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Yaakov And The Moon

By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe

(Le'iluy nismas my father Bentzion ben Tzvi Aryeh on his first Yartzeit, 4th of Kislev)

This week's parsha contains one of the most enigmatic episodes in sefer Beraishis. On a simple level, Yitzchak wished to bless his older son Eisav instead of his younger son Yaakov. When Rivka hears of this desire she immediately instructs and orders Yaakov to dress up as Eisav and "steal" the berachos of Eisav from his father. What logic could have motivated Yitzchak to bless Eisav over Yaakov? Did he really think that Eisav will continue the legacy of Avraham? How are we to understand this deceptive behavior of Rivka & Yaakov.

The Malbim explains that of course Yitzchak understood the true nature of Eisav. Indeed, in the previous section, the Torah states how Eisav married Chitite women and how much that bothered his parents. Yitzchak never intended that Eisav would continue Avraham's mission of spreading monotheism in the world. In fact, before Yaakov leaves for Charan Yitzchak bestows upon Yaakov the blessings of Avraham (28:4). However, he was concerned about the physical needs of Yaakov and his future generations. If Yaakov would be involved in spiritual matters, who would plow and harvest his fields? Who would fight his wars

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PARSHAS TOLDOS
1 KISLEV 5779
NOVEMBER 9TH, 2018

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Our Special Connection With Hashem

By Michael Arshadnia, 11th Grade

In Yaakov's bracha the pasuk says, "And may the Lord give you of the dew of the heavens and [of] the fatness of the earth and an abundance of grain and wine" The wording in this pasuk seems odd at first glance. Why does the pasuk say "Elokim"? It seems that the Torah never uses this name of Hashem when giving a bracha?

Rashi explains that although Yitzchak was giving a bracha, it was on the condition that Yaakov and future generations deserved the bracha and abundance. Rashi then points out that by Esav's bracha, there was no condition. How is this so? Isn't Yaakov so much greater than Esav?

The Sfat Emet brings down an interesting point to explain this. He adds that when Adam and Chava ate from the Etz Hadaat, they got a harsher punishment than the snake did. The snake actually didn't get too harsh of a punishment. He has everything that he could ever need since he gets his food from the ground. Why is this so? The Sfat Emet answers that the snake's punishment was actually worse because the snake will never need Hashem and will never be able to talk to Hashem, but Hashem loves us and wants us to always daven to him and to try to get close to him.

As is the case here by the bracha to Yaakov. Hashem wants us to always act properly and call out to him for

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Torah Teasers

By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum,
9th Grade Rebbe

**Parshas Toldos
Questions**

1. Which verse in this parsha has five verbs in a row?
2. Besides Esav, who else in Tanach is called an "admoni" - a person with reddish complexion?
3. In what two contexts does the number 40 appear in this parsha?
4. Whose neck is mentioned in this parsha? (2 answers)

Answers

1. When Esav takes the lentil soup from Yaakov, the Torah states: "And he ate and he drank and he got up and he went and he degraded the birthright" (Genesis 25:34).
2. When the future king, David, first meets the prophet Shmuel, David is described as having "reddish complexion" (1-Shmuel 16:12).
3. Yitzhak marries Rivka at the age of 40 (Genesis 25:20). Esav also marries at age 40 (Genesis 26:34).
4. Yaakov's neck is mentioned when his mother places the goat skins upon it (Genesis 27:16). Esav's neck is mentioned by Yitzhak in his blessing. (Genesis 27:40).



**Rabbi Moshe
Atik's Torah
Teasers
is available on
AMAZON**

Aliyot Summary

By: Avi Kwestel

1st Aliyah - In this Aliyah Rivka is having trouble getting pregnant. Yitzchak and Rivka Daven and indeed after twenty years of marriage Rivka becomes pregnant. She has a difficult pregnancy and she is told through Nivooah that she has two children in her womb. Two nations struggling and indeed she gives birth to twin boys. One is Esav and one is Yaakov. As the boys grow older Esav is a hunter, Yaakov is an איש אלים. We know that Yitzchak favored Esav whereas Rivka favored Yaakov. This is the Aliyah where Esav sells the Bichorah to Yaakov and the Aliyah ends when we hear that there was a famine in Eretz Cna'an. Yitzchak does not leave Eretz Cna'an as his father did, he stays in Eretz Cna'an and goes to Eretz Plishtim. Hashem tells him that Yitzchak will receive all the Brachos that Hashem promised to Avraham.

