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The Emperor's Strange Dream



Portrait of Emperor Rudolf II, circa 1576-1583

In the winter of the year 1592, the Maharal of Prague, Rabbi Yehuda Lowe, was called to see Emperor Rudolph II. The famed Rabbi spent a long time with the Emperor, but no one knew what it was all about. Many years later, this story was told about the visit and a strange dream that the Emperor had.

At the Emperor's court there were some ministers who were envious of the great respect and honor that the famed Maharal was enjoying. Both Jews and non-Jews knew that the Maharal was a holy man and they respected him greatly. The courtiers of the Emperor planned to drive the Rabbi out of Prague and send

him and all his flock into exile. Knowing that the Emperor would not hear of such a thing, they turned to the Empress, who promised to induce the Emperor to carry out the plan.

In the evening, the Empress handed the papers containing the harsh decree to her husband and asked him to sign them at once. At first, the Emperor hesitated to sign the decree, but when his wife persisted in her request, he said that he would "sleep on it," and sign the papers in the morning.

That night, the Emperor had a strange dream...He was waging war, but was captured and placed in prison, where he was told he would spend the rest of his life.

For many years the Emperor remained in prison, living on bread and water, with no one taking any interest in him.

One day an old Jew passed the prison. He was a venerable-looking man, with kindly eyes. The Emperor called out to him. The old man stopped and looked at the prisoner behind the bars.

"I am the Emperor," the prisoner exclaimed. "Don't you recognize me?"
"You have changed, Sire," the old man replied.

"I swear to you that I am the Emperor Rudolph. Please get me out of here," the prisoner begged desperately.

The old man knocked at the prison wall with his cane, and immediately there appeared a passage in the wall. The Emperor walked out and went with the old man to his home.

"You cannot return to the palace in this state," the old man told him, "for no one will recognize you. I will send for a barber and a tailor to groom you and to prepare royal robes for you. In the meantime, lie down and rest."

Then the old man placed two plates near the bed.

"What are these for?" the puzzled Emperor asked.

"One is for your nails and the other for your hair," the old man replied.

"How can I ever thank you?" the Emperor asked, with tears of gratitude rolling down his cheeks.

The Emperor awoke and wiped the tears from his cheeks. He sat up in bed and saw two plates on a little table near his bed. His thoughts turned to his strange dream. "Only the saintly Rabbi, Rabbi Lowe, could explain to me the meaning of the dream," the Emperor thought. At that moment there was a knock at the door. "You ordered the Royal Barber to report this morning," the Chief Chamberlain said on entering.

"Request Chief Rabbi Lowe for an audience immediately!" the Emperor called, and the puzzled Chamberlain withdrew.

As soon as the Maharal entered, the Emperor, who had never seen the Rabbi before, recognized him as the old Jew he had seen in his dream.

"In my dream last night, you did not recognize me," the Emperor said reproachfully.

"You had changed, Sire," the Maharal answered.

"Tell me more about my dream."

"You went to bed with unkind thoughts last night. What did you have under your pillow?"

The Emperor now remembered that the empress had placed the decree under his pillow, to be ready for his signature first thing in the morning.

"I promise you that no harm will befall the Jews of Prague," Emperor Rudolph said, and immediately tore up the papers containing the cruel decree.

"You spared my brethren much suffering," the Maharal said, "but you have spared yourself even greater pain."

Reprinted from the archives of L'Chaim (May 30, 2003.)

Basic Decency with Shidduchim



Rav Chaim Kanievsky, zt”l, was once asked, if someone had agreed to a certain Shidduch and a better prospect came along, would it be permissible to cancel the original date with the first person and pursue the second person that came along?

Rav Chaim answered, “This is absolutely not allowed to be done.”

Rav Chaim related, “There was once a case like this and a Bochur cancelled a date with a girl he agreed to go out with in order to go out with someone else, and

the Shadchan called him later and told him that the second date had cancelled on him.

Just as you do to others, so will happen to you. There was also another case where someone wanted to take revenge on a Bochor, and pretended to set him up on a date, while in reality there was never a date arranged. The boy showed up at the girl's home at the 'prearranged time', and the girl's father asked him what he was doing there.

He responded that he was there for the date with his daughter, and the fathertold him that no such date was ever set up. Seeing how confused and embarrassed the boy was, the father felt bad for him and invited him inside. They had a conversation and spoke in learning and shared a few Divrei Torah.

