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# ***Reconstructed Story Collection 22***

***From "Likutei  
Shmuel"***

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### **Abba, thank you** (Rav Asher Kowalsky shlita)

It was a bright afternoon, in the midst of a routine day. Moishe came back from the Talmud Torah as he did every day, and went down to the courtyard of the building to play. Then, in the midst of a fun game run, his leg hit something; he stumbled and fell to the ground, moaning in pain... Within a few seconds, it became clear that it just a dry blow. The boy was screaming and screaming; his leg was bent and blue. An ambulance was called, he was rushed to the emergency room, and that night he was hospitalized in the orthopedic ward, with the doctors very concerned about the condition of his leg... 'The bone has been shattered, completely!' – the doctor told his parents the next morning, 'In fact, we are very worried, and we are seriously considering our steps. We will conduct a special consultation with the senior professors, and we will make a decision on what should be done' – the doctor threw a rock at the hearts of the parents who are anxious about their son's fate.

It turns out that it was a terrible fall, with long-term consequences... In the afternoon, a special consultation was held, and then the parents were called to the doctor's room. 'We don't have much to do' – they said in despair, 'but to recommend physiotherapy treatments for a long, very long period. At the moment, we don't see a chance to heal the fractures in the leg; the situation is not simple... It seems that there is no choice but to state that for three years the child will not be able to walk, and throughout the entire period he will undergo arduous physiotherapy treatments, and maybe, and maybe, and maybe, - in three years he will be able to walk a little...'

The harsh news shocked the parents. Until yesterday, the child was healthy and happy, playing around and walking around. And now, in one moment of insufficient attention, he reached a point where he would not be able to walk for three years, and would have to undergo difficult and agonizing treatments, until his leg would return to strength. And who knows if that will happen, and in three years he will indeed start walking, and who knows in what form... Then, when the parents returned home, they decided to act in a different direction than expected. They gathered the children in the living room, and talked to them about how great the "natural" and "simple" miracle of walking on two healthy legs has been proven, and how worthy it is to observe the other "natural" miracles that occur every day, to draw attention to them and to be thankful for them. And we will say thank you to him. Here, I am writing the first note – a kindness that I have been blessed with today, and each of you can also write and give thanks...' From that day on, the family home became a home of thanksgiving. The children sought to see the good, to find an original idea of what to be thankful for today. Every single day they filled out notes, big and small, white and yellow, in round handwriting and square handwriting, big favors and small favors, graces and miracles of all kinds... And every day, the family members took time to give thanks. Take the bundle of notes, look at

them for a few seconds, and thank God for every detail of them. It didn't take a lot of time, just a lot of heart, thought, excitement, and a song of thanksgiving that rises from the bottom of the heart, from the mouths of both the big and the small, every single day...

In the meantime, the boy with the broken leg returned home. He began physiotherapy treatments, and from the very beginning it seemed that he was progressing at a faster pace than expected. The family members continued to thank him for this, for his healthy legs, for the broken legs, for the physiotherapy, for the fall, for the rapid progress - they thanked him for everything ... And in less than a year, the miracle occurred. The child was completely back to himself; he began to walk like a human being. He doesn't need physiotherapy, he doesn't need help, certainly not treatments of any kind. He just walks, walks on both legs, walks and dances in thanksgiving, walks and mouths praising and thanksgiving...

And this story, which we heard from the influential Rabbi Avraham Mordechai Malach shlit"a, as we heard from the boy's father, teaches us how great the power of gratitude is to bring about a real revolution. Let us see before our eyes the child walking on both feet against all odds, how he has overcome all prophecies. Let us see how great is the power of thanksgiving to open a special opening of grace and mercy in heaven, to bring salvation with surprising speed. "And for everything, G-d, we thank You and bless You." When everything goes smoothly and when we experience falls, literally. We don't need reminders about what and how much we should be thankful for; we can look around us and see with our own eyes the goodness and kindness of God that He has bestowed upon us. Let us thank Him from the bottom of our hearts!

