

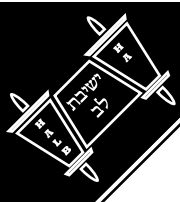
היוצאים

דברים



Volume XXIX - Issue I

The DRS Weekly Torah Publication



**Special  
Editor's  
Edition**

*Hirhurei Teshuva*

*By Dubi Fischman, Editor-in-Chief, 12th Grade*

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**A**s we approach Rosh Hashanah and get deeper into the period of teshuva, the mitzvah of teshuva is reiterated in Parshat Nitzavim. Beginning in Perek 30 Pasuk 3, the word "shav" (return) is used twice to describe how Hashem brings people back with mercy. The Rav, in his sefer Al HaTeshuva, elucidates that this repetition of the word shav is there to allude to two specific aspects of teshuva. Pasuk 11 continues "Ki haMitzvah hazot", clarifying that "this mitzvah" is not a difficult one to achieve, "not far, not hidden, not in Heaven." Pasuk 14 further states "Bephicha ub'lavecha la'asoto"- "in your mouth and in your heart to perform it."

This, Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz teaches in his sefer Sichot Mussar, is a unique characteristic of teshuva. Teshuva is simple and immediate, achieved with a mere declaration (your mouth) and resolution (your heart). Chazal refer to this as hirhurei teshuva- that a person achieves teshuva simply by declaring his willingness to do it. Based on a Gemarah in Kiddushin 49b, Rav Chaim illustrates this with the case of a Rasha who asks a woman to marry him on the condition that he becomes a tzadik. The Rambam posits that the two are married because the Rasha

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PARSHAS  
NITZAVIM/VAYELECH  
24 ELUL 5777  
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*Free Will?*

*By Jonah Loskove, Editor-in-Chief, 12th Grade*

**I**n Nitzavim (30:19), Hashem says "I call heaven and earth to bear witness against you; I have placed life and death before you, blessing and curse; and you shall choose life."

Many commentators discuss what the meaning of this line is. Notable, in Rashi's second interpretation of the verse he ponders the suggestion that Hashem wanted the Jewish people to draw a lesson from the behavior of the heavens and the earth. Hashem said to the Jewish people: Look at the heavens and the earth! Have they ever deviated from their assigned tasks? Every day the sun rises in the east and provides light and warmth to the world. Likewise, the earth produces crops every year when it is sown with seed. Now, the sun and the earth are not rewarded for the proper performance of their duties, nor are they punished if they do not fulfill their tasks. Nevertheless, they faithfully complete the tasks that Hashem has ordained for them. If this is so, is it not certain that the Jews, who are rewarded for fulfilling the mitzvos and punished for failing to do so, should faithfully fulfill the tasks that they are given by Hashem?

On the surface this argument sounds compelling, however, a logically question can be asked: How can we de-

*(Continued on page 6)*

**Torah Teasers**

By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe

**Parshas Nitzavim/Vayelech  
Questions**

1. Which two ancient professions appear in this parsha?
2. Which four cities are mentioned in a single verse in this parsha, and also in a single verse in the book of Genesis?
3. Which three people appear together in a single verse in this parsha - on two separate occasions?
4. In what context is a root (*shoresh*) mentioned in this parsha?
5. What item in this parsha is referred to both in the masculine form and the feminine?
6. What holiday is explicitly referred to in this parsha?
7. What two words found in this parsha are also names of parshios in the book of Genesis?
8. What four items are described in this parsha as a "witness"?

**Answers**

1. The professions of a wood-chopper and a water-carrier are in Deuteronomy 29:10.
2. Sodom, Amora, Adma, and Tzivoyim are all mentioned in a single verse in this parsha (Deut. 29:22). They are also mentioned (twice) in single verses in parshas Lech Lecha (Genesis 14:2, 8).
3. Avraham, Yitzhak and Yaakov are mentioned together in Deut. 29:12, and in 30:20.
4. Moshe compares those who have in mind to serve other gods to a "root flourishing with gall and wormwood" (Deut. 29:17).
5. A Torah scroll (sefer Torah) is referred to in the feminine form (Deut. 28:61), and in the masculine form (Deut. 29:20) See Rashi (Deut. 29:20) for an explanation.
6. The festival of Sukkot is explicitly referred to as the time when the mitzvah of Hakhel takes place, following the Sabbatical year (Deut. 31:10)
7. The words "*miketz*" (Deut. 30:10) and "*vayera*" (31:15).are also names of parshas in the book of Genesis.
8. The parsha describes as a witness: (1) The song that Moshe will write in the next parsha (Deut. 31:19). (2) The Torah Scroll placed with the Holy Ark (Deut. 31:26). (3-4) Heaven and Earth (Deut. 31:28).



