

As another incredible year of DH comes to a close, we want to thank all our dedicated readers for making our publication such a popular source of inspiration. We hope you enjoyed the Divrei Torah, Parsha Questions, and stories we have brought to you over the past few months. We now present to you the final installment of this year's series of Dvarim Hayotzim issues. Enjoy!

This week's issue is dedicated in honor of the hard work of the entire Dvarim Hayotzim staff, including: Writers, Distributors, Faculty and Editors.

The Push For Perfection

By Dovid Gelbtuch, 12th Grade

Throughout Parshas Emor, we see that the Torah greatly expresses the importance of perfection. This is shown when the Torah mentions the service of the Kohanim's eating of the Terumah, and Karbonos. When serving in the Mishkan, a Kohen must be free from any blemishes; however, if he does contain a blemish, he is unable to serve in the Mishkan. The Torah brings more restrictions and says that he can not even come near a dead body or else he will become impure. A similar idea by Terumah: One who is impure and is "contaminated" may not eat Terumah; the only way for this person to eat Terumah is to immerse himself in a mikvah. And the third time we see the idea of perfection is by Karbonos. When one wants to bring an offering to Hashem, he should make sure that the Karbon is pure and does not contain a blemish. Even if the blemish makes the animal larger and more valuable, it is not acceptable for an offering to Hashem.

From this we can see that when serving Hashem, we should do it in the best way possible. Hashem, as we know, is the most perfect being, and as his people, we should do our best to become as perfect as possible. This means that we must serve Hashem and do mitzvos with care and try to do them in the best way possible.

This idea can also be seen when counting the Omer. Later on in Parshas Emor, the Torah mentions our many festivals including the days counting up to Shavuot: the

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PARSHAS EMOR
16 IYAR 5777
MAY 12TH, 2017

All Zmanim are calculated by myzmanim.com for Woodmere, NY (11598)

Candle Lighting: 7:44 pm
Latest קריאת שבע: 9:15 am
שבת Ends: 8:50 pm

The staff of Dvarim Hayotzim would like to wish everyone an amazing summer and good luck on their finals!

As True As Truth Can Be

By Evan Goldstein, 12th Grade

Consumers are usually drawn to products advertised as "original," "authentic," or "real." People who put up a veneer and a mask that hides their true essence are often looked down upon. The people who consider themselves to be generally good also align themselves with truth. They support causes that deal with real and true problems, ones that are not just promoting a "subjective agenda," or special interest. Unfortunately, our daily lives do not always allow for dedication to essential issues. Most people need to work for a living, and as much as the pursuit of a maintainable income is essential, there are other, more important matters which we rarely have time to focus on. Even those who don't absolutely need to work for a living usually have many distractions which prevent them from focusing properly on life's essentials as well. This week's Parsha, Emor, states "And do not desecrate My unique name, and I will be sanctified among the Children of Israel, I am Hashem Who sanctifies you." (22:32) When we think of sanctifying Hashem's name we often conjure up a mental image of a righteous person refusing to trade his Judaism for anything, and ultimately being killed for his strength. Inevitably, he dies with "Shema Yisrael" on his lips. Yet many prominent rabbinical authorities also say that we also have the opportunity to "live" sanctifying Hashem's name, as opposed to dying sanctifying Hashem's name. Either way, we must always have Shema on our lips

"Hear and accept, O Israel, (that) Hashem, the One Who all existence emanates from; our Hashem, is the One and Only source of all existence."(Devarim 6:4) From the beginning until the end of time this is the only essential truth, the bottom

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Torah Teasers*By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe***Parshas Emor
Questions**

1. In this parsha, which law involves the sun?
2. In what two contexts is the "eighth day" mentioned in this parsha? In what two contexts is the "eighth day" mentioned in this parsha?
3. Which two of the seven species of the land of Israel, explicitly appear in this parsha?
4. In this parsha, which two laws involve the number seven - but the number seven is not mentioned in the description?
5. In this parsha, which item is described as "braided"? What other item in the Torah is braided?
6. In this parsha, which law refers to the numbers twelve, six, two, and one?

