בס"ד

זכרו תורת משה

לעילוי נשמת ר' משה בן החבר צבי זצ"ל ור' משה יצחק בן אברהם צבי הכהן זצ"ל

פרשת דברים ה'תשפ"ו

HEARTWARMING STORIES FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE

Vol. #264

For You…For Me

Sometimes the greatest kindness we can do for another Jew is not only to care for them physically, but to open a siddur, daven for them, and sincerely plead on their behalf. Often, the very brachos we ask Hashem to bestow upon someone else find their way back to us as well.

Mrs. Levenberg was informed that four young men associated with Yad Yisroel were in desperate need of lodging. These boys had grown up in Russia with little, if any, connection to Yiddishkeit. Yad Yisroel had discovered these precious lost *neshamos*, brought them close to Torah and *mitzvos*, ignited within them a love for Yiddishkeit, and reconnected them with their heritage.

As they matured, each decided it was time to enter the workforce. They left the supportive environment of Yad Yisroel and began the difficult transition to independent life, needing to earn a *parnassah* while also finding a place to live. Their plan was to rent a house together, split the expenses, and each work in the profession that suited him best.

While searching for housing, they turned to Mrs. Levenberg. Knowing that she had an unused attic, they hoped she might be willing to host them temporarily. They had spent many *Shabbosim*, *seudos*, and nights in the Levenberg home over the years, and she gladly welcomed them in.

Temporary, however, became much longer than anyone had anticipated. Finding a suitable house proved far more difficult than expected, and the boys remained in Mrs. Levenberg's attic.

At first, she cared for them with boundless enthusiasm. She prepared food, did laundry, and tended to whatever they needed. But as the months passed, the arrangement naturally became more challenging having to share her home with four unwed young men. For example, if her husband was away, she would step out of her home for some time to avoid *yichud* while the boys were there.

Yet, she kept reminding herself, "I don't regret this *mitzvah*. I'm happy to do it, and I want to continue. But I hope they can soon move on and build families of their own."

For a long time, Mrs. Levenberg had even tried arranging *shidduchim* for the boys, but nothing seemed to get off the ground.

Then one day, a different thought occurred to her. These four young men had no one to cry for them. No Jewish mother was pouring out her heart on their behalf. She decided that if no one else was davening for them, she would.

From that day forward, she made each of them part of her daily *tefillos*. She begged Hashem that they should each find their *bashert*, build faithful Jewish homes, and finally have homes of their own.

Within three months — twelve and a half weeks! — every one of the four boys became engaged.

Who can measure the power of a heartfelt *tefillah* offered on behalf of another person? We may never know what such prayers accomplish in *Shamayim*.

But the story doesn't end there.

At the wedding of one of these young men, the *shadchan* approached Rabbi Levenberg and asked if he would pay the *shadchanus* fee. Technically, he had no obligation; the young man was not his son, nor was he his legal guardian. Nevertheless, Rabbi Levenberg called his Rav to ask what he should do.

His Rav answered simply, "Pay the *shadchanus*. Let it be a *zechus* for your son." Rabbi Levenberg did exactly that.

Some time later, that couple asked if they could spend Pesach with the Levenbergs. Mrs. Levenberg happily agreed. Throughout *Yom Tov*, the young kallah repeatedly told Mrs. Levenberg that she knew the perfect girl for her son. But since the kallah came from a very different background, Mrs. Levenberg politely dismissed the suggestion each time.

Still, after hearing it again and again, she finally agreed to take down the name and phone number.

Not long afterward, the suggestion developed into a *shidduch*, which led to an engagement.

The very couple for whom Mrs. Levenberg had davened so fervently became the catalyst for her own son finding his *bashert*.

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Baruch Hashem, he, too, would soon be building his own home.

From the very *shidduch* they helped complete through paying the *shadchanus* later came the suggestion that led their own son to his *bashert*.

When we care for others, daven for them, and help them build their future, we are never merely changing their lives. In ways we cannot begin to imagine, Hashem often uses those very acts of kindness to bring His blessings back into our own.

One Key…Two Doors

Reb Yosef Shimon Unger* dedicated his life to helping struggling teenagers reconnect with their roots. Day after day, he invested endless energy, patience, and love into guiding others. Yet, despite all the lives he touched, one personal concern weighed heavily on his heart.

His daughter had reached *shidduch* age, and as the years passed, finding her *bashert* seemed increasingly difficult. Suggestions came and went, but nothing materialized. The uncertainty and waiting were painful for the entire family.

As *Yom Kippur* approached, his daughter approached him with a heartfelt request.

"Tatty, one of the well-known *segulos* for finding a shidduch is receiving *pesichah* during *Neilah*. Over the past few weeks, I've been setting aside money so that you can purchase it on my behalf. Hopefully it will serve as a *zechus* for me to find my *bashert*."

She handed him the money she had carefully saved. Reb Yosef Shimon was deeply moved by her sincerity and determination.

Living in a quiet suburb in the south of Eretz Yisrael, he assumed that her 2,000 shekels would be more than enough to secure the coveted honor. Confidently, he arrived at shul prepared to bid. But as the auction progressed, the bids climbed higher and higher.

Finally, Yosef Shimon called out, "2,000 shekels!" Almost immediately, a voice from the back of the shul responded, "3,000."

His heart sank.

He had only the money his daughter had entrusted to him. How could he justify bidding beyond that amount? And how would he explain to her that he had been unable to obtain the *zechus* she so desperately wanted?

As he sat there contemplating what to do, he recalled a story he had once heard from **Rav Yaakov Hillel**, *shlita*. Reb Yaakov related that in one shul, during the bidding for *pesichah* at *Neilah*, four wealthy philanthropists simultaneously called out the same bid of $10,000. The Rebbe immediately recognized the potential for hurt feelings and conflict. Rather than allowing the competition to continue, he suggested that all four men join together in the mitzvah and share the honor. When the time came, they would open the *Aron Kodesh* together.

Remembering that story, Reb Yosef Shimon decided to try the same approach.

He walked over to the man who had bid 3,000 shekels and shared with him the story he had heard from Rav Hillel. He then explained his own situation and told him about his daughter's heartfelt request to purchase the *pesichah* as a *zechus* for finding her *bashert*.

"Perhaps," he suggested, "we can follow the example from that story and share the honor together."

The man smiled warmly and agreed without hesitation.

Together, they contributed half the amount and purchased the *pesichah* jointly. When *Neilah* arrived, the two men stood side by side and opened the *Aron Kodesh* together.

Months later, on the Sunday of *Parshas Bamidbar*, 5786, a week before *Shavuos*, Reb Yosef Shimon called that same friend. "Please come to my house tonight," he said excitedly. "We're making a *l'chaim*. Baruch Hashem, my daughter has become engaged."

That evening, friends and family gathered to celebrate the long-awaited news. Amid the joy and excitement, Reb Yosef Shimon's friend turned to him and said: "Tomorrow night, I'm expecting you at my simchah as well. My son is becoming engaged, *be'ezras Hashem*."

Both families, who had shared a single mitzvah months earlier, were now celebrating together.

Sometimes a person clings tightly to something because it means so much to him. Yet it is precisely when he chooses to yield, to share, and to forgo his exclusive claim for the sake of peace and goodwill that Heaven responds in kind.

The power of *vitur* can open doors that no amount of striving can unlock.

Edited by: Binyamin Lieb

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