

היוצאים

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SPECIAL
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The Torah Sheb'al Peh Tochachah

By Gavriel Aharon, Editor-in-Chief, 12th Grade

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The Pasuk in this week's parsha, regarding the curses that will befall Bnei Yisroel, says: "And it will be, if you do not obey the Lord, your G-d." The Gemara in Megillah says that there is a practical difference between the tochachah in Parshat Bechukotai and in our Parsha. In Bechukotai one is not allowed to divide the reading of the tochachah into separate aliyot, however, in this Parsha one would in fact be allowed to divide the curses into different aliyot. The obvious question is, why is there a distinction between the two Parshiot that contain very similar rebukes?

Rav Soloveitchik explains that to better understand the Gemara's differentiation between the two Parshiot, we have to notice a very important difference in the way the two rebukes were given over. In Bechukotai, there was an agreement made between Hashem and the Bnei Yisroel. The wording there is in first person, as it is Hashem himself telling the Jewish people what their punishments will be if they break the covenant. Moshe, as being part of the nation was included in the agreement. However, the way in which the tochachah was given over in this Parsha was in a way of Torah Sheb'al Peh. Hashem initially imparted Sefer Devarim orally to Moshe alone, and it was only later on that Moshe shared it with the rest of Bnei Yisroel and became part of Torah Shebichtav. So, over here, the tochachah is worded in third person because Bnei Yisroel became obligated to Moshe besides Hashem Himself. It is because of this discrepancy that in Bechukotai one may not divide the tochachah, but here in our Parsha, because it started as Torah Sheb'al Peh, one would be allowed to interrupt. Have a great Shabbos!

Adapted from Chumash Mesorat Harav

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People Matter

By Menachem Neiman, Editor-in-Chief, 12th Grade

In this week's Parsha Hashem gathers the Jews on two mountains and tells the Jews about a series of blessings and curses known as the Tochacha. Hashem tells the Jews if they follow the Torah they will receive many wonderful blessings; if they do not follow the Torah they will be cursed with unimaginable and unspeakable horrible curses. One particular pasuk stands out. In the sixth aliyah Moshe says "If you observe the mitzvos of Hashem your god and you go in his ways (Devarim 28, 9)." Meforshim explain this pasuk to mean that we do not become holy automatically; we must follow Hashem and emulate him to be holy.

Someone who wants to become Holy might learn from this pasuk that the best way to do so would be to isolate himself from everything and anything that is not holy. This type of person, says the Ha'emek Davar, will do anything to avoid putting themselves in a challenging situation to the point that they might not even do certain mitzvos. The Netziv in his commentary on the Torah rejects this notion. He says this is not what Hashem meant when he says you should follow in his ways. The Netziv says part of what emulating Hashem means is not just to follow his Torah but to also interact and communicate with our fellow Jews. For example, if a person on their way to shul sees

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Torah Teasers

By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe

Parshas Ki Tavo**Questions**

1. In this parsha, which four consecutive verses are read on a holiday - but not in the synagogue?
2. Where is plaster instructed to be used?
3. Besides this parsha, where else does the Torah record lengthy words of rebuke (*tochacha*)?
4. In this parsha, which of the Ten Plagues are mentioned in the lengthy words of rebuke (*tochacha*)? (3 answers)
5. Where in this parsha is a "tail" referred to? (2 answers)
6. Which metal is mentioned three times in this parsha?

Answers

1. The verses beginning with the words "*Arami Oved Avi*" (Deut. 26:5-8) are read at the Passover Seder.
2. When the Jews cross the Jordan River, they are to set up huge stones, coat them with plaster (Deut. 27:2), and then write upon them all the words of the Torah.
3. A lengthy *tochacha* is also found in parshas Bechokosai (Leviticus 26:27-43).
4. These plagues are mentioned: pestilence (*dever*) (Deut. 28:21), boils (*shechin*) (28:27, 35), and locusts (*arbeh*) (28:38).
5. One of the blessings for Jews following the Torah is to be "as a head and not a tail" (Deut. 28:13). The reverse is also stated: our enemy can be "as a head, and you (the Jews) will be as a tail" (28:44).
6. Iron is mentioned three times: (1) The stones of an altar cannot be cut with iron (Deut. 27:5). (2) The rebuke states that the Land of Israel will be as iron (28:23). (3) The rebuke also states that enemies will place an iron yoke around the neck of the Jews (28:48).



