

SHALOM

MISHMERES HASHOLOM MAGAZINE

This year!
Bein Hazemanim
programs
in your own home!

Shalom Hour

P.8

FAULTY DENTAL WORK

ARE YOU ALLOWED TO SUBMIT A COMPLAINT ABOUT FAULTY DENTAL WORK IN A CLINIC THAT HAS AN ARRANGEMENT WITH KUPAT CHOLIM, TO COMPEL THE CLINIC MANAGERS TO GIVE A REFUND?

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ONE CLOSES EVERY EVENING AT 8:00 ON THE DOT, EVEN IF THERE ARE CUSTOMERS BEGGING TO COME IN.

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FROM THE REBBETZIN'S DESK



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SPREAD PEACE, SHEMIRAS HALASHON,
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A woman called and asked to consult with me. I said I'd be happy to receive her, but it was a particularly packed day. The woman begged me to make some time for her; the matter couldn't wait. After pondering how I could accommodate her, I decided to reschedule an appointment. "Fine," I said. "Come at five." If I expected to hear effusive words of thanks, it didn't happen. "I can't come then. I volunteer. ..." she said. Hmm... Maybe I could give up on attending the neighbors' *chuppah*. And what was her reaction? "Oh, no. I'm going shopping with my sister at seven thirty..."

You can imagine how I felt. I wanted to say "No" and that's it. I'd done what I could; I'd offered to change plans. Doesn't she understand that if she needs me, then *she* is the one who needs to be flexible??

But then, I caught myself. *This is precisely the opportunity to act with middas chassidus* – I said to myself. I don't owe her anything and I'd already tried as hard as I could. But I hadn't yet gone *lifnim mishuras hadin*.

I decided to give up my afternoon rest and receive her at a time that was convenient for her.

Middas chassidus, the rung of the ladder of *Mesilas Yesharim* that we reached this month – is the core of all the *middos* we worked on last year from *Tomer Devorah*. If we think a moment, we'll find countless examples presenting themselves every day to act *lifnim mishuras hadin*.

A co-worker asks you to stay an extra hour – instead of her – and you debate whether to do it. It demands of you to be flexible and change plans. And you're not sure she deserves it, because she---

You make up a price with a seamstress, a babysitter, a taxi driver, or a plumber. In the end, the work turns out to be a lot more than planned: the fabric was hard to deal with; the baby cried and needed to be held; traffic doubled the travel time; and the pipe replacement extended to the neighbors' apartment. You aren't halachically obligated to add to the price that had been set. But perhaps it would be proper to act *lifnim mishuras hadin*?

Sometimes a more significant matter is involved – for example, a delicate interaction with new *mechutanim*. Here, too, you may not be the least bit obligated to accede to their request, but perhaps it would be worth making the effort so as to maintain a positive atmosphere? So that the *simchah* will be complete?

When Rochel Imeinu gave over the *simanim* to her sister, Leah – she, too, was not obligated to do so. She acted *lifnim mishuras hadin*. And, to this day, we ask Hashem to remember this *zechus* of hers for our benefit.

Let's follow in the footsteps of Mama Rochel. Let's try, at least once a day, to apply this conduct of *middas chassidus*. *B'ezras Hashem*, we will be *zocheh* that in Shamayim, *middah k'neged middah*, we, too, will be treated *lifnim mishuras hadin*.

Sari Wertzberger

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What is the difference
between a baal chessed
and a "doormat"?
 I looked for work. I was
 found to be suitable.
 They want me. What do
 I care about all their
 politics?
 The Rav asked: What
 kind of Jews do you
 want to be: Grade A,
 Grade B, or Grade C?



