

# תשפ"ד · Bnos 5784

## Parshas

Shemini

אָחינוּן כָּל בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנְּתוּנִים בְּצַרָּה וּבִשְׂבִיָּה הָעוֹמְדִים בֵּין בָּיִם וּבֵין בִּיבְשָׁה הַמְּקוּם יָרַחם עֲלֵיהֶם יְיֻצִיאֵם מִצַּרָּה לְרוּחָה וּמֵאֲפֵלָה לְאוֹרָה וּמִשְׁעֶבֶד לְגֵאֲלָה הַשְּׁתָּא בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזֶמֶן קָרִיב וְנֹאמַר אָמוּן:



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# Story

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# THE TWO TAILORS

Reb Chaim Meir, the old man who used to tend to the Ohel – the holy resting place of the Alter Rebbe -- near the small Russian town of Haditch, stood outside and waited. From within, Reb Chaim Meir could hear heart-rending sobs. He was not surprised. Visitors often burst into tears when they came to the graveside of the saintly Alter Rebbe. In that silent spot they would have the feeling of being overwhelmingly alone with the Rebbe himself. The two young men who had asked to go into the holy resting place today seemed to be praying with unusually heartfelt tones. When at last they came out, Reb Chaim Meir felt he had to say a few words. “Excuse me,” he began, clearing his throat, “if I am not mistaken, you have not been here before, have you?” “No,” they replied. “This is our first time. “You do not have the appearance of followers of the Alter Rebbe either,” said Reb Chaim Meir. “No, we are not,” they said. “May I be so bold as to ask what then has brought you to this spot?” the old man inquired. “You ask why we are here,” began one of the men. “We came to pray for our souls, and to express our gratitude to the Rebbe for saving our lives!” “The Rebbe saved your lives! How could that be?” exclaimed Reb Chaim Meir. “You are both young men. Surely you never even met the Rebbe when he was alive.” “That is correct. We never met the Rebbe, but he saved our lives nonetheless.” Intrigued, Reb Chaim Meir pressed them to reveal more of their story, and they told the following tale: They were tailors. As was common in those days, they had to travel from town to town, stopping in all the villages to mend the peasants’ clothing for a few coins. Occasionally, if they were lucky, a local squire might hire them to do some larger job. It was a difficult and lonely way of life. Often they found themselves in small villages where there were no other Jews, or even a shul where they could pray, or a Jewish inn where they could get kosher food. At first they tried hard to keep their Jewish ways, but since they were living so much with the Russian peasants, it was very difficult. How were they to keep Shabbos? Kosher wine, challos, gefilte fish, kosher meat, were unobtainable. And during the week things were no better. The difficulties of living on the road were just too much for the two tailors. Soon they stopped saying their regular prayers, and gradually the observance of Mitzvos slipped out of their regular behavior. They worked hard at their trade and saved their pennies, until they had earned a large sum of money. At last, after years of traveling, they decided to return to their families and head for home. On their way, they passed through the small village of Piena. They did not know that in this village the Alter Rebbe, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liady, had passed away many years before, during Napoleon’s invasion of Russia. Hungry and tired, the tailors stopped at a large house that seemed like an inn, and asked if they could get food and lodging for the night. The owner of the house, a rough-looking Russian peasant, greeted them with a friendly smile but said that he could see they were Jewish and could only offer them a place to stay, but he did not have the Jewish food they would require. “Don’t worry about that,” the tailors replied. “We’ve been on the road so long we hardly know what Jewish food is any more. We’ll eat whatever you serve up. If it’s good enough for you, it’s surely good enough for us,” they joked. Then, patting their money pouch, they added, “We’ll pay whatever you ask.” “If that’s the way you feel,” said the peasant, showing them in, “I have a place for you. You’ll pay! Yes you’ll pay! Follow me. I’ll show you a room.”

He led them up a solid wooden staircase and down the corridor to a room at the back of the house. "You can arrange your things in here," said the host. "I'll be back in a minute." The tailors went in, dropped their few bags on the floor and sat down on the beds to await the return of their host.

