

Reb Moshe's Blessing is a Memory!



Serving as a *Shochet and Mashpia* in Montreal for almost 50 years, Davening was always Reb Moshe Rubin's first love.

In Shul, everyone could see him davening long hours, but only we, his children, were privileged to experience our father's heartfelt *Birchos Hashachar* at home, in the wee morning hours on Clark St., then on Bourret Ave.

We had long "graduated" from the Kindergarten's "beginners" Brochos which we thought were just 'kid stuff' compared to the *Psukai D'zimra, Shema and Shmoneh Esray!* Yet Reb Moshe poured his heart and soul into these 'simple' blessings, - to him they weren't so simple!

People usually zip quickly through these introductory Sidur pages. But Reb Moshe loved, succored and expressed each *Beracha* with great personal warmth, verbalizing and proclaiming each word aloud with deep *Kavanah*, like davening *Neilah* at the climax of Yom Kippur!

Years later, Zaidy Moshe Rubin would also summon and orchestrate the grandchildren nearby to respond "*Amein!*" to each and every *Beracha*.

Reb Moshe's voice would reach a crescendo in the *Birchos Hatorah*, concluding with the Grand "*Elu Devarim*" Finale of Mitzvos we can enjoy now in this world, plus later in the World to Come.

Reb Moshe embodied the *Pasuk* in Tehilim (39.4) engraved on his tombstone: "My Heart is warm within, my words are on fire, that I speak with my tongue."

Reb Moshe's fervent Blessings continue to reverberate on his 20th *Yartzeit* Adar 29. May his shining beautiful legacy live on until Moshiach.

By his children

*Yisroel Eliezer & Rochel Rubin, Albany,
Hershel & Rochel Devorah Zaklos, Detroit,
Moshe & Esther Shaindel Chanowitz, Montreal,
Yaakov Dovid & Sara Krayna Yuzewitz, Crown Heights*



כ"ק רבינו אמר פעם לאאמו"ר ז"ל בחלוקת 'כוס של ברכה':

"ר' משה, איר זאָגט דאָך די ווערטער אין דאָווענען צוויי מאָל, זאָגט צוויי מאָל לחיים!"

'חם לבי בקרבי, בהגיגי תבער אש, דברתי בלשוני'

פסוק זה חרות על מצבת אאמו"ר ז"ל

ז"ל ס' אדמו"רי בעלז (קלפהולץ) ח"ג (ת"א, תשל"ב) ע' כח:

מספרים בשם כ"ק מרן מהר"א, שאביו מרן מהר"ד נפגש פעם עם הצדיק רבי שלום דוב, האדמו"ר מליובאוויטש, ושוחחו ביניהם שעה ארוכה. אחרי זה אמר מרן: "להיות ירא-שמים גדול כל-כך ולדעת להסתיר זאת כל כך יפה זה באמת פלא, אבל הלא הם אנשי חב"ד, וחב"ד הם ראשי תיבות של חם לבי בקרבי, בהגיגי תבער אש, דברתי בלשוני" (תהלים לט, ד)!

אאמו"ר ז"ל סיפר לי כעין זה מהאדמו"ר מסלונים. כשחזר מביקור אצל אדמו"ר מוהרש"ב, אמר: 'ראיתי צדיק שיש לו שרשרת זהב ושעון משני צדדיו, ולבו שבור באמצע', והוסיף: 'קוקט אויף די אויגן וואָס האָבן געקוקט אויף אַן אמת'ן צדיק'.

יוכבד מרים בת שמואל

זכרונה לברכה - יארצייט ט' סיון

Bubby **Yocheved Miriam Rubin** was born on Teves 22 (Dec. 30 1923) to Reb Shmuel & Esther Shaindel Backman (her Zaid Yosef Begun once solely supported the Volozhiner Yeshiva).

Emigrating in 1921 from Turev, Belarus, they were the only *landsleit* who remained observant. Taunted why he sent his sons to Yeshiva, "Are they going to be rabbis?" Reb Shmuel replied: "But don't they have to at least be Jewish?"

Their 368 Livonia home in Brooklyn's Brownsville had real Yiddish warmth & flavor, and the 'Sam Backman & Sons' window shades, venetian blinds, suitcase & umbrella store was of the few businesses that kept Shabbos during the Great Depression and through the '60's.

With no Jewish Day schools then, Bubby went to Strauss PS, was Tho. Jefferson HS valedictorian, received a BA in Education, and taught pre-school in Elizabeth, NJ for Rabbi Pinchas Teitz.

The Backmans were close to R. Yisroel Jacobson (and co-produced Cholov Yisroel), who was the Shadchan, and Rosh Chodesh Elul 1947 the Rebbe was Mesader Kidushin for Bubby and Zaidy Rabbi Moshe Rubin, of Slonim, who learned in Otwock Lubavitch Yeshiva, and had just immigrated after 5 years in Shanghai.

A respected Montreal Vaad Ha'ir Shochet over 40 years, Zaidy was a passionate mashpia who farbrenged and inspired old and young "fans" and friends. They had Yechidus, and received letters from the Previous Rebbe and our Rebbe.

Bubby's Bais Rivka students fondly remember her Halacha and Yahadus classes, infused with the love of Hashem, Torah and Mitzvos. She also taught Taharas Hamishpacha to women.

Bubby read Jewish stories and sang Yiddish and Hebrew songs to kids with great love & patience. She felt that the Shabbos table beauty, spirit and atmosphere enriches and builds the family. She'd say: "If your intention is sincere - G-d will help."