The boy was unaware that the man's daughter happened to have been in a different part of the house listening to the conversation, and she was impressed by how the boy spoke with her father, and she told her father that she was interested in dating this boy.

In just a short while, the Shidduch actually went through, and this couple became engaged! The "Shadchan" was playing a nasty revenge trick and Hashem 'paid him back' by making the Shidduch work out. The "Shadchan" had the audacity to ask for Shadchanus, and he wanted to get paid for setting this couple up!" Rav Chaim said, "His Shadchanus should be two slaps across the face, but not money!"

Reprinted from the Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5786 email of Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg's Torah U'Torah.

Pearls of Wisdom – A Word for the Ages #1

After little Yaakov Kamenetsky was born, his family moved to a small town by the name of Dolhinov, where the people of the village had an unquenchable love for Torah. As a young child, his father would take him on Shabbos night at two in the morning to the Beis HaMedrash which was filled with the sounds of Torah learning, as if it was in the middle of the day.

At the age of eleven, the young Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky left home to learn in the Yeshivah of Minsk, where he passed an entry exam with the Rosh Yeshivah, Rav Shlomo Glovenchitz, zt"l, displaying his brilliance in learning.

The Rosh Yeshivah, however, was still unsure whether he should accept such a young boy into the Yeshivah, and told him: "You are not even Bar Mitzvah yet."

With the innocence of a child, the young Rav Yaakov replied, "Well, I came here to learn, not to be the tenth man of a Minyan." Rav Yaakov was accepted into the Yeshivah, and made his way to become one of the greatest Torah giants of his generation!

Rav Yisroel Salanter, zt"l, said, "When I go up to Shamayim, I will not be afraid of the question of why I wasn't like Moshe Rabbeinu. The question I am afraid of is why I was not everything that Yisroel Salanter could have been!"

Reprinted from the Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5786 email of Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg's Torah U'Torah.

The Baker's Bread Crumbs



The following story is not new. Reading it again, however, in Rabbi Yechiel Spero's latest book, "The Story Begins," I developed a new insight. The Chafetz Chaim became the Torah giant that he was due to his pure toil, uncompromised effort, living in abject poverty, with nothing to look forward to tomorrow but more of the same. But that same life was filled with 24/7 Torah study with a break for tefillah. He would not have exchanged his "idyllic" life for all the comforts in the world.

Indeed, on some days, there was nothing to eat in the house, not even a piece of dried-out bread. Nonetheless, as his Rebbetzin attested, the physical deprivation had no negative impact on his learning. She had nothing to feed her saintly husband. She went to the baker and asked to collect the crumbs from the bottom of the tray. She would take these crumbs home and make knaidlach from them. She planned to transform those few knaidlach into the dinner that would sustain them.

Even the free crumbs could not go on forever. The baker obviously had a customer who was willing to pay for the crumbs and, as a result, he apologized that he could no longer give her the crumbs. The Rebbetzin walked home empty-handed. She had nothing for dinner. How could her husband continue his learning if he had nothing to eat?

The Chafetz Chaim came home from the bais ha'medrash to see his wife's dejection. He asked what was wrong – and she told him. He seemed unperturbed, calming her down by reassuring her that all would be good. He went across the room, banged his hand firmly on the table and declared, "Yetzer hora! Gira b'einech, an arrow in your eyes! You will not succeed in taking me away from learning. Never! Whatever you try, whatever your evil wiles come up with, I will still continue learning!" He returned to his sefer.

The next day, the baker said that whatever crumbs she could find, she could have for free. The yetzer hora had failed. He would do anything to cause the Chafetz Chaim to close his sefer and stop learning. He did not succeed.

The lesson is clear: Do not allow the yetzer hora to have a footing. The slightest incursion was an opportunity for him to destroy what the Chafetz Chaim had devoted himself to. I think we should derive a lesson from the sage's reaction. He immediately knew that the yetzer hora was behind this. He was so tied up in learning, so thoroughly enveloped in Torah, that any incursion was an attack on his learning. This is the meaning of *ameilus baTorah*. This was his life.

Reprinted from the Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5786 email of the Peninim on the Torah, a project of the Hebrew Academy of Cleveland as compiled and edited by Rabbi L. Scheinbaum.

The Extended Family

By Rabbi Moshe Hirschberg

Rabbi Greenberg* had attended a local Sephardic shul for *Minchah-Maariv*. As was customary, someone would address the congregation between the two *tefillos*, offering a few words of inspiration.