2nd Aliyah - In this Aliyah Yitzchak settled in Eretz Plishtim. The people asked about his wife and Yitzchak, just like his father did, told everyone that Rivka was his sister. He was afraid that the Plishtim would kill him and would take Rivka. Eventually Avimelech, who was the king of the Plishtim, realized that Rivka was indeed Yitzchak's wife and he reprimands Yitzchak but he also issues a decree telling the whole country that no one may touch Yitzchak and while in Plishtim Yitzchak becomes tremendously successful.

3rd Aliyah - In this Aliyah we hear that Yitzchak became extremely wealthy, he redigs some wells that his father Avraham had dug but the Plishtim had since then stopped them up. The Plishtim become envious of Yitzchak's wealth and they ask him to leave. Yitzchak moves out of the city and he settles in the valley of Garar. There Yitzchak's servants dig two new wells but again the Plishtim contest his ownership over these wells. Yitzchak's servants dig a third well and that well is uncontested.

4th Aliyah - In this Aliyah Yitzchak moves to Be'er Sheva and there Hashem appears to Yitzchak and blesses him. Hashem assures Yitzchak that He Hashem will always be with Yitzchak. The Aliyah continues with Avimelech coming from Garar, he approaches Yitzchak with his whole entourage, with Avimelech's general Phicol and Avimelech requests to make a peace treaty with Yitzchak. Yitzchak is not so happy at first but eventually they do make a peace treaty

5th Aliyah - In this Aliyah Esav turned forty years old and he married two women who were not at all pleasing to his parents. Then the Torah in our Aliyah tells us the story of how Yitzchak at an older age wanted to give a Bracha to Esav but Rivka arranges for Yaakov to receive the Brachos instead of Esav.

6th Aliyah - This Aliyah continues the story of Yaakov getting the Brachos instead of Esav. Yitzchak gives the Brachos to Yaakov and as soon as Yaakov leaves the room Esav comes in, he is furious that Yaakov got the Brachos instead of him. Yitzchak gives Esav a Bracha nonetheless but Esav says that he will kill Yaakov. Rivka hears this and she asks Yitzchak to send Yaakov to Charan in order to save his life and eventually to find a wife.

7th Aliyah - This Aliyah tells us the aftermath of the story with the Brachos. Yitzchak sends Yaakov to Yitzchak's brother in law Lavan to get married and to stay safe. Esav marries Machlat, the daughter of Yishmael.

10-Minute Halacha Shiur

Given by Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz
on yutorah.org

Transcribed by
Eli Wiseman

Bein Adam LeChavero During Tefillah

Connection to the Parsha: Yitchak and Rivka prayed for a child, and after 10 years barren, they were answered with twins.

Q: What is one Bein Adam LeChavero Mitzvah that should be done before Tefillah?

A: The Magen Avraham quotes the Arizal who says one should give Tzedakah right before Tefillah. He says the positive Bein Adam LeChavero action helps one with his Bein Adam LaMakom actions and opens up the gates of heaven.

Q: Can one borrow a Tallis, Sefer, or a pair of Tefillin from another person without his permission?

A: The Shulchan Aruch (Siman 14) says one can borrow Tallis and Tefillin but not Seforim.

He reasons that people aren't as quick to give out their Seforim as their Tallis and Tefillin.

The Aruch Hashulchan (Siman 14 Sief 3) says to just look something up in a Sefer is fine

A2: The Minchas Yitzchak (Chelek 17 Siman 130) says nowadays when people give out Seforim quite often one can burrow a Sefer without the owner's permission.