Answers

1. A ritually impure person who purifies himself in a mikveh must wait for sunset to be considered completely pure (Leviticus 22:7).
2. An animal is only fit as an offering starting from the eighth day after its birth (Leviticus 22:27). The festival of Shmini Atzeret is on the eighth day of Sukkot (Leviticus 23:36).
3. Dates are mentioned in the command to take a branch of the date-palm tree on Sukkot (Leviticus 23:40). Olives are mentioned in the command to light the menorah in the Tabernacle with pure olive oil (Leviticus 24:2).
4. (1) A Kohen is allowed to become ritually impure upon the death of his seven close relatives (Leviticus 21:2-3 with Rashi). (2) This parsha states the command to light the seven-branched menorah (Leviticus 24:4)
5. In this parsha, the myrtle branches taken on Sukkot are called "a branch with braided leaves" (Leviticus 23:40). The chains that attach the High Priest breastplate to the apron are called "a braided work" (Exodus 28:14).
6. These are all descriptions of the Showbread, the loaves placed on the golden table in the Tabernacle. There are "twelve" loaves, placed in sets of "six" loaves each. Each ("one") loaf is kneaded with "two" solid measurements of flour (Leviticus 24:5-7).



This week, we read parshat Emor. The haftorah for this week's parsha can be found in Yechezkiel 44:15-31. The parsha contains Moshe teaching the laws of Kehuna. The haftorah continues with this theme as Yechezkel speaks about the many laws and prohibitions for a Kohen as they will be applicable during the coming of the third Beit Hamikdash. What really strikes me as something each one of us can learn from this is the fact that they do not receive a portion in the land and how it is our job as a nation to support them. They seemingly are ostracized from the rest of the Jews, but in reality, they are accomplishing perhaps the most important and holy things. We, as a nation, are aware of this and help them through all the different things that we bring to them. Let us stop and think for a second. If these Kohanim were different and had no portion in the land and we were not aware of or they were not doing this job that is so holy would we be so inclined to include them and provide for them? Probably not. Is this fair? Most definitely not. As the saying goes: A Jew is a Jew is a Jew.

Let me tell you a story in which people identified with someone who was wealthy and well liked but then abandoned him when his situation was most dire. I am about to tell you a fantastic story about a man named Eric Erickson. It bewilders me how more people do not know about the heroics of this very special man that may have single handedly ended World War II. Do I have your attention now?

Eric was born in Brooklyn NY, to a poor family. He nonetheless succeeded greatly in his education and ended up with an engineering degree from Cornell. Throughout the 1920's, he worked in all different oil companies. By the 1930's he was a successful businessman who was well liked by all. In 1936 he began to trash his own great reputation that he had worked so hard to earn. In conjunction with Hitler becoming well known and hated around the world, Eric began voicing his support for him. He went around arguing with anyone, telling them all of Hitler's accomplishments, and he became openly anti-Semitic. In 1938 there was an incident in which he publicly berated a Jew in a restaurant. A newspaper article was published condemning any relations with Eric. Everyone began to dissociate themselves with him, from his colleagues to his own wife's family members. He and his wife became the only ones either had. He quickly renounced his American citizenship and moved his oil business to

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10-Minute Halacha Shiur

Given by Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz
on yutorah.org

Transcribed by
Mayer Adelman

Going to Meron When Lag B'omer is Sunday

Intro:

I. Due to the vast number of people who go to Meron on ל"ג בעומר, there is a police force present, many of whom come and prepare in advance. Is going to Meron on ל"ג בעומר therefore a problem of לפני עור? If so, what is the proper response?

II. (סימן יד) שיערי ציון: Presumably, the precedent for this question is a question which was posed with regard to arranging a demonstration (הפגנה) on שבת. The question is: May one arrange for a demonstration against שבת on חילול שבת as it will lead to חילול שבת:

A. Rav Moshe Malka writes regarding that question that one may not do so, especially since the הפגנה won't accomplish anything anyway.