On that particular evening, one of the *mispalelim* rose to share a personal story — and he granted permission for it to be retold.

Mr. David Ben-Ami* had immigrated from Morocco years earlier. His own *yeshivah* education had been limited, and when he arrived in the United States, he had very little money. Though he worked hard, his modest salary barely satisfied his family's basic needs, and the high cost of tuition was especially hard to cover.

As the bills continued to pile up, so did his anxiety.

Until one day, he simply could not bear it any longer. With great pain, he made a decision that he never imagined he would have to come to: withdrawing his son from *yeshivah*. He was placed in public school.

It was, by all accounts, a heartbreaking situation.

Then, one day, the phone rang. "Hello," said the voice on the other end. "My name is Mrs. Purrs*, and I serve as the speech therapist for your son. I'm calling you with a question."



She continued gently. "If someone were willing to pay for your son's tuition, would you enroll him in a *yeshivah*?"

Without the slightest hesitation, Mr. Ben-Ami agreed.

"In that case," she replied, "please go enroll him immediately. From now on, I will cover the bill."

The joy that filled the family's home was indescribable. Even Mr. Ben-Ami, who him-self had grown up with only limited exposure to Torah education, understood that something extraordinary had just happened.

Years passed. The young boy blossomed. With the gift of a proper *chinuch*, he matured into a budding *talmid chacham* and began thriving.

Then one day he heard the news: Mrs. Purrs had passed away. There was no question — he had to attend the *levayah*, especially knowing that she left no children of her own. When he arrived, he realized that the story was far bigger than he had ever imagined.

Standing there were dozens who were helped by Mrs. Purrs.

Without fanfare, without recognition, she had built herself a re-markable family. Not through wealth or fame — but by giving Jew-ish children the priceless gift of a Torah education.

Standing together at her *levayah*, it became clear that her children were everywhere.

Reprinted from the Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5786 email of Zichru Toras Moshe.

Hashem's Promise of a Blessing for the "Sixth" Year



The Torah promises that in the sixth year of the agricultural cycle, just before the land of Israel enters the holy year of Shemitah, Hashem will send a

special blessing. “I will command My blessing for you in the sixth year,” the posuk declares, “and it will yield produce for three years.”

For generations, this promise stood as an assurance that those who observed the laws of the Sabbatical year would not be left wanting. In 1986, on the eve of the Shemithah year of 5747, the farmers of the Charedi moshav Beit Chilkiyah would witness this promise unfold in a way that none of them could have imagined.

That year, the month of Iyar brought with it an unusual phenomenon. Instead of the typical spring weather, the heavens opened with unexpected, abundant rains that lasted for days. These showers soaked the fields of Beit Chilkiyah, nourishing the grain in a way that seasoned farmers had rarely seen. The crops grew tall, strong, and vibrant, as though infused with a vitality beyond natural explanation.

When harvest time arrived, the farmers stood in awe. The yield was not merely good, it was extraordinary. The fields produced three times the amount they typically yielded in an average year. It was as if the land itself had risen to fulfill the ancient promise, offering a tangible sign of divine providence. Yet the blessing brought with it an unexpected challenge.

The Ministry of Agriculture, concerned that such an abundant harvest across the country would cause a steep drop in produce prices, issued a directive: enormous quantities of fruits and vegetables were to be discarded into the Mediterranean Sea. The idea was to protect the national market by reducing supply.

For the farmers of Beit Chilkiyah, this order was deeply troubling. To them, the produce was not merely agricultural output - it was a gift from heaven, grown in a year of blessing. Throwing it into the sea felt like a betrayal of gratitude. Quietly, and with a sense of responsibility over economic policy, the residents of the moshav discreetly distributed them to needy families, charitable organizations, and children’s institutions in Jerusalem, Bnei Brak, and other cities. They believed that food grown through a divine blessing should nourish people, not be wasted.

Their actions were carried out with humility and secrecy, guided by the conviction that fulfilling a mitzvah outweighed bureaucratic directives. But the story did not end there. Far from Israel, in the northwestern reaches of Ukraine, a catastrophe was unfolding that would ripple across continents. In April 1986, the Chernobyl nuclear reactor exploded, releasing massive amounts of radioactive material into the atmosphere.