Good shabbos everybody. My name is Moshe Strauss and I am the writer for a new column in D'varim Hayotzim called Aliyah Summaries. The purpose of this addition is to give a brief summary of the weekly parsha to allow everyone to better understand the connecting divrei torah. I look forward to the torah that will be shared this year. Good Shabbat and a Shanah Tovah!

**1st aliyah-** In the beginning of Parsha Netzavim, Moshe gathered all of Bnei Yisrael and goes on a long narrative to discuss how Bnei Yisrael is Hashem's chosen nation. Moshe warned them to not be tempted by other nations lifestyles and the consequences that would come by forsaking the bris would be detrimental.

**2nd aliyah-** This aliyah discusses Moshe informing Bnei Yisrael what will happen after they are exiled from israel due to their sins. Moshe says that eventually, hashem will gather them from all corners of the world and bring them back to israel.

**3rd aliyah-** Moshe goes on to say that when Hashem gathers Bnei Yisrael from galus, Bnei Yisrael will again serve Hashem and they will have a plentiful of everything. Moshe instructed Bnei Yisrael to follow Hashem and keep His mitzvos.

**4th aliyah-** Moshe tells Bnai Yisroel that they have *bechirah chafshis*- free choice to choose between good and bad. Their choices will determine whether they get brachas or curses. Moshe then informed them that he is 120 years old and is unable to cross the yarden and will not be coming into israel; rather, Yehoshua, his student will lead them and informed them

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**Rabbi Moshe Atik's Torah Teasers**  
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# 10-Minute Halacha Shiur

Given by Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz  
on yutorah.org

Transcribed by  
Chezky Rothman

## Chinuch for Children to Say Brachot

### Source for Chinuch by Brachos

Shulchan Aruch siman 186 Seif 2: A Child is Obligated in Birchas Hamazon Medrabanan for Chinuch purposes.

### What age should you start being Mechaneich children?

1. 6 or 7 years old which is the standard age of Chinuch
2. Teshuvos Maramchalava Siman 141: As soon as the child is at age when he knows who he is saying the Bracha to.

A. Even if he says to Hashem, still, at what level does that mean anything

3. Yesod V'shoresh HaAvodah Shar 7 Perek 10: As soon as he is able to speak he should say brachos
4. Mekor Chaim Siman 269: When he is 4 or 5 years old
5. Tzavah of the author of the Yesod V'shoresh HaAvodah: Even before he knows how to speak

A. This means even if he doesn't know how to speak properly yet, we try to instill it him so that one of the first things he says are Brachos.

### 2 types of Brachos: Nenin and Mitzvah

1. Nenin – ex: Bracha on food
2. Mitzvah – ex: Bracha on lulav

#### Birchas Hamitzvah

A. This may be different than nenin because we say vtzivanu “we are commanded”; however, children are not commanded to do the Mitzvah!

B. Ksam Sofer Orach Chaim Siman 9: if we assume like Rashi in brachos that it is the father's obligation to teach the child but the child is not a Bar Chiyuvah at all, How can the child say “vtzivanu”? he has no Chiyuv!

- i. Ashkenazim - Women recite Brachos even on Mitzvas Asei Shah Man Grama(ex: Lulav, sukkah). So too by children, even though they aren't commanded to, if they do it anyways, they can say vtzi-

vanu.

ii. Could be we hold like Tosfos, that the Katan becomes a Bar chiyuva M'drabana, so he can definitely say Vtzivanu, because he is obligated by the Rabanan.

iii. Even according to the Rambam who says women cannot make Brachos on Mitzvos Asei Shehazman Grama, would agree that children can make a Bracha because they have a greater connection to the Mitzvah, because in the future he will be an adult and be obligated in the Mitzvah.

iv. Pri Megadim Siman 657 Mishbtzos Zahav Sif Katan 1: Even if the child is not at the age of chinuch for Mitzvos, he can still teach him to make brachos on a Mitzvos.

