

The Jewish Weekly

It Once Happened..

Two Stories of the Holy Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk

By Rabbi Dovid Caro

The Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk would not accept visitors during the month of Elul. Throughout the year, his door was open and people would go to him for blessings, but during the month of Elul he required time for himself. People understood this, and they respected the Rebbe's stated boundaries.

One year, however, a wealthy person who felt desperate, decided that he would travel to speak privately with the Rebbe, even during Elul. His problem was indeed serious; his son had become insane! As he and his son were traveling to the Rebbe, they met a pauper, collecting money.

The boy said to his father, "Give this man a generous donation."

The father was startled; this was the first sane sentence he heard from his son in a long time. Since he was so pleased with his son's improvement, he gave a half-golden coin, to the pauper.

The pauper then asked them, "Where are you headed?"

The father told him that his son had become insane, so they were going to the Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk for a blessing.

The pauper replied, "But don't you see that your son is healed? Why should you bother the Tzaddik? You probably heard that he asked not to be disturbed during Elul."

Nevertheless, the father decided that since he had already traveled a long way, he would continue. When he arrived at Lizhensk he went directly with his son to speak with the Rebbe Elimelech, and as soon as he was admitted into the Rebbe's room, he gave him twelve golden coins.

Rebbe Elimelech replied, "am I more special than Eliyahu Hanavi? To Eliyahu Hanavi you only gave a half-golden coin."

Only then did the father understand that the pauper he met was Eliyahu Hanavi in disguise who had taken the bother to heal the boy to avoid disturbing the Tzaddik during such a holy time.

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One of the famed barons in Poland planned to throw an extravagant party for his friends in the Polish aristocracy. In



Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk

honor of the event he had his palace refurbished, planted new trees and flowers in the surrounding gardens and hired master chefs to prepare all the luxurious foods that he intended to serve. He employed many servants in various occupations in order to ensure that his party be remembered for a long time afterwards by the large number of people he had invited.

The baron wished to wear an extraordinarily impressive outfit, designed especially for the occasion. He ordered his servants to find an expert tailor for him, somebody who knew how to tailor magnificent clothes. When his servants returned to the baron, they brought with him a tailor who according to the testimony of witnesses was a great specialist in this profession.

When the tailor was introduced, the baron scowled. The face of the man standing in front of him and the way he was dressed clearly showed that he was a Jew. The baron was not fond of Jews, to say the least, but since there was not much time left until the big party, he had no other choice but to employ the Jewish tailor. The baron asked him: "Zhid, I have heard that you are a master tailor, and there is nobody to match your craftsmanship in the whole area. Are you willing to take upon yourself the important task of creating a magnificent outfit for me?" "Certainly, your honor", said the tailor. "I am an expert in this field and I have already made outfits for this duke and that baron," and he started to enumerate names of Polish aristocrats.

The baron accepted him as his personal tailor. Already that same day the tailor began to take the baron's measurement. He wrote down all the measurements in his ledger in an orderly fashion, instructed the baron's servants on where to purchase the fabric needed for the different parts of the outfit and he immediately began working.

The tailor labored diligently and with great self-confidence. After all, he was a master tailor and he knew how to fashion such outfits in the most impressive manner. When he finished his work, he proudly brought the finished product to the baron.

However, when the baron tried the outfit on, it did not fit him at all! One sleeve was too short, and the other was too long, the seams were not straight and the entire garment looked very odd. The baron was so furious that it seemed he wanted to kill the Jewish tailor. The poor tailor had to run away. He was very afraid of the wrath of the baron and what he might do to him as a revenge for the ruined outfit.


If the new clothes were not ready in time for the party, the tailor might pay the ultimate price. In his plight he went to the Rebbe Elimelech of Lizhensk in order to ask for his blessing and advice. The Rebbe listened attentively to his tearful plea, smiled briefly, and responded.

"This is what you should do. Go back to the baron's estate. Take the clothes and undo all the stitches. Do not leave even one stitch undone. Afterwards you must sew everything back exactly in the same order. The tailor returned to the baron's mansion and followed the instructions of the Rebbe to the last detail. He undid all the stitches, took new threads and joined the different parts together.


He told the baron's servant that he wanted the baron to try on the outfit once again. Lo and behold! This time the outfit was a perfect fit! The baron was so happy that he almost allowed himself to embrace the tailor! Of course, he richly awarded him. The tailor could not understand what had happened. He knew very well that he had made no alterations in the outfit but had just sewn everything exactly as he had done the first time.

He went to Rebbe Elimelech and asked him for an explanation. The Rebbe told him: "When you started your work, you were haughty and considered yourself to be a master tailor in your own merit. You forgot all your talents are given to you from Hashem. When you undid all the stitches and remade the outfit, you knew that if it was to succeed, it was not because of your skill but only due to the Divine Kindness of the Master of the Universe. In the merit of this acknowledgment, you were able to have success in your work!"

Reprinted from an email of Inspired by a Story.



Shabbat Times – Parshat Vayikra

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
 Jerusalem	6:25	7:39	8:19
Tel Aviv	6:40	7:41	8:16
Haifa	6:32	7:41	8:18
Be'er Sheva	6:42	7:41	8:18



Raincoats and Umbrellas on a Sunny Dry Day in Tiberias By Zev Greenwald

without rain having fallen, he would grind the Rabbi beneath his heels.