Suddenly the door burst open. There stood their host with two young men at his side. The peasant had a large hatchet in his hands, and the two others held long sharp knives and a rope. "Grab them!" shouted the host, with a murderous look. Before the tailors could move from their beds, the thugs seized their arms and firmly tied them up. Then they thoroughly went through their clothes and bags, removing whatever valuables they found.

The two tailors looked on in horror, realizing they had fallen into the hands of robbers. Helplessly they watched as the men took every penny the tailors had earned during years of hard work. "Please have mercy on us," they pleaded. "Mercy!" growled the host. "For what? So you should run to the police? Do you think I'm crazy?"

"Please, we beg you," the tailors cried. "We have wives, children. They haven't seen us in years. We were just going home ..."

"Say your prayers," the peasant growled. "How do you think I make my living? It's pigeons like you that feather my bed. You're just lucky that I'm busy right now, or me and my boys would kill you on the spot." Then he went over to the men and grabbed the ropes that held them. "Did you tie them secure, boys? Good. We'll deal with them in the morning! Ha, ha! No use your shouting," he added.

"No one will hear you anyway!" The host and his sons left the room gruffly, bolting the door from the outside. The men twisted this way and that, but the more they tried to wriggle free, the more the harsh ropes cut into their flesh. Outside the door, they could hear the man bark, "We'll come back in the morning to finish them off!" The two men lay there in the darkness and wept. What were they to do? There was no way out. They were weak and exhausted, and in a few more hours they would surely be killed. No one knew where they were. No one would ever let their families know. How wretched, how futile! What

a horrible way to end up life. Robbed and murdered, in an obscure village where no one would ever know.

It grew colder as the night hours passed. From time to time the tailors heard the floorboards creaking, as heavy footsteps went back and forth. In terror, they dared not imagine what would happen next.

With broken hearts, they began to remember how they had first set out together, hoping to make a livelihood on the road. How innocent they had been. If only they had been more careful about staying in Jewish areas and keeping to Jewish ways, they never would have gotten into such a mess. If all they had done was just to keep kosher, they would have been saved! Surely, then, they never would have entered into this death-trap. With bitter regret, they thought back over how they had forsaken their Yiddishkeit, and how it had led them to this dreadful end.

"Please, Hashem," they cried out. "Save us somehow! We will never neglect Your commandments again! Please! ...."

The rooster crowed. In the window, the darkness gave way to gray morning light. Again they heard the floorboards creak as heavy footsteps approached the door. The tailors squirmed against their bonds. They heard the peasant draw the bolt. Then the door opened. Their blood froze in terror.

“Shema Yisroel Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad” they cried with all their might.

The peasant took a step back astonished. “Looks like we did a good job, boys,” he said with a strange smile.

Then he pointed to the tailors and said, “Untie them.” “Gentlemen, I hope you forgive me. You are free to go home now.” Then the host reached

inside his jacket. “Here is your money back.” The tailors stared in disbelief. What miracle had happened? Why had that brute changed his mind? Had Hashem truly listened to their prayers?

“You can’t believe it, eh?” the peasant chuckled. “Well, I’m not such a murderer as you think.

It’s the Rabbi you’ve got to thank.”

The tailors opened their eyes even wider. “What Rabbi?” they thought.

“A good many years ago he stayed here,” the peasant continued. “It was bitter cold, in the middle of the winter. I’ll always remember ... that same cold finished off Napoleon. But then, Napoleon was still on the march, heading for Moscow. He made it too. Everyone was running away so Napoleon wouldn’t get them. That’s how the Rabbi and his family got here. They had come hundreds of miles, trying to keep out of harm’s way.

“We’d heard about them, of course, and how the Rabbi had helped so much in the fight against Napoleon. I took them in. I could see how tired they were. And the Rabbi, he was sick. I said they could stay as long as they wished. They did too. A little over two weeks ... and then he died.

“I’ll never forget it. He looked like a prophet of G-d straight out of the Bible. He was a prophet too. He said exactly how the war would go. How Napoleon would keep on till he got to Moscow. How it would be like no one could ever conquer him but, then, how he would suffer a miserable defeat.