#### Birchas Hanenin

Q) Can you feed the child if he doesn't make a Bracha on the food that he is eating?

- There is an Issur in the Torah called Lo Sachileim.
  - The Gemara in Yevamos Dafim 113-114 discusses that one is not permitted to feed a child non-kosher food because of this Issur. So if you give a child food knowing he won't make a Bracha on it:
    1. If the child is under the age of Chinuch then it is certainly Mutar.
    2. If, however, the child is at the age of chinuch is this called Lo Sachilim?

- ♦ Magen Avraham discusses this in Hilchos Sukkah and Hilchos Yom Kippur: Can you feed a child outside a Sukkah, and can you feed a child on yom kippur?

We are leninant and say since the food itself isn't Asur rather it is only temporarily Asur it is Mutar to feed him and you do not violate Lo Sachileim.

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BENYAMIN BORTZ,  
בנימין בורטץ

EDITOR OF STUDENT ARTICLES,  
עורך של מאמרים

12TH GRADE  
י"ב תלמיד

## WITHIN ONE'S REACH

מְיַחַד אֶת הַיְיָ

The Gemara (Pesachim 50a) tells us that one of the Amoraim got very sick and for a moment lost consciousness, and he briefly entered into Olam Habah. When he woke up, he was asked what he saw, to which he responded that he heard a voice saying "Ashrei Mi Sheba Likan Vitalmudo Biyado". "Praiseworthy is the one who comes here with his learning in his hand."

This Lashon is a very interesting way to describe someone who has a good portion in Olam Haba, because it doesn't say praiseworthy is the one who did a lot of Mitzvos or learned a lot of Torah. It says someone who has his learning in his hand.

Towards the end of Nitzavim when Moshe finishes telling the Bnai Yisrael the Mitzvos he says that they will "lishmor mitsvosav vechukosav" observe Hashem's Commandments and His laws. I heard R' Sobolofsky explain the Lashon of Shmirah to mean an indication of a special level of observance of the Mitzvos. It isn't just keeping on eye on it for someone but it's making the Torah so important to you that you can only keep it in your very own hands because no other place is good enough for it.

How do we demonstrate our care for Shmiras HaTorah? Rashi tells us "Umshmertem - zu Hamishna"--the study of Torah.

When you truly care about your Torah, you never want to let it go anywhere and you learn and learn and learn it, you want to know it so well that it will be on your fingertips and you never ever want to lose it so you keep it dear to you in your hands.

Moshe tells the Bnai Yisrael "Lo ba'shama'yim hi ..." "The Torah is not high up in the heavens" and therefore out of our grasp. Rather "ka'rov ha'davar ei'lecha me'od" "the Torah is within our grasp." When someone truly wants the Torah and invests time and effort it becomes something that is Ka'rov Ei'lecha Me'od. When you have something truly important and special to you the only place to keep it is in your hands and that is the only place for your Torah.

### Saying Hashem's name when saying the Bracha

- Who holds it is Midrabanan?
  - ◆ Tosfos in Rosh Hashana, Rosh in first perek of Kidushin, the Sefer Hachinuch, Magen Avraham.
- Who Holds it is Midoreisa?
  - ◆ Rambam in Hilchos Brachos
    - ◇ Since most Poskim hold it is Midrabanan, we are lenient and say you can do it for Chinuch.

### Can you repeat a Bracha to be Motzei a Kattan?

- Pri Migadim Siman 589 Seif Kattan 4: Can you say this also by Shofar?
  - ◆ Maateh Efraim Siman 625 Seif 59: An adult can make a Bracha for a child by Sukkah even if he already made the Bracha
    - ◇ Elef Lmattah: Things that come up all the time, like eating and drinking, you can make a Bracha Lvatalah. But for uncommon things, like Sukkah, you wouldn't be able to.
- Magen Avraham Siman 273 Seif Kattan 7: A Gadol can say Kiddush and Havdalah to be Motzei a child.
  - ◆ Why? Seemingly, because it is a common Mitzvah.