1st Aliyah: The parsha begins with the command to bring *bikurim*, first fruits, to the Beis HaMikdash. This mitzvah applies in Eretz Yisrael and only to the sheva minim: wheat, barley, dates, figs, grapes, pomegranates and olives. The owner of the fruits would thank Hashem and would mention that Hashem had taken his ancestors out of Egypt. He would then give the produce to the Kohanim.

2nd Aliyah: The second Aliyah describes the different tithes that would be given in the time of the Beis HaMikdash. Some of these tithes were given to the Kohanim, some to the Levi'im, some to the poor, and one tithe was to be eaten by its owners in Yerushalyim. These different tithes were given at different times in a cycle of three years. When the cycle would conclude by Pesach in the third year, the farmer would have to declare that he has followed all the laws of tithing and he then asks Hashem to bless the Jews and our Land.

3rd Aliyah: Moshe chastises the Jews and tells them to follow Hashem's mitzvos. Moshe reminds the Jewish people that we have chosen Hashem to be our god, and likewise, Hashem has chosen us to be His nation.

4th Aliyah: In this Aliyah the Jews are told to bring large stones across the Jordan River and plaster them. Then, the entire Torah was to be engraved upon them. Another set of stones was also to be inscribed with the entire Torah, and be put on Har Eival.

5th Aliyah: The Jewish people are instructed to proclaim blessings and curses on Har Grizim and Har Eival. Six tribes stood on each of these mountains, while the elders of the Levite Tribe and the Aron was positioned between the two mountains. The Levites faced each mountain alternately, and stated the blessing and curses.

6th Aliyah: In this Aliyah the Torah continues its lists of blessings and curses. After beginning with the blessings, the aliyah's majority is made up of the *tochecha*. The *tochecha* is the lengthy description of all the curses and suffering that will befall the Jews if they neglect the mitzvot and HaKadosh Baruch Hu.

7th Aliyah: Moshe reminds the Jews of all the miracles that have done for them since they have become a nation. These miracles spanned from when Hashem took them out of Egypt until that very day. It is because of this, Moshe says, the Jews have a responsibility to follow Hashem's Torah.



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10-Minute Halacha Shiur

Given by Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz
on yutorah.org

Transcribed by
Yosef Axelrod

L'Dovid Hashem Ori

When do we say it

The nusach one davens determines whether they say L'Dovid at mincha or maariv.

- Ashkenaz say L'Dovid during maariv
- Sefardim say L'Dovid during mincha

Several issues that arise:

1. One who normally davens nusach sefard, but finds himself in a nusach ashkenaz minyan for mincha: Should he say L'Dovid at the nusach ashkenaz minyan by himself, or should he follow the ashkenaz minyan and not recite L'Dovid at mincha
2. One who davens in a nusach sefard minyan for mincha and then davens at a nusach ashkenaz minyan for maariv: Would one say L'Dovid both times?
3. What about the reverse? Would one only say L'Dovid by Shachris and not by the other two davenings?

To answer these shai'los, let's discuss the history of L'Dovid.

Origin of reciting L'Dovid

- The Mishnah Berurah quotes the minhag to recite L'Dovid after Shachris and after maariv.
- The Gra did not accept the minhag to say L'Dovid.
- Several groups of Chassidim who purposely didn't say L'Dovid which is strange since it is a kapital tehillim, and people say tehillim after davening all the time.

What is the earliest source?

- The earliest sources is found in sefer "Shem Tov Katan" published in 1709. The sefer advises that anyone who says L'Dovid from Chodesh Elul until Simchas Torah, even if he has terrible gzeiros against him in shamayim, will be fine. That sefer was not the most popular sefer in the world, and probably was not seen by gedolim and rabanim of the time.
- There was another sefer published in 1709 called "Sefer Zechira" which echoes the same advice; say

L'Dovid by morning and night, thereby guaranteeing a good din for oneself

- In 1739, the sefer "Chemdas Yamim" was published, which includes the minhag to say L'Dovid during Elul. An issue, however, arose with this sefer, leading to much controversy over the validity of its content. Included in the sefer was a poem written by Nasan HaBavli, a false prophet and leading figure in the movement of Shabtai Tzvi. This could be a reason why many chassidim rejected this minhag

Why did this minhag catch on- specifically this time of year?

