

בס"ד, Mishmeres
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הירחון טעון גניזה

משמרת

כל הנותן פרוטה
לעני מתברך
בשש ברכות
והמפייסו בדברים
מתברך באחת
עשרה ברכות

(בבא בתרא, ט:)



Mishloach with an Address

How embarrassing... That was the first thing I felt. What mother doesn't remember who her son's rebbi is? The second thing I felt was regret about the money that went to waste

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Alone in the Battle

We were on the way home late at night. The road was empty. Suddenly our car died. While we were debating what to do, a car stopped near ours. Two Arabs jumped out, holding flashlights in their hands.

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Once-a-Year Opportunity

Purim is a chance to set aside the machlokes and send "Misloach Manos."

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accompany some of his little brothers to their *melamdim*. That took off some of the burden from my husband's shoulders, especially since some of the *melamdim* lived quite far away and reaching them by bus on Purim was slower than a snail's pace.

One of the addresses Moishy set off for was the house of Yossie's Mechinah rebbi. I explained to him how to get there, which bus to take, and the exact address. I entrusted him with the fancy *mishlo'ach manos* and asked him to hold Yossie's hand all the time. On Purim, the street is crowded and confusing. I hoped they'd find their way there safely.

About an hour and a half later, Moishy and Yossie were on their way home, both of them beaming: Moishy – from fulfilling his mission, and Yossie – from the game he'd gotten. "The rebbi received us very nicely," Moishy told me.

"But it wasn't my rebbi," Yossie stopped playing with the fascinating game he'd gotten to make this dramatic statement. "He's just the rebbi of the school van."

I laughed. "Yossie, Rebbe Steinberg is your rebbi," I said to him and I ran to bring the *mishlo'ach manos* for Moishy's rebbi himself.

Later on, when the rush quieted down a bit, the boys talked about how it was by their rebbi. "Only I didn't go to my rebbi," Yossie insisted.

Moishy told me that all the way home, Yossie kept saying this rebbi wasn't *his* rebbi and he kept asking when we would go to *his* rebbi, too.

A doubt started gnawing at me. *Could it be that* --- A quick consultation with my husband, who had been at the PTA meeting two months earlier and met the rebbi personally – confirmed the facts.

Yossie was right.

Rebbi Steinberg had taught Meir, Nachum, and Mordechai. That must be why I got mixed up. Yossie had a different rebbi.

How embarrassing... That was the first thing I felt. What mother doesn't

remember who her son's rebbi is? The second thing I felt was regret about the money that went to waste and the *mishloach manos* I sent to someone who wasn't even my son's rebbi. And the third thought that arose was the most practical and logical: I needed to quickly organize a *mishloach manos* for Rebbi Rubin, who is Yossie's rebbi this year.

This time, my husband went with him, arriving at the rebbi's house at the beginning of his *seudah*---

"As if all the *mishlochei manos* that I organized and sent weren't enough," I said to my almost empty kitchen after the busy day. "I had to send an extra *mishlo'ach manos*. If at least I would have performed a mitzvah of *matanos l'evyonim*, for which there's an *inyan* to send more than the minimum. But this rebbi of the parallel class probably got tons of *mishlochei manos* from his *talmidim* and he didn't understand why we were sending him one, too."

Purim passed. Life went back to routine for a short while, until Pesach. Pesach ended, too, and one very ordinary day, in the middle of Iyar, Yossie refused to get on the school van.

He stood downstairs with two of his brothers, waiting for the bus. But when it came, Yossie started crying and ran home.

Two of the older boys, who traveled by city bus, offered to take him. But the next day, when the story repeated itself, I started wondering. Yossie wasn't my oldest. I had experience with kids who were afraid to go on the school van. But it usually happened at the beginning of the year, not at the end. Why did Yossie

suddenly start being afraid?

In the afternoon I went shopping with him – just the two of us. "You don't like riding on the school van?" I asked him. Yossie burst into tears. "I want Moishy to take me by bus," he declared resolutely.

"But on the bus, there are a lot of boys and sometimes, there's pushing. On the van, you have a place to sit," I tried telling him patiently, hoping he'd explain to me the strange mystery.

"But Rebbi Steinberg isn't there," Yossie stuck out his bottom lip. I noticed it was trembling a bit.

"Rebbi Steinberg?" How was this rebbi, who doesn't even teach Yossie's class, connected to the story? I felt a sour taste of that extra *mishloach manos* rising to the surface.

"He's the rebbi of the school van," Yossie said to me, his gaze wandering to the display window of the toy

"As if all the *mishlochei manos* that I organized and sent weren't enough," I said to my almost empty kitchen after the busy day. "I had to send an extra *mishlo'ach manos*."

store. "And now he's not there."

The boys had mentioned something about a substitute rebbi on the van. I didn't think that the identity of the rebbi chaperoning the van was of such importance.

"And you don't know the other rebbi?" I tried drawing out the child. He shook his head. "I don't know him and he also doesn't take me to my class."

I slowed my pace, wanting to understand better. "Rebbi Steinberg used to take you to your class every day?"

"Yes," said Yossie with the simplicity of a four-year-old. "He knew I'm afraid to go by myself, because there are big boys, so he took me to the schoolyard of the little boys, where there are only boys from Mechinah."

"And the new Rebbi?" I continued, step by step.

"The new Rebbi says all the boys are big and can get off the van by themselves. But I'm *not* big."

Later, at home, we clarified the story. It turned out that Rebbi Steinberg's father, who lives in America, became sick. His son went abroad to help him, and meanwhile, a substitute was brought in, both for his *cheder*

class and to chaperone the van.