A3: The Mishna Berura says one can burrow Tallis and Tefillin only from time to time.

He reasons that people don't want their Tallis and Tefillin to be burrowed constantly.

He also points out if the one knows the owner is strict with burrowing, he shouldn't borrow from him

Q: How long can a Shaliach Tzibur Daven for?

A: The Gemara (Berachos 31) says when Rabbi Akiava was a Shaliach Tzibur, he would daven a shorter Chazaras HaShatz so as not to burden the congregation. This implies that a Shaliach Tzibur should follow the pace of that specific shul.

The Shulchan Aruch (Siman 53 Sief 11) says a Shaliach Tzibur is not doing the right thing if he burdens the Tzibur.

Rav Sraya Deblitzky (in his Haskama to Shaari Mitzvah) says a Shaliach Tzibur should also not burden the Tzibur with his silent Shemoneh Esrei. However, he determines that the time one should cut

down his Shemoneh Esrei to nine minutes on a weekday and six on Shabbos.

Q: What are situations when one should shorten his Shemoneh Esrei?

A: Rav Sternbuch (Teshuvos V'henghaogs Chelek 1 Siman 75) says a person with a long Shemoneh Esrei he should not daven right in back of him because this would prevent the person in front of him from taking his three steps back.

A: Some poskim say if one is blocking other people from entering or exiting the Shul, one can pick him up and move him.

A: The Eliyahu Rabba (Siman 124 Seif Katan 7) writes that a Rabbi and one who is in a Minyan of just 10 should not daven long Shemoneh Esreis.

Q: How serious is talking in Shul?

A: The Shulchan Aruch (Siman 124 Seif 7) says if a person speaks during Chazaras HaShatz, his sin is too big to bear.

A:The Mishna Berura (Siman 124 Seif Katan 27) quotes from Eliyahu Rabbah that many Shuls were destroyed because of talking in Shul.

A: Halichos Bein Adam LeChavero quotes the father of the Shelah HaKadosh, in Yash Nochlin, who says that he has never seen a worse sin than talking in Shul. He says it not only prevents people from davening but also disgraces the honor of Hashem.

Q: Should one daven outloud?

A: The Shulchan Aruch Poskins that one should not daven Shemoneh Esrai too loud that it will disturb others, but loud enough to hear himself.

The Mishna Berura recommends in the other areas of Tefillah to daven loudly. However, this is best if everyone is doing so.

Q: Who should daven for the congregation?

A: The Mishna Berura (Siman 53) writes even though it is important for a person with a Yahrzeit to be Shaliach Tzibur, if the congregation doesn't want him to be Chazan, he should not do so.

Q: Is there a problem with collecting Tzedakah during Davening?

A: The Ritva (Sukkah 25a) explains the rule that in-

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The Importance Of Ameilus

By: Yosef Shafler, 10th Grade

There's a famous medrash quoted by Rashi on the pasuk (Breishis 25:22). The medrash, elucidating the nature of the struggle within Rivkah, explains that every time Rivkah walked past a Bais Medrash, Yaakov would struggle to get out; when she walked past a Bais Avodah Zarah, Eisav strongly endeavored to exit the womb. There's a question, however, to be asked on this Medrash: from our earliest moments in nursery school we're all taught that every baby learns with a Malach while he's still inside of his mother. Why then would Yaakov Avinu even want to leave that environment to go instead into a Bais Medrash to learn? After all, he's learning Kol HaTorah Kulah with a Malach! Does he think he can find a better Chavrutah?? This is the question of Rav Druk in his sefer Aish Tamid.

Rav Druk offers a beautiful answer. He notes that Yaakov appreciated the full mitzvah of Limud HaTorah, that he knew that Torah which comes without effort and toil is not considered "real Torah"; that in fact it is only when you sit and break your teeth over the Torah is it "real." It is therefore that Yaakov wanted to leave his mother and the Malach and enter into a vibrant and serious Bais Medrash specifically so he could be Amal B'Torah and learn properly. Even in the womb he didn't want the easy way out but wanted to push himself, to expend real effort and not be spoon-fed by the Malach.