- The Mateh Ephraim writes that it is based on a Midrash in Esther, which reads the "uri" is Rosh Hashana, "yishai" is Yom Hakippurim, and "suko" is Sukkos. So there is a remez within the paragraph to this time of year
- The Haflaah presents a different explanation, which is the same reason found in the first source "Shem Tov Katan." He explains that if one looks at the paragraph carefully, and calculates the number of times that the shem Hashem is mentioned, one will count thirteen times. This is reminiscent of the yud gimel midos of Hakadosh Baruch Hu, which is obviously front and center this time of year. Hashem told Moshe Rabeinu that whenever we are in trouble, we should say these yud gimmel midos harachamim of Hakadash Baruch Hu. What better time of the calendar than Elul to remind ourselves of the yud gimel midos harachamim.
- Rav Shay Schachter quotes from his Rebbe, Rav Asher Weiss, a phenomenal explanation. He quotes a Gemara in Taanis of daf ches. The Gemara tells us that during the times of Rav Shmuel Bar Nachmeini, the community was suffering from two major catastrophes: a tenacious famine and a widespread plague. The Gemara, however explains that they were not able to daven to be saved from both the famine and the plague simultaneously, and they had to select one. After much debate, the people concluded to daven for the plague to end.

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SPARKS OF CHASSIDUS



With Akiva
Magdar

The concept of teshuvah is truly a difficult one to understand. When it comes to matters in this world, we are held accountable for our actions. For example, if someone robs a bank, no matter how much teshuvah this person does the judge in court will hold them responsible. However when it comes to Hashem, things are different. Hashem gave us the Torah and expects us to abide by all of it. So how can it be that a person can sin in this world and just do teshuvah (depending on its level) and just erase the sin? There is a beautiful answer given in the Bnei Yissaschar (Ma'amarei chodesh Sivan, ma'mar beis oas hei). He explains that unlike non-jews, Jews can do teshuvah.

Why is that? Based off the gemara in kiddushin 32a "av shemachol al kvodo, kvodo mochol" meaning, if a father pardons his honor, his honor is pardoned. Furthermore, the Torah tells us that we are "banim atem laHashem elokeichem (Devarim 14:1)." So this means that only for Hashem's children can his honor be pardoned but not for non-jews. This may shed light onto the mishnah in Avos 3:14 "Beloved are Israel in that they were called children to Hashem." Especially beloved are they for it was made known to them that they are called the children of Hashem, as it is said: "your are children to the Lord your God."

The question is, why are we especially beloved because we know we're Hashem's children? The answer

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- Rav Shmuel Bar Nachmeini told them that he had a better idea: they should instead daven to be saved from the famine. If Hashem were to feed the community, the members of the community would have to be alive to be fed - hence, saved from the plague as well.
- Why couldn't they daven for more than one thing?
- There's a pasuk in Sefer Ezra that says that Klal Yisrael davened to Hashem for "this," which implies they needed other things, but were only allowed to ask for one. We see that there is some yesod that one can only ask Hashem for one thing.
- Now during Elul before the Yomim Noraim where everything is being decided (health, parnassah, etc...) how can one decide what to daven for?
- Says Rav Asher Weiss, we take a clue from the Gemara that if we pick one nekudah to ask for, we can get everything else. So we daven for "achas she'alti me'eis Hashem osa avakeish shivti b'beis Hashem kol yemei chayai (which is in L'Dovid)." We daven that we should be close to Hashem and the best way to be close to Hashem is by not having to be distracted by health issues or parnassah issues, so that one can focus and dedicate oneself solely to avodas Hashem.