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HARAV HAGAON R' MENACHEM MENDEL FUCHS SHLITA

REPORTING A WORKER WHO NEGLECTS HIS RESPONSIBILITIES

Question: One of the workers on our staff steadily neglects his responsibilities and causes damage and loss to the system. They warned him many times, but there was no change; he always finds flimsy excuses to evade penalty. At some point, I felt that I am not permitted to ignore it and I complained to the higher-ups about him. Somehow, he heard about it, and he wrote me a very sharp and aggressive letter with terrible words about how guilty I will be if he is fired because of me. Did I do the right thing by complaining about him, and what should I do now?

Answer: If the subject indeed neglects his job and causes damage and loss to the system, and was also warned several times, yet continues, it was permissible for the questioner to inform the higher-ups about his conduct, for the benefit of the system. The *heter* applies only on condition that his intentions were purely for this *to'eles*, not for personal interest, and that he did not exaggerate.

Regarding the biting accusations that the worker wrote to him: when someone unjustifiably curses his fellow Jew, these curses are liable to rebound on the curser himself, *R"l*, as explained in *Gemara Sanhedrin* (48b-49a).¹

Therefore, the questioner has nothing to fear; he should just *daven* for that worker that his curses should not harm himself. May Hakadosh Baruch Hu bring peace upon his nation, Yisrael.

LASHON HARA ABOUT SOMEONE YOU DON'T KNOW

Question: It's generally accepted that one is permitted to speak *lashon hara* about someone he "doesn't know." But, practically speaking, the term "doesn't know" is broad. I want to understand more precisely: If you speak, for example, about the mother of the secretary in our dental clinic – a woman that there is no chance anyone will know or meet, but there are clear signs as to her identity – is that called *lashon hara*?

Answer: We've elaborated in the past in this column about when there is an *issur lashon hara* even when we do not mention the details of the subject.

According to what we explained, it comes out that as long as the listener can easily verify who the subject is, based on the details that were mentioned, the speaker definitely violates the prohibition of *lashon hara*. All the more so in our case, where the speaker gave clear details of how to verify who the subject is – certainly the speaker was guilty of *lashon hara*. And, according to what we explained there, even in cases where the listener can verify who

the subject is, but not so easily, the speaker may still be guilty of speaking *lashon hara*.

COMPLAINING ABOUT FAULTY DENTAL WORK

Question: Less than a year ago, I had dental work done by an Arab dentist from Jordan who works in a clinic that has an arrangement with the Kupat Cholim. Unfortunately, the crown she put in is already starting to break and I am absolutely unwilling to accept the clinic manager's offer for a new crown at no cost; I want a refund so that I can go have the job done at a more reliable clinic.

Am I allowed to submit a complaint to my Kupat Cholim office about the faulty work, so as to compel the clinic managers to respond to my demand?

Answer: The questioner may submit a complaint to her Kupat Cholim office about unsuccessful treatment at a clinic that has an arrangement with the Kupah, even though the complaint isn't actually against the dentist who treated her, since the dentist merely does the measurements and sends the data to a lab, where they prepare the crown.

In any case, complaining about the work done at the clinic will not be *lashon hara*, for two reasons:

There is a *heter* of *to'eles*, in the hope that the Kupah administration will convince the clinic management to give the patient her money back, instead of their offer to do a new crown for free (even though it is unclear if she has a right to make this demand; it depends on the regulations, the clinic's agreement with the clients and other things).

In every area, there are liable to be failures; nothing is perfect in this world. At a dental clinic, too, there is liable to be a rare case of faulty treatment, and this does not indicate a flaw in the clinic, especially since we are speaking of a clinic that apparently is not of the highest level. The fact is that the clinic continues functioning and patients keep coming and getting care... Therefore, it is not *lashon hara* to report that the dental care or crown was unsuccessful, since this is an isolated case.

However, though it is permissible for the questioner to submit a complaint to the Kupat Cholim, she should complain only about the actual faulty treatment and should be careful not to accuse particular people of being responsible for the failure (the dentist, technician, clinic management for employing such a dentist, and so on), and also should not say that in general, the clinic does not function properly, etc.