The Soviet authorities initially concealed the disaster, even as radiation spread across the region. Entire communities were evacuated, many already suffering from exposure. The reactor continued to burn, spewing dangerous particles into the air until emergency crews labored under perilous conditions to contain it. They diverted rivers, poured lead over the burning core, and eventually encased the reactor in a massive concrete casket.

The radioactive contamination, however, did not remain confined to Ukraine. Winds carried it across borders, and soon fields in Turkey and neighboring countries were tainted. The Turkish government, alarmed by the levels of radiation detected in its agricultural regions, issued a strict ban on the consumption of locally grown fruits and vegetables. Overnight, Turkey faced a severe shortage of produce. Markets emptied, and the government urgently sought safe imports from abroad.

It was then that the fruit of Beit Chilkiah - untouched by radiation, grown in purity, and harvested in abundance - found an unexpected destination. Instead of being thrown into the sea, large shipments were sent to Turkey, where they were eagerly purchased. The very produce that had been destined for disposal became a lifeline for a nation in crisis.

And for the farmers of Beit Chilkiah, the sales brought significant financial gain, ensuring their economic stability for the coming Shemitah year. Thus, on the eve of the Shemitah year of 5747, the farmers had already experienced the Torah's promise. They had seen a triple harvest, witnessed unexpected markets open across the sea, and felt the security that comes from divine provision. Their fields had yielded not only grain but also a revelation of the mysterious ways in which blessing can unfold across the world.

Reprinted from the Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5786 email of Rabbi Dovid Hoffman's Torah Tavlin.

My Business Coach

As told by Mr. Laibel Lipszyc



Mr. Laibel Lipszyc and the Lubavitcher Rebbe

My family came to America in 1946, when I was seven years old. We had run away from Antwerp, where I was born, when the Nazis invaded. First, we fled to Portugal, where a younger brother was born, then to Cuba, where another sister was born, until eventually — after the war — America began to let more ships in. We lived in Brownsville, Brooklyn, near several Lubavitcher families, until we moved to Charleston, South Carolina, where my father got a job as a shochet, a kosher slaughterer.

But then, in 1949, my father got the news about his parents. He had been trying to save his family throughout the war, and it was only then that he learned that his mother, father, and two siblings had been killed by the Nazis. When his sister, who told him the news, blamed him for not saving them, he had a nervous breakdown. We moved back to New York, and he spent the next few years in and out of the hospital. Throughout this time, the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe helped our family by sending my mother some money every week.

Because he was sick and away from home, my father wasn't at my Bar Mitzvah in 1952, nor did he participate in my first audience with the Rebbe in honor of the occasion. On top of that, my older brother also had some health troubles, and so a lot of things that had to be done around the house fell to the next boy — me. I was a student in the Lubavitcher yeshivah system. But because of everything that was going on in my family, I became a bit rebellious. I started to hang out on the streets with some non-Jewish boys, and my mother didn't like the way things were going with me.

When I was eighteen, her younger sister, who lived in Argentina, suggested sending me to live with them for a year. Her husband had a jewelry store, and he

could help me get into the jewelry business. “He’ll learn a trade, and we’ll straighten him out,” she said.

Before going to Argentina, I had another audience with the Rebbe. He told me that I should only go on the condition that I would be able to continue studying in a local yeshivah alongside my work. I agreed, and at first I spent half a day studying Torah and the other half training for the jewelry trade. But after a few months, I wrote a letter to the Rebbe suggesting that I spend less time learning Torah in order to work longer hours.

Back in New York, my family was living on welfare, which in those days meant getting coupons that allowed you to pick up food from a government warehouse. These warehouses didn’t have a lot of kosher food, so my mother would go there just for eggs and vegetables. The city’s welfare authorities could come into our house to look around at any time without even knocking on the door. If they saw anything new, they would ask how we paid for the item. Most of our household items were second-hand, and for a time, we weren’t even allowed to have a telephone.

Because I felt so driven to do my best economically for my mother, my father, and my family, all of my thoughts were on making a living. My training was originally supposed to take two years, but by working more, I would be able to finish up faster and come home.

The Rebbe did not agree. “You must not consider your study as something which is beneficial only for after-life,” he wrote in his response, “but as something which is also of vital importance for your present and future in this life. “One of the many benefits of the study of the Torah is that it equips the Jew with the necessary ability and powers to cope with daily life and whatever trials that may lie ahead. This is all the more important in your present environment.”