Suddenly we heard for the first time that all year long, Rebbi Steinberg would walk Yossie all the way to his classroom, so he shouldn't

be afraid of the bigger boys running around in the schoolyard.

We took care of the school van easily. Our big boys promised to walk Yossie to his classroom every morning. But something else fell into place for me – the *mishloach manos*. The *mishloach* I thought I'd sent for no reason. It turns out that there was a very good reason for it, and the Master of the World had arranged for me to send a *mishloach manos* to someone to whom I owed a special debt of *hakaras hatov*, without my even knowing...

A loudspeaker on the street screams at top volume to anyone who doesn't know yet, that "Purim is here!"

I must finish my costume accessory shopping: A shiny cape for Yossie, and maybe a new crown instead of the half-broken one in the costume carton. A giant hat for Yankie, who's dressing up as a tourist, and a toy camera to complete the look. And wait, Eliyahu also asked me to buy ---

After the costume purchases are done, I'll work on the main job of Purim – *mishlochei manos*.

We're a family of boys and every boy has at least two rebbis, aside from the Menahel and the educational supervisor, and the *melamed* who substituted a long time in Moishy's class... and they all get *mishloach manos*!

One year, I prepared more than a dozen *mishlochei manos* just for the *melamdim*, but that year was a record-breaker. I had seven boys in *cheder* then and needed to prepare almost twenty packages. It was a big project. I felt as if I'd changed professions. Instead of being a teacher, I'd turned

into a designer. And then came the turn of the notes. As a teacher, I know how important these *brachos* are and how much *ko'ach* they give the teacher/rebbe to continue putting their *neshamos* into their work. At least once a year, you need to express appreciation to the dedicated *melamdim*. But when you're dealing with so many *mishlochim*, it becomes a little more complicated.

In the end, on Erev Purim, lined up on my dining room table were rows of beautiful *mishlochei manos*, each one with a note written with a lot of thought thanking the rebbi for his investment in our child.

Next came the logistical effort of getting each of the *mishlochei manos* to the *rebbe's* homes. The big boys went out themselves, taking the valuable packages, along with numerous warnings, directions, and instructions in case of emergency (such as what to do if someone with a scary costume walks by you and the *mishloach manos* flips over---).

Eleven-year-old Moishy, a big, responsible boy, suggested that he'd

When I Am for Myself

We thought of presenting to you an article on ko'ach harabim — so appropriate for the Mishmeres chizuk initiatives that unite individuals to create a spiritual revolution with public impact. But Adar, Purim, and the words of the Megillah — "ונהפוך הוא" — led us to change direction and assemble interviewees who document extreme situations in which they felt alone in their battle

It Wasn't Easy Standing There Alone

Rina, a Highway at Night

"It happened during one of the stormiest periods of the last war," Rina recalls. "We were

on the way home late at night. The road was empty. Suddenly our car died and we were stuck there, alone. It was frightening.

But that was just the beginning. "While we were debating what to do, a car stopped alongside ours. Two Arabs jumped out, holding flashlights in their hands. They asked what happened and offered help..."

Rina describes how she sat in the car, trembling from fear, while her husband stepped out to speak with the two Arabs. "In my mind, I already took leave of my children waiting at home, my parents, my family..."

Ricky, a Non-religious Neighborhood:

"We were part of a nucleus of families who came together to a totally non-religious city for purposes of *chizuk*," Ricky relates. There's a *kehillah*, a *kollel*, and schools for the children. But in our building, for example, out of twenty families, we're the only *Chareidim*.

That means there's no one you can borrow two eggs from for supper or a cup of sugar for a cake?

Ricky smiles. "It's much more than that. My sisters who live in the Center send their children down to play outside. They have a nice dynamic among the kids in the building lobby. That doesn't exist by us. When Shabbos arrives, it becomes even more disturbing, when you can't even sit with the children on a porch facing the view... of *chillul Shabbos*, *lo aleinu*."

Ayala, the Operating Room

"I knew I needed to undergo an operation. I prepared for it," shares Ayala. "Still, I can't forget that moment when the orderlies rolled my bed into the huge, cold operating room, while my dear, supportive family remained outside and I was surrounded just by the medical staff and countless instruments."

Ayala describes a feeling of helplessness. "You're alone in a bed, connected to tubes, unable to help yourself. It's hard for you to even *daven* because of the medications blurring your awareness."

Ayala adds that in the midst of this mix of feelings, she suddenly identified the surgeon she was afraid of... "I'd been hospitalized first in the ward and I caught her making a significant error. I knew she was a beginning surgeon. Even

though there was a senior surgeon together with her, it still made me very nervous."

Dorit, on the Other Side of the Divider

"We have family here in Eretz Yisrael — parents from both sides. They're even people of means. Still, at certain times, I feel so alone."

Dorit, who merited to cross lines and become a *baalas teshuvah*, is raising a lovely family *baruch Hashem*, together with her husband. They have *nachas* from the precious children whom they're being *mechanech* in Torah and mitzvos. "We're happy. We know how to appreciate this privilege. We try to give our children the Jewish upbringing we unfortunately didn't receive. But sometimes, especially in challenging periods, such as after the birth of a new baby, it becomes difficult and complex."

I Knew I Had to Cope

Ayala: "I felt such *kirvas Elokim*. I said to myself that I'm in Hashem's hands and only he can save me. I myself know someone who underwent this same operation, performed by a private surgeon, and encountered complications. I know there are also many who don't take a private doctor, yet recuperate without any problem. I reminded myself of what my grandfather used to say to us — that in difficult situations, you need to repeat *אין עוד מלבדו*."

