

The Torah Any Times

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Rabbi Paysach Krohn

A Shliach Tzibbur

Rav Yisroel Zev Gustman zt"l was a brilliant Torah giant of the previous generation, so much so that he was appointed by Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinski zt"l—the gadol hador in Vilna in the early 1900s—as a dayan (judge) in his early twenties.

But unfortunately, Rav Gustman suffered terrible times in Vilna. He did indeed survive the Holocaust with his wife and daughter, but he was not without his sorrows.

After Rav Gustman came to America and then later to Israel and established in both countries the yeshiva Netzach Yisrael, the following took place.

Every day he would give a shiur (lecture) specifically to students, though each Thursday he gave a shiur which was open to the public. The audience was comprised of an eclectic bunch, including mathematicians, scientists, professors and judges. One of the attendees was a well-known figure, Professor Robert Aumann, a Nobel Prize winner in Economics in 2005. He was very fond of Rav Gustman, and Rav Gustman was equally fond of him as well.

Tragically, in June 1982, Israel was involved in a war with Lebanon. Professor Aumann had a son, Shlomo, who was a lecturer in a yeshiva in Jerusalem. Shlomo himself had a young child, and his wife was expecting their second. During that war, Shlomo was called up to

serve in the army and lost his life. He never had the opportunity to see the birth of his second child—a son who was born soon thereafter.

Of course, it was heartbreaking. Rav Gustman, hearing this news, had his entire yeshiva attend the funeral of Shlomo, who was buried in a cemetery reserved for Israeli soldiers. After the funeral, Rav Gustman headed to the area where other Jewish soldiers were buried and broke down himself in tears. “Every one of them is holy,” he remarked.

Professor Aumann then returned to his home to begin sitting shiva. But within mere hours, Rav Gustman showed up. Noticing this, Professor Aumann asked why Rav Gustman hadn't yet returned to his students at the yeshiva. He had already made the trip to attend the funeral; wouldn't it make more sense for him to return to pay a shiva call a different day?

“No,” replied Rav Gustman. “I want to be here. I want to sit next to you.” Rav Gustman then retold a story that had transpired years before.

“When the Germans entered Vilna, they caught me one day holding my son. He was my little boy, named Meir. But, with complete disregard, the Germans grabbed him out of my hands and shot him and killed him right before my eyes.

“We were so hungry and so starving that I needed to take my son's shoes and barter them for food. But to tell you the truth, I could never eat that food because I knew I had ex-

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changed my child's shoes for it.

"I must tell you, I never had the opportunity to sit shiva for Meir. So I would like to sit shiva now, here, with you.

"My son is in the highest places in Heaven right now. He died only because he was a Jew, and he is a kadosh, just as are all other Jews whose lives were snuffed out because they were Jewish.

"But your son died defending Jewish people, and in that sense, he is like a shliach tzibbur (leader of the congregation), and he is on a different level. Your son represented the Jewish nation and protected and defended them with his very life. My son was never able to do that, but your son did. And that makes your son very, very special."

Professor Aumann looked up at

Rav Gustman with tears in his eyes. "Rebbe, I never thought that I could be comforted for the loss of my child. But you comforted me."

Every single Jewish soldier is a shliach tzibbur because he or she is protecting and defending the Jewish nation.

May Hashem, measure for measure, protect them all.

Rabbi Benzion Klatzko

Of Unity and Extra Tables

Years ago, one of my children was getting married in Monsey, and so my wife and I, who do our utmost in helping facilitate shidduchim within the Jewish community, came up with an idea. We thought of inviting shadchanim from all around the Tri-state area to the wedding, along with all singles who were looking to get married. Once there, the singles would have the opportunity of meeting a handful of shadchanim at one time. Hopefully, we thought, with many more eyes and ears present in the same room, an increased number of shidduch suggestions would be made.

We moved forward with the idea and put out the word. Anyone who wanted to come to the wedding was invited. They would be our honored guest. They could meet the shadchanim, and then stay for dinner and dancing. The shadchanim were enthusiastic about the plan, but we had no idea if the singles would actually come and meet with them.