The Jews, led by R' Nachman, did not answer him, but continued quietly to the cave of R' Chiya and his sons. There, they poured out their hearts in prayer.

G-d heard them. Dark clouds filled the sky, and then a heavy rain began to fall - so heavy that, had the men not carried rain gear, they would not have been able to return to town at all that day.

Upon their return to Tiberias, the government official was waiting for them at the city gates. He placed R' Nachman on his shoulders and carried him into the heart of the city, where the people were overcome with joy at the blessed rains that were falling at last. G-d's great Name was sanctified, with Jews and non-Jews together proclaiming, "Who is like You among the gods, and who is like Your people, Israel?"

This episode raised the Jews' esteem greatly in the eyes of the populace, and when, some twelve years later, a large influx of Jews arrived in Tiberias under the leadership of R' Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk, author of Pri Ha'aretz, and R' Avraham of Kalisk, they were received with the greatest respect and welcomed with open arms.

Adapted and supplemented by Yrachmiel Tilles from "Stories My Grandfather Told Me"

Why do some people start in the middle?

This Shabbat we will be commencing our reading of Sefer Vayikra, the Book of Leviticus, the middle book of the Torah. In the Yalkut Shimoni, an anthology of Midrashim, there is a suggestion that we should start teaching our children Chumash from the beginning of Vayikra and not from the beginning of the Torah in Bereishit. And why? Says the Yalkut, the sacrifices which form the major part of the content of Vayikra are pure, and children are pure. Therefore, 'let the pure come and immerse themselves in the pure.'

In addition, there are some who point out that the final letter of the word ויקרא, which is the opening word of the book, is a tiny alef. And they suggest that because alef is the first letter of the alef bet, and it is small, the smallness of the letter represents those who are tiny, our little children, and they should commence the very start of their learning of Chumash with Vayikra, which is the middle book.

Now, we need to add some rationale to this whole concept. Some of our commentators say that this particular custom emerged as a result of the destruction of the Second Temple. After the destruction, our rabbis declared that children should always learn the Book of Vayikra first in order that they should be well versed in the details relating to sacrifices and that they should grow to love the sacrificial rite so that the importance of it should never be lost from our people.

Then there are those who point out that the word sacrifice, קריבן, comes from the term קרבה, which means to be close. It represents our closeness to Hashem. The sacrificial rite included details for which we have no logic, giving a message to young children of how important it is for them to feel naturally close to Hashem, and also not to be confused or disappointed by the fact that we cannot understand absolutely everything. Nonetheless, we can have a close spiritual connection to our Creator, accompanied by a meaningful and joyous life.

But most of all, our commentators point out that in the Book of Shemot we are given as a nation the mitzvah that we should be a 'ממלכת כהנים' - a nation of priests. The Kohanim were the ones who brought the sacrifices which form the content of the Book of Vayikra, and we are called upon as a Jewish people to be the Kohanim of the world. And as a result, our prime task is Kiddush Hashem, sanctifying the name of Hashem, right around the world, all the time.

This is the prime lesson that we want our children to be aware of from the most tender age, so that they will grow up to be outstanding ambassadors of our people and of Hashem. Through all of their future actions, may they indeed produce a great Kiddush Hashem. Not only is this an important lesson for our children, it's an important lesson for all of us. May we indeed, through our deeds, always cause the sanctification of Hashem's Name.

Another way to sanctify Hashem is by praying and thanking Him, so let's pray with all our hearts, for the healing of all those injured, for the safe return of those taken as hostages, as well as Divine Protection for our brave IDF soldiers, police officers, medical professionals, firefighters, ZAKA members, security personnel and all those citizens protecting us in Israel as well as around the world, and for those who need healing, shidduchim, children or pamassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual, safe, quiet and sweet Shabbat.

Rabbi Nachman of Horodenka arrived in Eretz Yisrael in 1764, during a difficult year of drought. The Turkish ruler of the city of Tiverya (Tiberias), who was always scheming against the Jewish residents, issued an appalling declaration. If rain did not fall within three days of his decree, he would expel every last Jew from his city.

R' Nachman did not panic. He assured those close to him that, in G-d's goodness, they were going to have the opportunity to sanctify His Name.

According to the account written in Tabor Ha'aretz by the Chief Rabbi of Tiberias, R' Moshe Klieres, R' Nachman ordered his fellow Jews to go to the cave where R' Chiya and his sons were buried and to pray there for rain. He went with them. Though the day was sunny and dry, he advised them to bring along rain gear.

They left the city and made their way to the cave, protective clothing slung over their arms and some with umbrellas in their hands. A government official caught a glimpse of them at the city gates, and laughed heartily at the raincoats the Jews carried. Spitting in their faces, he declared that if they returned to the city

The Jewish Weekly Pesach Guide, Halachot, Minhagim and stories for the year 2025 / 5785. Includes text: 'According to Shulchan Aruch... All times listed are for Jerusalem only as per www.myzmanim.com... Based on Rabbi Yehoshua Leshem's Halachah Sheets... Reviewed by Rabbi Yehoshua Rabinowicz... Co-edited by Yossi Frae... in memory of his grandfather... And in memory of my friend and mentor, Mr. Mendy K... And דבורה חנה ע"ה בת מנחם מענדל שליט"א

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 16
MITZVOT ASEH: 11
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 5
NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 111
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1673
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 6222

HAFTORA: Yeshaya 43:21-44:23