Bubby's Shavuos 🎵 song: 🎵

In the wilderness no wind blew, in the Heavens no bird flew

In the meadow no cow was lowing, in the rivers, the waters stopped flowing

Camel bells were nowhere ringing, even the angels ceased their singing

At the foot of THE MOUNTAIN we stood, and received, the TORAH....

"YISROEL 2x VEORAYSOH, CHAD HU, 2x

TORAH ORAH 2x, HALELUKAH, 2x..



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מוחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקווי
ברוקלין נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
15th Day of Tzevetz, 5714
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Jewish Women's Orthodox League
Agudas T Shefi Chabad
Montreal, Canada

Blessing and greeting:

I was pleased to receive a report dated 22 Kislev, from Mrs. Miriam Rubin, member of your Praesidium, on your activities, as well as recent elections, as well as your preparation for a Chamuka party. I hope that everything went off very nicely and I would like to hear about it explicitly.

I want to take this opportunity to underline what I have said orally to the Montreal visitors who were here, the importance of attracting women and girls from the widest circles, and bringing them under your good influence. I am sure that with the proper approach you will enjoy success in these efforts. Needless to say, all beginnings are difficult. However, you are no longer in the stage of beginning and, secondly, the Jewish approach is not to be discouraged by difficulties, for the Almighty seems to aid.

I wish you success in your good work and may it bring success also in your personal affairs.

With blessing



Selected Sayings of R' Moshe Rubin z"l

Preface

Our Zaidy, affectionately known as "Reb Moshe," was like a walking Haggadah. He always loved to share his Torah "sayings" with his children, grandchildren, friends, students, and anyone who listened.

We fondly remember our Zaidy for the long hours he used to spend davening, for the beautiful melodies he would sing, and for his Chasidic stories and expressions.

This collection of Zaidy's sayings, selected from several hundred, are not all his original creations. He may have read them in seforim, or heard them at the Yeshiva in Otwock, Poland, or during World War II in Shanghai.

*But Zaidy's sensitive and charming style was certainly original. It was not only **what** he said, it was **how** he vividly described the people and places, climaxing with his fiery "stress and emphasis" on the moral of the story.*

Rather than being literal interpretations, these stories are often truths in jest, inspiring with a smile.

Unfortunately, we cannot retell these vertlach with Zaidy's fervor and enthusiasm, but we hope the reader will enjoy his style and message.

May we soon be reunited with him with the imminent coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu!

Mendel Rubin

Learning from Zaidy

Zaidy also knew Gemara and Chasidus, but that wasn't how people knew him. He didn't make big new ideas of his own in Gemara or Rambam, but he was known for his warmth and his smile.

Even if you already heard the vort before, this time it was different, the way he said it, the fire how he described it, as if you were actually there. Then if he said it over again to another person, the flavor didn't go away, it was still with the same fire of the first time.

It didn't matter to him if you were big or small: he made you feel at home. He didn't speak great English, but even if they didn't understand every word, they saw a living Chasid full of fire, with a big heart. That was better than any words he may have said.

His talks weren't prepared but they were true words from the heart that entered the heart, because the person sees where it comes from. We can learn from him that even if you don't have the right words to express it, it will be accepted if it comes from the heart.

I remember how he davened in the dining room, he said every word clearly. By Brochos he made sure that we answered Amen out loud. We should learn from him what means a chasidishe davening. When I left in the morning he was davening, and when I came back home from school he was still davening, I watched how he davened and said Shma. I would go to eat, and come back, and he was still davening...

Abba Rubin

Inner Warmth

Best When Served Hot

“Tay un Tehillim zaynen shtendig gut, ober nur haise.”

A guest may decline food, saying he’s had dinner. But it’s no excuse for declining tea, for tea is always appropriate.

We may not always be ready to delve into Talmudic complexities, but reciting Tehillim is always timely. Like tea, Tehillim is best said with ‘fire’ and warmth, not lukewarm.

It’s Warm Inside

“Cham Libi Bkirbi, Bahagigie Tivar Aish, Dibarti Bilshoni. My heart is warm within me, I speak with a burning fire, saying it with my tongue.” (Tehillim 39:4).

Engraved on Zaidy’s gravestone, the initials of this verse spell “Chabad”, representing the intellectual pursuit of Torah Wisdom, Understanding and Knowledge. But intellect alone is cold, it must touch the heart and inspire our emotions.

Fire!

There was a terrible accident at a train crossing. An investigation revealed that the watchman waved his lantern to and fro, but the fire in the lantern was not lit. It is meaningless to shake back and forth in davening without some ‘fire’ inside.

The Steamboat

A new steamboat was being launched. Whistling its steam horn, it proudly blew loudly, again and again. It all looked very impressive, but when it was time for the boat to move, all the steam was spent, and it could not budge. After investing all the energy on outside publicity, nothing was left for the warmth within and the real task.

In the Service

A judge court-martialed a Russian soldier found frozen at his post. “The sense of duty should have warmed you.”

Pesach & Yomim Tovim

The Second Seder is “#1”

The Chozeh of Lublin asked a wealthy man to provide his poor student Reb Shmuel of Kariv with all his Pesach needs.

Overwhelmed by the abundance of food and supplies delivered unexpectedly to his home, Reb Shmuel was delighted that he could now celebrate Pesach with joy.

Relaxing comfortably on new pillows at the head of the table, Reb Shmuel felt like a king as he conducted the Seder. Calmly explaining each detail of the Haggadah, he enjoyed the lavish feast with his family and guests.

But not being accustomed to such rich and plentiful food, Reb Shmuel had an unpleasant reaction. The heavy wine prolonged his afternoon nap the next day, and he awoke late that evening.

