



# A Word From The Wise

Dovid<sup>1</sup> lived in the home of his brother-in-law, Avraham, in the city of Novo-Ratzevsk which was located in Pskov, outside the Pale of the Settlement.

Only Jews with a profession that was deemed necessary were given permits that allowed them to live in that area. Avraham was a glazier by trade which earned him the residence status that he needed. However, his actual work was as a merchant of silverware and ornaments, a well kept secret that could lead to trouble.

In the first floor of the same house lived a tailor. The tailor was very jealous of Avraham and of the double life he lived and to top it off he felt that his peace and quiet was disturbed because of him. The tailor, looking to settle the score, went and informed the government that indeed this man was

living in the city under a false pretense because he was not a practicing glazier but rather a merchant.

The government immediately acted on this information and evicted him from town and also confiscated all his possessions. The final blow was the command that he must relocate to the city of Polotzk.

Dovid was allowed to stay on and he continued doing the business. His brother-in-law, on the other hand, was not faring well in Polotzk.

On one occasion, Dovid travelled to visit the resting places of some members of his family who were buried in Vitebsk. He happened to meet his brother-in-law there, who bemoaned the miserable life he was having and all the challenges he was facing. Avraham then shared his idea to help him out of the dire situation

he found himself in. "I am therefore going to travel to Lubavitch to ask the advice of the Rebbe [Maharash]. Since you are already here, why don't you join me on my trip?"

Dovid agreed and off they went to Lubavitch.

When Avraham went into *yechidus*, Dovid stood on the side to observe what would happen.

After Avraham poured out his heart, the Rebbe asked him, "What skills do you have?"

"I am a glazier by trade," he replied.

"Are you well versed in this craft?" pressed the Rebbe.

"Yes!"

"In that case," advised the Rebbe Maharash, "Travel back to Novo-Ratzevsk and go into the town office building. On the second floor you will see a broken glass window. Offer to repair it and tell

the secretary to mark it in your name. When you have done this, go make an acquaintance with the minister of the city."

The Rebbe then made notice of the gentleman standing silently in the corner, "Who is this man?" He asked. "He is my brother-in-law," he replied.

"Where do you live and what is your occupation?" the Rebbe asked, turning his attention to Dovid. "I live in Novo-Ratzevsk." After hearing his response the Rebbe continued, "You should leave your current residence and resettle in Vitebsk!"

Without fully grasping who he was talking to, Dovid brazenly replied, "I lack nothing in Novo-Ratzevsk and besides I did not ask for advice about what I should do!"

"Don't you see that Novo-Ratzevsk is a dangerous place!" persisted

לע"נ  
השלוחה מרת הינדא גיטל אלטע חי'  
בת ר' עזריאל ע"ה  
שיימאן  
נלב"ע כ"ז אייר ה'תשע"ג  
תנ"צ'ב'ה'  
נדפס ע"י  
משפחתה שיחיו



the Rebbe and with those words the *yechidus* ended.

After they had left the Rebbe's presence, Dovid berated his brother-in-law for schlepping him to Lubavitch and made it clear that he had no intentions of relocating.

In contrast to Dovid, Avraham had every intention of following the directives of the Rebbe. He travelled to Novo-Ratzevsk and carried out all the instructions he had been given.

He then went to the house of the minister but he was not home at the time.

Seeing the minister's wife there he went inside with some ornaments and tried to persuade her to buy something. "I will discuss it with my husband," she replied.

In an attempt to catch her attention and draw her into a conversation, he removed a fancy pocket watch from his jacket and pretended to be looking at the time.

His ploy worked and she was drawn to the watch. "How much can I buy that for?" she asked.

At that point he realized the Rebbe's advice was already materializing and he spilled out his whole story to her.

She replied, "Come back tomorrow morning, and in the interim I will speak to my husband about your situation."

The next day he woke up early and met up with the minister before he went to his office. The minister instructed him, "Come over to my office today and

present your case; I will react strongly and shout at you, however, don't back down and push back at me with conviction. In the end everything will work out well."

Sure enough, a short while later, as soon as he had entered the office and began presenting his case, the minister began to yell and shout at him. "I am a glazier! I am really a glazier! In fact I fixed a window in this very building yesterday."

The secretary, who was working nearby and overheard the conversation, chimed in, "Indeed it is true. I watched him do it with my own eyes and I even have it recorded in my ledger.

The minister then gave him the appropriate

documents and he was able to return home.

The tailor who had been the informant was not too happy that his plan had failed so he schemed again. This time he laid his eyes on Dovid. He informed the authorities that Dovid was in the city illegally and without anyone knowing him or having connections with higher ups in the government he was forced to move to—lo and behold—Vitebsk!

The Rebbe's words were true, each man made the choice of how to end up where he was supposed to. **T**

(*Otzar Sippurei Chabad*  
vol. 18, p. 19)

1. The names do not appear in the original, they were added here for the sake of clarity.