"Since I'm very connected to Mishmeres HaShalom, I also davened that the Chofetz Chaim and Rav Segal would advocate for me."

Dorit: "Mood swings are familiar and expected in a *yoledes*. But by me, they are compounded by the major technical challenge that lies on my shoulders due to our 'aloneness,'" Dorit admits honestly. She describes how she sometimes dreams of a situation in which she has a mother's shoulder on which to lay her head and let go a bit... "But it doesn't exactly happen," Dorit quickly snaps back to reality. "My mother-in-law comes occasionally, after I

give birth and when she encounters scenarios of difficulty functioning, a disorderly house, and children who are acting wild because their mother wasn't home for a few days, she can't understand it."

Nevertheless, everyone survives. survive. "I remind myself that this stage passes quickly, *b'ezras Hashem*. Soon we'll all regain our strength and return to routine, with a sweet new baby added to our wonderful family."

Rina: "The truth is, I was paralyzed by the fear. My thoughts also froze," Rina relives those terrifying moments inside the stalled car, opposite the two Arab faces. "But my subconscious was working, and that is what led me to silently cry out the two *pirkei Tehillim* I know best from the depths of my heart."

The terrible panic subsided a bit when it came out that these were two car mechanics from the area, who regularly drove around the area offering their repair services at a discounted price.

Ricky "In order to strengthen the *kehillah*, we set a rule that every family can go away for Shabbos just once a month," Ricky says. "At first it was really hard. I used to count the days..."

"In general, the whole subject of trips to family, to *simchas*, etc. is not simple. There's no regular transportation to *Chareidi* enclaves, and every trip involves several buses," she says. "But it's all worth it to sit on a bus in the morning on my way to work, and see a totally irreligious woman peeking at the siddur in my hand, 'May your prayers be accepted,' she says when I finish. Sometimes women say to me, 'I already prayed in the morning. I got up at five.' Or 'I say Tehillim all day.' And these are people you would never guess do such things, based on their external appearance..."

Chizuk Lessons I Picked Up on the Way

Ricky: "When I see my neighbors' empty lives, I feel so fortunate," Ricky enthuses. "Not just for the merits we have in Olam Haba, but also for our Olam Haze, which is so much better than theirs."

"What do they have in life? Nothing," she says. "Today television, tomorrow television. The street there is empty. Dead. And, in our area, we're talking about a well-to-do population, people with good professions and a higher than average standard of living. In contrast, what a full, lively life we have —"

"Neighbors come over and tell us about their grandfather who was a Rav. They compliment us on our well-behaved children. One neighbor was thrilled to hold my baby. 'It's been twenty years since I last held a baby,' she said."

Dorit: "There's nothing like the support you get from a good friend," Dorit declares warmly. She speaks of a friend who is on a similar life track. "We understand each other and work together to strengthen ourselves."

Rina: "It's not only in the dead of night and on an empty highway. We always need miracles and protection from Hashem," says Rina, and on the background of recent tragic events and difficult incidents that struck families in Eretz Yisrael, her words assume a powerful dimension. "We should be *zocheh* to strengthen our *emunah* in Hashem from good and abundance, and shouldn't need to reach situations of difficulty and challenges."

Ayala: "In the past, my family members asked Maran Hagaon Rav Chaim Kanievsky zt"l about an operation like the one I underwent. They consulted him as to whether or not to take a private surgeon," says Ayala. "He gave a one-word answer: Daven. In other words, he felt that the primary *hishtadlus* is in the area of *tefillah*."

"When you think about it — it's calming and gives strength."

Purim K'Kippurim

A Day of 'Shlichah' and Mechilah

Purim is an opportunity to put machlokes behind you and reunite. Among all the mishlochim to close friends, send a misloach manos and end unnecessary fights.

THE HARDER IT IS TO DO, THE MORE IT'S WORTH!

Did you send a misloach manos?

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The “Matching” of Ko’ach Harabim

Did you ever try tracking a swarm of ants digging a joint nest? It's fascinating to see the efforts these tiny creatures invest - removing grain after grain to slowly enlarge the tunnel. The Gemara (*Berachos* 54b) says that when Og, King of Bashan heard that Bnei Yisrael were advancing towards his land, he decided to frighten them with a huge mountain that he simply picked up in his hands. He stood there, holding the mountain that was capable of burying them all beneath it... But then, huge swarms of ants came, sent from Shamayim to save Klal Yisrael. Every ant removed just one grain of earth, but all of them together managed to dig a tunnel that split the mountain in two. It landed on both sides of the giant Og and sat on him like a necklace, not allowing him to extricate himself...

The *ko'ach* of the *rabim* and what it can do.

Ishamelite Wolves

When a “matching” campaign is held for the benefit of the community shul, people of means donate substantial sums to tile the floor, cast the ceiling, purchase an air-conditioning system or shul furniture, dedicate the *aron kodesh*, or at least a *paroches*. But when building the Mishkan, the donation was just a half shekel. “The wealthy should not increase and the destitute should not decrease” – so that the diamond dealer should know his donation is not worth anything unless accompanied by the donation of the beggar. So that Klal Yisrael will understand that only with *ko'ach harabim* can we build a *bayis laShem*.

When Yaakov Avinu put the stones under his head, they started arguing among themselves: Each one said, “Let the tzaddik lay his head on me!” After Hashem united them into one piece, it didn't make

a difference where exactly his head would lie because all of them together were now one big stone. The power of *tzibbur* is that it unites all individuals. The twelve stones correspond to the twelve *shevatim*, reminding them that they should always be united.