Observing the *Afikoman* midnight deadline also on the second night, Reb Shmuel had to rush through the Seder, with only a minimum of *Hagaddah*, wine, *matzah* and *maror*.

Reb Shmuel felt humbled by this austere “no frills” Seder, especially as compared to the first night’s splendor.

Sometime later, Reb Shmuel visited his Rebbe. As soon as he crossed the threshold, the Chozeh said to him: “*Der tzvaiter Seder gifelt mir besser vie dem ershter.* Reb Shmuel, the second Seder was better than the first.”

Nobody’s Home

The *Karpas* at the Seder spells out a message: *K’lal Rishon, Peh Sasum.* = Rule #1: Keep the mouth closed.

“Matza Na’ul, Yesh Adam” (Tamid Ch. 1). In the *Beis Hamikdash*, a closed bathroom door indicated that someone is inside.

Moral: If a person keeps his mouth closed, talking only, when necessary, it shows that there

is 'someone inside'. But a mouth that is open and loose means that 'nobody's home.'

Seder and Supper

A simple Jew had his designated seat in Shul next to two scholars who studied Talmud together.

This simple Jew had great respect for the scholars' ability to study Talmud, which he could not. On Erev Yom Kippur, he overheard the scholars say to each other, "Let us stop learning now, so we can daven maariv."

The man was shocked. How dare they refer to Kol Nidrei, the holiest prayer of the year, as just a plain maariv!

A half year later, on Erev Pesach, he again overheard them say, "Okay, let us stop now, and go eat supper."

This really upset him. **Supper?** On the Seder Night! Recalling their words on Erev Yom Kippur, he confronted them.

"Look, I'm but a simple Jew. However, even I know that Kol Nidrei is very holy and that the Seder is very special. How dare you show disrespect to such holy events?"

So, they explained: "Our Kotsker Rebbe taught us that we should have the same fervor in a simple Maariv as for Kol Nidrei. He taught us that even a plain supper should be eaten on the same spiritual level as the Seder."

Holding On

The Rebbe Rashab together with his son (later to be the Rebbe Rayatz) once saw a painting of Yetzias Mitzrayim, portraying the children as fearfully grasping the garments of their elders.

The Rayatz asked: Didn't Bnei Yisroel march out fearlessly?

The Rebbe Rashab explained that it wasn't fear, but good manners: A youth must hold onto an elder for guidance, yet remember that he is still young, while striving to grow older.

No Food Here

There are three types of "Kol": At **Kol Nidrei**, we don't eat for one day. When we say **Kol Chamirah** before Pesach, we eat no bread for eight days. But, in a **Kolchoiz** (a Russian commune), there is nothing to eat all year.

By Force

The Haggadah states: '*Davar Acher, b'yad chazaka.*' A '*davar acher*', a wild character, tries to change things by force, rather than by gentle persuasion.

Opening Up

The Haggadah says: "*Uposach Hashem al haPesach*, Hashem will pass over the door."

Usually, Hashem wants **us** to open up and make the first move, "*Pischi li kechudo shel machat*. Open up to me at least the size of a pinhead." But, on Pesach, Hashem bypasses our initial opening, and He opens up first to us.

Have a Kosher Purim

Some people confuse the customary greeting and say, "Have a Kosher Purim, and a Happy Pesach!"

But this, too, has truth. With so many *Mishloach Manos* foods circulating, we pray for a Kosher Purim. And sitting down at the Seder after all the hard work of preparation, we sincerely wish to have a "Happy Pesach".

Albany

When visiting Albany on Peach, Zaidy would pronounce the Haggadah's El-B'nay poem as "AL-BANY!" May G-d help us to build its Yiddishkeit. He would also say he was going *El bnee*, "to my son."

Bonfires

The Holiday Musaf "*V'hasieynu*" prayer can be translated as "*masiyin masuos*", the bonfires that proclaimed *Rosh Chodesh* in earlier times. (Mishnah, Rosh Hashana, 2)

Like giant projectors, the holidays are sources of light that help us illuminate the rest of the days of the year, including the 'Blue Mondays'.

Notes on Davening

Straight and Crooked

The morning prayer states: '*Derech Reshaim Ye'aves* (Tehillim 146), G-d makes crooked the ways of the wicked.'

But isn't a crook already crooked?
By taking something that is crooked, and making it crooked again, it turns out straight...

It's Not Exactly So

R. Yakov Yosef of Polonoye, the Besht's famous student, was an extremely intense and exacting person. He once became so withdrawn, that he stopped corresponding with his friend R. Mendel Horodoker.

One day, as R. Yakov Yosef travelled by coach, he saw a Jew trudging along the road, and invited him to ride on the wagon. But, instead of sitting down on the regular seat, the guest preferred to squat on a small box.

Responding to R. Yakov Yosef's amazement, the Jew said: "We say in prayer, "*Ashrei Haam shekacha Lo* (Tehillim 145), *Fortunate is the person who is happy with whatever he has.*"

R. Yaakov Yosef soon received a letter from R. Mendel: "Since you stopped communicating with me, I had to send you my message through Eliyahu Hanavi." We should aspire to the level of *Hen v'lav shavin etzlo* (Tanya, Igeres HaKodesh ch. 11), to have the equanimity to persevere, so that no matter how things work out, it is always for the best.

"As Is"

Hashem showed *Moshe Rabenu* the New Moon to establish the lunar calendar, and said: "*Kazeh Re'eh v'Kadesh*, Thus shall you see and sanctify." (Shemos 12:2). Zaidy's version: Do not expect life to always be perfect. We must often accept an 'as is' situation and work hard to 'sanctify' and to make the best of it.