This answer provides us with a proper understanding of the correct way to learn. After one is Misayem a Masechta he recites the Hadran Alach. One of the lines we say in it is "Anu Ameilim V'Hem Ameilim. Anu Ameilim U'Mikablem Schar V'Hem Ameilim V'Einam Mikablem Schar" "We toil and they toil. We toil and receive reward and they toil and don't receive reward." This doesn't make any sense- everyone who works receives reward! The Chofetz Chaim gives a fascinating answer to this puzzle: we get reward based on the fact that we put in the effort, that we tried and persevered, even if we don't immediately have the desired outcome. Goyim, however, can't just show up to work and vainly try to do their jobs. No worker has the expectation that as long as he shows up and consistently tries to do his job, regardless of the fact that he didn't produce or accomplish any-

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and protect its citizens from enemies. Yitzchak envisioned a partnership between Yaakov and Esav where Yaakov would be the spiritual heir of Avraham and Esav's descendants would provide Yaakov's descendant with all the physical necessities so that they can devote their efforts to spiritually serving Hashem. It would be an equal partnership similar to what was established between Yissachar and Zevulun.

Rivka, however, believed that Eisav would not use his material blessings to support Yaakov but to harm him. She felt that Yaakov must also be blessed with the material blessings to be self-sustaining and not rely on the financial & physical support of Esav. Upon hearing of Yitzchak's plan, she needed to act fast to thwart it and therefore, in haste, resorted to deception. Had she had more time, the Malbim writes that she would have spoken to Yitzchak and try to change his mind.

I think that perhaps we can acquire a deeper understanding of this episode with a seemingly unrelated gemarah in Meseches Chulin (60b) which is quoted by Rashi in sefer Beraishis. The pasuk first states that Hashem

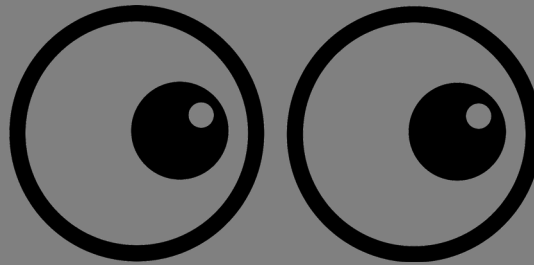
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(Michael Arshadnia- Continued from page 1)

help. That's when he will give us bracha. By Esav, Hashem doesn't care about him and he doesn't want to be involved with him. It is a big honor to be able to daven and to get closer to Hashem.

Have a good Shabbos!

Eyes
Of
Compassion



Max
Blumenthal
10th, Grade

“And when Yitzchak grew old his eyesight faded and he could not see. He called Eisav, his elder son, and said To him ‘My son.’ Eisav said to him ‘Here I am.’” (Bereishis 27:1)

Rashi, quoting the Midrash Rabbah (65:10), explains that by the Akeidah, when Avraham raised the knife to slaughter the bound-up Yitzchak, the angels cried and their tears fell into Yitzchak’s eyes. As a result, in Yitzchak’s old age, his eyesight became weakened. What was it about the angels’ tears that could have caused Yitzchak to become blind? Tears come from the eye, how can that blind you? Certainly, there must be a much deeper meaning to this Midrash.

This Midrash is based on a pasuk in Yeshayahu (33:7) which says, “Angels cried out openly; messengers of peace wept bitterly.” This pasuk is the key to understanding this mysterious Midrash. Like all angels, these “messengers of peace” angels were created to fulfill one mission only. One can infer that these angels were intensely compassionate, incapable of looking critically at any event as their essence was shalom.

When the angels saw the Akeidah, they cried. Their tears, a manifestation of their extreme compassion, fell into Yitzchak’s “eyes,” changing his worldview. Yitzchak absorbed the nature of the angels, seeing only good in others. This is why Yitzchak, in his old age, became incapable of seeing any fault in Eisav, and was prepared to bless him despite his shortcomings.