## **Ahavat Yisrael II**

We will bring another heartwarming story to teach us what "Ahavat Yisrael" is:

The walls of the room of the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Aharon Leib Shteinman zt"l, have already become accustomed to hearing chilling, moving, or horrific stories from the mouths of those who come to receive the Rosh Yeshiva's advice and blessing. Despite this, it seems that this occasion was unusual by any standard, and all the members of the household teared their eyes at this terrible spectacle...

Rabbi Nachum Bernstein, shlita, came to the Rosh Yeshiva, together with his disciple – a Jew who had recently taken his first steps into the world of Torah and mitzvot, and repented completely. "The Rosh Yeshiva," Rabbi Bernstein introduced his student, "the Jew before us has come a long way from the education he has received to this day – when he is privileged to toil in Torah and elevate in mitzvot and fear of Heaven, and there is still one mitzva that he is unable to fulfill, he has failed in it time and time again..."

Yes, indeed," the author of the teshuva burst into bitter tears, "I did everything I could. I dedicate myself to the labor of the Torah with all my heart and thank God I manage to fulfill most of the mitzvot. Only in this mitzva do I fail to overcome; again and again I fail, and the inclination diverts me from my path, again and again my heart crashes and I cannot stand. May the Rosh Yeshiva teach me what to do, how to cope, maybe some reinforcement advice or something...", he asked for signs in tears.

He expected the Rosh Yeshiva to explain to him the seriousness of the matter, perhaps to give him practical advice, to study in this or that book, to act in one way or another. To his great surprise, he was answered in a different way ... The Rosh Yeshiva rose to his full stature, shook his hand warmly, hugged him and kissed him again and again... Ninety-five years of Torah labor and community leadership stood up and showered love on a recently arrived repentant man, with the Rosh Yeshiva saying to him with tearful eyes: "Oh, how much I envy you, how much I envy you... How many rights do you accumulate every time you do overcome, how much eternal reward awaits you... I'm jealous of you!" The Rosh Yeshiva did not calm down, and shook his hand with endless love: "You are a wonderful tzaddik, a rare tzaddik. I find it so hard to cooperate, and yet I try, I keep trying, I still keep fighting. The Creator of the world is proud of people like you; I am full of jealousy of you!"

Everyone present wiped away tears; not many times did they see the Rosh Yeshiva so excited, so flattering, so encouraging, certainly not a Jew who testifies to himself that he failed time and time again... Finally, the Rosh Yeshiva shook the man's hand again and asked him to re-enter it after a while, because he wanted to meet the great spiritual hero again...

A few months later, Rabbi Bernstein returned with the same Jew and entered the Rosh Yeshiva, who received them warmly and remembered the previous meeting well. The Rosh Yeshiva was interested in his well-being and how the struggle was going, and was happy to hear that there had been a significant improvement, that the Jew was already coping much better, although he still failed from time to time... And once again, the moving spectacle is repeated. The Rosh Yeshiva gets up from his chair, hugs and kisses him with warmth and boundless love. "Blessed are you, how good your lot is" – the Rosh Yeshiva praises him, "I am happy that I am privileged to meet a person like you! You manage to overcome, you fight like a lion, I'm proud of you!" - the Rosh Yeshiva sits down and reads excitedly, shakes his hand warmly and invites him to visit again in a while...

The third time he entered, the Jew told him that he had completely elevated himself, that he was standing firm in his mind and in all the commandments of his religion. This time it was impossible to contain the spectacle; the Rosh Yeshiva rose from his chair and

kissed him on the forehead, "You are not a holy Jew, you are the Holy of Holies!" – the Rosh Yeshiva called out to him with endless excitement – "There are no words to describe, no words really!" And so, with sincere love of Israel, without a word of criticism, without reinforcement or advice, only with a shower of love, the Rosh Yeshiva succeeded in giving him the strength to overcome his attempts, to defeat his inclination. Because love of Israel is a sure recipe for influencing others, the way of love always wins, is beneficial, uplifting, and influential!