# Lessons for Elul

**Yosef Kaminetsky,  
Editor of Student Articles,  
12th Grade**



In the opening pesukim in the first of this week's parshios, Parshas Nitzavim, Moshe reminds Klal Yisroel that they are about to enter into a covenant with Hashem and warns them about following their hearts desires and straying from the will of Hashem. In Moshe's opening remarks, he singles out the leaders of the tribes, the elders, the men, the women, and the children.

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh picks up on this fairly unusual and seemingly strange way in which Moshe addresses Bnai Yisroel and asks, why couldn't Moshe just address them as "Bnei Yisroel"? Furthermore, why over here in this context does Moshe address the nation specifically as opposed to other times where he refers to them as a whole?

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh answers with a very simple yet critical idea. He says that Moshe is trying to impress upon Bnai Yisroel that they need to be united as one, each part of them must be a part of, and must believe in, the whole, in order to enter into the covenant with Hashem. Klal Yisroel needs unity.

Even so, a question still remains: why is Moshe trying to impress this idea of unity and responsibility for all members of Am Yisrael specifically in this context as opposed to other contexts?

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh answers beautifully. He says that it is specifically here that Moshe impresses these ideas upon Bnai Yisroel because immediately after Moshe speaks to Klal Yisroel about entering into the covenant with Hashem, he warns them about straying from the path of Hashem and following their hearts desires. Moshe is telling Klal Yisroel that in order to stay away from straying from Hashem's path, we need to be united as one, we need to take responsibility for each other to make sure that we are all on the right path.

Moshe's words ring true for us today in our times with the recent tragic events we have experienced as well as with the current period of the year in which we are in.

I read a story in one of the major jewish publications last week about an American yeshiva bochur in Eretz Yisroel who walked into yeshiva and saw that everyone in the room was saying tehillim at a time when they would usually be learning. Somewhat confused, he asked one of the Bochrin what was going on and why everyone was saying tehillim. The bochur answered him (in Hebrew) that there was a tsunami in Texas so they were saying tehillim. He then added that he has no idea what a tsunami is or what Texas is, but that if jews are in trouble then we daven for them.

We see from this story, as well as from countless others emerging from the terrible tragedies of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, the tremendous unity and responsibility that Am Yisrael feels for each other. These stories only come to reinforce those ideas and remind us just how important our being united as one is.

Secondly, we find ourselves in the month of elul, just one week away from Rosh Hashanah and the Yomim Noraim. During this time it is incumbent upon us to not only repent and return from the wayward ways of our past, but also to look to the future and think about ways to avoid sin in the future. We must remember, that the key to staying on the path of Hashem and avoiding sin is each other, we need to stick together as one family, taking responsibility for each and every member of our nation no matter who they are. Good Shabbos!

*(Dubi Fischman- Continued from page 6)*

Rosenzweig who, on the eve of his conversion to Christianity, was famously drawn into a shul on Erev Yom Kipur. Rosenzweig emerged a changed man, becoming a prominent Jewish thinker and prolific author.

May this message of Parshat Nitzavim and unique character of the mitzvah of teshuva stay with us through the Yomim Noraim as Hashem empowers us to act on our thoughts of teshuva and Himself helps us return.

*(Dubi Fischman- Continued from page 7)*

va is binary, as reflected in the repetition of the word shav. Hirhurei tashuva, the verbal and internal commitment to change, is simple and immediate with the pasuk noting Hashem's declaration that He Himself will help us return. The Rav illustrates this with the incredible transformation of the Jewish German philosopher Franz

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*(Stories of Greatness- Continued from page 8)*

friend smiled. "Fool! You have no idea what a favor that thief did for you! You thought you bought a good suit for your son, and probably in your village it would have been considered very appropriate. But here in the big city, people have very sophisticated tastes. They would have laughed at that suit!" But now that the thief stole everything and his father-in-law bought new clothes for everyone, your son was dressed in style, even according to the standards of our city. So this was the best possible outcome for you!"