“It was all true too, exactly like he said. “And now I see what a prophet he really was. One day, just before he died, he called me in and thanked me for my hospitality. Then he said that he had one more favor to ask. He said that some day two Jews would come and ask if they could stay here. He said I should give them a fright that would change their lives.

“How will I know who they are?” I asked

“You’ll know when they tell you they don’t care if they eat Jewish food or not. They are the ones.’

“I forgot about it -- it was so many years ago – until you two showed up. Your words brought the whole thing back. I knew right away that you were the ones the Rabbi had meant. Imagine him thinking of you all those years ago!

“So you see, I never meant to harm you, just to give you a scare, like the Rabbi said. I guess he really saved your life any way you look at it.

“If you want to pay him a visit, you should go to Haditch,” the peasant concluded. “That’s where they took him after he died.”

“And so we came here to Haditch,” the tailors said to Reb Chaim Meir, “to pray to Hashem and thank the Rebbe for saving our lives.”

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# Parsha Quiz

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**See how much  
you know!**

1. It was on the eighth day of what occasion?
2. On what day of which month was this celebration?
3. On what day of the week was this celebration?
4. Did the Shechina rest in the Mishkon during the seven days of "Miluim"?
5. When did the Shechina rest in the Mishkon for the first time?
6. What blessing did Aharon give the Jews on that historic day?
7. What blessing did Moshe and Aharon give the Jews on that historic day?
8. Why was Aharon commanded to take a young calf as a sin offering?
9. What are the names of Aharon's sons?
10. Can you name three offenses committed by Nadav and Avihu which made them guilty to die by fire?
11. Why does Hashem become feared and praised when He does judgement upon the Tzaddikim?
12. Why did Aharon suffer the loss of two sons?
13. When his two sons died, what did Aharon say?
14. What reward did Aharon receive for his silence?
15. If a Kohen did the Avodah while he was intoxicated, is it acceptable?
16. May a Kohen do the Avodah with torn clothes?
17. May a Kohen let his hair grow long?
18. How many goats for sin offerings were offered on that historic Rosh Chodesh Nissan?
19. What was the occasion for each one of these sin offerings?
20. How did the Jews know exactly what things they may eat or may not eat?
21. What are the signs (simanim) of a kosher animal?
22. What are the signs (simanim) of a kosher fish?
23. If a fish sheds its signs while in the water, may one still eat it?

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# Recipe

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## 9×13 Pesach Cheesecake with Sour Cream Topping

### Ingredients:

Crust: (This crust is one recipe of Pesach Chocolate Chip Squares)

1 cup sugar  
2¼ cups almond flour  
1 cup chocolate chips (or equivalent chopped chocolate)  
½ tsp salt  
½ tsp baking powder (optional)  
2 eggs  
½ cup oil

### Filling:

2 (8 oz) containers whipped cream cheese, at room temperature  
¾ cup sugar  
3 eggs, at room temperature

### Topping:

1 (16 oz) container sour cream  
1 tbsp sugar

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Prepare the Pesach Chocolate Chip Squares cookie dough, mixing together dry ingredients, then adding wet ingredients. Bake for 35-40 minutes. You want to over bake it a bit (the original recipe bakes for 25-35 minutes), as the drier it is the less soggy it will become once the cheesecake is on top of it. Let cool.
3. Prepare the cheesecake mixture: in a bowl, combine room temperature cream cheese, sugar, and eggs. Use a whisk and mix until combined and not lumpy anymore. A few lumps are ok though.
4. Pour over the cooled cake and return to the oven for 45-50 minutes, until it seems set.
5. Let cool for a bit, and while it cools, prepare the topping: In a small bowl, mix together the sour cream with 1 tablespoon sugar. Pour over the cheesecake. Smooth by using an offset spatula or spoon. Cheesecake does not need to be completely cooled, 10-15 minutes is enough. Return to oven and bake an additional 15-18 minutes.
6. Let cool and refrigerate. Cut into the cake only when chilled. Keep cake refrigerated.

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# Middah of the Week

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Emunas Chachamim

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**We want to hear from you!!**

Questions, comments, or suggestions?  
Email us at [bnos@agudah.org](mailto:bnos@agudah.org).

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