¹ See *Gemara Baba Kama* (93a), "*Hamoser din al chaveiro*" etc.; and *Shulchan Aruch CM* (422); see also *Zohar Hakadosh, parashas Tazria* (46b) on the *pasuk*, "*Netzor leshoncha meira*" as well as *Zohar Hakodesh* vol. 3 *parashas Kedoshim* (85a) on the *pasuk*, "*Lo sekallel cheres*."

לע"נ הרה"ח ר' שבתי זאב בן הרה"ח ר' מנחם מנדל ז"ל זוג' מרת חיה דבורה בת הרה"צ ר' משולם זושא ע"ה



דבר גדולים

THE ZUTSHKER REBBE SHLITA

IT IS BROUGHT IN THE NAME OF RAV NAFTALI MIRUPSHITZ, ZY" A, AUTHOR OF ZERA KODESH: THE ORAL TORAH BEGINS WITH THE LETTER MEM – "MEI'EIMASAI," AND ENDS WITH THE LETTER MEM – "B'SHALOM." TO SAY THE LETTER MEM, YOU NEED TO CLOSE THE MOUTH. THIS TEACHES US THAT IN ORDER TO SUCCEED IN LEARNING THE HEILIGE TORAH, THE MOUTH MUST BE KEPT CLOSED AND HOLY. THE NAME "MISHMERES HASHOLOM," WHICH ALSO BEGINS AND ENDS WITH A MEM, SIMILARLY HINTS THAT IN ORDER TO BE B'SHALOM, ONE NEEDS TO KEEP HIS MOUTH CLOSED.

THANK YOU TO ALL THE MEZAKEI HARABIM AT MISHMERES HASHOLOM WHO WORK SO HARD TO SPREAD PEACE IN THE WORLD, AND ESPECIALLY IN OUR TIME, WHEN WE NEED SUCH RACHAMEI SHAMAYIM. THEIR WORK SERVES AS PROTECTION FOR KLAL YISRAEL. MAY ALL THE PARTICIPANTS MERIT ALL THE GOOD HASHPA'OS AND MAY WE SEE THE GEULAH SHELEIMAH VERY SOON. AMEN!

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STORY

RACHEL T.

A HALF THAT IS A WHOLE WORLD



"Harav...This decision is the outcome of many years of thought."

The elderly man's hand on the black leather case trembles a bit. His wife, sitting beside him, pulls out a few documents from the folder.

The Rosh Yeshiva straightens his eyeglasses and takes the sheaf of pages in his hand. The two follow his gaze as it moves from line to line and watch the wrinkle of thought deepen between his eyes.

One of the documents states explicitly that the couple has an only son.

"I see that you have a son." The Rosh Yeshiva understands that there is no alternative but to bring up this very point.

"In America, Harav. We haven't seen him for more than ten years." A sigh bursts from the old man's heart.

"He doesn't always remember even to call to wish a *"Shanah tovah,"* his wife adds, her fingers nervously twisting the ends of the embroidered tablecloth.

An empathetic silence. The Rav shares the pain of parents who raised a child and loved him, and now, when they approach their 80s and need help and support – they remain alone.

"And yet..." The Rosh Yeshiva's words are gentle and caressing. "I think that even so, it is not advisable to exclude him from the inheritance altogether."

The elderly man tightens his grip on the black case, as if trying to draw strength from the financial capabilities that it represents.

"We thought about it, not just once, but for many long and teary nights, Harav," he says in a tremulous voice. "He ignores us. Ignores our tears. He cut off ties with Hashem, too; he lives like a total *goy*. He doesn't deserve a single dollar." The cutting pain is hard for the Rav to see.

"There is no question that he does not deserve it..." the Rosh Yeshiva agrees. "And your decision to donate the money to the Yeshiva is a great *zechus*. However, I think

that it would be worthwhile splitting your assets in two, half for our Yeshiva – and that half is plenty. It will put the Yeshiva on its feet, *b'ezras Hashem*. But also half for the son in America."