The Ultimate Perfection

Some people want only the best of everything. But too much perfection is in itself an imperfection, i.e., a girl who is looking for a 'general wearing a *shtreimel*' to be her groom.

Listen here!

'Lechu Banim, shimu lee – Go my sons, listen to me.' (Tehillim 34)

Is it not more logical to **come** closer to listen, like the Talmudic expression: "*Ta Shma, come and hear?*"

Not necessarily. It is easy to listen and follow the rules when we are right near our teacher. The real challenge is to follow his guidance even when we go elsewhere.

Our Father, Our King

The Rosh Hashana prayer *Avinu Malkenu* seems like a strange combination. A father is usually kind and personal, while a king is strict and aloof.

A melamed once taught his own children. As a father, he was very lenient; but as a teacher, he was stern and demanding. One evening at dinner, the children asked their father to speak to their 'teacher' to go easier on them.

Haves and Have-nots

"Al tivtechu bindivim, b'ven adom sheayn lo, teshua." (Tehillim 146)

Don't rely on the rich; Surprisingly, the poor man who has nothing, may be our source of help.

Don't Rush

In *Maariv* we recite: '*V'hoser mimenu yagon*', remove from us '*yuggen*' (Yiddish for 'constant rush').

Similarly in the Shema: "*v'avadetem meheirah*," get rid of the constant 'rush.'

And: '*Ays – Tzara hee L'Yakov*', (Yirmiya 30:7): i.e., deadline pressures can cause tzuris.

Don't Run

Reb Shmuel Munkes once went to buy oil early for Chanukah. Walking outside, however, he met Chassidim who were traveling to the Alter Rebbe and joined them.

Returning home several weeks later, Reb Shmuel remembered that he had originally left to get oil. So, Reb Shmuel went out and bought some oil, but rushing up the steps to his home, he fell and spilled it.

Unfazed, Reb Shmuel paraphrased the Talmudic statement: "*Aylunis* (Yiddish for rushing) *aino molid*." Haste makes waste, and is not productive.

On the Fast Track

A king made an offer to one of his subjects: "Run as far as you can, and I will grant you all the land that you cover!"

The man ran and ran, gaining more and more land with every stride. Totally exhausted, the runner finally collapsed.

Stretching out his arm over a few more inches, he uttered his dying words: "This, too, is mine!"

Thank G-d!

Seeing his whole house engulfed in flames, a Jew recited the blessing: "*Shelo osani goy!*"

People did not understand and thought that the tragedy had gone to the man's head. However, he explained:

"Thank G-d, I am Jewish. I lost only my worldly possessions in the fire, but did not lose my G-d, as would a worshiper of wood and stone."

Every Word Counts

When praying, we must pay attention to every word, for each word has its own special meaning and significance.

Q. "Where is that Chassid up to in his davening?"

A. "He is up to '*Vayevarech Dovid*'."

Q. "But be more specific: Is he up to the word '*Vayevarech*', or is he up to '*Dovid*'?..."

What Takes So Long?

A skeptic was curious why Chasidim spend so much time in prayer, so he went to a Chasidic shul to see for himself.

An elderly Chasid entered and sat down on a bench. He sat. And sat. Meanwhile, the visitor took a Chumash and read the weekly portion; he opened a Gemara and learned the *daf*, while the Chasid just sat and did not yet begin to pray.

The visitor asked the Chasid what was taking so long.

The Chasid explained: "I started this morning by saying *Modeh Ani*. I thought to myself: What am I saying? I thank G-d that I have lived to see another day. I cannot express something so important in haste. It takes time."

"Then I thought about the next word: *Ani* – I. Who am I? Who am I to thank G-d? Am I on the level to speak to Him just like that? Heh! Here comes a lowly *Ani*, such as I, and wants to thank G-d. Hey, it's not so simple. Then I say "To YOU!" I speak not just to G-d as He relates to this lowly world, but to G-d's very essence. After all, G-d isn't my buddy. I must prepare myself to talk to Him. All this takes time."

Proportionately, the recommended daily amount of prayer and *Yiras Shamayim*, as compared to Torah study, is small. The Talmud (Shabbos 31a) recommends a ratio of only 1 "*kav*" (amount) per "*kur*" (bushel). But it is the actual mixing of the two together, to get the proper balance, that takes so much time.

Healing the Wounds

The morning *Baruch She'amar* prayer states: "*Baruch Gozer Umekayem*, Blessed is G-d who fulfills His decrees."

Is G-d praised just for keeping His word?

Zaidy translated *Gozer* as its other interpretation: "cut." G-d heals our cuts and preserves us.

When saying these words in prayer, Zaidy would look at his right hand, which he once cut during his *shechita* work. He also looked at this hand when saying "*Al Nisecha Shebchal Yom*, Thank G-d for His daily miracles."

The Fool's Shul

Zaidy's native city of Slonim was predominantly non-Chasidic. After an attempted rebellion, the Czar wanted better control of the minorities, and sent an official to monitor the religious communities and institutions.

The Slonim communal leadership guided the official around the established synagogues but avoided showing him the informal Chasidic kloiz with its idiosyncrasies, i.e., one man praying after hours, while others eat and shmooze, etc..

When the officer saw them avoiding the kloiz, he became suspicious and demanded an explanation.

"In other cities," the Slonimer leadership explained, "the fools are dispersed all through the town, so that each shul has to deal with just one or two fools. But Slonim found a different solution. The fools organized their own **Fools' shul**."