The wedding hall gave us a separate room where the shadchanim and singles could meet. A long and large table was set up where the shadchanim were seated and could easily speak with each of the singles, one by one. At first, a handful of sin-

gles came. But then another group of singles came, and then another, and then another, so much so that a line began to form that went out the door. Our hope was that such a small endeavor undertaken for the wedding of our own son would bring about the building of other future Jewish homes and families.

Following the meeting of the shadchanim and singles, they made their way into the hall to their designated tables and were served a portion of food. My wife and I couldn't anticipate exactly how many singles would actually stay for the meal, so we had planned for a limited number of tables to be set aside. But the groups of singles, one after the next, continued to make their way inside and find a seat. Soon enough, we had reached the expected limit. At that point, the caterer came over.

"Rabbi Klatzko," he said, "you know that you have an entire additional table of singles waiting for their dinner, but that was not planned for. It'll be quite expensive." "Look," I said, responding, "I told them to come. They are our guests. Please set up the table and we'll pay for it."

A few minutes later, though, the caterer was back at my side. "Rabbi Klatzko, we need another table."

"Go for it," I said. This happened yet a third time. At this point, I began doing a mental calculation. Per plate, per table... this wedding was going to double in cost. But our intention had been l'shem shamayim, and we had wanted to create a genuine sense of unity and community, so I went ahead with it all.

The wedding eventually wound down, and we said our goodbyes to family and friends. The caterer then came to sit down with me and my wife to settle the bill. "Aside from the reserved tables and that anticipated expense, you had several additional tables." The bill was a lot, to say the least. But the caterer wasn't done.

"But you don't have to pay it," he said. I didn't understand. "There was someone at the wedding, who wanted to remain anonymous, and when he saw what you had arranged, he was so moved by the love being shown for other Jews that he came over to me and asked, 'How much are these extra tables?' He then handed me a check and covered the entire bill. So Rabbi Klatzko, you earned the mitzvah of facilitating Jewish unity and sharing in the building of future Jewish families, but Klal Yisrael also joined you in this mitzvah."

This is who we are, and this is why no enemy can defeat Klal Yis-

rael. When we are united and express love to one another, we are

stronger together and pave the way for Mashiach.

Mr. Charlie Harary

A Few Dollars Reaching Heaven

A friend of mine was working on collecting army gear for Jewish soldiers. Many of our soldiers didn't have as much equipment as they needed, and when word got out that such an endeavor could support the army, my friend began shouldering the responsibility of seeing it through as best as he could.

One Friday afternoon, he was sitting at his home office, coordinating the various components that would land more gear in the hands of our Jewish brothers and sisters on the front lines. As this was going on, a thought crossed his mind about his nine-year-old son. Most Friday afternoons, he would get together with his friends and play for a bit. And usually, at some point of their get-together, they would come knocking on his office door and say hello. But that afternoon, it seemed quieter than usual. His son wasn't out and about like he usually was. Where was he though?

Looking around, he found him. He was trudging out to the backyard, then into the house, then out onto the front lawn. But it didn't end there. Back he went into the house to the refrigerator, grabbing some sodas and ice teas (some of which seemed like he made) and then back out front. Scotch tape followed, along with some markers and paper. Some noise accompa-

nied the process, all to the father's remaining uncertainty of what exactly was going on.

And then it came into plain sight. His son had lined up sodas and ice teas for sale right in front of the house. But why? And would anything come of it?

A few minutes later, a car pulled up to the front, and a guy rolled down the window and stuck his hand out. The boy ran around to the passenger window and grabbed what was a five-dollar bill in exchange for some drinks. "Keep the change," said the driver.

Minutes later, another window came rolling down. "Hey, what are you doing?" "I'm raising money for Israel." "What?" came the surprised reply. "How much for a drink?" "Fifty cents." "Here's a ten—keep the change." Another neighbor soon walked by. "What are you doing?" "I'm raising money for Israel." A minute later, the neighbor came out of his house with a box of cookies. "Raise these too," he said.

The father, looking out at his son and all his sodas and box of cookies, watched as kid after kid and car after car went by. After a couple of hours, the boy bid his friends good-bye and headed inside.