There are moments that are beyond words. The elderly man rises to his feet and extends a shaking hand to the Rosh Yeshiva. "You win, Harav," he says. The half in question is in the millions of dollars. One cannot help but feel profound admiration for this golden advice, which is above any consideration of personal gain.

And, yes, also to accept it.

All the *bnei hayeshiva* escorted the *aron* of the wife, who passed away not long after the signing of that will. The Yeshiva staff took care of all the burial details and stood by the elderly man, who remained alone. The son did not bother coming to Eretz Yisrael to escort his mother on her final journey.

Alone, he sat *shiva*. Neighbors came in, as did friends, people who *davened* with him, and of course, the staff of the Yeshiva, who had already become almost like family.

When the elderly man spotted the figure of the Rosh Yeshiva, who'd come to comfort him in his grief, he lowered his voice, composed and practical as always. "Harav, the will we signed a year ago..."

"It is secure in my safe," the Rosh Yeshiva calmed him. "You can rest easy," he added.

"And the other half??!!" Suddenly, the gnawing indecision, dripping with pain and tears, rose from oblivion. "The Rav sees; his mother passed away, and he stayed there in America. It doesn't interest him in the least..."

The grief is fresh. A piercing, unimaginable sorrow stands in the room. Streams of empathy and understanding flow from the Rosh Yeshiva's gentle eyes towards the elderly man in his low *aveilus* chair, and still, he shakes his head from side to side.

No. Even now, after the errant son has

demonstrated his lack of interest in the broken parents he left behind with callous disregard, the Rosh Yeshiva does not think that the will ought to be changed. A large apartment in the center of town, pension funds, and fat bank accounts – all these will be split up 50-50 when the time comes; half for Torah support in the big, famous Yerushalmi Yeshiva, and half to the heartless son in America.

The days of *shiva* passed. A large *matzeivah* was erected on the fresh grave, and the elderly man, who seemed to age several years all at once, did not remain alone. He became an inseparable part of the Yeshiva – on weekdays and on Shabbos, at times of routine as well as times when he needed help or support. When his health condition began to decline, it was self-understood that responsibility for his care would fall on the Yeshiva administration. The Rosh Yeshiva appointed a special staff to attend to him devotedly, see to his needs, and make his days as pleasant as possible.

"The will, Harav..." Even in the wheelchair, his mind was clear as a bell, and the pain for the son who had gone astray did not let up. Oy, "Do not cast us off in our old age..." It is the natural course of things for dedicated children to care for a beloved father. It is the fulfillment of *mitzvas kibbud horim* by caring children, who understand the great *zechus*. Here, it's true that he was receiving care and aid from the heart, but from strangers... while he had a son of his own who was apparently sitting and counting the days until he would lay hands on the inheritance... "The will... It's not too late to change it. As long as I'm alive, it's still possible..."

But the Rosh Yeshiva explained that it is a *zechus* for them to help him, an opportunity for the Yeshiva staff to express a modicum of *hakaras hatov* – and he had not changed his mind about the 50-50 division.

In the end, the aged and longing father, too, passed away, alone, with only his friends from the Yeshiva around his bed. Again, responsibility for the funeral and the burial fell on the Yeshiva staff. But this time,



as expected, the son from America suddenly appeared in the flesh.

And, needless to say, it wasn't the grief for this dear father that drew him from across the ocean---

"Harav, we need to go to court, urgently!" said the lawyer who dealt with the old man's will. "The son who landed here from America has already managed to get an inheritance order and to empty out his parents' bank accounts. Now he is busy moving the apartment to his name." He rummaged in his briefcase and pulled out the signed will.

A nod of attention from the Rosh Yeshiva. A brief glance at the pages with the logo of the lawyer's office at the top, and the signatures of the couple *a"h* at the bottom.

"We're talking about millions, Harav. And there is no reason that this heartless fellow should get them. Even the half that will go to him according to the will is a lot more than he deserves. I want to go to court already tomorrow morning and put a confiscation order on the property. We'll meet this errant son in court---

The Rav's head, swinging decisively from right to left and back, stopped him in midsentence. "I'm afraid to take such a step..." the Rav said, stroking his graying beard.