B. Rav Elyashiv, however, said that even though הפגנות won't cause people to stop being שבת, they are still productive in that it is a public expression against שבת. He argues that one need not give up his מצוה of protesting שבת in order to avoid causing one to do an עבירה. Rav Elyashiv brings two ראיות.

1. The בבא מציעא in גמרא on מהרי"ל דסקין (דף פח) asks the following: Why does one who "muzzled" his worker violate the לא of "לא תחסום שור בדישו"? Shouldn't we require him to forgo his rights to the food so that his owner won't be over a לא? And he answers that one is not required to give up something which is rightfully his just so he won't cause someone to do an עבירה. So one can apply the same line of logic to our case as well.

I. Perhaps one can deflect this ראיה however, because this is only stated by a monetary case.

2. The גמרא in מסכת כתובות (דף ג:) says that there was a תקנת חכמים that בתולות get married on Wednesdays. The גמרא then says that certain evil governments had a rule that one who gets married on Wednesday must first be intimate with the Bishop. The גמרא then states that the בתולות shouldn't be worried about having to be intimate with the Bishop because it was a case of אונס and it was out of their control. So, from the fact that the חכמים insisted on keeping the תקנה, despite it leading to the Bishops violating an אסור, we see that one need not repeal a תקנה in order to prevent someone else from violating an אסור.

פסק הלכה

I. שיערי ציון: Since going to the קבר of רשב"י is at the very least something that one gets a lot of inspiration from, it can be called a מצוה, and, seemingly, Rav Elyashiv would hold that one doesn't need to be concerned that his actions will lead to other people violating שבת. There are three additional התרים לפני עור for not calling this:

A. It's very indirect: One person going to the קבר doesn't increase the police presence in the area, and one is not held responsible for the fact that he is part of a group which as a whole necessitates the police presence.

B. Rav Moshe says that one who owns a wedding hall may rent it out to one who is going to have a wedding with mixed dancing because he is renting it out for a wedding, it just happens to be that at the wedding something which is אסור is taking place. Here also, one who wants to go to the קבר is going for a מצוה. It happens to be that it will lead to a police presence also which will come early.

C. The גמרא in עבודה זרה (דף סג) says that one may give money to his workers and he need not worry that they will use it to buy non-כשר food. The ריטב"א over there says that we see from that גמרא that if you don't enable the אסור directly, it isn't לפני עור. Similarly, here, the police force can come whenever it wants. One is not held responsible because they chose to come on שבת.

1. The case of the הפגנה is actually worse because in that case you have to ask them to come so one is directly causing them to come on שבת.

II. שיערי ציון: Even though one does not violate לפני עור, one should still try to prevent חילול שבת as much as possible and should therefore wait until Sunday to light the bonfire.

III. Rav Zalman Nechemia Goldberg: One must wait until Sunday to light the bonfire. "Go out and see, sometimes the חכמים prevent the performance of דאורייתא because of a concern for חילול שבת (i.e. שופר)."

Shaving:

I. רמ"א: When ל"ג בעומר falls out on Sunday one may (and should) take a haircut and shave on ערב שבת in order to not disgrace שבת by shaving the day after.

REPRESENTATION OF G-D

AARON NASSIR

9TH GRADE

This week's parsha, Emor, is the largest Parsha in the book of Vayikra and consists of over 50 mitzvot. Many of these laws apply to the Kohanim. One of the pesukim relating to them states; "They (Kohanim) shall be holy to their God and they shall not desecrate the name of their God" (21:6). The Kohanim, who represent the Jewish people in their service of Hashem. Are instructed in this verse to be holy and not to desecrate Hashem's name. The Sforno says that it is not for the Kohen's sake that he is instructed to do this, but it is because he stands for Hashem's honor. Therefore he is not allowed he is not permitted to allow himself to be dishonored, because it is as if Hashem is being dishonored as well.