This discovery is revealed in the book *Likutei Amrim-Tanya* in chapter 32, that the way to influence a person and bring him closer to the Torah passes through the path of love of Israel, and thus he writes: "Even those who are far from the Torah of God and His service... It is necessary to be pledged in bonds of love." Because love of Israel is the way to influence, to elevate, to give strength and coping abilities to others! Let us adopt this path, because we all want to have the ability to influence others, to elevate them, to educate our children. To succeed in this, how worthwhile it is to choose the path of love of Israel, to see the good part of our fellow human beings and to connect to them with true love, and then we will be able to speak to them from a place of love and affection, and influence them for the better.

***If I were a 'smart enemy' – I would lose!*** [On the contrary, give it in our hearts]

On one occasion, after the rabbi of Ponevezh had returned from abroad, he stood by the podium in the yeshiva, took out a large check from his pocket, showed it to the young men, and said, "Let me tell you the story of this check:

I was walking around Frankfurt to raise money. I went to the shtibelach and went from person to person to ask for his alms. And then a Jew, Rabbi Yaakov Rosenheim, came up to me and told me that it was not "honorable Torah" to collect money in this way. He invited me to his room, and in my presence he invited me to an appointment with wealthy gentlemen, as is the custom of important rabbis, and not like some schnorer. He called one of the rich people and told him that a great ponevizer was here. And that he was interested in meeting with him. The rich man said that he leaves the city the next morning with a train that leaves at eight o'clock, and he agrees that the rabbi will wait for him at the platform at 15 to 8 o'clock. The next day, the rabbi of Ponevezh relates, I woke up a little late, and realized that if I went to pray in public, I wouldn't have time to get to the train platform on time. I said to myself: 'I came here to collect money and not for myself. I collect for the needs of Torah, Torah rabbis, and I will pray once alone. But I immediately said to myself: 'I can't miss a public prayer because of this! A person has not yet been born who has been harmed because he listened to the voice of the Holy One, blessed be He! And I went to pray in public.

I finished praying at 8:30! There was no point in going to the dock... I decided, nevertheless, to make an effort; I went to the platform and arrived at 8:40... It was not more than three minutes before the rich man came running, and, panting, he began to apologize to me for being late, explaining that he was late for the eight o'clock train and was therefore on the nine o'clock train. He took a check out of his pocket, and wrote down a sum on it that was enough for the Ponevezh yeshiva for six months... "This is the check you see here in front of you," the rabbi said. And he added: "I didn't come to show you the check to show that I didn't miss a public prayer! It's a simple thing, there's no need to show it! I came only to tell you that if I were a wise guy praying alone to get to the platform at a quarter to eight, I would wait there at most until eight, until the train departed, and then leave the place! It is a shame that I would not wait there until a quarter to nine! I would have told myself that there must have been changes in the rich man's plans, and I would have returned here without this check."

"Trust in the Lord and do good" – a person who lives in faith and trust in God, knows that only God runs the world, can live a happy life, a life of doing good, with the clear knowledge that he will gain nothing if he is a "wise enemy" and runs, and fights, and fights, and maneuvers, and goes crazy, and does this, and does not do this... "Trust in God and do good"! Let us conclude with the words of the Rashba, who explains the words of the Gemara in Tractate Berachot [10:] that in the Shemoneh Esrei prayer, the worshipper must direct his legs and stand them close together, by which a person comes to imply that as far as he is concerned, he is unable to do anything! His legs are bound, tied! He cannot bring the beneficial closer or remove the harmful, but everything is out of God's hands.]

***"If the Lord wills, I will be there"*** (and the sweet of the light)

Sometimes it seems that such a corrected life is a pipe dream... The vast majority of the Jewish people are far from observing the mitzvot, and the opinion of the Torah receives no attention at all, but despite the seemingly gloomy situation, we must know that there is no room for despair at all!

