

SHABBOS STORIES FOR ACHAREI MOS-KEDOSHIM 5786

Volume 17, Issue 33 8 Iyar/April 25, 2026
Printed L'illuy nishmas Nechama bas R' Noach, a"h

The Miraculous Story of Walter Kairy



Walter Kairy

Hillel Eisenberg and Yaakov Shwekey shares the inspiring story of Walter Kairy, Yom Tov ben Yaakov A"H. When Walter grew up he did not have a lot of exposure to religion. As a teenager he went one day to pick up some friends who were learning at Lakewood, New Jersey. He passed by a class that was being given by a white bearded man. He was giving a fiery lecture in Yiddish.

Though he did not understand a word, Walter stood there, transfixed. When the class ended, he asked his friends who was this man. They said he was none other than Reb Aharon Kotler. Right then and there, Walter made a promise to himself, even if he may never learn Torah like this, he wanted to be a part of this fire, this passion. He decided he would never work on Shabbat again.

Years later Walter got married, built a home, and grew in his Judaism. He opened a clothing store in Brownsville, and everything was going well until the night of July 13th, 1977. There was a devastating citywide blackout that devastated Brooklyn. Riots broke out, security systems were down and stores were looted. Walter watched as his entire business collapsed in one night.

Courageously, he borrowed the money and rebuilt his business. His business was finally going well again, when Hashem sent him the ultimate test. That year, December 24th, the biggest shopping day of the year, fell out on Saturday. Walter went to Reb Moshe Feinstein and asked for a *heter—permission* to keep the store open just this once as it would be such a loss of money. Reb Moshe Feinstein said he would give him a blessing if he kept it closed. Walter told him he chose Shabbat. After he said that, the Rabbi said that in merit of his choice Hashem will bless him with one hundred times what he thinks he will lose from that day.

Friday, December 23rd the store was packed, wall to wall with customers. As Shabbat was getting closer Walter knew he had to close the store. No one was leaving the store, and by kicking them out he would lose so many customers. But he knew he could not betray Shabbat. He stood on the table and shouted, “Fire!” Everyone fled out of the store, and Walter locked up and hurried home for Shabbat. Motzei Shabbat, he reopened for a few hours, and the total earnings matched last year’s.

Still, he did not see the Rabbi’s blessing come true. A few weeks later he got a call from his landlord who owned a couple of stores on his block. After the riots most of these stores were still empty. She offered to sell him the entire building for \$120,000. He would pay \$20,000 up front and \$20,000 annually for five more years. Walter borrowed the money, repaired and renovated the stores. Within a year his building was worth \$3 million dollars. The \$26,000 he was worried about sacrificing he got back and much much more.

The merit of Shabbat protected and paid him back. We should never be afraid of growing because although it may seem like a sacrifice, in hindsight, we will see how much better we become, and we may be responsible for literally changing the course of history.

Reprinted from the Parashat Vayakhel-Pekudei 5786 email of Jack E. Rahmey based on the Torah teachings of Rabbi Amram Sananes.

The Mother's New Dress

Rabbi Yechiel Spero relates the story of an eleven-year-old boy named Yitzchak, in Europe. He was an exceptional student, and he went out of his way to make his parents proud of him, which they certainly were.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, most Jews did not have large bank accounts, if they had any at all. Those who could provide three meals a day were considered very fortunate.

Clothing was different altogether. New garments were purchased only after the old garments could no longer be fixed anymore. Yom Tov was usually the time to purchase a new garment however it was not a simple process. Purchasing a dress, for instance, meant picking out the fabric, going to the seamstress a number of times for fittings, and then waiting until the garment was completed.

Yitzchak was very excited that his mother was finally getting a new dress. It was supposed to be ready sometime before Pesach, and the whole family was looking forward. Their mother was so devoted to them, and now, she was finally getting something for herself. Since this was such a major event, she would not wear the new dress until Pesach.

Meanwhile, Yitzchak was really starting to excel in his learning. He had recently been placed in an advanced Shiur and had completed Mesechta Bava Kamma, which was a very significant accomplishment for a young boy. Not wanting to bring attention to himself, he mentioned this to his mother only as an aside, and his mother was filled with pride.

This is what mattered most in her life. When she expressed her enthusiasm about his accomplishment, Yitzchak simply said that there was so much more to be learned, that he had barely begun to scratch the surface.

The next evening, when Yitzchak returned home from Yeshivah, he was very surprised when he entered his house. The table was set with their finest tablecloth, the dishes that were usually reserved for special occasions were out, candles were lit, and his mother was wearing her new dress!

