigleh* and Chassidus. His *parnassa* saw ups and downs and was never a sure thing, but you would never have noticed in his demeanor, because it didn't seem to bother him all that much. At the time of our story, 5640, there was friction between the peasants and the noblemen, and somehow, amongst all the uncertainty, Reb Shmuel ended up with the short end of the stick. He lost his entire savings and then some, leaving him wallowing in major debt.

When Reb Leib was visiting the Rebbe Maharash before Pesach of 5640, he had the chance to speak to the Rebbe in

yechidus. Upon entering the Rebbe's room, he began to detail all the ins and outs of his business and requested a *bracha* for continued success in his dealings.

After delineating all of his personal wants and concerns, Reb Leib sighed as he brought up the dire situation of his friend Reb Shmuel. He bemoaned the circumstances, stating that although Hashem must have His reasons for what befell Reb Shmuel, it was a pity nonetheless. The Rebbe Maharash covered his eyes as he went into deep contemplation, but did not answer anything to Reb Leib.

A few weeks after returning home, after celebrating Pesach, a fire broke out on the street that Reb Leib's merchandise was stored. In the course of the fire, all of his stock was burned and he lost tens of thousands of rubles worth of merchandise. At the very same time, a fire broke out in his home, burning his store with all its contents, valued at approximately 20,000 Rubles. Nothing was insured.

A few days passed as Reb Leib absorbed the news and began to understand its ramifications; he thereupon decided to travel to Lubavitch. In the confines of the Rebbe's room, he wept bitterly about his situation. Between the two fires, he had lost an estimated 50,000 Rubles. The Rebbe gazed upon him with a serious expression and answered him. "For the hardships that befell Reb Shmuel you were able to find solace in Hashem's superiority, but when it comes to your own losses you aren't able to find any sort of comfort? Another person's trials seem to invite a very different calculation than your own troubles."

After leaving the Rebbe's room, Reb Leib had a chance to internalize the words of the Rebbe. He realized what he had done; how the words he had spoken then had brought on the current *tzaros*. For two days Reb Leib walked around Lubavitch depressed and not knowing what to do, before deciding to once again go in for a *yechidus* to beg the Rebbe for a *tikkun* for his actions.

When Reb Leib entered the room of the Rebbe Maharash, he became very emotional and cried like a baby. After calming a bit, he asked the Rebbe how he could atone for his misdeeds, and promised to henceforth be more careful in his care and sensitivity for other Yidden.

The Rebbe Maharash responded, "The Ba'al Shem Tov has taught us how careful we must be with the words that we use. Anything that someone says about a fellow Jew—both positive and negative—plays out in some way in his own

life. For example, if someone says of another Jew that he did such and such good things or such and such bad things, he is in effect attaching that deed unto his own record of deeds. When someone justifies another person's suffering, he is inviting such a fate onto himself.

"The Mittlerer Rebbe taught in the name of his father, the Alter Rebbe, that when Chazal say בעד חבירו כל המתפלל ביעד חבירו, they mean that when a Yid feels the pain of another so much, that it causes him to cry out to Hashem, he

collects that extra merit. This *zechus* can be redeemed right away—if he needs it—or it can be stored away as a *zechus* for a different time.

"What I suggest," said the Rebbe, "is that you give 3,000 Rubles to Reb Shmuel Brin as an interest free loan to be paid back at his leisure. This will allow him to acquire all the merchandise he needs to get himself back on his feet. Just be sure to give it with a full heart and with joy, and may Hashem

grant you success. May you have *hatzlacha* in purchasing new products for your stores, so that you can make back double of what you lost."

When Reb Leib got back to Vitebsk, he went straight to the house of Reb Shmuel Brin to carry out the Rebbe's instructions. He was informed however by the members of his house that he had gone on a business trip and was due to arrive back in Vitebsk any day. Reb Leib desperately needed him to return so that he could fulfill the instructions of the Rebbe; only then could he travel to Moscow to buy more products for his store. It took a week for Reb Shmuel to finally return home. When Reb Leib came into shul on Friday night, he saw Reb Shmuel standing with a large crowd surrounding him; everyone was trying to get closer to hear what he was saying. All Reb Leib was thinking was how Reb Shmuel could be in such high spirits; just two months after losing all his wealth, he stood there like the happiest man in the world. The *gabbai* banged on the *bima* and announced that Reb Shmuel Brin would now *chazzer* the Chassid that he had heard from the Rebbe in Lubavitch. Over Shabbos Reb Shmuel *chazzered* the *maamar* a few times, to the joy of all the Chassidim.