And when they're united, they're *zocheh* that Hashem is with them, protecting them and shielding them from their enemies. How much *shemirah* we need today, in our fragile position as a sheep among seventy wolves, surrounded on all sides by the Arab wolves who want to devour us. The *pasuk* says, “Five of you will pursue a hundred and a hundred of you will pursue ten thousand.” Rashi asks: In simple arithmetic, this doesn't work out. If five pursue a hundred, that's a ratio of 20 times more. When we're talking about a hundred, the same ratio would bring a result of 2,000, and here, the promise is for 10,000! From here, Rashi derives this special *ko'ach*, the *ko'ach harabim*.

The Tefillah of the Jews of Persia

“Go, assemble all the Jews,” said Esther to Mordechai HaYehudi upon hearing of the decree of Haman Harasha. In order to daven for me and for you, it's not enough for each one to sit in his home with a *sefer Tehillim*. We need to gather. To assemble. To use the *ko'ach harabim*, which empowers the *tefillos* and splits the gates of Shamayim. In order to rectify the *cheit* of separation - “There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the peoples” - we need to unify the hearts and foster love and brotherhood. And from this “*b'yachad*” of *tefillas rabim*, that generated the *yeshuah* in Shushan and in all generations, the Geulah Sheleimah that we are so fervently awaiting will come to us, too, *b'ezeras Hashem*.”



You're probably familiar with it. The teacher announces preparations for a social event, or the boss announces a project that needs to be done as a team. A mother-in-law declares, “We're producing a family album,” or a cousin recruits everyone to help organize a joint trip. One way or the other, a few heads get together and --- get to work.

Ugh, ay, oops! Everything gets complicated, like the *tovei ha'ir* in that village from the joke, who, by the end of the discussion, didn't know which leg belonged to whom.

Because one classmate insists on record-breaking gimmicks and claims there are no programs today without fancy clickers. The other espouses an intellectual program that plumbs the depth of the class's genealogy. The first colleague sides with comprehensive filing of every document before and after reading it, while the second is primarily busy creating interesting connections between the circles her cup of coffee left on the page. The energetic sister-in-law decides on a 20-inch tall format for the album that will adorn Savta's living room, while the conservative sister-in-law doesn't understand what's wrong with 4 x 6 in. photos in the original photo store envelope.

In short, unquestionably, working alone is easiest and most convenient. Alone is power! Alone, you can get anywhere! After all, if the woman who fell asleep on the bus hadn't been alone, how would she have gotten to the last stop? And if the two-year-old toddler wasn't alone, how would he have managed to climb to the top of the frighteningly high park fence? And if the teenager wouldn't have been alone in the kitchen – who else could have succeeded in bringing the kitchen to such an inspiring state, adorned with touches of nougat, sprinkles of egg yolk, and gold dust?

As we said, “Alone is power.” But actually...

If “alone is power,” can you multiply that power?

If one baby screaming is possible, a whole group of babies in a day care center can take your breath away,

If a drop of rain on the nose is nice, a million drops is a flood.

If a crumb of *chrein* goes down the throat, but a heaping spoon of it – is *aaargh!!!*

Then certainly, if “alone is power,” “together can be – fire!”

All you need is to agree to humble yourself, to give of yourself a bit, and to connect lovingly to something that is greater than any single one of us – the *ko'ach harabim*.

We'll get a lot further!

Better a Close Neighbor

We were going through a period when we needed *yeshuos* beyond the realm of nature. We were waiting to see our older son engaged. Also, an apartment we'd bought as an investment was up for sale, and nothing was budging. In addition, we were enduring harassment by a neighbor in the building, almost on a daily basis.

After consulting with the Mishmeres HaSholom telephone receptionist, we decided to set up a monthly donation of 847, the *gematriya* equivalent of “כל הישועות”, in the *tefillah* that the *zechuyos* of *shemiras halashon* would help us see great *yeshuos*.

A month passed. The standing order started working and we saw the *neis* with our own eyes, when that troublesome neighbor unexpectedly moved---

31 Years Old – Mazel Tov!

After I'd been in *shidduchim* for years, a friend recommended to me to donate to Mishmeres HaSholom, a tried and true *segulah* in her family. She added that Hashem brings *yeshuos* to those who help strengthen *shalom* in Klal Yisrael. I decided to try it. I called to donate the sum of 892 shekels, the *gematriya* equivalent of “זיווג הנון במהרה ובקלות”. I mentioned to the phone receptionist that I'm already 31, there aren't many *shidduch* suggestions, and even when something finally starts progressing, it suddenly stops... She *bentched* me that my next phone call to the *yeshuah* hotline should be with good news, and that's exactly what happened! Two weeks later I called and asked to change the donation to the *gematriya* of “ברכה והצלחה”, after my long-awaited *shidduch* had finally arrived, and I wanted the preparations for the wedding to *b'ezeras Hashem* be with a lot of *brachah* and *hatzlachah*.

Devora from Ofakim

Three Root Canals

My daughter refused to sit on the chair in the dentist's office. We had no choice but to treat her in the hospital, under full anesthesia. Time passed, and she again had a toothache, but it wasn't simple to obtain approval for another round of such treatment... We decided that since it was a problem in the mouth, we should

donate to Mishmeres HaSholom as a *zechus*, and *baruch Hashem*, it worked! She underwent three root canals at a regular dentist's office, using laughing gas!