They are happy to be together, and we are happy that we don't have to deal with them. But it isn't really a synagogue." The officer was very impressed that the 'fools' could unite together, to express the beauty of their unique aspect of Yiddishkeit.

It's Really, Really True

The chapter *V'yatziv* after the Shema has 15 synonyms: "True, and confirmed, and proper, and correct, and right", etc.

Zaidy's parable: A wealthy man was marrying off his daughter, but, being a miser, he lamented to his poor brother, "I feel terrible. Being rich, I just can't make a cheap wedding, but

it hurts me to waste my money on strangers."

His poor brother advised him: "Make a grand impression that you're cooking up a big wedding. Go into the fish store on Friday when it's full, stand at the end of the line, and yell out loud to the fish man to prepare a lot of fancy salmon. Then proceed to the butcher, and order out loud the most expensive steaks.

After the wedding ceremony, I will stage a scene and scream 'We had a fire! The food's all gone!' The guests will sympathize and be happy with cheap herring and plain kichel; while your family will feast privately on fancy foods!"

As planned, the poor brother ran in right after the ceremony, pale as a sheet. "Oy! Oy! A fire! There's been a terrible fire," he shouted. "All the food is ruined!"

The rich brother sensed that his brother was screaming for real, so he asked him, "*Mit an emes?* Is it really true?" "Yes, it's true," his brother answered. "But c'mon, just between you and me," he asked, "is it really true?" "Yes, yes, true unfortunately, very true," his poor brother replied.

"But really?" he asked. "Is it True?" "Absolutely," his brother kept repeating, over and over again to convince him that this was not a game, but that there really was a fire.

We must confirm that we really, sincerely, and truly mean what we had just said in the Shema, "G-d is One." We must ask ourselves again and again, to fully understand, and affirm it, again and again...

The Staff of Life

In the High Holiday *U'Nesaneh Tokef* prayer, we say: "*B'nafsho Yavi Lachmo*, with his life, man acquires bread." We give up a piece of our life for every piece of bread we earn.

Impressions

Several Chasidim were trying to persuade a skeptical scholar to visit their Rebbe. The skeptic rated people only by the books they

published, so he asked: "How many books did your Rebbe bring to press?"

They replied: "Our Rebbe did not impress on paper, as much as he impressed people's hearts."

A Personal Pasuk

It is customary to recite a verse at the end of the *Shmoneh Esray* corresponding to the first and last letters of the person's name. The Siddur, at the time, had no listing for Fruma or Feiga, but Zaidy found it in Vayikra (2:6): "*Pasos Osa Pitim.. Mincha Hee.*"

Zaidy, however, didn't know a pasuk for Kraina, and the Rebbe directed him to Eichah (3:57): "*Karavta bayom ekroeka, amarta al tira.*"

Holding Up the Train

Zaidy once travelled with his son, R' Yisroel (who was 8 at the time), from Montreal to New York by train to celebrate Yud Shevat with the Rebbe. At Mincha time, Zaidy davened between the cars. The train stopped at Albany, where the trainmen had to change the cars, but the connection was right where Zaidy was davening.

Despite all the commotion of the trainmen waiting to disconnect the cars, Zaidy davened at his regular pace, while they stood around waiting until he finished *Shmoneh Esray*.

Close to 20 years later, when R' Yisroel was chosen to be the Rebbe's emissary to Albany, he recalled this occurrence, and wondered perhaps this is a "*Hashgocha Protis*" Divine connection between a father's davening and the *peulos* of his son...

Double Blessing

The Rebbe once gave Zaidy wine from his *Kos Shel Bracha* **twice**, saying: "*Reb Moshe, ir zogt duch yeden vurt (in davenen) tzvay mohl.* I am giving you a blessing twice, because you repeat the words in davening."

Zaidy would always try to *chap arain*, to 'catch' and recite yet another *Kedusha*, another

Amen, another "*Amen Yehai shmay rabba*" at different shuls and minyanim.

Watch Your Watch

Personal watches used to be a luxury, which few could afford. Only the central tower in town had a clock.

Today, with so many watches, everyone knows the time. The problem is that we have too many fancy watches, but too few inner 'alarm clocks' to arouse us from our slumber.

Even a Silver Watch Has Golden Minutes!

People say that "time is money." But the real standard of value is Time, so we should say: "Money is time," i.e., the accumulation of money represents a lot of time.

By Foot

Unfortunately, in America, people are measured by the foot, "this person is 5 foot something," rather than being appraised by their "head" or "heart."

Answering the Angels

In shul on Simchas Torah, the Rebbe Rashab pointed to Reb Shlomo "*der Geller*" ("the Gingi"), a big, tall man, who despite his personal troubles, was a lively and hearty Jew. Reb Shlomo 'lassoed' the kids together with his *gartel* and danced with them *Hakafos*.

"Shlomo der Geller is our best response to the angels who opposed giving Torah to man."

Follow Directions

The "Thruway" signs that direct us to Montreal were never actually *in* Montreal. Yet we follow their direction.

Whether they were personally there or not, they speak the truth. *Kabel es Ha'emes mimi she'omro*, we must readily accept the Truth from whoever says it.

The Loose Screw

At an industrial exhibit, the Rebbe Rashab saw a new machine that automatically processed a block of wood into a finished product. The next

year, however, that machine caused a disastrous factory explosion, all due to a little loose screw that controlled it.

The Rebbe explained that the control button represents the basic *Kabalos Ol* commitment, self-control, without which all the 'fancy machinery' is worthless.

Ahavas Yisroel

Being Nice

Some people 'cannot afford' to do someone a favor, as if just a kind word or a nice gesture will cost them money.