In conclusion, the minhag to recite L'Dovid in Elul came about in the eighteenth century. Since it was not an accepted minhag neither by the Gra nor several groups of Chassidim, it probably does not matter if one wanted to recite the kapital by mincha or maariv. However, because of the lav of "lo tisgodidu", one should follow the minhag of the tzibur. Therefore, if one is davening mincha at a nusach sefard minyan, then davening maariv at a nusach ashkenaz minyan, one would in fact recite L'Dovid twice. In the reverse scenario, one would refrain from saying L'Dovid. If one desires to say L'Dovid after the minyan, of course one is permitted.



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THROWN OUT OF EGYPT

EPHRAIM SCHRECK, EDITOR OF STUDENT ARTICLES, 12TH GRADE

In Parshas Ki Savo Moshe gives over the Tochacha, a series of prophecies describing the horrors the Jews would suffer if they fail to carefully observe the Torah and Mitzvos. Some of the curses that would befall the Jews if they turn away from Hashem include military defeat, disease, and drought. However, we know that the Torah already goes through the entire Tochachah in Parshas Bechukosai. The question then becomes why do we have both and how can we differentiate between the two?

First, on a very basic level, we can highlight a simple textual difference between the two. The first Tochacha was uttered by G-d and its long list of punishments is expressed in the first person. Hashem is directly telling the Jews what the consequences would be for their actions. The Tochacha in this Parsha was told over by Moshe and is in third person. Moshe was saying in his own words what would happen if the nation stopped observing the Torah.

On a slightly deeper level, the Ramban suggests the following difference between the two. He says that the curses mentioned in the first Tochacha specifically referred to the time period leading up to the destruction of Bayis Rishon and the subsequent Babylonian Exile, whereas the Tochacha in Ki Savo was intended to describe the end of Bayis Sheni and the current exile. The Ramban ties several Pesukim of the second Tochacha to actual events that occurred at the end of Bayis Sheni and the beginning of the Roman Exile. Pasuk 32 says, "Your sons and daughters will be given to another people and your eyes will see and pine in vain for them all day long, but your hand will be powerless." The Ramban takes this to refer to the many attractive young Jews that were taken by the Romans back to Rome to be slaves and gratify the lusts of the conquerors. Pasuk 36 mentions that Hashem will lead the Jews and their king to a foreign nation, which the Ramban interprets as an allusion to the last Jewish king, Agrippa II, who was raised with Roman influences and played a central role in causing the exile.

The Or Hachaim suggests another difference between the two Tochachas based on the fact that in Bechukosai it is written in the plural, while here in Ki Savo it is written almost entirely in the singular. He says that in Bechukosai it is plural because it is designed to address cases of broad, national spiritual downfall. The Tochacha in Ki Savo, since it is in the singular, is targeting individual sinners. By singling out individual sinners the Torah is stressing to us that even if the nation as a whole is following the Torah properly and keeping the Mitzvos, Hashem cannot tolerate any level of sin amongst his people, even if it is just a small group or person.

Adapted from the Artscroll commentary to Devarim

(Menachem Neiman- Continued from page 1)

someone trying to get a heavy item out of their car, you should go over and help them out; in Hashem's eyes it is just as important as davening. Hashem is teaching us that being holy and emulating him is not just doing the 613 mitzvos and following the Rabbanim, it is also looking out for each other and making sure each of our fellow Jews are alright.

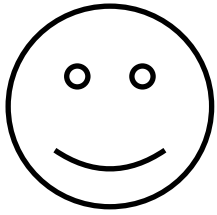
At this time of the year when we start doing teshuvah and get ready for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, we must focus on all aspects of what Hashem wants. We should obviously learn Torah and do mitzvos, but above all we must make sure to look out for each other because Hashem weighs that just as much as being holy and following the Torah.