Rav Aharon Kotler would say that just as how the Kohanim would represent the Jewish people in their service of Hashem. So too, our rebbeim and torah scholars play a similar role among the Jewish people today. Rav Aharon continues by saying, that those who learn Torah must always behave with higher standards than those around them. This is because they are representing Hashem and must be a good example for other people. Acting with a higher level of holiness especially applies when we are around non-Jewish people, because we are not only representing Hashem, but also representing the Jewish nation as a whole. We can learn from this to accept responsibility in our lives, and when confronted by a certain situation remember that through our actions we are representatives of Hashem.

Shabbat Shalom!

(Dovid Gelbtuch— Continued from page 1)

Omer. From the second day of Pesach to Shavuot, we are expected to count those 49 days and say a special bracha. The only difficulty with this mitzvah is that one must consistently count every day, but if he misses one day, he is unable to complete the mitzvah and cannot make it up? What this parsha is trying to teach us is that we must try to do every mitzvah in the best way possible. We can't just do half of the job if we want to be rewarded; we must do every mitzvah completely and with our best efforts.

Shabbat Shalom!

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דברים היוצאים מן הלב

Rebbe Akiva's Praise: a Prayer for Us All

Yaakov Fuchs
10th Grade

One of the extremely popular songs sung around the world at Lag B'Omer Hillulahs is the song of "Omar R' Akiva." The first sentence of this song is "Omar Rebbe Akiva Ashreichem Yisrael!" In English, this is, "Said Rabbi Akiva, praiseworthy is Israel!" This song comes from a Mishna in Meseches Yoma, where the Mishna is discussing Hashem forgiving and purifying Bnei Yisrael. Rebbe Akiva says that Hashem purifies all sin and that going to a Mikvah is the same as Hashem purifying Bnei Yisrael on Yom Kippur.

I have one question on this Mishna. "Praiseworthy is Israel?" After all that Rebbe Akiva went through – 24,000 students dying and the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash – "Ashreichem Yisrael?" How can Rebbe Akiva say such a thing? We just spent an entire month not getting haircuts, not shaving, and not listening to music because Rebbe Akiva's students tragically died after not showing respect for one another. They didn't treat each other like they would themselves, a basic fundamental that Rebbe Akiva stressed, one of the first things Jewish children learn. So now Rebbe Akiva says that we're praiseworthy?

The answer is that in the worst situations, Rebbe Akiva remained optimistic, he stayed positive. The Gemara in Makos relates how when the Chachamim walked past the destroyed Har Habayis, they burst into tears, while Rebbe Akiva, on the other hand, began to laugh. Rebbe Akiva explained his laughing by quoting pesukim from Micha and Zechariah. The Pasuk in Micha (during the time of the first Beis Hamikdash) talked about Yerushalayim being plowed, whilst the Pasuk in Zechariah (during the time of the second Beis Hamikdash) says that old men and women will sit together in the streets of Yerushalayim. "If the 1st Pasuk came true already, so too the second one will for sure come true," said Rebbe Akiva. "Akiva you have comforted us, Akiva you have comforted us," said the Chachamim.

Another story is the famous story of the Haggadah, in which the five Rabbis in Bnei Brak were having their Seder. Rebbe Akiva lived in Bnei Brak, so the other four Rabbis visited him, which was quite strange considering Rebbe Akiva was the youngest of the four. Why did they go to visit him? I heard a great pshat at my seder this year. None of the other Rabbis even wanted to have the Seder! Death at the hands of the Romans was certain if the Rabbis would have been caught. Said Rebbe Akiva, "We must have this Seder." As we all know, not only did they have the Seder, but it went until their Talmidim rushed in, telling their Rabbeim it was time to say Krias Shema of shacharis.

We see from both of these stories that Rebbe Akiva looked for the positive in any given situation. He's saying "Ashreichem Yisrael" because he knows that although his generation and his Talmidim were certainly less than praiseworthy, he's giving them chizuk. Everyone has the potential to be praiseworthy, even people like Rebbe Akiva, who literally worked from the bottom up starting from the age of forty to become the Talmid Chacham he became. It's never too late; even though you may not seem praiseworthy now, you can become praiseworthy if you work to become the person you know you want to become. Only then can we be "Ashreichem."