(Adapted from Rav Shimon Schwab zt”l on Chumash)

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created two large luminaries. It then describes the large luminary, the sun, and the small luminary, the moon. Rav Shimon ben Pazi explains that originally both the sun and moon were of equal strength. However, the moon said to Hashem “Can there be two kings that share one crown?” Hashem then commanded, “Go and diminish yourself” The moon then said, “Master of the Universe, since I said something proper I should diminish myself?” Hashem attempts to appease the moon with several conciliations, but the moon is not satisfied. Finally, Hashem states “Bring for Me an atonement for I minimized the moon.” This is in line with the explanation of Raish Lakish as to why the Korban Chatas of Rosh Chodesh is called a “chatos laShem” – it is an atonement for Hashem who minimized the moon. What is the deeper meaning behind this complaint of the moon and the resulting “punishment.” What is the deeper meaning to the atonement for Hashem?

A clue can be found in the Beraishis Rabbah(6:3) which puts the blame for the minimization of the moon solely on Hashem for causing the moon to “enter the boundary” of the sun. The midrash continues “The way of the world is for the big one to count with the big one and the little one to count with the little one, Eisav counts with the sun and Yaakov counts with the moon...Just as the sun rules by day but not by night so too Eisav has a share in this world but will have no share in the next world...just as the moon rules by night and by day, so too Yaakov has a share in this world and the next...” The midrash spells out for us the deep connection between the moon and klal Yisrael. Indeed, the Maharsha on the Gemarah in Chulin explains that the moon itself hints to the very historical destiny of the Jewish people. Just as the moon waxes and wanes so too the Jewish people have had their successful triumphant periods as well as the difficult moments where we it appeared that we would chas veshalom disappear. At the very moments of despair there was a miraculous rebirth where we begin to again to succeed and flourish. We spell this out every

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What Brings Gan Eden Here? By: Alexander Papilsky, 12th Grade

When Yaakov enters Yitzchak's tent to receive the beracha he purchased from his brother, the Torah tells us that Yitzchak smelled the fragrance of "a field that was blessed by Hashem". Rashi, on the spot, explains that this pleasant fragrance of Gan Eden was not emanating from the malodorous goat skins that Yaakov had donned to disguise himself as Esav but that it wafted through the air as Yaakov entered the room. This explanation poses the question of how Yitzchak could recognize the smell of Gan Eden; however, we know that Yitzchak had previously been exposed to such a smell during the Akeidah in the merit of Avraham. The two acts that induced the scent of Gan Eden appear to be quite different. On the one hand, there is Avraham who showed his undying devotion to Hashem through the willingness to sacrifice his only son. On the other hand, Yaakov pretends to be someone he is not to procure the special beracha, an action that is seemingly dishonest. Rabbi Chaim Yaakov Goldvicht offers a beautiful way to reconcile this apparent difference. He explains that these two events, the Akeidah and Yaakov receiving the beracha, are similar in that they are both antithetical to the middos that Avraham and Yaakov held most dear. Avraham's essence is kindness, and Yaakov's is truth ("Tetain Emes L'Yaakov, Chesed L'Avraham"). The peculiarity of the Akeidah would have lost Avraham all the followers that he had accumulated through his kindness. As for Yaakov, he would be required to act dishonestly toward his father to receive the beracha. These acts were of a magnitude worthy enough to warrant the fragrance of Gan Eden because they demonstrated the ability of both Avraham and Yaakov to forgo what was most important to them in order to fulfill the will of Hashem.