Rabbi Friedman of Rexim related in this context that he had the opportunity to travel to the United States via Europe in previous years, when the flight tickets had an appendix intended for tearing off by the clerk. He found himself standing behind Rabbi Yaakov Galinsky, shlita, and now he saw that the clerk was glancing at the card, and when he looked at him with a stern look in his eyes, it lit up to him: "You can't get on, there's a signature missing..." Rabbi Yaakov did not understand English, but he also understood the problem. He turned to Rabbi Friedman and said to him: "Tell him that if Hashem wills, I will be there..." Rabbi Friedman said nothing, fearing what he was going to do, approached and handed his card to the clerk, and with a sigh of relief he saw that the

clerk had approved his entry. "I prayed Ma'ariv in a minyan that was organized there" – Rabbi Friedman continues in his story – "and then I boarded the plane, and to my amazement I discovered Rabbi Yaakov Yashuv there... When he saw me, he said, "Well, I told you that if God wills, I'll be here? Do you see that you must not despair? Sit here, and I will tell you where I drew this faith."

I studied in Białystok - he began and said - after the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement, Lithuania remained free, but soon the Russians occupied the place and began to harass the yeshiva students, and it was not long before we were all put on the train on the way to Siberia. We traveled for ten days or more as animals... The Russians were not allowed to leave the car for even the most basic needs, and the suffering was indescribable. Then the train stopped in Siberia, and we realized that it could be worse. We had been in Siberia for fifteen years, imprisoned for no apparent reason. Little did we know that imprisonment in this frozen corner would save us from certain death in the gas chambers of the accursed Nazis, who, in Operation Barbarossa, conquered all of Russia as far as Stalingrad.

In all those long and agonizing years, I had one dream that always accompanied me - one day, so I dreamed, I would get out of here and then meet my mother... I'll kiss her hand and say, "Mom, my mother, thank you so much for saving your last slice of bread to hire me a good teacher." But when I finally arrived in Israel, I didn't meet my mother, nor my father, nor my brothers, nor my sisters – everyone, they all remained there, silent and frozen forever... When I learned of the tragedy, I didn't want to live anymore. I didn't know what to do with myself, and I was shrouded in utter despair. Finally, someone advised me to go to Chazon Ish, and I listened to his advice and left. The Chazon Ish heard everything I had to say, and said to me: I want to tell you a story:

In Lithuania lived a quiet and calm Jew, who made a living in commerce. Every year the Jew would borrow a large sum of money, travel to the fair in Kovno, where he would replenish all his stores of goods, and throughout the year he would sell the goods he bought, cover the loan he took, and provide for his household with dignity. One year, after taking care of himself on a loan, the Jew fell ill and could no longer go to the fair as usual. He had no choice but to call his wife and say, "Look, there are things I can't give up, and yet I can't go, so I ask you to take the money and go in my place." The woman agreed, listened attentively to all the instructions he gave her, took the money and tied it up in two bundles, put it in her bag - and left.

The commotion that greeted this woman, who had never left the village, caused her to lose her temper, and she fell and fainted. For a few minutes she lay like this, until her spirit returned to her, and knowing that she had no other choice, she got up and began to walk. She walked among the stalls until she found a seller, who seemed to her to