Meshulam

No Entrance to Dampness

For six years, we struggled with dampness in our home. Rainwater that penetrated through the walls turned our lives into a nightmare. We brought in several professionals, but they didn't succeed in solving the problem. My husband consulted with the Rav, who advised him to be *mis'chazek* in *shemiras halashon*. In addition to our personal *his'chazkus*, we decided to also donate a standing order to Mishmeres HaSholom so as to gain the merits of spreading *shemiras halashon*. After a short while, one of my husband's friends recommended a certain solution and also referred him to someone who specializes in this work. *Baruch Hashem*, despite the huge amounts of rain that fell this past winter - our home remained dry.

D. Mizrahi

Stopping the Downward Trend

At the beginning of the year, the income from our business slowed down. My husband and I reviewed the accountant's financial reports for the branches of our chain store. We saw a downward trend, which is normal for any business, but it put pressure on us because just then we needed to double our income to cover costs of two children's weddings. We considered what we could do.

Quite recently, my mother-in-law had passed away, and discussions about the inheritance had seriously muddled relationships in the family. We took upon ourselves to speak only positively about his brothers and sisters. At the same time, we called Mishmeres HaSholom and set up a monthly standing order for 677 shekels - the *gematriya* equivalent of “כפול הכנסות” - doubling income.

If I hadn't seen it in black on white, in the balance sheets of the business, I might not have believed it, but the simple truth was that there was an impressive leap. We literally saw the income double, in the merit of the donation to Mishmeres HaSholom!

S., manager of a chain of stores



The Block That Was Overcome

The long wait for a *shidduch* for our oldest daughter was nerve-racking. Everyone told us “it will come.” But the years passed and nothing moved. The unease pervading our home grew stronger. Most suggestions that arrived weren't suitable and the ones that seemed right - fell to the wayside for unclear reasons. We felt as if there was some block we needed to break through. Our daughter's pain was what hurt us most.

We decided we must do something to shake things up in Shamayim. When we heard about the *segulah* of *k'minyan hayeshuah*, we decided to try. We said to Hashem, “We're giving of ourselves for the good of the Klal, to increase *shalom* in Your world; please open up the gate to our personal *yeshuah*. We donated a sum equal to the *gematriya* of “זיווג הנון בקרוב”, with full *emunah* in the importance of spreading *shemiras halashon*.

Believe it or not, the *yeshuah* came almost instantly! Just three days (!) after we made the donation, the phone rang. It was a *shadchan* we'd hardly spoken to in the past. She had a suggestion that sounded so exact. In contrast to previous times, this time everything flowed calmly, without extraneous questions or delays. We felt as if the road had been paved for us. Two weeks later, we already stood in a brightly lit hall, celebrating our daughter's engagement and breaking a plate! We thank Hashem for the home being built with marvelous *siyata d'Shmaya* and with the *zechus* of *shalom*.

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

ASK THE RAV

By Harav Hagaon **R' Menachem Mendel Fuchs** shlita, Rav of Mishmeres HaSholom

Buying Friends with Candy

Question: In our class, there's one girl who often isn't included in games. Recently she started bringing very special candies and nosh (that the school doesn't allow to be brought to class) and offering it to girls so they'll play with her. Do I need to tell the teacher about it?

Answer: From the wording of the question, it appears that the questioner's only concern is if she's allowed to tattle on the girl who is bringing candy against school rules. But the truth is there's an entirely different and very serious concern: the fact that girls in the class have made a *cherem* on one girl and don't include her in their games, which led to her needing to bring special candies so they'll let her participate. This situation is bad from all aspects and is liable to cause the girl emotional damage both now and for the future, when she grows up and remembers what she went through. She might even need psychological or psychiatric treatment.

Therefore, it's very important to tell the teacher what's going on with this girl. *Be"H*, the teacher will make sure to be *mechanech* the class in the mitzvah of "*V'ahavta l'reyacha kamocha*." Despite the fact that this girl apparently has some personality problem and maybe acts a little strangely, the girls need to overcome their negative feelings and to draw her in. With that, they'll also fulfill the great mitzvos of *gemillus chasadim* and emulating Hashem's ways, they'll avoid the *aveirah* of "*Lo sonu*," hurting their classmate, they'll train themselves in *vatranus* and tolerance, and more. When they do so, the problem with violation of the school rule of not bringing special candies will also be solved.

Who wants a great costume for Purim?

Everybody does! Kids dream about their Purim costume all year. They start planning it as soon as the previous Purim's costumes are packed away.

It makes no difference which costume you've chosen – a doctor or a baker, a tourist or an artist. If you want any costume to be a success, you need to adapt yourself to the role, so it'll be as real as possible – with the right hat, a matching scarf around your neck, a belt and briefcase that a figure of this kind would use, and all kinds of other accessories connected to it.

When we "step into the shoes" of the character we're dressing up as, that makes the costume really authentic...

We can use this same capability in order to judge others *l'kaf zechus*.

For example, when we're angry at the teacher, who, in our opinion, was too strict today, maybe we can try to understand her. To feel her. To think that for her, too, it's hard to be in the classroom on Erev Purim... The last period of the day...

Or, if it irritates us when the driver of the school bus comes late, let's think a bit about what could have caused the delay. Maybe he didn't sleep well at night, and therefore, he woke up late.

It is this ability to judge favorably that will give us a happy and satisfied life, not only on Purim.

IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS

The "Birkas Avraham" of Slonim zt"l

A Special Mishloach Manos

Purim in Tveria, seventy years ago.

Tefillas Shacharis had just finished in the shul of the Baal Birkas Avraham of Slonim. Megillas Esther was read for the large crowd. Then, the Rebbe, who was at the beginning of his years as an Admor and wished to strengthen the *tzibbur*, spoke about some spiritual *takanos* for the benefit of the *kehillah*.