"There's nothing to worry about, Harav," intervened the Yeshiva's financial manager. "The law is on our side. We'll win the case."

But the Rosh Yeshiva thought otherwise.

"My fear is of the *chillul Hashem* that is liable to emerge from it," was his calm explanation. "Just imagine what the media will do with this story. The son will claim that we extorted his aging father, that we just covered ourselves with a show of helping the elderly couple in order to lay hands on their money..."

The lawyer was stunned. The financial manager was struck dumb. But the Rosh Yeshiva was resolute. No suit would be brought to court by the Yeshiva.

The Yeshiva staff did not come to meet with the son in court, but as for the son... he came unexpectedly to meet with the Rosh Yeshiva---

He was totally blown away when he understood that the legally binding will, whose existence he knew of full well, had been secreted in a drawer in the Yeshiva office and not presented to the court. He had come to meet the people standing behind this inconceivable and noble conduct.

He came just for a minute, to have a peek, but he was captivated by the radiance and decided to stay...

A year later, when they went up to the father's *kever*, the son who stood there had already changed his style of clothing, as well as the garments of his *neshamah*. With him were his two sons, who were also continuing in their grandfather's path, the way of "*Yisrael Saba*" ---

קדושה

יראת
החטא

ענווה

חסידות

טהרה

פרישות

נקיות

זריזות

זהירות

מסילת ישרים:



חסידות – Doing More Than Required

One who has a true love for the Creator will not suffice with fulfilling the obligations that have been placed on every Jew. He will not excuse himself and say, "Enough. I'm not obligated to do any more." Rather, he will try to add and do more than required in every area where he can bring *nachas ruach* to Hashem.

Doing More Than Required in Matters Related to Shemiras Halashon

The Torah obligates us in many interpersonal mitzvos and shows us how to behave towards our fellows. But in addition, there is the path of "*lifnim mishuras hadin*, beyond the letter of the law." Even if we are not required to be *mevater*, even if it is absolutely permissible to follow the halachic requirement and no more – the *middah* of *chassidus* means elevating ourselves and choosing the path of "*lifnim mishuras hadin*."



STOP AND THINK

B. HARAMATI

EXPANDING THE CIRCLE



In the local shopping center, there are two shops, side by side. One closes every evening at 8:00 on the dot, even if there are customers begging to come in. The door is locked at eight and that's that. And the other? There, closing time is no more than a vague recommendation. As long as customers keep knocking, the store remains open.

What lies behind this difference? It's very simple: The first shop is managed by a hired salesman. He finishes his shift and just wants to get home. He has no inclination to give up his own time and stay on. The other shop is managed by the owner's son. Every customer who walks in makes him happy and he is willing to devote more and more of his own time to increase sales.

This is also the difference between someone who does his mitzvos at the minimum – what is required by halachah and no more – and the “chassid,” who is eager to go *lifnim mishuras hadin*, beyond the letter of the law. This shows that he longs to give more and more *nachas ru'ach* to his Father in Shamayim.

In matters of *bein adam laMakom*, this conduct of *chassidus* also keeps a person from slipping into sin, since it distances him from the actual prohibition.

And how about in matters of *bein adam l'chaveiro*?

PUTTING ONE'S EGO ON HOLD

The ability to act towards others in *lifnim mishuras hadin* mode – with true devotion and concern for him and his welfare, in keeping with *middas chassidus* – calls for unique inner strength. It is natural for people to think first of themselves and their own interests. Here, the person is called upon to “freeze” his “self” and act with maximum caring towards those around him. How is this done?