It is a special quality to be *Someach besimchas Chavero*: to rejoice in another person's *Simcha* as if it is your own.

Empathy

Eliezer was so impressed when Rivka offered him water at the well, that he was convinced that she was the right wife for Isaac.

But what is so great about offering water?

It certainly falls short of Abraham's hospitality, which included baked bread and a selection of expensive meats. Rivka offered only water, which cost her nothing. Except for running up & down, it showed no personality or intelligence.

The Talmud says that, up to the age of forty, people prefer solid foods. But, after forty, it is better to drink more.

Rivka was a young girl, while Eliezer was an older person. Although youngsters like snacks and treats, Rivka gave him water, instead of offering him her favorites.

Kindness is not always judged by what **we** consider to be good. Rivka empathized with a person's different needs, although the offering was not her own preference.

Smooth Talk?

Here are three misnomers; nothing is straighter than a crooked ladder. Nothing is more whole than a broken heart; and, nothing is more coarse than a smooth talker.

Listen up!

Vayishma Yisro, Cohen Midian chosein Moshe (Shmos 18:1); Yisro, the Midianite priest and Moshe's father-in-law, heard...

By just **listening properly**, even a pagan priest can be elevated and be associated with Moshe Rabeinu!

Growth

Trees in a forest all grow straight and tall, while the branches of a city tree bend and twist, producing poor lumber.

In the forest, the crowded trees limit each other's spread. But a lonely city tree grows unrestrained all over the place, because it has nothing to stop or confine it.

Man is like a tree in the field. It is much better for a person to grow with others, than to grow all alone by himself.

Finding Fault

Yachpesu Olos Tamnu, chefes Mechupas (Tehillim 64).

Some people continually look for faults in others, rather than in themselves. It is like the silly bird that dirtied its tail. The bird sensed the odor, but instead of cleaning herself, it blamed the smell on others. It kept leaving other birds' company, while the bird itself was the source of the problem.

Yidden!

'*Yid*' is a Yiddish word for "Jew." It is also the tenth letter of the *Alef Beis*. When two *Yidden* (Jews) feel they are on the same level, they represent G-d's name, like two yuds.

But, if one Jew considers himself superior and higher than the other, it symbolizes 'the end' symbol closing a statement.

L'chayim!!

A *L'chayim* toast unites two 'yidden' as spelled in the Hebrew word *L'Chaim*. This unity also bestows material blessing, as expressed in the remaining letters *Lechem*, which means "bread," the staff of life.

A humorous reading of the end of *Av Harachamim* (before the Shabbos Musaf): *Yidden baGoyim*, When Jews are in Galus, *molay geviyos*, drinking just cupfuls, *mochatz rosh*, they lose sobriety and break heads. *Al eretz rabba*, but when Moshiach returns us to Israel, *minachal baderech yishteh*, we can drink *L'chaim* like a stream. Yet we can, *yorim rosh*, keep our head up.

Love your Fellow...

A Yid has to be so full of Ahavas Yisroel for another Yid, that no matter how hard it is to love him (like even if he is very annoying or hurt us), we will still love him and treat him with Ahavas Yisroel no matter what.

A chossid once came to the Rebbe Rashab in yechidus. He told the Rebbe that he was at the doctor, and the doctor told him he has to take a very yucky medicine! He asked for a bracha that should get easier.

The Chossid was very surprised at the answer he got: The Rebbe told him that he doesn't even have a little bit of how much Ahavas Yisroel he really needs to have!

The Rebbe Rashab explained: "Do you think that Ahavas Yisroel is just dancing with another Jew on Simchas Torah? Ahavas Yisroel can be very hard! Sometimes it can even hurt!"

The Chossid understood that if he was careful with his Ahavas Yisroel, and was even ready to do things that were uncomfortable or hurt, in order to help another Yid, then the medicine wouldn't bother him so much!

The Shrouds

Mr. Rich had expected to have the town's scholar as his son-in-law and felt very slighted when the eligible scholar married the daughter of a less wealthy man.

One day, a *Nisraf*, a bankrupt Jew, who had lost his home, store and merchandise in a fire, came asking for help to restart his business. The scholar wanted to help, but he had lent all his money to others, and had already asked his father-in-law for an advance.

The scholar swallowed his pride and approached Mr. Rich for a loan. The rich man agreed on one condition:

The scholar would have to wear a white cassock that once belonged to a Russian priest who had defaulted on a loan. In order to help the poor Jew, the scholar walked around town dressed as a priest, disgracing his family.

After many years, the priest's garments ended up as scrap cloth at the town's tailor. When the poor tailor died, the *Chevra Kadisha* burial society used the white cloth as the shroud in which they buried him.

Several days later, the tailor appeared to the town Rabbi in a dream, telling him that the garment was protecting him against worms, except for one spot where it was patched. He asked the Rabbi to open the grave and resew it properly. After repeated dreams, the Rabbi obeyed the request.

Reb Michael Dvorkin observed: So powerful is the mitzva of helping another person, that it even elevated the cloth, benefitting even the tailor who did not do the Mitzva!

Dip of the Tongue

"Leshoni et sofer mahir, My tongue is like a scribe's pen." (Tehillim 45:2)

A quill is dipped into the inkwell to draw ink, so it can express itself and write. Also, at a *farbrengen*, the tongue sips a little *l'chaim* to draw inspiration and express itself better.

Half Right is Wrong

The Tzemach Tzedek once recommended a Rabbi to a community. The people were concerned that the scholarly Rabbi was too

unworldly, but the Rebbe assured them that he could apply Torah law to real situations.