(Evan Goldstein— Continued from page 1)

line; what it all boils down to. There is no truth which is more basic or more real. The Torah instructs us to recite this "when you lay down and when you rise" at night and in the morning, so that in all aspects of our lives and in all of our endeavors we begin and end with a focus on Hashem's existence and oneness; His hand in our lives which is constantly sustaining us. "Shema Yisrael" is the basis of "living to sanctify Hashem's name" as it states in the paragraph which follows it: "And you shall love Hashem your God with all your heart, with all of your soul, and with all of your wherewithal." Our love of Hashem should be palpable to the extent—our sages say—that others should come to love Hashem through you. So that people will be moved to say: "so and so who learns Torah, how pleasing are his deeds, etc." This is how we "live" to sanctify Hashem's name. There is nothing more real or essential than the reality of "Shema Yisroel." Let us strive to always recite "Shema" daily, when we lay down and when we get up. Let us make this reality a focus of our lives. May we be zoche to sanctify Hashem's name throughout our daily lives.

Good Shabbos!

AKIVAH THALHEIM

12TH GRADE

REASON FOR ALARM

הזל (Bamidbar Rabbah 19:5) relate that when Moshe heard פרשת אמר (which contains the laws regarding the prohibition of a כהן becoming טמא through contact with a dead body), his complexion turned a sickly yellow-green. However, when Moshe later heard the פרה אדומה פרשה which includes the process of purification for one who becomes טמא, he felt at ease again.

It is difficult to comprehend why Moshe appeared so crestfallen when he heard about the laws of a כהן who became טמא, especially since the purification process associated with the פרה אדומה had already been taught to Moshe at מרה. Furthermore, even if the option of the פרה אדומה did not exist, and once a כהן became טמא he remained that way forever, why was Moshe so shocked? Shouldn't he have accepted it that this is how Hashem wanted it to be?

In the aftermath of the חטא העגל, Moshe pleaded with Hashem and said, "I and Your people are made distinct from every people on the face of the earth" (Shemos 33:16). Moshe meant that since the Jewish nation is different than every other, by virtue of our immersion in תורה and עבודה we should be able to continue to have a unique intimate bond with Hashem. Obviously, that could only continue to happen if Hashem didn't kill all of ישראל as He intended.

Upon hearing that כהנים were not permitted to become טמא and assuming that a כהן could never become טהר again, Moshe became alarmed. He reasoned that even when a כהן was permitted to become טמא (for a close relative or for a מצוה) he would never be permitted to reclaim his status as an active participant in the עבודה of the בית המקדש. This implied that גמילות חסדים — compassion and kindness displayed toward the deceased — is of even greater importance than the עבודה of performing the will of Hashem. If so, then Moshe's request that כלל ישראל be permitted to excel through its עבודה and attain a status not shared by any other nation was rejected in favor of the thesis that גמילות חסדים was of greater importance. Moshe was concerned that כלל ישראל's unique status was jeopardized, because he was aware that non-Jews at times excel in the area of גמילות חסדים. It was only upon hearing that the institution of פרה אדומה was still viable and that כהנים would never be permanently unable to perform the עבודה because of their גמילות חסדים extended to certain מתים that Moshe felt relieved.