The young boy was shocked. He asked, "Why is the table set like this and the candles lit? And, why are you wearing your new dress? I thought you were waiting for Pesach?"

His mother smiled and said, "Yes, I was saving the dress for Yom Tov, but yesterday you told me that you finished Mesechta Bava Kamma. What bigger Yom Tov is there than that? That is what I live for, and nothing is more important to me than my child's Torah learning. If you are making a Siyum, then it is a Yom Tov!"

The young boy remembered these words his entire life, and he eventually grew up to become the distinguished Rosh Yeshivah of Yeshivas Chaim Berlin -- Rav Yitzchak Hutner, zt"l!



RavYitzchak Hutner, zt"l

Reprinted from the Parshas Vayikra 5786 email of Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg's Torah U'Tefilah.

Only the Comforting Words of the Torah

By Yoni Schwartz

At a young age, Rav Elazar Shach unfortunately lost his daughter. He was deeply pained, to the depths of his soul, and at times found it difficult to keep moving forward. No matter how hard he tried, day after day, he felt the pain creep back in; it felt as if his reality had been overturned. He decided that he simply

could not continue like this and that he should visit Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzensky, one of the gedolei hador at that time.

When he visited, he poured his heart out, expressing his deep pain and unbearable difficulties. Rav Chaim Ozer responded that he himself had lived a very difficult and painful life, losing many loved ones along the way.

He asked Rav Shach, “How do you think I managed to survive when I was in similar circumstances?” He then answered, “If Your Torah, Hashem, were not my delight, I would have been lost in my affliction.”

Rav Chaim Ozer continued, “Carrying the burdens of Klal Yisrael on my back would not have been possible if the Torah had not been there for me. You have nothing else to do but throw yourself into the comforting words of Torah, because only through it do we experience closeness to Hashem, the source of all strength and



Rav Elazar Shach

comfort.” Rav Shach did just that, and he ultimately found the strength to keep pushing forward, learning Torah, and eventually becoming one of the leaders of world Jewry.

Reprinted from the Parshas Vayikra 5786 email of Torah Sweets.

Ticket to Eternity

By Dvora Kiel

I was on a bus on my way home from Bnei Brak. One of the passengers approached the driver and said he found a cell phone on his seat. The driver said he thought it might belong to one of a group of workers who travel on his bus every morning to a factory in Bnei Brak. So, the driver decided to keep the phone and ask the workers the next morning if one of them was indeed the owner.

While the phone was in the driver's hand, it rang. Instinctively the driver answered and found himself speaking to the owner of the phone. The two discussed when and how the phone would reach its rightful owner. The entire conversation took no longer than half a minute.

An eagle-eyed traffic cop spotted the cell phone in the hand of the driver and came on his motorcycle in pursuit of the bus. All eyes were on the driver as he pulled over to the side of the road.



The policeman wanted to give the driver a ticket for speaking on the phone while driving. Naturally the driver attempted to explain that he never, ever spoke on the phone while driving, but this was an unusual, unavoidable happening. The policeman was adamant. At this point, all the passengers intervened. They thought it was grossly unfair to penalize the driver for a once-in-a-lifetime coincidence.

To everyone's utter astonishment, the policeman told the driver that if he would agree to put on *tefillin* from that day forward and promise to do so forevermore, he would tear up the ticket! The driver accepted the condition on the spot, and the policeman rode off.

The driver then told the passengers this curious story. He said that for some time he had wanted to return to the ways of his parents. He had been postponing it daily, not sure exactly how to begin. Now, here was a sure sign from Heaven. Besides, he said, this only shows the truth of the saying of the Sages that one *misvah* brings another in its wake.

I heard the rest of the story from a friend who was on the same bus later that day. He had been the last passenger off the bus, and the driver, who was not wearing a *kippah*, walked a few paces with my friend, saying he was in a hurry to get home to put on *tefillin* before sundown. When my friend evinced curiosity, the driver told him that he had promised someone that morning that he would begin putting on *tefillin* that day and did not want to break his word.

I would have found the story impossible to believe if I had not witnessed it myself. (When the time is Right)

Reprinted from the Parashat Ki Tisa 5786 email of Rabbi David Bibi's Shabbat Shalom from Cyberspace. Excerpted from the book – "When the Time is Right" by Dvora Kiel.

The Zichliner Rebbe and The Lodz Flour Merchant

By Yehuda Z. Klitnick

Reb Shmuel Aba Zichlinsky (1809-1889) son of Reb Zelig, was the founder of the Zichliner Chassidus, He was a miracle worker, and many followers would travel to him. He was the successor of his grandfather, Rabbi Ephraim Fishel of Strikov, the Strikover Rebbe.