*(Aliyah Summary- Continued from page 2)*

*that they should be strong and not to fear their enemies.*

**5th aliyah-** The Aliyah begins with Moshe telling Yehoshua the two famous words that we say after ending every sefer of the Torah, Chazak Viamatz, be strong and courageous- he should not be afraid about bringing the Jews into Eretz Yisroel because Hashem is on our side and will always be with us. Moshe then wrote the entire Torah and gave it to the kohanim who placed it in the Ahron. Moshe now informs Bnei Yisroel about the mitzvah of Hakel. At the end of every Shmitah cycle, the entire Jewish nation gathers on Sukkot to the Beit Hamikdash and listen to the king read "HaTorah Hazot", this Torah, referring to Sefer Devarim.

**6th aliyah-** Hashem told Moshe that he is about to die and it's time for Hashem to "inspire" Yehoshua. Moshe took Yehoshua to the Mishkan and Hashem appeared there and told Moshe that the Bnei Yisroel will soon forsake Him and leave to worship other gods. When this happens, Hashem says, He will abandon them and hide His face and give them troubles. At that time, Hashem won't hold back and they will be punished. Therefore, Hashem tells Moshe, to write down "this song" and teach it to the Jewish people so that it will be a witness for them. (This song appears in next week's parsha.)

**7th aliyah-** Hashem, again, reiterates the fact that the Jews will become corrupt after Moshe dies when they enter into Israel and that this song, I.E. parshat Hazinu, as a witness to the Jewish people. He then gathers the Zikeinim and tells them that after his death they will become corrupt and they will be punished for it. Moshe then spoke to all of Bnei Yisroel the words of Shirat HaZinu.

*(Jonah Loskove- Continued from page 1)*

rive proper behavior from the sun, which has no free will? Humans were given the ability to choose their path, while the heavens and earth were not. So how can their behavior-which cannot deviate- serve as a lesson for us?

R' Moshe Feinstein attempts to answer this question by offering a sharp insight: The reason that the heavens and the earth do not have free will is because Hashem wills that it be so, just as He wills the Jews to keep the mitzvos of the torah. The "natural law" that governs the movement of the heavenly bodies is nothing more than an expression of Hashem's will. And, if a person sees that Hashem's will is immutable in the case of the sun, this should teach him that anything willed by Hashem must be treated as ironclad law- something that should never change, even if the possibility to do so exists. The fact that a person is rewarded for upholding His will and punished for defying it makes it all the more obvious that Hashem's will is for mitzvos to be kept. Accordingly, a person can derive from the actions of the heavens and the earth that he must obey Hashem's command.

Daniel Goldstein, Editor of Rabbinic Articles, 12th Grade

## Moshe's Birthday

In Parshas Vayelech, Moshe tells Bnei Yisrael, *"I am a hundred and twenty years old today; I can no longer go out and come in"* (Devarim 31:2). The Ramban on this Passuk states that Moshe began the narrative by announcing his age in order to comfort the people regarding his coming death, by pointing out that he was old and would not be useful to them any longer. In a similar vein, the Sforno explains that he meant to highlight that they should not be saddened by his death, for he had lived his natural life to the fullest extent. According to either interpretation, this pronouncement served as an introduction to Moshe's assurances that they do not need to be afraid, for Hashem was with them and they would have Yehoshua as a leader.

Rashi cites the Gemara (Rosh Hashanah 11a) that quotes from the seemingly extra word, *today*, that Moshe meant to convey that, *my days and years are full*, teaching us that Hashem sees to it that tzaddikim will die on the very day of the very month in which they were born, in fulfillment of the verse: *the number of your days I will make full* (Shemos 23:26). In the case of Moshe Rabbeinu, the Gemara (Kiddushin 38a) states that he was born and died on the 7th of Adar, yet nowhere in the Torah is this explicitly mentioned.

The Gemara (Kiddushin 38a) addresses this point and proves its accuracy. Regarding Moshe's death, the verse states: *The Bnei Yisrael bewailed Moshe in the plains of Moav thirty days; the days of tearful mourning for Moshe ended* (Devarim 34:8). The Gemara then recounts the chronology of events after Moshe's death as continuing in the first part of Sefer Yehoshua.