And then came the knock at his office door. "Daddy, I hear you're raising money for Israel. Here's \$78.50. Can you send it to them as well from me?"

When I first heard this, I was moved beyond words.

In many ways, this story is representative of how our relationship is with Hashem. We would make a mistake to think that we do chesed because Hashem needs it. Hashem doesn't need it; He can do whatever He wants. If He wants blessing, success and abundance to be showered upon the Jewish nation, it's not difficult for Him. It's only a second away until He grants it to us. And equally so, we are the little nine-year-old boy relative to Hashem.

I can almost imagine the nachas (pleasure) Hashem gets when we go out of our way to raise money and help our Jewish brothers and sisters. To Hashem, Who can do anything, any human contribution is akin to a couple of cents. But when we help each other and do for one another, despite Hashem having all the means and resources to do anything, it still gives Him unbelievable nachas. You can just imagine how the father felt seeing his nine-year-old son commit and dedicate himself to helping our brothers and sisters. Hashem feels much the same way.

When we do anything, even raising just a few dollars for another Jew, it echoes in the Heavens and brings true pride and delight to our Father in Heaven.

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Rabbi Joey Haber

In Honor of Your Son

One Chabad rabbi tragically lost his son on October 7th. The rabbi was living in America, and his son was living in Israel. After receiving the news, he booked a flight in an attempt to arrive in time for his son's funeral.

Seated on an EL AL flight, he began wondering what he could do in memory of his son. He was sure that something positive could be done over the course of the next hours. And so, he began.

Turning to the man seated next to him, he broached the question. "Would you like to put on a pair of tefillin?" "No, I'm sorry," responded the man, "I don't really do that." Not being deterred, the rabbi proceeded to ask the same question to the man seated just one seat farther. "Would you like to put on a pair of tefillin?" "No, it's not my thing," came the similar sounding reply. Still determined, the rabbi asked a third person. "Could you put on tefillin in honor of my son who just passed away? It will be an elevation for his soul." The man was taken aback. "Yeah, of course. It would be my honor to do so." It didn't end there though. The man sitting one seat closer chimed in. "In memory

of your son? I'll do it too." The next man sitting even a seat closer spoke up as well. "In honor of your son? Yeah, I'll do it too."

The rabbi proceeded to help these three men put on tefillin, all the while remaining oblivious to what was happening right behind him. Only when he lifted his head and turned around did he see it.

A full line had formed along the entire aisle. Every man on the plane wanted to put on tefillin in memory of his son.

After every single man had finished, the pilot told the co-pilot, "Do me a favor. You take over the plane... I want to put the tefillin on too."

Am Yisrael is incredible. During this past month, we have seen what we look like when we are inspired to grow. All around the world, people are putting tefillin on for the first time in their life. People too are suddenly wearing tzitzit, though they normally don't. Hundreds of thousands of pairs of tzitzit have also been delivered to Israel.

One young man who works in a pizza shop in Toronto wanted to do something. He took all the money he had made—\$2100—and spent it all on tzitzit. He then told any customer

who entered the store, "If you've never worn tzitzit before, you can have a pair for free." And in fact, nearly eighty students from the University of Toronto visited this pizza store and took a pair of tzitzit for themselves.

The Torah tells us that Hashem blessed Avraham Avinu with "everything" (Bereishis 24:1). What does 'everything' mean? Rashi explains that he was blessed with a son (Yitzchak). How can one child be everything?

Because through that one child the entire Jewish nation would come into existence. And the Jewish nation is everything. We are kind, compassionate, self-effacing, generous, creative, smart, tenacious, focused. Out of that one son, Yitzchak Avinu, a nation would come to be born which possesses every possible trait and trace of goodness.

The question for us all is therefore this: what have we personally done to ensure that we are growing and uniting with other Jews around the world?

With that answer, we can light up the world and change it. Forever.

Rabbi Label Lam

From the Heart

I was thumbing through an old notebook and I had written there: "The outreach is only as effective as the inreach." And so it goes with people. Children and adults can detect truth and sin-

cerity. It applies equally to prayer, which is compared to a bow and arrow. The closer we draw the string to our heart, the stronger and farther the arrow flies. Words which emanate from the heart en-

ter the heart. And so we hope that the prayers that are launched from the depth of our heart reach the heart of Heaven and make a world of a difference.