trust his word, began to bargain with him, and when they both reached Emek Shaveh, she opened her bag to get the money out of there, and to her horror she discovered that... There is no money... Where's the money? Her hands trembled as she spilled the contents of the bag on the ground, but all the searches yielded nothing. No money. Apparently, when she fainted, the bundle fell, and someone maliciously took advantage of the situation, took it, and left... The money is not mine at all! - The woman began to cry out - what will happen to the hungry children and the sick husbands?! Her shouts attracted attention from the rest of the audience, and it wasn't long before credible testimony came about a man who was seen picking up the money. When they reached him, the woman asked him, "Did you find the money?" "Yes," replied the man, "but he is mine..." "He was wrapped in two bundles" - the woman gave the signs. "Yes," the finder agreed, "but the halacha is that a person who finds money in a city where most of the non-Jews are his, for two reasons: one, because it turns out that the loser is a non-Jew, and the second, because the loser apparently despaired, because a wrong person would find it and never return it. And if this is the halakha, then the money I found belongs to me by law! And there is no reason for me to give it back to you." The woman shouted, "Have mercy on me, the money is not mine!" But it is borrowed. Finally, the two of them went to Rabbi Yitzchak Elchanan Spector, the rabbi of Kovno. The rabbi heard the woman's claims, and then the words of the other who claimed: "She cries out that I should have mercy on her, and of course, I feel sorry for her, but no more than I feel sorry for my own children... Heaven forbid I would touch that is not mine, but property that according to Halacha is mine – there is no reason to find mercy on it... I have four teenage girls in my house, and I believe that mercy for them precedes pity for that strange woman." Rabbi Yitzchak Elchanan instructed him to return the money immediately and said that he would later explain to him why, and indeed, after he returned it, he said to him: "The whole reason for the law of 'these are his' is because the husband has certainly already given up, but in this case the money is not the wife's, but her husband's, and since her husband does not even know that he has lost the money, she is not the owner of the house because of her despair at all! And in any case, the money is not yours!"

At this point, the Chazon Ish raised his holy eyes to the broken young man in front of him and said: "Are you the owner of the house to despair? Are you the master of the world? After all, the world belongs to God, and as long as He is the owner, there is no room for despair at all!" "By virtue of this" – Rabbi Yaakov Galinsky concluded his story – "I gathered the faith and confidence that if the Holy One, blessed be He, wants me to get on the plane, there is no room for despair! He is the owner – and He is the one who decides!" We also need to know that there is no room to despair about his situation; let the Creator of the world "arrange" the world in the best possible way, and focus on

what we need to do – knowing that we have no life without the holy Torah, and true devotion to our Father in heaven.

## **Faith**

Adam entered the barbershop and in the middle of the haircut, he and the barber began to talk about a variety of topics, they came to a topic that discussed the existence of G-d.

"I don't believe that there is a G-d in the world," said the barber. "Why are you saying that?" the man asked. "It's enough to go out into the street and see G-d there!"

Tell me, if G-d existed, do you think there would be sick people? That there were abandoned people? If God existed, there would be no sorrow and pain!! I just can't imagine one loving God who would have allowed all these atrocities to happen. The man thought for a moment, but he preferred to keep quiet so as not to start an argument.

He got up to the door, was about to go out into the street, and then he saw a homeless man lying right at the entrance to the barbershop; he looked very neglected with unruly hair and a thick beard.

The man returned to the barber and said: "I don't believe there are books!!" "Did the barber ask?" It is illogical to say so...! After all, just a second ago I told you! Nope!! Books don't exist!! Because if they existed, there would be no people in the world with long hair and a thick beard, like this person outside."

Oh. - The barber answered - "It's not that there are no books, it's what happens when people don't come to me." "Exactly!" the man answered, "that's the point. G-d certainly exists, but that's what happens to people who don't come to Him and don't turn to Him for help. This is where all the sorrow and pain in the world comes from!!"

## **Faith 2**

Once, a severe drought fell on the country. It lasted for a whole year, followed by another year. When it seemed that the third year was going to be dry and without rain, all the villagers decided to turn to the great sage who was alone in the mountains and ask him to do something to bring rain. We organized a delegation that went out to look for their supplications so that he would pray for them and do everything in his power to save them and their families from destruction. And it will cause some rain to fall from the sky... The wise man looked at them seriously. "Sorry, I can't do any miracles for you. All the members of the delegation immediately protested: "It's not true how you say such a thing; of course we have faith. If we didn't have faith in Your power,

would we come to You to ask for Your help? The wise man answered them: "If you really had faith in me, you should have come here with an umbrella in your hands.