Let's look at ourselves for a moment. In spite of the basic egocentric nature of “looking out for Number One,” we also care about our close circle: nuclear family, extended family, and close

friends. Did you ever see what it looks like when there is a distribution of items for free or almost for free? We grab whatever we can – for ourselves, for the married daughters, for our sister who lives in a different neighborhood, maybe even for a cousin who lives nearby. In fact, even for the neighbor next door... It's human nature to include his close circle in his “self.”

If so, all we need to do is to expand the circle a little more, to increase our genuine love for others. The natural outcome will be that the circle of “me” will grow. Then we will want to benefit others as much as we can, even when it is not our halachic obligation... In other words: to act towards them with *middas hachassidus*.

WHO WILL PAY FOR THE CALL TO AMERICA?

A *yungerman* from Eretz Yisrael was faced with a complex halachic *she'eilah* and it occurred to him to call the *posek hador* at that time, Maran Hagaon Rav Moshe Feinstein *zt"l*. It was ten in the morning in Eretz Yisrael, and the *yungerman* did not grasp that in New York at that moment, the clock read: three a.m....

He dialed, and Rav Moshe picked up on the other end. The man presented his question and awaited an answer, but Rav Moshe apologized and asked him to hold on for a few minutes.

The *yungerman* was stupefied. Rav Moshe?? He had the entire Torah at his fingertips. He had mastered all of its secrets. How could it be that Rav Moshe seemingly needed time to look into *sefarim* in order to answer his question??

A minute went by, and then another few. Finally the voice of Rav Moshe Feinstein was heard on the New York end of the line. He gave a clear and sharp response to the caller. Then he asked for the *yungerman's* name and his address in Eretz Hakodesh. The caller replied, of course, and his bewilderment grew even greater...

A week later, an envelope with American

stamps peeked out of the *yungerman's* mail slot. Inside was a check written and signed by the Posek Hador, Rav Moshe Feinstein, along with a brief explanatory note. “When you called with your *she'eilah*, I needed to say *Birkos HaTorah* before answering. I knew that you would be willing to pay the cost of the phone call, including the waiting time, in order to hear the response. Still, I felt obligated to return the cost of the five-minute wait on an expensive trans-Atlantic call, since it was actually for my benefit, so I should not speak in learning before the *berachah*...”

A powerful example of *middas chassidus!*

THE SHADOW WALKING BEHIND US

The Gemara (*Bava Metzia* 88a) says: “Yerushalayim was destroyed only because they established matters according to *din Torah*,” meaning that they did not act *lifnim mishuras hadin*. The Mefarshim ask: Is it an *aveirah* to act only according to the *din*? And besides, the generation of the Churban surely had far greater and more serious sins! Why were they punished specifically for this?!”

Rather, explains the Chofetz Chaim in *Shaar Hazechirah* (ch.2), if the people in that generation would have acted towards others in a manner of *lifnim mishuras hadin*, they would have been *zocheh* that in Shamayim, too, they would have been treated the same way. But since they insisted on everything being precisely according to law, they, too, were treated exactly as they deserved. They were punished for their many sins and subjected to the Churban.

This is what the *pasuk* in *Tehillim* is telling us: “Hashem is your Guardian, Hashem is your protective Shadow at your right hand.” Hashem is your shadow. Precisely as you behave towards those around you – He behaves towards you.

Does any doubt remain in our hearts whether or not it pays for us to act *lifnim mishuras hadin*??!

THE STAGE IS YOURS



DID YOU SEE A YESHUAH? CALL AND BE MEZAKEH HARABIM. TO HEAR AND RECORD YESHUAH STORIES FOR WOMEN, CALL 072-337-2212

CUTTING THE RED TAPE

I'd like to share with you a difficult experience we went through with our third child.

It was an ordinary summer day. I stepped out into the street, holding tight to the small hand of my five-year-old, Yonasan. The street was bustling, with lots of buses, cars, and pedestrians. But for me, the world had ground to a halt.

Suddenly, all the Yonasan-related problems we had struggled with to that day – fell into place. The diagnosis had come through, sharp and unequivocal, and I knew that our life from that point on was not going to be easy, by any means.