But the Rebbe's words didn't find favor in the eyes of one of the *mispallelim*. That person, one of the distinguished people in the community, didn't keep his opinion to himself. He started shaming the Rebbe in front of everyone, saying, "He was just appointed as the Admor and he already wants to change things...?"

And the Rebbe, the Baal Birkas Avraham? He heard his disgrace... and remained silent. He didn't react in the slightest to all of the insults. But when they came home, he asked his son to prepare a special, impressive *mishloach manos* and bring it to the home of that man...

There was no end to the admiration the son felt at that moment upon seeing his great father's noble conduct.



מאכלות תלנוק

Yes. The pacifier. Not a candy in the shape of a pacifier, but a simple silicon pacifier that was tucked into the *mishloach manos*, to hint that...

You didn't have to be a genius to understand. He was hinting that I'm just a baby. As far as he's concerned, I could sit in a playpen and play with a toy bowling pin, instead of sharing childish ideas that don't interest anyone. *A baby. That's what he thinks of me.*

Two salty tears trickled from my right eye. I quickly dried them. That's all I need – that someone should ask me what happened. That they'd understand how hurt I felt and would stick a pacifier in my mouth...

Shimshy! – mature Shimshy suddenly said to the sad, hurt Shimshy inside me. *Get a hold of yourself! Maybe it's not what you think? Maybe it's all a funny mistake? And maybe... even if Motty sent you a hurtful hint, you don't have to be dragged after him like a baby. You can take the reins in your hands and act maturely and responsibly. Only you can decide what your Purim will look like on the inside.*

Later, at Motty's house:

Moishy's deafening howls could not be ignored. From minute to minute, he increased the volume. "Paci!" – he screamed. "Moishy's paci!"

It could have been funny, if it wasn't so sad. Moishy, the "pacifier seller" of Purim 5786, was covered in pacifiers, from head to toe. In his hand, he held a basket brimming with pacifiers of all kinds – and he was

crying bitterly: "Paci..."

Anyone who knew him understood that "*Kol zeh einenu shoveh lo* – all this is worth nothing to him." All the pacifiers in the world, along with jewels, gold, and piles of toys – cannot match the value of one tattered pacifier, the only one dear to his sensitive palate.

"We must search for Moishy's pacifier right now!" – echoed the cry throughout the house. "If not..."

"What's going on here? Is it Purim or Pesach? Why are you looking in the nooks and crannies, like by *bedikas chametz*?" asked Moishy's Zeidy when he came into the house.

"It's Moishy's pacifier. Did you see it? It disappeared!"

"We'll soon check. Motty, your friend's at the door."

"Shimshy!" All my doubts about whether I was really acting maturely or was just being a chump – evaporated when I saw Motty's warm and genuine smile.

"Thanks for the nice *mishloach*!" I said, handing him a *mishloach manos* from me. Then I took the pacifier out of my pocket and asked: "Can it be that this slipped by mistake into the *mishloach* you prepared for me?"

Motty almost hugged me in his excitement. "Moishy's pacifier! What a funny kid. First, he hides it in a *mishloach manos* that has nothing to do with him, and then he puts us all to work looking for it. Moishy! Look what my best friend brought you!"

We shook hands.

Best friends, no?



Whoever answers correctly enters a raffle for prizes
Last month's winner: מודיעין עילית ישראל דניקל

And now for the next question:

Look up, up *sefer Shemiras Halashon, Shaar Hatevunah, Perek Dalei*, call 072-337-2212 Ext. 3, and choose the correct answer to the following question:

About what did the Chofetz Chaim write in *Perek Dalei*, "The more the person practices this middah, the less he will violate the sin of lashon hara."

1. The good and important middah of vatranus.
2. The excellent middah of "B'tzedek tishpot amisecha" – being *dan l'chaf zechus*.
3. About all the good middos *bein adam lachaveiro*.

*The recorded question and answers are in Hebrew only.

Rebbe Chaim invites you to check what the correct answer is, and be"H, in Shiur No. 20, he will elaborate on the topic.

NO OFFENSE



You're invited to send us stories suitable for this column: stories in which a friend was almost hurt or embarrassed, and thanks to someone's sensitivity, it was prevented, and also stories in which, sadly, a friend was hurt. The stories chosen for the magazine will earn the sender a prize: M025379160@GMAIL.COM | 02-650-6107

The idea that won was from Chaya Feldman.

Notice from the Building

The Yaakobi family lives in a big building, with many families and lots of children, *bli ayin hara*. As you know, children don't always keep their surroundings perfectly clean... The building has a "Building Committee" that collects money from the neighbors to take care of the garden, the elevator, the electricity, and the cleaning. Each time, a different family takes on the job for six months.

Right now, the Yaakobi's are in charge of the Building Committee and they're putting a lot of effort into this job. They decided to prepare a nice, big sign reminding all the neighbors – and especially the children – to keep the stairwells clean and to toss all the candy wrappers and empty snack bags into the trash can, and not onto the floor. They hung up the colorful sign in a prominent place, next to the elevator at the entrance.

The next afternoon, when Dassy Yaakobi came home from school, she noticed Yair Levy, son of the neighbors from the second floor, standing next to the sign and reading it carefully.

Nice. Putting up a notice was a good idea – she thought to herself while waiting for the elevator. I see the children are reading it and taking the matter of cleanliness to heart.

But then, as the doors opened and she was stepping into the elevator, she saw something very annoying – seven-year-old Yair simply yanking off the notice and tearing it up!