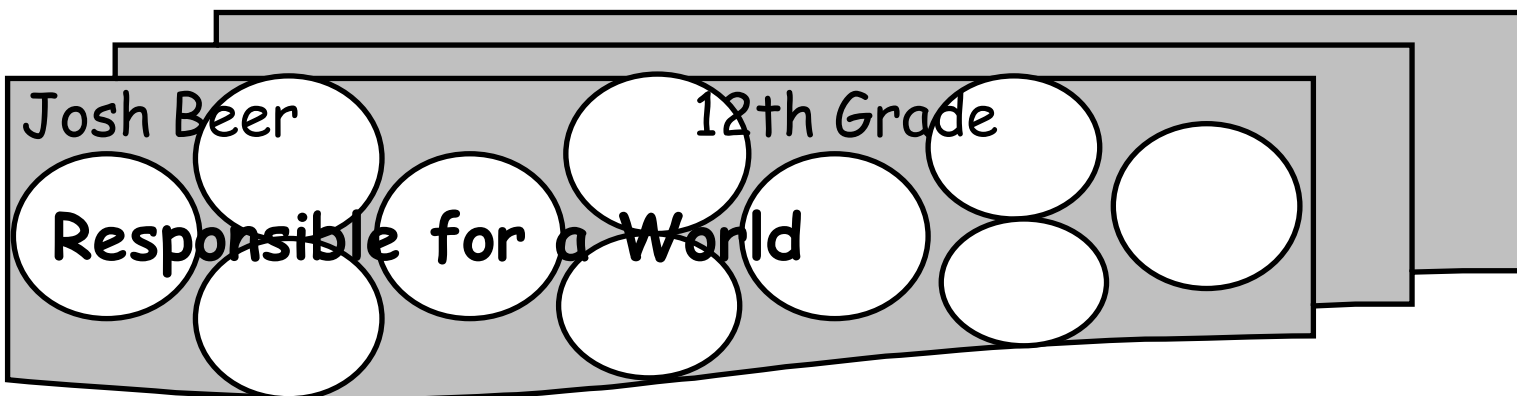
stood silently. "Regarding your question," continued the Baal Shem Tov, "you would do well to speak to my student, Reb Volf. He's the one you met outside stroking the horses."

After hearing the man's story, Reb Volf explained: "It is entirely conceivable that this earthquake had been preordained since the beginning of time. However, the fact that your punishment had been timed just so that it happened neither before nor after the earthquake is clearly a miracle that G-d has brought about through His many messengers." Satisfied at last, the man began to live openly as a Jew and as an adherent of the Baal Shem Tov's teachings.

Adapted from Otzar Sippurei Chabad (p. 119-120)

Thank you to all of our participating Shuls:

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Parshas Emor begins with the laws pertaining to Kohanim. The pasuk says to tell the Kohanim to not defile themselves by dealing with people who are dead. Kohanim can't touch any dead besides for their immediate family. This is one of a few restrictions that also include not being allowed to marry a woman who is divorced. The Kohen Gadol has even more limitations. He is not allowed to touch even his parent who died and can't marry a widow to go along with a divorcee on the list of limitations. The sefer Zichron Meir says that every person needs to act and serve Hashem however much his ability allows. If someone is not as fortunate and is on a lower level, we should not look at him and don't look to try to go above that. Instead, we should strive to grow as much as we can and not look at others. This is similar to what the Mesilas Yisharim says, that every person must know his responsibilities in his own world, and not in anyone else's world. Each and every one of us have a responsibility to represent ourselves and Hashem in the greatest way. We all have encountered people that know less than us and that gives us an opportunity to be mekadesh Hashem. May we all realize the great responsibility we have and use it to bring Mashiach closer. Have a great Shabbos!

(Haftorah Corner— Continued from page 2)

Sweden, a neutral country, where he continued to loudly voice his opinions.

He was soon approached by members of the Gestapo, asking if he, as one of the world's oil experts, would help with Germany's need for oil. He enthusiastically agreed to help. He immediately began to try to help them with the expansion of their synthetic oil industry which would eliminate their need for other's oil. No one knew the location of these synthetic oil plants that the Germans had. Security was rigorous. Then, in 1942, Eric managed a meeting with Heinrich Himmler, the head of the Gestapo. He proposed an idea in which they would build a synthetic oil plant in Sweden for use in case the other locations were discovered and bombed. Himmler fully supported the plan and even invested in it himself. Now Eric needed to become familiar with the German technology. He was given a personal pass to all the plants allowing him access to everything personally signed by Hitler. He began to tour all the plants and get all the details and plans from their operation. In 1943 these plants were "mysteriously" bombed by the Americans and "somehow" they always knew when a plant was repaired and were able to bomb it again. Within months, the oil supply was dried up. So many planes and tanks which they had in great numbers were left unable to be operated.