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Bring Them Home!

Names of Hostages in Gaza

(Updated: 10 Kislev)

עמית דוד בן לימור - נעד עמית אסתר חיה בת אילה אלן (בוסקילה) עמרי בן אסתר ורה (מירן) ענבר בת יפעת (הימן) עפרה בת פנינה (קידר) עפרי בת הגר (ברודץ) פרנדו סימון בן טניה (מרמן) צחי בן דבורה (עידן) קית' שמואל בן גלדיס (סילג) קרין בת אירינה (ארייב) קלרה רוסה בת טניה (מרמן) קרינה בת סוניה (אנגל ברט) קרן בת רות (מונדר) רביד אריה בן ירדנה (כץ) רום בן תמר (ברסלבסקי) רומי בת מירב (גונן) רון בן חנה (בנימין) - נעד רון בן מעין (שרמן) רון בן מרינה (קריבוי) רוני טומי בן רוזמרי (אנגל) רות בת חווה (מונדר) רז בת מיכל (בן עמי) רז בת דורון (אשר) רימון בת אביטל (בוכשטב) רן בן טלי (גואילי) - נעד רעיה בת ורדה (רותם) שגב בן גלית (כלפון) שגיא בן נעמית (דקל חן) שושן בת רנה (הרן) שירי בת מרגיט (ביבס) שירי בת תמר (וייס) שלומי בן רוזיטה (זיו) שלמה בן מרסיל (מנצור) שני בת תמר (גורן) שרון בת רבקה (אלוני קוניו) שרון בת רות (אביגדור) תומר יעקב בן ענת (אחימס) תמיר בן חירות (נמרודי) תמיר בן יעל (אדר)	יוסף חיים בן מרים (אוחנה) יורם בן בלה (מצגר) יונת בן איריס (חיים) ילנה בת אירינה (טרופנוב) יפה בת טובה (אדר) יצחק בן אנטה (אלגרט) יצחק בן גילה (גלרנטר) ירדן בן פנינה (ביבס) ירדן בת אורלי (רומן גת) כפיר בן שירי (ביבס) כרמל בת כנרת (גת) לואיס נורבטו בן נורה (הר) ליאור בן מיכל (רודאיף) ליאם בן יונת (אור) ליאת בת חיה (בינין אצילי) לירי בת שירה (אלבג) מורן סטלה בת רימונה (ינאי) מייאה בת גבריאלה רחל (ליימברג) מיה בת יהודית (גורן) מיה בת מירית (רגב) מייח בת קרן (שם) מיקה בת קרינה (אנגל) מירב בת רחל (טל) מישל בן סולמירה (ניסנבאום) - נעד מקסים בן טלה (הרקין) - נעד מרגלית ברטה בת ליטה (מוזס) מתן בן ענת (אנגרסט) מתן בן ירדנה (צנגאוקר) נדב בן חנה (פופולול) נוגה בת שירי (וייס) נועה בת ליאורה (ארגמני) נילי בת דפנה (מרגלית) ניק בן קטיה (בייזר) נמרוד בן ויקי (כהן) נעם בן יונת (אור) נועם בת שרון (אביגדור) נעמה בת איילת (לוי) סהר בת הדס (קלדרון) ספיר בת זיוה (כהן) עדה בת אסתר (שגיא) עדי בת שושן (שוהם) עדינה בת אידה (משה) עדן בת אורין (זכריה) עדן בת שירית (ירושלמי) - נעד עודד בן בלהה (ליפשיץ) עומר בן ניבה (ונקרט) עומר בן שלי (שם טוב) עומר מקסים בן אורנה אסתר (נאוטרה) עידו בן כוכבה (קלדרון) עידן בן יעל (אלכסנדר) - נעד עידן בן דלית (שתיי) - נעד עמלמה בת יונת (אור) עמירם בן שרה (קופר) עמית בת מירה (סוסנה) עמית בן טל (שני)	אמה בת שרון (קוניו) אמילי בת נרקיס (הנד) אמיליה בת דניאל (אלוני) אנדריי