A few words from Dassy Yaakobi:

What could have happened >

If the elevator doors hadn't closed just then, I don't think I would have remained silent towards that *chutzpahdik* boy. How does he allow himself to behave like that? Isn't he embarrassed? But I was already inside the elevator, zooming upwards... I came into the house and shouted, "Ima, call Mrs. Levy and tell her to give her son a talking-to! I just saw him tearing down the nice notice we hung up about keeping the place clean..."

What happened in the end >

Ima waited until the evening, so she could speak to the neighbor calmly. When Mrs. Levy heard the story, she was surprised. It wasn't like Yair to do such a thing. A few minutes later she called back and explained to Ima: "Yair needs new glasses. When he read the sign, he thought it said, 'Everyone must rend this.' He'd just learned in Megillas Esther that the English word for 'vayikra begadav' is 'rend his clothing' – that is, to tear it. So he did what he thought the notice said to do. He tore it right up!"

Summary: The Berkowitz family starts selling milk products so as to help the residents of the new neighborhood, "Shacharit," who have to travel far to get to the nearest supermarket.

Goat's Milk

All night, baby Pinny cried and refused to eat, even though he was definitely hungry.

"A bottle?" Ima tried.

"A pacifier?" Pinny put the pacifier in his mouth for a second, and then started screaming again.

In the morning, Ima was exhausted, and since I'd woken up early, I offered to watch Pinny until I had to leave for *cheder*. Pinny looked so miserable. He wouldn't even touch the cookie I offered him. I really felt bad for him.

"Pinnush!" I picked him up high, but he didn't smile, even though it's Adar...

Again I tried to make him laugh. This time, he gave a little smile, and ... that's when I saw them – tiny white pimples on his tongue and dozens more of them hiding inside his mouth.

"Poor thing!" I hugged him tight. "Is that why you're crying? It's not your teeth coming out; it's pimples coming out..."

"It looks like mouth disease," sighed Ima when she woke up from her brief rest. "We'll need to get hold of goat's milk."

"We have a few bottles of goat's milk in the fridge," I pointed in the direction of the big yard where the milk refrigerators stood.

"No, not that kind of goat's milk," explained Ima. "Goat's milk straight from the goat. I heard it does wonders for mouth disease."

"But where do you get it?" I asked.

"I'll inquire in the course of the morning," said Ima. "Hey, Bentzie, isn't it late for you already?" I glanced at the clock and jumped up. Taking my lunch bag, I zoomed outside, flying towards the *cheder*. Five minutes of huffing and puffing, and I was there.

"Good morning, Bentzie," whispered Ushie. "Got up late?" he asked sympathetically.

I wanted to tell him I'd actually gotten up extra early, but I didn't have a chance, because just then the rebbi came in and we began davening.

I only got to telling Ushie the whole story

at recess, and he sighed. "Look at that. I was sure you were snuggling up in bed. You can never know what people are going through..."

"Bentzie, is it true you opened a milk products sale in your house?" Moishy Kagan asked curiously.

"It sure is!" For a moment, I forgot about the morning's events. I told my friends about the giant refrigerators that came, the supermarket that's starting to take shape, the porch we're planning to close, and our dream of providing everyone in the neighborhood with basic products right down their block. Everyone was excited that our neighborhood would have a real supermarket.

In the afternoon, when I came home, I was greeted by bleating.

"Mehh... Mehhhh..."

"What's going on here?" I leaped backwards. "Is this a Purim shtick? Or---"

"This is what's going on here," my sister Rivky laughed and pointed towards the yard, where a real goat was walking around, bleating gently. "Ima got hold of it from a nearby *moshav*. They lent her the goat for three days, in the hope that it'll help Pinnush."

"If only!" I said. Before I'd even put down my briefcase, there was a knock at the door.



"Must be someone coming to buy milk," Rivky guessed. She went to open the door. An unfamiliar man stood there, holding a toddler. "I heard you have a milk Gamach?" he asked in an accent I couldn't identify.

"Right," she said. "How many milks do you need?"

"Ummmm..." He looked embarrassed for a moment, and then said, "Maybe...one."

"With pleasure." Rivky went inside and came back a moment later with a bag of milk.

The man looked at the bag and again looked uncomfortable. "It's... regular milk..." he mumbled.

"Right." I tried to understand. "Do you need milk in a carton? Or goat's milk? We have."

"Yes, goat's milk!" The man's eyes lit up. "My baby has pimples in his mouth... They said you have a Gamach for special milk."

At that point, I also came to the door. "We have a Gamach for regular milk," I said with a smile. "But apparently, Hashem sent another mitzvah our way..." I led them out to our yard and helped Rivky spritz fresh milk into the baby's mouth. Only then did I see that the toddler looked familiar. He's a friend of Pinny from the babysitter's house. Maybe they caught it from each other? Who knows?

"Thank you very much," he said, as he left. "You've done a tremendous mitzvah, ..." and the goat echoed from behind: "Meeehhhh..."



Way to Go!

Kasriel's amusing corner,
with stories on middos
tovos that happened to
him on the way.

An Original Grogger

When Abba and I walked out of the Merenstein wedding, I felt a kind of "Nahafoch hu": From the warm hall to the freezing outdoors; from the noisy wedding to a quiet street; from bright lights - to darkness. Maybe that feeling of "Nahafoch hu" is what made me think that the big hot plate next to the garbage bin could be connected to Purim. The metal was a little old, and I don't know if it heated up chicken that was cold, but one thing I knew: An idea in my mind was starting to unfold!