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student of the famed Rabbi Dovber of Mezeritch.' It was clear that my words had resonated as the man turned away and left the room. A half-hour later, I stepped outside and was greeted by the sight of several carts loaded with furniture and household goods. Standing on one of them, the old man busied himself with tying down the last of his personal belongings. "What's this?" I called out. "The man looked surprised at my question. 'I'm getting ready to move to the city, just as you instructed me!' "Do you see," concluded the Alter Rebbe to his grandson, "the utter faith of this old man, who listened to me—a young student—and immediately acted upon my words as though his life depended on them? You disregarded my words even after I told you twice to deposit your dowry here in this box." Adapted from Chabad.org

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thing, that's sufficient. No such worker under those circumstances can expect to still be paid— regardless of how much effort he put in. A worker can't just give the excuse "at least I tried." This is the awesomeness of ameilus- because in learning Torah, the effort itself is an essential desired result.

From here we can understand Yaakov: If the point of learning Torah is just to know it, if it's all just the end goal, then of course he would have wanted to stay with the Malach. Just knowing Torah, however, is not the point of learning. The real purpose of learning is not to just to amass the knowledge, it's about the time and effort put in. The process itself, the intense effort and the time are also very much the point. Because Yaakov was devoting zero effort learning with the Malach, he desperately wanted to leave. Yaakov struggled, even in womb, specifically so that he could struggle in the Beis Medrash and start learning the proper way.

Finding The Good
By: Dubi Fischman, Class of 2018

In this weeks Parsha, Parshas Toldos, we read about Eisav and his wives. Eisav marries a Chitti woman names Yehudit. The Torah states that this action of Eisav caused “bitterness of spirit to Yitzchak and Rivkah.” The Rabbis comment that she kept worshipping Avodah Zarah after marrying Eisav and that the smoke from the incense she burned for this Avodah Zarah even caused Yitzchak to go blind. Rashi also states that the name Yehudit wasn’t her true name; rather, it was an attempt to trick Yitzchak into thinking he had married a woman who only worshipped Hashem. We see from here one of many cases of Eisav’s wickedness.

Eisav had another wife, a granddaughter of Yishmael, named Machalot, which translates to forgiveness. Rashi comments that from here we learn out that a bride and groom are forgiven for all their sins on the day of their wedding. The Lubavitcher Rebbe comments that Machalat’s actions reflect this. Machalat truly did worship Hashem and only Hashem. If so, why did Eisav, a wicked man, marry a good, God referring person? On basic level, one could say Eisav was trying to do teshuvah, but on a deeper level we see that Eisav had this drop of goodness all along which is why Yitzchak loved him. The Lubavitcher Rebbe then states that one day, this spark of goodness will be revealed through Eisav’s descendants.

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month when we recite Kiddush Levana. The beracha states “To the moon He said that it should renew itself as a crown of splendor for those borne [by Him] from the womb, those who are destined to renew themselves like it.” The implication of the beracha is that in the future the moon will regain its original greatness and illuminate the world equal to the sun. (Maaseh Hashem Maaseh Avos 35 – parshas Vayeshev). So too will klal Yisrael fulfill its final purpose in the world in the days of Mashiach reaching its ‘full moon.’

It seems to me that this petition of the moon on the fourth day of creation can be alluding to the very argument between Rivka and Yitzchak. Yitzchak felt that it was possible for Eisav and Yaakov, the sun and the moon, to ‘rule’ the world together sharing one crown. Rivka however, felt that it was not possible. In response, Hashem decided that Yaakov and his descendants be ‘minimized’ and indeed take upon the very personality of the moon. They will receive the material blessings of Yitzchak, but those blessings will be dependent upon their very commitment in fulfilling the mission of Avraham. Thus, the historical destiny of waxing and waning will be their fate. For this decision with all its implications and philosophical difficulties, Hashem kevayachol empathizes with His chosen nation and wishes that they bring an atonement for Him on His decision. Rivka’s practical and realistic assessment of the relationship between Yaakov and Esav holds true before the ultimate redemption. However, after Mashiach’s arrival when klal Yisrael succeed in their ultimate destiny, Yitzchak’s dream has a chance of being fulfilled. As the pasuk in Ovadya states “ve’alu moshi’im behar tzion lishpot es har Esav ve’haysa laShem hamelucha, vehaya Hashem hamelech bayom hahuh yihyeh Hashem echad ushmo echad.”