Once, a group of Chassidim traveled from Lodz to Zichlin to be with the Zichliner Rebbe on Shabbos. They arrived Thursday night, and went to greet the Rebbe, to give Shalom, and that the Rebbe should bless them in their requests.

One of the Chassidim, R' Aharon Hirsch, ran a business selling flour, which he used to sell to all the bakers in Lodz, and that is how he was successful. But the tide began to turn as a Gentile who was a wholesale baker, placed orders with him several times for large quantities of flour, and he kept on postponing payment, giving excuses like "come tomorrow" or similar.

However, R' Aharon Hirsch had to pay for the flour he sold and didn't have enough money to buy more flour for the bakers. R' Aharon Hirsch poured his heart to the Rebbe and begged him that the Rebbe should intervene so that the Gentile would agree to pay his debt. The Rebbe after reading his Kvitel, wiggled it with his hand, telling R' Aharon Hirsch, "Go home right now, do not wait!"

The Rebbe accepted other Chasiddim's requests, and R' Aharon Hirsch understood that he had to leave. He stood outside in the courtyard, not understanding what the Rebbe wanted from him. The Gabbay saw that R' Aharon Hirsch was standing nervously, and asked him what happened. R' Aharon Hirsch replied that he desperately wanted to be with the Rebbe for Shabbos.

The Gabbay being clever, said that the Rebbe only wanted him to leave already, implying that it was better to leave because the Rebbe knows perhaps something had happened in his house that required him to be there, and maybe he would still be able to return for Shabbos!

R' Aharon Hirsch understood what the Gabbay said, and decided if he plans to return to Zichlin for Shabbos, he cannot go by train since it departs first early in the morning. Therefore, he looked for a horse-drawn carriage with healthy horses so he can travel quickly and arrive in Lodz during the night, and still be back in Zichlin on Shabbos.

He found a fine Gentile driver and got in. They traveled all night, and R' Aharon Hirsch slept deeply. He was awakened in middle of the night when his wagon crashed into an approaching wagon. R' Aharon Hirsch got out of the

wagon, and the Gentile wagon driver, began shouting at the other wagon, claiming he was negligent and owes him money and threatened to call the police.

Meanwhile, it was getting somewhat daylight, and R' Aharon Hirsch saw that the other wagon was actually the Gentile baker's wagon, which was loaded with furniture and utensils. R' Aharon Hirsch realized that the baker was trying to flee town, so he took a stand and told him, "If you do not pay your debt now, my wagon owner will beat you up badly!"

The baker was frightened, took out his money bag, and paid everything owed to R' Aharon Hirsch, including a small debt for another merchant. R' Aharon Hirsch

became very happy and told the wagon owner to check his wagon, and when he saw that no damage was done to his wagon, the Gentile was relieved! He moved his wagon aside and arranged for the baker to continue on his way.

R' Aharon Hirsch was thinking and already understood what the Rebbe saw and why he was told to go. Now it was clear to him that everything was guided by Heaven, that he had to leave then to meet the baker who was fleeing, or he could have forgotten about ever being paid his debt. He reflected and remembered what the Gabbay had said—that he might still return for Shabbos in Zichlin.

He received a renewed sense of confidence and told the wagon owner that they were returning to Zichlin, and he will pay him properly. The driver agreed, and they arrived early enough in Zichlin. R' Aharon Hirsch positioned himself among the crowd of Chassidim who just arrived for Shabbos, and gave the Rebbe shalom, but the Rebbe didn't react on what had transpired.

In the meantime, R' Aharon Hirsch recounted the story to the Chassidim who had originally traveled with him from Lodz. It was an uplifting Shabbos. After the Shabbos ended, R' Aharon Hirsch went in to the Rebbe and told him the entire story, recalling it vividly, and the Rebbe listened carefully. R' Aharon Hirsch thanked the Rebbe and gave him a fine donation. The Rebbe blessed him to be successful with good health.

Reprinted from the Parshas Vayikra 5786 email of Pardes Yehuda.

What You See is Not What You Get!

By Rabbi Yechiel Spero



Rabbi Yechiel Spero

It was the third day of Elul zman, the start of a new year, when the boys were still on their best behavior. The Gemaros were brand-new, the notebooks fresh and appealing. The attitude of "anything can happen this year if I put my best foot forward" permeated the atmosphere.

That morning, something caught the eye of R' Lieberman, the menahel. Motti, a fine boy, already in eleventh grade, walked down the halls wearing a yarmulke that was completely out of dress code. The boys were expected to wear a black velvet yarmulke. It was standard and no one ever veered from it. But this yarmulke was bright, unusual, and drew undue attention.