It was clear that Yonasan could not continue attending a regular *cheder*. He'd also need a lot of therapy. The doctor also recommended special equipment that could make it easier for him to cope with the disability.

One ray of light shone out; the doctor spoke about a substantial disability allowance due to us from Bituach Leumi, and he signed several documents that would help us access it.

That allowance would help us breathe a bit.

We'd simply need to file a claim to Bituach Leumi and start getting the allowance – or so we thought. "Simply..." We were naïve. In fact, the matter was not simple in the least. Months passed and we were still mired in the endless bureaucracy. Again and again there was some form or signature missing, and our frustration soared...

Yesterday (15 Iyar), I headed to the Bituach Leumi branch for the umpteenth time, praying that this would be the last time in this nightmarish process. On the way, I decided to call Mishmeres HaSholom's *yeshuah* line and donate a sum equal to

the *gimatriya* of "yeshuah." Believe it or not, I came out of there with the approval for the disability allowance solidly in my hand!

A GUEST IN THE HOUSE: PEACE!

On Rosh Chodesh Nissan, my two boys came home for Bein Hazemanim, and, sad to say, the interaction between them was not pleasant. There were endless arguments, and this affected the entire atmosphere at home. I had to do something to put a stop to this and that "something" was a donation to Mishmeres HaSholom. You'll surely agree that it was an appropriate address...

The improvement was immediate. *Baruch Hashem*, we had a calm and happy Yom Tov and enjoyed much *nachas* from the wonderful boys, who got along beautifully.

THE AIRPLANE DOORS OPENED

I was in Kerestir for the *yahrtzeit* of R' Yeshayale on Wednesday, 3 Iyar. I planned to return to Eretz Yisrael on Friday morning, on a flight that would bring me home well in time for Shabbos.

At eight a.m., when I was already at the airport, I suddenly was informed of a three-hour delay. Naturally, I got very nervous. I was afraid I'd

have to pass up the flight so as not to risk *chilul Shabbos*. The only thing I could do at that point was to donate for a *yeshuah*, and that is what I did: I called my wife and asked her to call Mishmeres HaSholom and donate. I've already seen the power of the Chofetz Chaim to bring *yeshuos* to those who help spread *shemiras halashon*.

And so it was.

A half hour later, at exactly eight thirty, we got on the plane and immediately set off.

CHAVRUSA FOR A MAZEL TOV

My daughter went through a tough *shidduchim* time. Time and again, *shidduch* suggestions would progress to an advanced stage, and then fizzle out in the end.

On Rosh Chodesh Nisan, she decided to start learning two halachos a day of *shemiras halashon* with a good friend who had also been waiting a long time for her *zivug*. They started having a regular phone *chavrusa*, trying not to miss a single day.

The end of the story – as you may have guessed – was a thrilling double *yeshuah*: On the fortieth day of the learning, both of them got engaged!!

We are still all worked up, awed by the power of *shemiras halashon* and *shalom*.

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BY HARAV HAGAON R' MENACHEM MENDEL FUCHS SHLITA,
RAV OF MISHMERES HASHOLOM

ASK THE RAV GIFT FROM A FRIEND

Question: I am in third grade and I got a gift from one of my friends — a sweet gift that she bought for me. My big sister saw the gift and told me it could be that my friend bought it without her mother's permission, so maybe I'm not allowed to use it.

I don't want to ask my friend straight out if she got her mother's permission. I'm afraid it will insult her. What should I do?

Answer: From the question, it seems that we are talking about a valuable gift, not a "simple" one. Therefore, the big sister is right: If the friend bought it without her parents' permission, even if it was with her own money – the questioner cannot accept the gift or use it. (See *Shulchan Aruch CM*, 270:2.)

The questioner is also right in her concern that the friend is liable to be insulted if she asks her explicitly if she got her parents' permission. The solution is for the recipient to tell her mother about it. Her mother will call the friend's mother, tell her excitedly about the beautiful gift, and after speaking highly about the friend's good-heartedness, ask if it was bought with parental permission. Then, everything will work out, *iy"H*.