Thus, after charging Yehoshua to lead Bnei Yisrael across the Jordan River into Eretz Yisrael as the new leader (Yehoshua 1:1-9), the verses state: *Yehoshua then ordered the marshals of the people, saying: Circulate in the midst of the camp and command the people saying, "Prepare provisions for yourselves, because in another three days you will be crossing the Jordan"* (vs. 10-11). Establishing the date of the crossing from the verse: *(Yehoshua 4:19), The people ascended from the Jordan on the tenth of the first month (Nissan), we can calculate the date of Moshe's death by deducting 33 days from the 10th day of Nissan (30 days of mourning plus 3 days of preparation), which comes out to be the 7th of Adar.*

To find out the date of Moshe's birth, we must first note that the Scripture states that after Moshe's birth: *She hid him for three months* (Shemos 2:2), after which Moshe was placed in a wicker basket and set among the reeds at the bank of the river. The Gemara (Sotah 12b) states that Pharaoh's daughter found Moshe and saved him on the 6th day of Sivan, and on that day an exceptional light radiated from him, alluding to his greatness and to the date that he would bring Bnei Yisrael the Torah. However, Rabbeinu Bachya explains that we cannot simply count three months back to Adar, because the word *Yirachim* implies individual lunar months, while we count by alternating "full" months of 30 days and "deficient" months of 29 days. The word *Chodesh*, on the other hand, merely represents one of the twelve equal parts that constitute a lunar year. Therefore, by calculating backwards from the 6th of Sivan using deficient months and one full month (88 days), we arrive at the 7th of Adar, the date of Moshe's birth.

(Dubi Fischman- Continued from page 1)

may have performed teshuva in his heart, demonstrating that once a person resolves to do teshuva we acknowledge that teshuva as complete.

But is it really that simple? Can a person so entirely transform his character through a mere utterance and a resolution? In his sefer *Al HaTeshuva* and based on the pesukim in 30:3-4, the Rav explains that the paradigm of teshu-

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## STORIES OF GREATNESS

TOLD OVER BY: DOVID BLANK

Hello and welcome to a new year of D'varim Hayotzim. My name is Dovid Blank and I am this year's Maggid. I will be focusing stories this year, and relating them to the parsha.

This week I am focusing on Nitzavim. In the Parsha Moshe tells the Jews to listen to Hashem and listen to the torah. Moshe continues on how they should listen to what he says and never question his doings. Hashed knows the master plans and we must continue; even if we don't agree. This weeks story is a perfect example. **The Groom's Clothes:**

Jack was a peddler from a small village. Jack's son, a bright and talented young man, caught the eye of a young lady from an extremely affluent family. Despite the vast differences in social status and wealth, the woman's father liked the hardworking young man and approved of the match. When the time came close for the wedding, the bride's father approached Jack with a request. 'Please buy your son a proper suit, so that when he comes to my city for the wedding celebration he will look respectable. Jack readily agreed, and took his son to a local clothing shop in the village to buy him a nice suit. The evening before the wedding, Jack and his family arrived in the city, and took a room in a local hotel. The following morning, the father of the bride together with his friends went to greet his future son-in-law. But they were surprised to find a great commotion in the hotel.

What happened? Jack was so upset that he could barely speak. Agitated and shaken, he pointed to the broken lock on the door. In the middle of the night, thieves had broken into their hotel room, stealing their luggage, clothes, and other possessions. "Even the new suit which I bought my son for the wedding is gone," Jack wailed. "This is a catastrophe!" The wealthy father of the bride put his arm on Jack's shoulders. "Don't let this trouble you at all. Don't worry about the loss; I will make it up to you." He then told his butler to take Jack and his son to the finest stores in town and buy them suitable clothes for the wedding. After the wedding, the wealthy man organized a reception for his friends and neighbors, and he seated his new in-laws at the head of the table. Yet people noticed that Jack looked unhappy. A good friend of the bride's family took Jack aside. "This should be a time of great joy for you. You just married off your son to a wonderful family. Why are you upset?" Why shouldn't I be upset?" replied Jack. "Didn't you hear what happened to us in the hotel, how thieves stole our clothes, including the new suit that I purchased for my son?" Why should that bother you so? Did not the bride's father buy splendid clothes for all of you?" True - but why should I have to resort to gifts? I had prepared everything myself!" At this point, the

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