After Shabbos, Reb Leib wanted to go give Reb Shmuel the money, but he wasn't sure if it would be permitted on Motzei Shabbos, when one may not do business. Suddenly, picturing the holy face of the Rebbe Maharash, he decided to go immediately. When he arrived at Reb Shmuel's house,

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he found him learning. Reb Shmuel greeted him warmly and began to comfort Reb Leib on the losses that he had suffered in the fires, quoting the phrase that Chassidim would say, that “*noch a sreife vert men reich* - after a fire one becomes wealthy.”

Reb Leib was struck by the piety of Reb Shmuel. He had himself suffered a massive loss recently, and yet he had the wherewithal to travel to Lubavitch to hear the Rebbe. And when he returned all he could speak about is the Chassidus he heard from the Rebbe. He goes home after Shabbos to learn and now he's comforting me! Amazing.

“What are your plans now?” Reb Leib asked Reb Shmuel.

“It's the beginning of a new week,” said Reb Shmuel. “Let's speak about happier things. As far as my business is concerned, I'm confident that Hashem will help and provide the capital that I need to get back on my feet.

“When I came to Lubavitch, I was lucky enough to hear a *maamar* from the Rebbe and then to hear *chazzara* three times from his sons and son-in-law. On Sunday, I was in *yechidus* with the Rebbe for more than an hour. The Rebbe expressed great concern over the friction between the peasants and the landowners, and cautioned that the Yiddishe *sochrim* (businesspeople) must be careful not to get caught up in the issue. As the *yechidus* came to a close, the Rebbe asked me how I was faring and I gave him a brief rundown of my situation. The Rebbe said to me, ‘Shmuel, don't despair. Go out and buy merchandise and may Hashem ensure that you make some good, lucrative deals, and some extra *parnassa* on the side.’

“Already on my return, I began to see the realization of this *bracha*. I was asked to serve as the third *dayan* on a *zabla* (arbitration) for a Din Torah between two wealthy businessmen. Each of them paid me 300 Rubles for the time I spent on the case.

“So you see Leibeh, the Rebbe *bentched* me with extra *parnassa* on the side, and it's already come to fruition. The Rebbe takes care of his Chassidim in *ruchaniyusdike inyonim* and also *begashmiyus*. With that money, I already have some capital to pay back my debts, and even some to begin buying new merchandise.”

“But what about the rest of the money that you need to pay in advance,” asked Reb Leib. “That can add up to thousands of rubles.”

Answered Reb Shmuel simply, “The Rebbe *bentched* me to make some lucrative purchases. I can't do that without money, so surely Hashem is going to provide the money, one way or another.”

Until that point, Reb Leib wasn't sure how to bring up the matter that he had the money that Reb Shmuel needed, and that he was going to give it to him interest free. Now,

he blurted out to Reb Shmuel, “There is no reason to worry anymore, I have the money that you need here with me.”

And before he even finished his surprise, he took out the bundles of money that he had.

Reb Shmuel looked from the money to Reb Leib and then back again; he was speechless. “I brought you three thousand rubles,” said Reb Leib. “You'll pay me back from the profits that you make from your sales.”

“No way!” said Reb Shmuel. “Even the best transaction in the world contains an inherent risk, and I can never take that risk with your money. Where did you even get such a wild idea from, to lend me all this money?”

Reb Leib recounted his entire story to Reb Shmuel, of the first *yechidus* before Pesach and what had happened to him since. How the Rebbe had told him how he could rectify what had happened by helping Reb Shmuel get back on his feet once more.

Reb Shmuel answered, “*מחשבה טובה הקב"ה מצרפה למעשה* (Hashem counts a good thought for the deed). You did what the Rebbe instructed you to do, but I cannot take the money.”

Still that night, Reb Leib began his journey back to Lubavitch to complain about Reb Shmuel not accepting the money. He entered the Rebbe's room and placed the money on the table.

On Monday morning, the Rebbe's *meshorres* gave Reb Leib a sealed envelope from the Rebbe addressed to Reb Shmuel, with a short note from the Rebbe:

“I am sending 3,000 rubles for you to buy what you need, and may you be successful in your endeavors.”

Reb Leib then took a bundle of money to pay his debts in Moscow, and a small sum to buy new products.

When he arrived in Moscow he told the distributors about the fire and what had happened to his wares. He hadn't even finished recounting everything in detail, when one of the lead businessman calmed him. Certainly they would take his losses into account and they would reduce his debt by a few percent. Additionally, they provided him with all the wares that he needed to get back on his feet. Within a few days, the distributor got back to him saying that they had decided to wipe fifty percent of the debt, and the other half could be repaid over a period of two years.

That summer Reb Leib won the national lottery for a sum of some 15,000 rubles. He used it to buy vast amounts of products as per the instructions of the Rebbe, and made significant profits on his sales.

Reb Shmuel also followed the Rebbe's instructions and invested in his business. He saw major profits and was able to pay off all his debts, and remained with some extra to buy a new house. **Ⓢ**

(Based on *Hatomim* vol. 2 p. 738)