

SICHA STORY

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



Likkutei Sichos, Volume 15

Vayechi, Sicha 3 (First Sicha of the week)

- Rabbi Yossi Nemes, Metairie, Louisiana

In this Sicha, the Rebbe differentiates between Reuven and Yehuda. Reuven's personal spiritual self-refinement and his intensity of Teshuva when he felt he made a mistake were greater than Yehuda's. Nevertheless, if we consider the results of their actions, in how they affected others, Yehuda's had much more positive outcomes for those around him. For example, what Yehuda said, directly saved the life of Yosef and indirectly the whole world. When he acknowledged ownership of the objects it directly saved Tamar's life. Therefore, the monarchy was taken from Reuven and given to Yehuda. The mark of a leader is how he helps and positively affects other people, more so than his own self-refinement.

We bring here a well-known story with the Alter Rebbe directly related to this theme. In addition, we have chosen 2 stories of people being helped by the Rebbe, out of thousands. One, where the Rebbe said something which was inexplicable and yet turned out later to be a great Bracha, and the other where the person didn't even realize the Rebbe was helping him, as he thought he was helping the Rebbe's work!

1. The poor people are satiated B'emes!

A wealthy chassid, who generously fed the poor of his town, once came to the Alter Rebbe, founder of Chabad, and complained about the deep satisfaction he received from his good deeds. "I feel terrible that the good I do is driven by selfish intent. I am giving Tzedaka and helping others because of how it makes me feel, not because I truly care about others. Should I put an end to my hypocrisy?" The Rebbe replied in his signature singsong: "You might be insincere in your giving, but the poor people you feed

are very sincerely satiated." In the world of the recipient and in our world of action in general, intentions are not what count most.

2. Inexplicable words turn into blessings X4

Rabbi Levitansky A"H, shliach of S. Monica related: Summer 5719 (1959) was fast approaching. I was going to drive to Chicago from New York, together with my parents and brother, peace be with them. Before leaving, I merited meeting the Rebbe in yechidus, private audience, to receive a blessing for my birthday.

The Rebbe spoke for about fifteen to twenty seconds. Suddenly he said: "Der Eybershter zoll helfen es zoll zein a gezunter zummer. Hashem should help that it be a healthy summer."

The Rebbe continued to speak about other matters. A minute later, he repeated: "Der Eybershter zoll helfen es zoll zein a gezunter zummer." Hashem should help that it be a healthy summer."

This happened a third time: the Rebbe "interrupted" the conversation with the above words. Afterwards, he continued to speak.

Suddenly he intoned: " Der Eybershter zoll helfen es zoll zein a gezunter zummer. Hashem should help that it will be a healthy summer."

He then gave me four dollars for the shlichus mitzvah for my parents, my brother, and myself. (Sending off a "messenger" with money for charity helps to ensure a safe trip.)

We got into the car and drove off. On our way from Cleveland to Chicago, a sudden storm erupted. Torrents of rain flooded over the highways, pounding our vehicle, and hindering visibility.

My father was normally an experienced driver. A traveling salesman, he drove 15-20,000 miles a year without ever having an accident. But here – wham! The car skidded all over the turnpike, hurled into a ditch, then skidded another 150 feet. It slammed against a boulder, flew up in the air like a helicopter, and with a thud hit the pavement on the turnpike facing the wrong direction.

Then the rain stopped. We crawled out of the car, which was totally smashed. Miracle of miracles! All four of us survived without a scratch.

I then understood the Rebbe's words in the yechidus – four times he repeated himself for the four of us in the car, with his conclusion – it will be a healthy summer.

When we finally arrived in Chicago, I wrote to the Rebbe about this incident, and I also wrote about other things. Below is a translation of the part of the Rebbe's response that dealt with this incident:

BH. 7 Tammuz 5719, Brooklyn, NY

Greeting and Blessing! I was happy to receive your letter that the trip went through peacefully, notwithstanding the incident. Hashem should help, that from now on we should not have to resort to such types of miracles, and we should utilize the brachos of Hashem in apparent and revealed good....

3. "Yitzchak Nemes needs help with Parnosso!"

My father, Mr. Yitzchak Nemes A"H, was a dealer of rare stamps. In the late 1970's and early 1980's, a time that my father's Parnosso was slow, I remember him, for months on end, soaking overnight the top right corner of envelopes that had come from the Rebbe's office and had the postage stamps on them. In the morning he was able to pull off the stamps and set them on pages of newspapers.

When I asked him what he was doing, he told me that Rabbi Chadakov asked him to remove the stamps from the envelopes, as my father was able to get some money for each used stamp. He was splitting with Merkaz whatever money he could get for it and shared what a privilege it was to be able to help Merkaz, in this small way.

About ten years ago, a relative called me all excited. He had just seen the full video interview of Rabbi Binyomin Klein and one of the stories Rabbi Klein told is that he once walked into the Rebbe's office and saw the Rebbe standing and removing the top right corners of the envelopes of the many letters he received and placing them in a box. Rabbi Klein did not say anything but was wondering why the Rebbe, who was so pressed for time, would be doing this. The Rebbe looked up at Rabbi Klein and saw that he was perplexed and said, "Yitzchak Nemes needs help with Parnosso and this helps him!"