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involvement in one mitzvah exempts one from tending to another does not mean, when it is impossible to do another Mitzvah, he is exempt, but when he is dealing with one Mitzvah, it is Asur for him to do another Mitzvah. From this Ritva there might be a probelem with collecting Tzedaka during Tefillah.

STORIES OF GREATNESS

TOLD OVER BY: TZVI GRUSHKO

If you were to take a look around the Alter Rebbe's house, you would never believe that it was the home of a preeminent scholar. It was furnished modestly, with nary a luxury in sight. As the Alter Rebbe's finances were from communal funds, he couldn't bring himself to spend the earnings of others on anything beyond bare necessities, and this was clear to anyone who knew him. Once, a grandson of the Alter Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch—a well-regarded Torah scholar in his own right—arrived at the Alter Rebbe's home wearing a richly woven gartel. "That's a nice gartel," remarked the Alter Rebbe. "How much did it cost?" Rabbi Menachem's heart dropped, and the sash suddenly felt heavier. "Fifteen rubles," admitted the young rabbi. "Fifteen rubles?" repeated the Alter Rebbe, a note of displeasure in his voice. "Who do think you are—a rich man—that you allow yourself to wear such expensive clothing?" The Alter Rebbe paused for a moment before adding, "And how much did you receive as your wedding dowry?" "Two thousand rubles." "And what did you do with the two thousand rubles?" "I gave the money to a reliable businessman who will invest it in various propositions from which I hope to profit." "But you might not even see your dowry again, let alone the profits!" pointed out the Alter Rebbe. Rabbi Menachem was nonplussed. "But he's an honest man!" "And so? Does it matter if he's rich today, when tomorrow he can be as poor as a beggar?" "So what would you suggest I do with the money?" The Alter Rebbe brought out a charity box. "My advice would be to keep the money here, where it will undoubtedly stay safe." Rabbi Menachem stood without saying a word, mystified. His entire dowry of two thousand rubles to charity? Is this a joke? And as though reading the young man's mind, the Alter Rebbe continued, "I am certainly hoping you'll leave the dowry here with me. The dowry and its profits, rest assured, will be safe here, something which I can't promise if you entrust them to the rich man." The Alter Rebbe

wasn't joking. Excusing himself, the grandson withdrew from his grandfather's chamber. He wasn't ready to throw his entire dowry to the winds by giving it to charity. A few months later, the money Rabbi Menachem had invested disappeared as flames engulfed the investor's warehouse, leaving both the once wealthy man and Rabbi Menachem penniless. Rabbi Menachem returned to his grandfather. Many days had passed since their last visit, but the Alter Rebbe recalled their conversation and got straight to the point. "Nu, how much did you make?" Ashamed, Rabbi Menachem Mendel explained how he had lost all of the money. "Why didn't you give it to charity?" asked the Alter Rebbe. "And why don't you have faith in the words of your rabbis, as do the simple folk of Volhynia?" The rebbe then proceeded to share the following story: "As a young student, I was returning home from Mezeritch in the midst of an extraordinarily cold winter. The wind was howling, dispersing snow in all directions, making an already difficult trip even harder. It was so cold that even inside my carriage I couldn't feel my legs. It was impossible to continue traveling. So I asked the wagon-driver if he could stop at a nearby inn in Volhynia. There an old man restored feeling to my legs by rubbing them with snow and vodka. He seemed like a nice man, and we started talking. I asked him how long he had lived in the little town. "Over 50 years." "Are there enough men here for a minyan?" I inquired. "No. For the High Holidays, I travel to a nearby city to join the prayers there." I pressed, "Why should a man your age pray without a minyan his entire life? Why don't you move to a city where you can join a daily minyan?" "But from where will my livelihood come?" he asked, concerned. "How many businessmen live in this town that you visit?" "Around one hundred." "Certainly, if G-d can find a way to provide for a hundred households, He can accommodate one more!" "I then added, 'I'm a

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