Before long, two merchants approached this Rabbi to adjudicate their dispute. After hearing both sides, the Rabbi ruled that it was a case of *Modeh B'miktzas*, i.e., the defendant who admits partially must swear to defend his position. Readily agreeing, the merchant was prepared to take the oath.

Sensing that the defendant didn't fully appreciate the seriousness of the situation, the Rabbi took the merchant aside and showed him the tractate *Bava Metzia* 3a, where the Talmud analyzes the *Modeh B'miktzas* law.

"*Hai Bekula... V'hai Bekula...*; On the one hand, this person would deny it all, yet on the other hand, this person feels obligated to make an admission."

The Rabbi pointed to the Talmudic phraseology: Although speaking of one person, it quotes them as two persons.

The Rabbi explained that man is composed of two identities: one of which is his evil inclination, pulling him to be *kofer hakol*, a heretic who denies everything. It is not just this specific money that is at stake, but his divine soul and his Judaism.

After hearing the Rabbi's psychological application of Torah law to the human psyche, the merchant conceded that he indeed owed the money.

Asthma and Normal Breathing

For a healthy person, breathing is **natural**. If you can **feel** that you are breathing, you may be suffering from asthma.

Torah, the breath of our life, should integrate smoothly into our lifestyle. It is not a healthy sign if our Yiddishkeit becomes abnormal and unnaturally ostentatious.

How much did you pay for it?

"*Daya kanisa, ma chasarta*. With knowledge, you lack nothing." (Talmud Nedarim 41a)

Zaidy explained: "You can tell how much wisdom you gained by '*ma chasarta!* by how much you paid' for it! Did you spend time and effort learning this? We achieve nothing worthwhile without struggle, for 'easy come, easy go!'

Some people expect to become scholars **overnight**, and sleep that night, too!

Swimming against the Current

"*Az Ponim L'Gehinom*" (Avoth 5).

Chutzpah can sometimes have a positive side.

If you are strong and tough within, *Az b'Pnim*, you can survive even the fury of purgatory. But *Boshes P'nim*, a timid person, can manage only when everything flows smoothly.

As the Halacha states: a bird that falls from a height and then swims downstream is not Kosher, unless it is strong enough to swim upstream against the flow.

Closed!

Rabbi Gamliel posted a watchman at the door to admit only sincere students to his Yeshiva (*Berachos* 27).

But how can a security guard judge inner character? Zaidy explained that the guard let **nobody** enter, without exception. But the truly sincere student who really wanted to study, would somehow find a way to get inside.

Two Jokes

The Talmud relates that two comedians merited the World-to-Come. "*T'ray badchi dehavu badchi m'alma*" (Taanis 22a)

The two 'comedians' are actually two comedies. They laughed at the world, just as the world laughed at them.

The Thinker

Coming to market, a peasant saw a scrawny little parrot offered for sale for the exorbitant sum of 20 rubles.

The next day, the peasant brought his turkey and listed it for 100 rubles! People ridiculed his price for the turkey, which usually sells for only 5 rubles. But the peasant argued that the parrot has less meat and yet cost 20 rubles.

“How can you compare them?” people asked. “The parrot can speak!”

“Ah,” the peasant replied, “but my turkey **THINKS!**”

The Musical Expert

Chasidim were sitting at a farbrengen and singing heartfelt tunes and niggunim.

He walked a boor and demanded: “Why are you just sitting around? *Zungt a Nuggun!*”

The boor, who could not even pronounce “*zingt a niggun*” properly, is telling them what to do?! Had he only paid attention, he would hear that it is exactly what they are doing!

The Whole Person

“*Havei Dan es Kol HaAdam L’Kaf Zechus.*”
Literally: “Judge all the man favorably.” (Avos 1:6)

The Mishna does not say “all men,” (“Kol **Adam**”) but “all the man” (“Kol **HaAdam**”).

When judging someone for a specific instance, we must take into account the “whole” person. He may be deficient in one area but has other redeeming qualities.

When we judge a person kindly, it has a ripple effect on “*Kol haAdam*”, all of mankind. The world hangs in balance, and one person's good deed can affect us all.

The Hard Part

Using a play on the words: A rabbi who renders a specific “*Meikil*” (lenient) decision, is not a problem, unless he is personally a “*Kal*”. It

is okay to be a “*Machmir*”, but not an insensitive “*Chamor*” (a donkey).

Shivisi Business

A chassid of the Besht named R' Koppel earned his living as the trusted “honest weight & measures” of the marketplace, as people paid him to weigh their produce on his scales. While waiting on customers, R' Koppel would recite Tehillim, often repeating the verse, “*Shivisi Hashem L’negdi Tomid*, G-d is always before me.” (Tehillim 16:8). So the peasants nicknamed him *Koppel Shivisi*.

Once, R' Koppel left to visit the Baal Shem Tov, so another man tried to replace him with a scale and a yardstick. But the peasants rejected him, saying: “When *Shivisi* is here, then we're in business; but without *Shivisi*, nothing's doing.”

Moral of the story: If “G-d is always before us,” then there is activity. Otherwise, there is nothing doing.

Who is a Tzadik?

The introduction to *Pirkay Avos* states (with a creative “replacing” of the comma): “All Jews are Tzadikim, *L’olam.*” Compared to the local peasantry, a Jew is truly a Tzadik. (R. Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev)

Missing the Point

“*V’shomu amoray ki noaymo, kmo folach uvokeah ba’aretz*” (Tehillim 141:6-7).

Enjoying a Torah “word” (or “vort”) merely for its cuteness, without taking it to heart, is like a chopping ax that misses the wood, striking the earth instead.