בן יבגניה (קוזלוב) ארבל בת יעל (יהוד) ארו בן הדס (קלדרון) אריאל בן סילביה מוניקה (קוניו) אריאל בן שירי (ביבס) בר אברהם בן גיולה (קופרשטיין) גבריאלה רחל בת טניה (ליימברג) גד בן שרה (חגי) גד משה בן שרה (מוזס) גיאה בן מירב (גלבוע דלאל) גיאה בן דוריס (אילוה) גל בן חן (גולדשטיין) גלי בת ראומה (טרשצ'ינסקי) גלי בן תמר (ברמן) דוד בן סילביה מוניקה (קוניו) דולב בן יעל (יהוד) דורון בת סימונה (שטיינברכר) דורון בת שרה (כץ אשר) דיצה בת לאה (היימן) דניאלה בת אורלי (גלבוע) דניאל בת רבקה (אלוני) דפנה בת מעין (אליקים) דרור בן דורית (אור) דרור בן שרה (קפלון) הגר בת יעל עטרה (לוטס ברודץ) הילה בת רעיה (שושני רותם) הירש בן רחל (גולדברג פולין) זיו בן תמר (ברמן) זלמן אריה בן פנינה (זלמנוביץ) חיים בן נחמה (פרי) חן בת שלומית (אלמוג גולדשטיין) חנה בת גייסי (פרי) חנה בת רבקה (קציר) חן חנן בן ורד (יבלונקה) - נעד טל בן ניצה (שוהם) קורנגולד) טל בן אסתר (חיימי) טל בן חן (גולדשטיין) יאיר בן רות אדית (הורן) יאיר בן פלור (יעקב) יגב בן אסתר (בוכשטב) יגיל בן רננה (יעקב) יהודית בת ... (ויינשטיין) יהל גני בת עדי (שוהם) יובל בן הגר (ברודץ) יובל בת קרינה (אנגל) יולי בת שרון (קוניו) יונתן מרדכי בן איילת (סמרנו) יוסף בן חנה (שרעבי)	אביב בן תלמה (אצילי) אביב בת דורון (אשר) אביגיל בת סמדר (עידן) אבינתן בן דיצה תרצה (אור) אביתר בן גליה (דוד) אברהם גלעד בן ליאת (מונדר) אגם בת מירב (ברגר) אגם בת חן (גולדשטיין) אדר בת דניאלה (בוזגלו) - נעד אדריאן אביבה בת גיוליט (סילג) אוהד בן אסתר (בן עמי) אוהד בן אסתר (יהלומי) אוהד בן קרן (מונדר זכרי) אופליה אדית בת רוסיטה (רויטמן) אופיר בן רחל (צרפתי) אופיר בן שרון (אנגיל) אור בן טלי (לוי) אור בן רננה (יעקב) אורי בן עיב (דנינו) אוריאל בן נעמי (ברוד) אוריה בן הגר (ברודץ) אחיה נווה בן עדי (שוהם) אילן שלמה בן מרים (וייס) אילנה בת מרים (גריצ'ביסקי) אירינה בת ... (טטי) אייתי בן אורית (סבירסקי) אייתי בן חגית (חן) אייתי בן מירית (רגב) אייתן בן סול (לוי) - נעד אייתן בן רות אדית (הורן) אייתן בן בת שבע (יהלומי) אייתן אברהם בן אפרת (מור) אלה בת מעין (אליקים) אלון בן דקלה (לולו שמריו) אלון בן עידית (אהל) אליה בן אודל (טולדנו) - נעד אליה בן סיגי (כהן) אליהו בן חנה (שרעבי) אליהו יעקב בן הדסה עדי - נעד אליקים שלמה בן אבישג (ליבמן) אלכס בן אוקסנה (לובנוב) אלכסנדר ששה בן ילנה (טרופנוב) אלכסנדר בן נינה (דנציג) אלמה בת לאה (אברהם) אלמוג בן אורית (מאיר גיאן) אלמוג בן נירה (סרוסי) אלעד בן חנה (קציר) אלקנה בן רוחמה (בוחבוט)
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