R' Lieberman was nonplussed. This wasn't Motti's style at all. He wondered if something had happened over the summer that caused Motti to start heading in a different direction. Should R' Lieberman say something? Or would it be better to wait and see? After some thought, he decided to hold back. If Motti wore the same yarmulke the next day, the menahel would address it then.

The following morning, Motti came in wearing his regular black velvet yarmulke. R' Lieberman went over to him, and, with a smile, said, "I like your yarmulke today," adding with a wink, "It's an improvement over yesterday's."

Motti grinned. "Rebbi, I want to tell you what happened."

Yesterday, one of the boys came to yeshivah by mistake wearing the yarmulke he uses for sleeping, his "shluff kappel." He was so embarrassed. Seeing how mortified he was, I told him, "Don't worry, we'll switch. You wear mine, and I'll wear yours." At first, he was hesitant, but when he saw I was sincere, he took me up on my offer and was extremely relieved. It was like the weight of the world was taken off of his shoulders. And I was happy to do it.

R' Lieberman felt a wave of admiration. Motti hadn't just done something harmless; he had done something beautiful. He had taken another boy's embarrassment onto his own head. Literally. How often do we think we know exactly what we're looking at, only to find out later that the truth is completely different!

We see a student yawning in class and assume he's bored, when really he was up late helping care for a younger sibling. We notice a neighbor avoiding eye contact and think he's unfriendly, when he's simply going through a hard time. We pass someone in shul still wearing weekday clothes on Friday night and judge, not realizing he's coming straight from the hospital. Life is full of moments where what seems wrong at first is actually something very right.

Reprinted from the Parshas Ki Sisa 5786 email of At the ArtScroll Shabbos Table. Excerpted from the new ArtScroll book – "The Story Begins..." by Rabbi Yechiel Spero.

The Bochor's "Unheard" Question

Every Shabbos in the home of the tzaddik, R' Chaim Kanievsky zt"l, was an event. People vied for the exclusive opportunity to sit at a Shabbos seudah with the Gadol Hador. It wasn't the food they came for. It was to bask in the presence of gadlus. The Rebbetzin a"h, would cook and host a large seudah for those fortunate enough to be invited.

Many family members were in attendance and even two bochorim per seudah were allowed in, usually after waiting months on a list, just to sit at the table with R' Chaim. One such bochor, who finally received his turn about ten years ago, described the experience with a sense of awe.

"After davening vasikin in R' Chaim's house," he said, "they spread a tablecloth, set out the food, and the seudah began. It felt unreal. R' Chaim was sitting right there, eating simply, quietly, with that same otherworldly focus you always hear about."



As the meal went on, each person at the table was given a chance to ask the Rav a question. The bochur waited, rehearsing his question over and over in his mind, trying to steady his nerves. He had been warned beforehand: “If you want R’ Chaim to hear you, you have to speak loudly. He cannot hear very well so whatever you do, speak loudly.”

Finally, there was a brief pause in the conversation - it was his time to shine! The perfect opening. The bochur gathered up his courage and focusing on R’ Chaim shining countenance, he practically shouted his question across the table. But R’ Chaim didn’t move. Didn’t turn. Didn’t blink. He didn’t react at all. Obviously, he hadn’t heard the question.

R’ Chaim was facing the opposite direction, completely absorbed in whatever sugya was flowing through his mind at that exact moment. The bochur felt his face burning. He tried again - louder. And louder. His voice echoed through the room, but it was as if the Rav was in a different world entirely. Later, the bochur would say, “It was like shouting into the side of a mountain. My voice was loud, but it couldn’t penetrate the walls of Torah surrounding him.”

He kept trying, each attempt more desperate than the last. Still nothing. R’ Chaim remained motionless, his mind clearly elsewhere, his thoughts wrapped in Torah. Someone sitting opposite the bochur noticed his distress. The man locked eyes on R’ Chaim and pointed directly at the bochur sitting there. Loudly, he said, “Rebbi, this bochur is asking something.”

And in that instant, everything changed. R' Chaim turned his head. His eyes locked onto the bochur with full, total attention, as if the entire world had just snapped into focus. The bochur, now mortified by how loudly he had been yelling, lowered his voice to a near whisper and nervously asked his question.

R' Chaim answered immediately, clearly, without hesitation, as though the question had been waiting for him all along. The whole exchange lasted no longer than a few seconds. The bochur later reflected on the moment with amazement. Until someone pointed him out, nothing in the world had been able to interrupt R' Chaim's concentration. His immersion in Torah was absolute.