## **Belief in the Creator of the World**

The famous Chassid Rabbi Menachem Mendel Poterpas zt"l (known as Rabbi Mendel), who was one of the greatest and most important Lubavitcher Chassidim who during his life sought to escape from the Soviet Union (Russia) after World War II, but was arrested by the Soviets and sentenced for treason to ten years in prison, which he served in labor camps in Siberia (the cold in Siberia sometimes reached minus 55 degrees Celsius!) and by the grace of Heaven after many events, After years of hardship and suffering, he immigrated to Britain, and later served as an influential yeshiva in Kfar Chabad.

He was asked how and with what strength he managed to get through those difficult events in frozen Siberia, and how he did not lose his faith in the One who said and the world was, and on the contrary, his faith was strengthened by these difficult trials. Upon hearing the question, he opened and told them an incident that he had seen with his own eyes in Russia, and from this he took an awakening to the service of God and strengthening in times of trial.

One day our acquaintance noticed a non-Jew who was climbing a very high mountain. The climb took many hours; when he reached the top of the mountain, he stuck an enormous piece of iron at the top of the mountain with a very large and very long rope knot on it. The next day he saw the same gentile again, but this time he climbed a second high mountain near him.

When he reached the top of the mountain, he did as he had done the day before, and there he stuck an iron on the top of the mountain and tied the other end of the rope to that piece of iron, when there was a very deep rift between the mountains and in the eyes of the people who were following his action, he climbed on the rope and despite the great distance he passed bravely from one mountain to the other, with all those standing at the foot of the mountain looking in wonder at how he managed to do such a thing.

The next day he came again, and at the sight of him the people who lived in the village came out. There he informed everyone that he would do what he had done yesterday, that is, he would move quickly to the mountain by climbing the rope. But the people begged him not to risk his life again. For it is not every day that a miracle occurs. But the man shut his ears. And with courage he climbed again to the top of the mountain and successfully crossed the rope quickly to the mountain.

The next day he informed the people again that he was going to walk on the rope again, but this time he would add to what he had done and pull a wagon on the thin rope, asking them if they believed he could do so. Some of those around him replied that if he succeeded in doing the unbelievable and crossing the rope from one end to the other with great courage, it stands to reason that he could climb on the thin rope and pass a wagon over it.

He was delighted with their answer. But he continued to ask them, "Is there any of your sons who agree to sit in the wagon when I drag it on the rope from one end of the mountain to the other?"

It didn't take long. Suddenly they saw the man climbing the high mountain with a little boy walking next to him. And they dragged a wagon and went up the mountain. And it came to pass when they reached the top of the mountain, the boy cheerfully and happily entered the wagon, and the man dragged the wagon on the rope and managed to cross the abyss successfully, and some people wondered: Who was the little boy who agreed to take the risk and get into the wagon, that it was dragged on the rope and could fall into a great abyss with any slight deviation?!

When the boy came down, they asked him about it. How could he not be afraid to do such a thing, but the boy answered them simply and confidently, "The man who passed through the rope is my father, and if he ordered me to sit in the wagon. I was sure that he knew clearly that he could cross the rope with the wagon without any risk. Otherwise he wouldn't have put me in such a place."

The Chassid concluded: "From this story I learned something sublime. After all, the child trusted his father so much that he was not at all afraid of depriving him of his life because "my father can't do anything that is not good for me," and what is more, this is a stupid non-Jewish father whose abilities are limited, and he could certainly have found his death together with his son, on one of the sides of the mountain. And yet the son enters the wagon with confidence, joy, and unambiguous cheerfulness." That my father is the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, who fills the whole earth with His glory, and He is the One who is able and has all the powers. And there is no limit to his strength and strength. Why should I be afraid of the bitter events and the difficult trials that befall me? After all, it is the will of the Creator that if it were not for His will, it would not have been done, and if so, I am sure that everything is in my favor and this is what makes me happy and go through all the crises with my head held high .