Did you notice those rhymes? I was a little dizzy from the dancing, but the moment I laid eyes on the hot plate, my head cleared up and I started thinking in rhyme. The perfect *grogger*! That's what it'll be! Last year's *grogger* (which I made with Yonah-Dan out of wine bottle caps) wasn't much of a success, but this year's would be different!

"Can I just check something small here?" I asked Abba.

"Small?" Abba gave a hearty laugh, and watched me approach the big hot plate.

"Something thin," I corrected myself. "Don't worry, Abba! If Ima tells me to throw out this noisemaker before Pesach, I'll get it out pronto."

"Sounds like the man who took apart his succah as the judge ordered - by the end of the seven days of Succos," Abba winked. "But think logically, Kasriel. How will you schlep such a giant *grogger* to shul?"

I tried. I thought. The logic part was a little complicated for me...

"Please!" I pleaded. "I want to do the mitzvah of wiping out Amalek *b'hiddur*!"

In the end, Abba said, "Oh, all right," and my eyes lit up.

I didn't know yet if I'd bang with a ladle or a spatula (what is that, actually...?) but I assumed Ima would contribute a suitable utensil when the time comes. Meanwhile, I left the big metal "treasure" in the "ginas habisan," that is, the yard

of our building.

On Rosh Chodesh Adar, the time finally came. "A *guttin chodesh*!" I wished everyone sitting in the kitchen, as I nervously tapped on the big hot plate I'd dragged inside. The cold thin metal seemed a bit out of place in our warm, cozy kitchen.

I thought of starting my *derashah* with the boiling bath that Amalek cooled off, but before I had a chance, something happened. One of the people at the table had a taste of the fancy yogurt Ima had bought for Rosh Chodesh and made a face. "That's how they lie to people and make them buy," she fumed, licking a bit more of the whipped cream to calm



herself down. "Everyone knows what the quality of---" At that moment, I went over to the *fleishig* drawer, took the first spoon that came into my hand, and banged it hard on the hot plate, protesting the accusations with all my strength.

"Kasriel, what happened?" Ima quickly closed the kitchen door so the baby wouldn't wake up.

"*Lashon hara*!" I cried. "I object!"

"Object?" Ima wrinkled her forehead, and then asked if my objection could be quieter.

I didn't know if protesting quietly would do the job. Besides, the wooden spoon was in the sink and I didn't know what else would make more restrained sounds. While I was still racking my brain, I heard voices talking about the neighbors upstairs, who "simply went too far when they asked that all the girls---"

BOOM. BOOM-BOOM. BOOM-BOOM-BOOM! I banged on the metal plate with all my might, but when my hand came down the ninth time, I saw Ima standing there. She gave a deep sigh and said, "You're so creative, Kasriel, and so full of good intentions. But the noise---"

"Bothers you?" I asked sheepishly, happy I'd understood Ima without words.

"Bothers us," Ima confirmed. "The baby woke up. And besides, when this '*grogger*' is in action, we need to scream in order to be heard ---"

I almost cried. *Oof. Why stop? Why give up a mitzvah?* At first, I thought I should try to prove to Ima why I needed to protest loudly. Against *lashon hara*! But instead of explaining and elaborating - I just kept quiet.

Reflected on the hot plate (I guess someone cleaned it before throwing it out...), I could see Ima's eyes pleading and my sisters with hands clapped on their ears.

A tiny voice in my heart (I could only hear it now, when it got quiet...) told me that I don't have to stop. I can continue reminding everyone what yes to say and what not. But I'll first remind myself what's the best way of giving that reminder... and what's less than best.

An Exceptional Purim

On each line, find the picture that doesn't belong. Arrange the letters of the exceptional pictures to form two words from *Megillas Esther* that symbolize *achdus* and brotherhood.

6 5 4 3 2 1

1	ט	ק	ר	7	4
1	ז	ס	ב	1	5
1	ס	ט	ב	ה	6
1	כ	7	1	מ	1
1	ת	ע	י	כ	2
1	כ	ז	ח	פ	3

Send solutions to Mishmeres HaSholom
11 Sdei Chemed St. Jerusalem or fax: 02-650-6107
Raffles follow the protocol at Mishmeres
HaSholom offices. Winners will be informed

Name:	
Address:	
Phone:	City:

Raffle winners
for the puzzle
section:
איציק
מילר
בית שמש

Challenging PURIM RIDDLE

2
raffes for
valuable
gifts

Help Meshulam and his friends fill the mishloach manos basket with goodies



1

Leaf through the sections of Pirchei Hamishmeres and look for at least 7 words or pictures you could send as *mishlo'ach manos* (a not-true example: package of wafers)

2

Call the Hotline, ext. 362, and say clearly the words and pictures you found, so as to enter raffle no. 1 (a not-true example: a package of wafers is peeking out of the boy's pocket on page 5).

3

After Purim, you can also enter raffle no. 2, if you record on the Hotline ext. 363 a story of a special incident of *hisgabrus* that happened to you connected to Mishloach Manos.

חייב
פסח → 072-337-2212 Ext 362 for a solution to the riddle
Ext 363 to record stories of *hisgabrus*

Summary: The "For Body and Soul" organization provides discounted kosher food to far-flung towns, resulting in spiritual *hisorerus*. Erez, owner of a non-kosher restaurant, notices the promotional material on "*shemiras hapeh v'halashon*" and thinks that someone has discovered his plan to slip spoiled merchandise into the area of the distributions.

PLOT

That Doesn't Expire

Chapter 6

WRITTEN BY B. HALEVY.

ILLUSTRATED BY C. HASID



To be continued, be"H