But the moment he became aware that someone was speaking to him, he turned instantly, fully present, fully attentive. The scene remained etched in his memory: the quiet room, the long table, the simple Shabbos food, and R' Chaim sitting with a calm stillness, his mind soaring in the heights of Torah one moment and then, in the next, turning his focus to hear the question of a young student who had waited months for this moment.

Reprinted from the Parshas Vayikra 5786 email of Rabbi Dovid Hoffman's Torah Tavlin.

Never Seen

By Rabbi Akiva Rutenberg



Rabbi Akiva Rutenberg

A teenage girl, about twelve or thirteen years old, was growing up in a religious home. Like many teenagers, she began expressing herself differently than the rest of the family. She started dressing in ways that felt foreign to the household. Such exploration is not unusual during adolescence.

But her father found it deeply unsettling.

What began as discomfort slowly turned into tension. The father felt disrespected and worried about the direction she was heading. The daughter, on

the other hand, felt misunderstood and unheard. Each felt hurt in different ways, and the tension between them gradually intensified.

Over time the situation deteriorated and their conversations became minimal. They would say hello and goodbye, but the warmth was gone. Real communication had stopped.

At a certain point the father decided he wanted to interrupt the negative spiral. He thought to himself that perhaps he could send her a message that would soften the situation.

So, he wrote her a heartfelt email.

In that message he told her how deeply he loved her. He reassured her that nothing she did could ever change that love. He wrote that he believed this stage of life was temporary and that he trusted the person she was becoming. The tone of the email was gentle, patient, and full of care.

He sent it.

Remarkably, within a day or two, he began to notice a shift. She seemed more open, less defensive, and their interactions softened. That in turn made him more open as well, and the relationship slowly began to move in a different direction.

Within two weeks they were speaking more comfortably than they had even before the conflict began. And one Shabbos afternoon, about two and a half weeks later, she approached him and quietly asked, "Can I sit next to you at the table?" For the father, it was a deeply moving moment. Later, when they were alone, he turned to her. "I feel so grateful that things between us have improved," he said. "Tell me something honestly. What was it in my email that affected you so much? What did I write that really reached you?"

She looked at him with confusion. "What email?" He repeated the question. Almost amused, she said, "Dad... I don't read email." In that moment the father realized something profound.

She had never read the email. Nothing in her had changed.

He had changed.

Writing that email shifted something inside of him. It changed the way he saw her. He approached her with more patience, more understanding, more openness. And because he was looking at her differently, she began looking at him differently as well.

That, in many ways, is the secret of relationships.

Reprinted from the Parshat Ki Tisa 5786 edition of Torahanytimes Newsletter as compiled and edited by Elan Perchik.

The Payback for a Mitzvah

The following story was told in Torah Wellsprings. A community near Monsey was renovating their Bet Midrash. They decided, “If we're spending thousands of dollars to make our Bet Midrash more beautiful, we should also invest in checking and beautifying the Sefer Torah.” A sofer reviewed the Sefer Torah and discovered that it was passul—invalid. He said it would cost five thousand dollars to fix it.

The Rosh Hakahal refused to give so much money. “I'll pay you five hundred dollars, but not a penny more.” It didn't really make sense. He was paying tens of thousands of dollars to beautify the Bet Midrash, but for the most important part – the Sefer Torah – he wasn't ready to spend money. The sofer explained the immense work involved in fixing a Sefer Torah, to no avail. The Rosh Hakahal refused to pay more than five hundred dollars.

The sofer called up a colleague and requested help towards correcting the Sefer Torah. He said, “This community is using a passul Sefer Torah, and if we don't fix it, they will continue using it. Let's work together to make the Torah kosher. We will do it just for the mitzvah.” His friend agreed.

On the day they completed fixing the Sefer Torah, satisfied that they were able to do this mitzvah, they began their trek to Monsey. On the way there, they needed to make a stop to use the restroom. The only restroom in the area was in a Christian cemetery, so they went there.

The guard stationed at the entrance asked for their names, addresses, and telephone numbers. The men gave the information and went inside. A few weeks later, they received a phone call from a lawyer. At first, they were afraid that they were being accused of some crime, but the lawyer was telling them that they would each receive \$62,000. The day they were in the cemetery, a funeral of a wealthy person was taking place. This wealthy man didn't have any children, so he stipulated in his will that his money should be distributed among those who attended his funeral. Being that they had registered with the guard at the entrance, they were endowed with this large sum of money.

These men made a sacrifice to help a congregation have a kosher Sefer Torah, and Hashem paid them for their dedication. The word נתן – give is a

palindrome; it reads the same way forward and backwards, because when you give, it comes back to you.

Reprinted from the Parashat Terumah 5786 email of Jack E. Rahmey based on the Torah teachings of Rabbi Amram Sananes.