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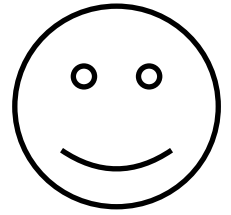
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Ari Katznelson, Editor of Student Articles, 12th Grade

Throughout this week's parsha, the Bnei Yisroel are told of the punishments for their actions if they do not follow the commandments of the torah. In the middle of the list of punishments, the Torah tells us that the reason for these punishments are because the Bnei Yisroel will not serve Hashem "B'Simcha U'Betuv Leivav", with joy and goodheartedness. If you read this without expounding on it at all, it seems that the punishment is that the Bnei Yisroel will not do the mitzvos and serve Hashem with happiness despite all the good Hashem has done for them. However, the Arizal says that there is a much deeper meaning of not serving Hashem with happiness than what seems on the surface. The Arizal says that the punishment of not serving Hashem with joy and happiness doesn't have so much to do with not doing the mitzvos with any joy, but rather because the Bnei Yisroel got their main joy from external things and not from observing the commandments in the Torah. Hashem is telling the Bnei Yisroel that the most joy one can derive is from the joy of serving Hashem.

This is very important in the month of elul. Throughout these next few weeks, we will keep on hearing that we should take something upon ourselves in preparation of Rosh Hashanah. Many might take something upon themselves, but won't really feel the joy of becoming closer to Hashem, rather just taking something upon themselves because their rav says it will make you a better person. We should take the verse in the parsha of "B'Simcha U'Betuv Leivav" and be happy that we are getting closer to Hashem. There is no greater joy than being able to serve Hashem. Serving Hashem with joy and goodheartedness is also very appropriate when approaching the holiday of Rosh Hashanah. One of the main goals of Rosh Hashanah is to make Hashem a king. One of the aspects to this is to recognize that we derive all joy from Hashem, and the joy that we derive from other external things isn't comparable. This Elul and Rosh Hashanah, may we all find joy in serving Hashem and think of following the commandments of the Torah not as a burden, but rather as a way to get closer to Hashem.

Adapted from Aish.com

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moved in years ago when the innkeeper hired him to teach his sons.

Although the children had long outgrown his tutelage, the innkeeper allowed him to remain simply because he was a good friend.

On a day when particularly pleasant weather graced the county, the teacher and the chassid took a walk. Once the two were a considerable distance from the inn, the teacher motioned to a large boulder hidden in the privacy of the forest thicket. "Let's rest here," he suggested. The two sat. The teacher sighed and turned to the chassid with a somber expression.

"I have an idea how you can get the money you need for your daughter's wedding," he confided with grim urgency, "but first you must promise you'll do whatever I say."

The chassid promised. With another sigh, the teacher began his story: "As you probably know, I arrived to teach the innkeeper's sons many years ago. Five years into my tenure, I saw the innkeeper return from a fair in Leipzig laden with profits. He was in the middle of counting his money when he was suddenly summoned to the market. As he dashed out, he never noticed me standing there, consumed by temptation. "I saw my chance and seized it. I am ashamed to say that I walked into his open room and stuffed all of his earnings into my pockets. Not a soul saw my theft.

"Almost immediately, I regretted my impulsive act, wanting nothing more than to return the money and confess. But despite the terrible gnawing of conscience, I couldn't do it because I was terrified of the consequences. Even after the innkeeper discovered the theft and his wretched cries caused me to shudder to the bone, the money remained with me. I couldn't bear the thought of people finding out that the 'righteous' and 'G-d fearing' teacher took the money.

"Years have passed, and although a lot has changed, the money remains untouched, still bound and stamped.

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emerges from above. The reason the Torah needs to tell us that we're Hashem's children is because if we didn't know that we wouldn't be able to do teshuvah. However, since the Torah says that we are children of Hashem, meaning that Hashem is our father, we know we can do teshuvah because "a father who pardons his honor, his honor is pardoned." Maybe we can suggest based off this that the month before Elul (which is a prime time for doing teshuvah) is called Av, literally father. Because in order for us to properly approach Elul and teshuvah we have to understand whom we're doing teshuvah towards.

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"I have not dared to even look at it." The chassid met the teacher's eyes and saw tears glinting in the sunlight.

"I beg you to return the money for me. Seeing as you're a visitor from out of town, he would never suspect you to be the thief from so long ago." "I'm sure," added the teacher, "that the innkeeper will charitably repay you for this." The chassid agreed and accompanied the teacher back home where he handed him the stolen money. Discreetly, the chassid brought the money to his room and waited for the right moment to present it to the innkeeper.