But, the Rebbe went on, continuing my Torah studies didn’t have to come at a cost: “If you apply yourself diligently to your training, I am confident that you could complete it much sooner than you anticipate, all the more so since the very study of the Torah will bring you Divine blessings in every respect, including your progress in your training and your future economic status, so that you could always serve G-d with peace of mind and joy.”

A few weeks later, I wrote again, this time to say that I was worried my boss — who was Jewish but hostile to religion — didn’t want me to work only half a day. In his reply, the Rebbe addressed my concerns and explained how I should respond to my boss:

“It seems to me almost certain that if you will speak to him nicely, but firmly, that it means very much to you to have half a day free for study and that this is something that vitally concerns your future and your entire outlook on life, etc., he would surely agree. “Since you have apprehension on account of your boss’s attitude to religion, you need not stress the religious aspect of it but other aspects such as cultural, educational, character training, peace of mind, etc. When your boss will see that you are really sincere and that it means very much to you indeed, I’m sure he will agree to this arrangement.”

When I had originally come to Argentina, my mind was on material things, but with these letters, the Rebbe reoriented my thinking. If I put more energy into studying Torah, he was telling me, then everything else would fall in line as a result. The physical comes through the spiritual.

In a very practical way, I saw this happen shortly after receiving this letter. In the first place I worked, I was learning the trade well, but they weren’t teaching me the main skill I needed — soldering, which is the technique of joining metal with heat. So I left and went to another apprenticeship, where they were willing to teach me properly. It was hard work, and they were glad to push it on me, and so I learned quickly.

I was prepared to do this work for free, because I was learning the trade, but my second boss started to pay me, and he even gave me a raise each month. When I eventually returned to New York, I started working straight away. After a week and a half, the owner finally told me what I would be getting paid: Twenty-five dollars a week. In those days, people were getting around eighty dollars. Right away, I decided against staying on and said goodbye. As it happened, that very same day I had an appointment to see the Rebbe — my first audience after coming back.

In the audience, the Rebbe asked about Argentina, and I related various stories that had happened there. Then, before I left, I told him about this job and how I had been offered twenty-five dollars earlier that day.

“For twenty-five dollars a week,” remarked the Rebbe with a smile, “I don’t let you leave yeshivah!”

Instead, the Rebbe told me to call a certain Israeli jeweler by the name of Ahron Stein, who lived in Crown Heights. I went over to Stein, told him what the Rebbe had said, and on the spot he made a phone call and got me a proper-paying job — my first after coming back to America.

Mr. Laibel Lipszyc worked as a jeweler in New York from 1959 until 2002. Today he is retired and lives in Deerfield Beach, Florida, where he was interviewed in December 2025.

Reprinted from the Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5786 email of Here's My Story [with the Lubavitcher Rebbe], a project of The JEW Foundation.

An Inspiring Story of the Imrei Yosef of Spinka

By Yehuda Z. Klitnick



Rabbi Yosef Meir Weiss, the Imrei Yosef, zt"l, founder of the Spinka Chassidic dynasty

Reb Moshe Rosenthal was a chosid of the Kossover Rebbe. He lived in Sighet. After his wedding he studied, and served Hashem without any hindrance. When his family grew, his father-in-law put aside a nice amount of money so that he could make business with it, and have a nice income, and able to continue his studies.

R' Moshe had a good head, got involved in a few business deals, and caught on to the idea of how to make money. He invested in a small business venture which brought him a bit of income, and he was able to study further. His wife also held a small job and helped him with money.

He eventually met a smart merchant who was very successful. They forged a close friendship and the merchant offered him some deals that he would be able to earn good money. R' Moshe approached his father-in-law and explained the situation, and asked him to give him the money, and be able to invest the money into a large business deal. His father-in-law was also a smart merchant, and after reviewing the deal, gave me the money. I gave it to my friend, and the money was invested in the business. Everything went smoothly. I prayed for further success, and went back to studying Torah and hoped that I would become rich and be able to study for a long time.

But unfortunately, something happened, and the business went sour, and my money was wasted! This put me in a state of a terrible depression. It effected me so much that I lost my courage to live. I didn't tell anything to my wife or my mother-in-law and tried to keep it to myself, but it almost caused me to have a nervous breakdown.