Germany was no longer able to advance their position and lost several battles due to lack of fuel. This whole turning point in the war came because of one individual. How do you think all the people that deserted him felt after they found out that he was the hero of the war? Probably not too great. While it is perfectly understandable to no longer associate with someone who is a Nazi, it is a whole different thing to not include different people from society. We need to look around and make sure regardless of whether people have a physical portion of the land, we must still help them and include them. They should not need to have the lofty status of a Kohen to be recognized.

Thank you to all those who have read my Haftorah corners all these weeks. Hopefully we can all cherish and build on the many lessons that were taught. I would like to end off with something that will help us hammer these lessons home. It can be found in the Noticer, which is written by Andy Andrews whose ideas have helped me in my divrei torah.

If there are five seagulls on a dock and one decides to leave how many are left? You may be inclined to say four, but within the question is where the answer lies. The key word in the question is the word "decides." With this knowledge, we now know that indeed five seagulls still remain on the dock. Why? Because the seagull only decided to leave. He can talk about how he wants to leave as much as he wants or even speak about the destination where he is headed; it does not matter! Until he begins to flap his wings and fly away there are still five seagulls on that dock. There is no power in intention. We experience inspiration all the time. Hopefully we experienced inspiration within the many Haftorah corners. The problem with inspiration is that it is fleeting. I beseech you to not let your intentions remain simply that, intentions. Do something. Change yourself and then change the world. Carry these lessons with you and let them influence you every day. Thank you and have a great Shabbos.

STORIES OF GREATNESS

TOLD OVER BY: NETANEL YOMTOV

For centuries after the expulsion of Spanish Jewry in 1492, pockets of Jewish people clung to their faith in secret. While giving the appearance of being devout Christians, they maintained Jewish practice in hiding.

Some of these crypto-Jews held positions of great prominence in Spanish government, finance, culture and academia. One such Jew was a very high official in the royal court who enjoyed a close relationship with the reigning monarch. But the day came when the powerful arm of the Inquisition caught up with him, and he was accused of living as a Jew. He was summarily tried and sentenced to death by auto-da-fé.

Since he had many important duties, he asked the king and was granted to defer his punishment for a year so he would be able to put the kingdom's affairs in order before being burned.

The year passed all too quickly, and the king once again asked that the punishment be delayed by one month. This was followed by a request for an additional week and then a day. Finally, word was given that the treacherous Jew, who had pretended to be a faithful Catholic, would be put to death by burning in the city square.

People gathered from miles around to witness the event. The pyre was burning, and the priests were performing their last rites. Suddenly, the ground shook. Buildings crumbled. The bleachers wobbled. The crowd dispersed in panic as the city was gripped by an earthquake. In the mayhem, the accused managed to slip away from his captors. A few weeks later, he escaped out of Spain to safety.

Well versed in classical philosophy, the Jew knew no rest. Was the earthquake sent by G-d just to save him, or was it simple happen-

stance? Could it be that G-d was intimately involved in his personal affairs and cared about him?

After giving the matter some thought, he decided to further contemplate the issue. If he would conclude that it was simple coincidence, then he would continue to live his life in the relative safety of his non-Jewish persona. If, however, he would come to understand that G-d had ordained the earthquake for his personal protection, he would have no choice but to live according to G-d's will, as an open and proud, practicing Jew.

He immediately began discussing the issue with the philosophers and thinkers whom he met in Germany, where he had come to reside. He always talked of a theoretical minister, never letting on that it was he himself who had experienced such an amazing turn of events.

The opinions flew fast and furious, and every wise man had his say, but there was no answer that satisfied the stranger from Spain.

In desperation, he decided to travel eastward to seek the council of Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov, the leader of the nascent Chassidic movement.

As the travel-weary man came to the courtyard of the famed rabbi, he saw a man stroking the horses. It was none other than Reb Volf Kitzes, one of the Baal Shem Tov's pupils. In response to the Spaniard's query, Reb Volf indicated the Baal Shem Tov was inside the house.

As soon as the stranger entered, even before he was able to speak, the Baal Shem Tov called out, "Welcome, minister from Spain!"

Shaken by the fact that the Baal Shem Tov knew who he was without being told, he

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