The next day, as the chassid sat in his room, swaying to the tune of his learning, a knock at the door stopped him mid-sentence.

It was the innkeeper. They conversed for several moments before the chassid said, "I was thinking about that story you told me. The one where you were robbed. Could you please tell it again?"

"With pleasure," replied the innkeeper, who proceeded to retell the sad tale. "I'm able to return that money—" said the chassid. The innkeeper's jaw dropped. "—on one condition." "Of course. Anything!" spluttered the innkeeper. "You must not go looking for the thief. Understand?" The innkeeper nodded.

One by one, the chassid produced the wads of bills and coins and placed them into the innkeeper's trembling hands. Eyes as wide as saucers, the innkeeper examined the neat packets. "Incredible... the seals are still intact..." The innkeeper burst into tears and embraced the chassid, sobbing into his shoulder. "This must be a miracle of your Rebbe," came the innkeeper's muffled voice. "A chain of events to return what I lost..."

He straightened up, wiped his eyes, and proffered a bundle containing 1,000 rubles. "You certainly deserve this. Please, go and celebrate your daughter's wedding without further worry." Incredible. Even after so many years, the teacher was still able to partially make up his sin by returning the money, and as a result, the chassid was able to pay for his daughter's wedding. Even if it's not a big thing like this, take a moment sometimes to realize how Hashem is watching directly over us and helping us every step of the way. Additionally, we can see from the teacher that it's never too late to do teshuva. Even if you think that you're beyond repentance, you're not because Hashem will always take back his children. B'ezrat Hashem we can take what we learn from this story and take it with us throughout the yamim noraim and ultimately for the rest of our lives. Good shabbos.

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TOLD OVER BY: HILLEL GOLUBTCHIK

THE TIME FOR TESHUVA IS NOW! Now that I've got your attention, I want to personally invite everybody to join me in this spiritual journey through Chassidic tales and important messages. The mashal and nimshal will apply to one of the parsha, an upcoming holiday, or a simple lesson of musser. By reading the story, I hope we can all feel connected and as a result take the nimshal to heart. To start off this shabbos, there is a brilliant story which shows Hashem's hand in our everyday lives and how a simple act of teshuva can change that life.

"Oh please help me, Rebbe," beseeched the chassid, quietly blinking back tears. "My daughter is at last betrothed to a fine young man, but I haven't even a glimmer of an idea of how I'll be able to pay for the wedding."

Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchak Horowitz, the Seer of Lublin, directed his eyes heavenward. "Your help lies in G-d's hands and nowhere else. Travel to such-and-such a town and book a room at the local inn. You should sit and study Torah there, and G-d will deliver the necessary help."

Doubts quieted, the chassid left the room, went home to pack a few essentials, and immediately began his journey to the specified town. The rabbi's words buoyed his heart and spirit.

He found a Jewish-owned inn and checked into a room, perhaps indefinitely. Holed up all day studying, his lack of activity

stirred the innkeeper's curiosity. On one of his rare ventures through the foyer, the innkeeper detained him and politely asked about this behavior.

The chassid didn't hide the intent of his stay and told the innkeeper all about the rebbe's promise which he believed with all his heart. A friendship took root, and the two opened up more and more about their lives.

Feeling particularly comfortable one evening, the innkeeper confided:

"I used to be a rich man, blessed with an abundance of wealth. Unfortunately, I lost it all in less than an hour, just after I returned home from the Leipzig fair 20 years ago.

"I had finished counting my earnings, arranging the bills and coins in neat, labeled stacks when a sudden errand demanded my attention and I left the safe unlocked and unattended. You can imagine my shock when I returned to find the empty box sitting on my desk.

"My head spun. This was all I had! The room looked exactly as I had left it, without a trace of forced entry. I suspected my servant and demanded that he confess, but when I saw his bewilderedness I had to abandon any further inquiry. I had no evidence and didn't want to wrongly accuse anyone.

"Now this inn is my sole source of income, but I don't complain," he finished with a shrug. As his stay progressed, the chassid also befriended a Torah teacher who lived on the premises. Known as a learned and good-natured man, the teacher had

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