Enjoyable as the idea may be, it has **missed its mark.**

It's Cold!

“*Il fait froid,*” is how the French say: “It is cold.”

We can sense G-d's presence even in casual talk. Many other languages use the vague term “**It** is cold.” But the French are more direct. They state it clearly: “**He** makes cold.”

The Dog Show

Before his students left Poland, Rav Yehuda Eber (a fond mentor and teacher to R' Moshe as well) told this story to prepare them for the worldly temptations:

The traveling circus' main attraction was a trainer who presented a troop of dogs in army uniform, saluting and marching like soldiers. A poor man who could not afford the admission ticket was upset at being locked out of the fun and wanted to spoil it for everyone. He took a piece of meat and waited for the climax of the dogs' parade and salute. At the grand finale, he threw the piece of meat onto the stage.

Their many years of preparation and training were thrown to the wind, as the "soldiers" reverted back to dogs. Do not let the world reverse your yeshiva training.

Who is Smart?

The *midrash* says that King Solomon was wiser even than the fools.

It does, indeed, take much wisdom to deal with a fool.

"If you try to crush a fool among the oats in a grinder, you could not remove his foolishness from him." (*Mishlei 27:22*). Although he is inside the grinder, the fool assumes that the crushing is intended only for the oats, and not for him.

Be Honest!

A student asked his Rebbe for permission to return to his city, claiming he would be better off religiously at home.

The Rebbe answered: *Nichsof Nichsafta L'vais avicha, Lama Gonavta Es Elohai?* (from Parshas Vayetze); "You really want to return home for convenience, so why use G-d as an alibi?"

Inside Insult

In addition to not responding to an insult, we shouldn't let it bother us inside.

M'iz nisht mer vi a mentsch, un amol, a mentsch oich nit. We are only human, and sometimes not even that...

IOU

A man reviewed his finances on his deathbed.

"Ich bin kainem gornisht shuldik, Ich bin zich shuldik; I owe nothing to no one. I owe only to myself for not accomplishing as much as I could have."

Real Simcha

At family Simchas, Zaidy would say: *"Men zol Praven di Simcha mit Simcha."* May we celebrate the Simcha with joy, without hassle or aggravation.

Stuck in the Mud

A group of veteran *Baalei Agola* wagon drivers were sitting and shmoozing, when in walked a novice who just joined the club. To entertain themselves, the older, seasoned drivers began to ridicule the young man's inexperience.

"Don't just sit there and laugh at me," said the young man. "Test me, and you'll see that I know my stuff!"

The eldest *Baal Agala* threw out the first question: "Young man! What would you do if you run into a mudhole?"

"No problem," replied the young man. "I'd whip the horses to pull harder, and we'd be out in a jiffy."

"But what if whipping doesn't help?"

"I'd unload the merchandise to lighten the wagon, and then whip the horses to free the wheels."

"But what if that doesn't help either?"

"I'd cut off a branch to use as a lever under the axle."

“But what if that still doesn't help?”
The exasperated young man gave up and asked:
“Wise men, what would **you** do in such a
situation?”

“We try not to fall into the mud in the first
place!” answered the elder.

A Masters in Accounting

The Zohar refers to people who search
their souls and take a spiritual inventory to
assess their personal assets and liabilities as
Maarei d'Chushbena, “Masters of Accounting.”

We should take an accounting of
ourselves as a master and owner, not as an
objective accountant concerned only with
numbers, but remain unaffected by gains and
losses.

We should also remain the master in
control of the accounting, and not allow the
accounting to control us.

Downsizing

At a shul board meeting, the *Shamash*
requested funds to replace the old books that
were fraying at the edges.

But the ignorant president, an efficient
cutter by trade, suggested an alternative; “Take
the big *Gemara* volumes and cut them down to
medium-size *Mishnah* books. Then take the old
Mishnah books and cut them down into small
siddurim...”

Man In the Middle

A person should bid farewell citing a
Halacha “*Mitoch dvar halacha.*” (Berachos 30).
We should always remember that we are still ‘in
the middle,’ rather than fully accomplished.

Nothing But the Truth

A milkman once heard the Rabbi preach
about honesty, so he stopped diluting the milk
with water as he did in the past.

But the customers, unaccustomed to the
taste of 100% milk, thought that the milk was
spoiled, so they returned it.

The full truth is not always appreciated.

Going Through the Motions

Zaidy’s fiery davening recalls a story that
expresses his enthusiasm in every Mitzvah.

There was a flagman whose job was to wave
his lantern at approaching trains signaling them to
slow down or stop on tracks though the city.

Unfortunately, one night a tragedy
happened; the train did not stop and people were
killed and hurt.

The flagman was brought to court. The
judge asked him: “Were you at the tracks at 10 pm.
Thursday night?” “Yes, Your Honor,” said the
flagman. “Did you see the train approaching?”
asked the judge. “Yes your Honor,” answered the
flagman. “Did you wave the lantern?” the judge
asked. “Yes, your Honor!” he answered. The
flagman was dismissed.

But the judge forgot to ask one crucial
question: Was the lantern lit? Waving an unlit
lantern is useless in the dark!

We shouldn’t just go through the motions, -
our actions must have fire, warmth and light! We
should show our friends and family that we are
excited to be with them and help them

We are all lamplighters in this dark Galus,
lighting the way to a better world of Moshiach, the
light at the end of the tunnel.

Nachas from Children

*A tatteh is tzufriden tzu heren as di kinder
kumen leben tzuzamen besholom.*

As our Father, Hashem wants all His
children to get along peacefully.