My wife noticed it and immediately asked me what happened. But I didn't want to answer. She got very scared and told her parents, who tried to get me out to explain my situation. But I didn't want to talk about it. My parents were Kossover Chassidim, and I had wanted to go to Kossov in order to meet my Rebbe. But since it was a long journey and there was no train running at that time to Kossov, I would have to travel with a wagon, and I did not dare to go on such a long journey alone because I had no one to travel with. I also knew that to write a letter to the Kossover Rebbe would take too long, and I had no-where to turn for advice.

My mother-in-law was a wise woman and understood what was bothering me, and she said we live not far from the city of Spinka, and she will provide you with a nice wagon and give me money for the trip, and I would be able to see the Spinka Rebbe (Rabbi Yosef Meir Weiss, the Imrei Yosef, 1838-1909). She offered to write a letter on my behalf to the Imrei Yosef, who was famous for delivering yeshuos (salvations). My mother-in-law urged me strongly to go to Spinka for a Shabbos, and after Shabbos when the Rebbe receives people, I would be able to talk to the Imrei Yosef, and he would surely help me.

This did not go so well with me being that for all my life I was a Kossover Chosid, and was not comfortable going to another Rebbe. However, my mother-in-law with her mother's soft speech, told me who the holy Spinka Rebbe was. She felt sorry for me, and gave me a nice sum of money and wished me to be successful in Spinka. I agreed to go since I was under a lot of pressure, and

couldn't get to my Rebbe in Kossov anyway, and the time was too short to be able to get an answer from the Rebbe.

I agreed to go to Spinka for Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara. I arrived on Friday Afternoon. I had never seen the Spinka Rebbe before, so I went to give him Shalom Aleichem. When I came to the Rebbe, the Rebbe looked at me sternly, shook his hand, gave Shalom, and said "Young man, don't be so scared"! This was a shock to me, but I shrugged it off and thought it was just a coincidence that the Rebbe had just happened to notice my plight.

However, when saying Good Shabbos and during the Lechayim at the Tish Friday night, I felt that every Dvar Torah the Rebbe said at the Tish, the Rebbe was talking to me and knew what was going on within my soul, and I connected strongly with him. Immediately after Havdalah, I went to the gabbai, Reb Yochanan Basch, and asked that I should be able to go in first to the Rebbe and that no one should be in the room when I talk to him. The Gabbai agreed on the condition that I give him a silver coin. I then went to the Rebbe I told the Rebbe everything that was on my heart.

The Rebbe looked and listened to everything but didn't answer anything; instead, he stood up and took a Gemara Pesachim from the bookcase and opened it to the beginning, and the Rebbe asked me to sit down. We began to learn, and I suddenly felt elevated and tranquil. We didn't learn much, but the Rebbe did the job right. My mood was upbeat, and I felt great. The Rebbe felt my tranquility, closed the Gemara, and wished me success. He shook my hand and held it for a minute, which strengthened me strongly, and we said goodbye. I came home to a delighted wife, and my in-laws. I went back to do some business deals, and was very successful in the Zchus, merit of the Spinka Rebbe.

Reprinted from the Parshas Emor 5786 email of Pardes Yehuda.

The Refusal to Take a Generous Donation

Rav Yoram Abergel was a well-known and deeply beloved leader of Jews in Israel. People would rush from all over the country to ask him questions and seek advice. One time, there was a wealthy non-Jewish businessman who traveled a long distance to ask him for advice. The Rav took a real interest in what the businessman was asking about and thought deeply about the best way to help him, as well as encourage him to be more honest in his dealings.

After their meeting, the businessman asked the Rav, "How much money does the Rav still need to finish the yeshiva's construction?" The Rav responded,

“1 million dollars.” The businessman wanted to help him, so he offered to pay the entire amount, but the Rav politely declined. The businessman was shocked. “How about half a million?” he offered. The Rav politely declined again. The businessman offered \$250,000,” and the Rav politely declined.

The businessman’s heart was in the right place, so he kept pleading with the Rav to allow him to donate something. Eventually, the Rav agreed to accept \$1,000, and the businessman left feeling like a changed man. Afterwards, the Rav called in one of his students and said, “Please use this money to buy toilet paper for the yeshiva.”

His talmid was confused. “Rav,” he asked, “why didn’t you accept this man’s money?”

The Rav responded, “The money that he offered did not come from an honest source, and money like that can never help; it can only harm.” The talmid left in amazement that even in the face of a million dollars, the Rav would not sacrifice any of his values one bit.

Reprinted from the Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5786 email of Torah Sweets