I should mention that even if it is a very inexpensive gift, not always is it permissible to buy without the parents' permission. It depends on the case.

The questioner deserves the highest praise for standing up to the test and refraining from using the gift she wants so much until she clarifies what she has to do according to halachah.

OUR WORD

The Fightman family rent a lovely vacation unit in the North. They pile suitcases and bags into their roomy family car and set off with great excitement.

And what happens there, in the car? The air conditioner is working well, blowing nice, cool air, but ten-year-old Shimmy isn't happy. "I always get stuck in the window seat that gets the sun. It's so hot and uncomfortable and unfair and---"

Two minutes later, a fight breaks out: Everyone is angry, everyone is accusing everyone else, and Abba heaves a deep sigh, hoping that at least when they get to the beautiful destination spot, the atmosphere will improve...

Well, can you guess the continuation of the story?

Of course, even in the well-appointed vacation unit that they spent so much money on, the children find reasons to fight – over the bunk bed, over the hammock ("I called out that I'm first, even before we got here"), over the kiddie pool in the yard, 'It's not fair that the little kids always go in the water first...' One complaint after another!

And meanwhile, what's happening with their neighbors, the Shalomi family?

They didn't rent a costly place. They're vacationing at home. The big children are running a lively day camp for their younger siblings. On the wall hangs a "family newspaper" that a-a-a-ll the children, young and old, wrote and drew and cut and glued and designed. On the porch, there's a kiddie pool, with lots

of splashes and giggles. Carry bags are packed and ready at the door for a short trip they will soon take to a local park, in *achdus* and joy. Enjoyment fills every spare moment...

Because exotic trips, a dreamy vacation unit, and thrilling programs are not worth a thing if there is a lack of peace and tranquility. When there is no *shalom* – there is nothing, and when there is *shalom* – there is everything.

In your homes, dear children, there is surely an atmosphere of *shalom* and *simchah*. After all, you are Mishmeres HaSholom children, who work all year on mitzvos and *middos bein adam l'chaveiro*. So now, too, when everyone is on vacation, you will merit pleasant, cheerful *achdus*!

To add to your enjoyment, we've prepared for you special programs with prizes on the Hotline. Flip to page 8.

We're waiting to hear from you!!





NOT JUST A CUP OF COFFEE

A refreshing Yerushalmi morning breeze accompanies the Chacham Yehuda Tzadka. The street is quiet; just a few people are outside. He continues walking towards the distant Katamon neighborhood. Ah, today he has good news to share with dear Chacham Ben Zion, news he will surely be happy to hear.

It was a short while after the Arabs from Jordan had captured the Jewish Quarter in Yerushalayim. They took the men with them to Jordan as prisoners and let the women, children, and elderly flee from the area aflame with battle. The frightened refugees were brought in a convoy to Katamon, where they were housed in homes abandoned by Arabs who had fled from the fighting.

"Shalom Aleichem, Chacham Ben Zion!" Rav Tzadka's smile enters with him, lighting up his friend's temporary quarters in Katamon. Rav Ben Zion is happy to see his precious guest, but not surprised... He'd come yesterday and the day before, and would apparently come tomorrow, too.

Rav Yehuda soon has water bubbling on the primus and prepares a hot cup of coffee for Rav Ben Tzion. "I know it is not easy for you here. You are in *galut*, far from home..." He empathizes with Rav Ben Zion Chazan.

Rav Ben Zion heaves a heavy sigh. "You know that what hurts me most is that the Yeshiva is closed. I put in all my strength and money, all my life and soul, into Yeshivat Porat Yosef. Every stone of Porat Yosef is dear to my heart. The *talmidim* who labored over their Torah there are beloved to me as sons. And now..." Hot tears fill Rav Chazan's eyes. Oy, how hard it is for him to see Yeshivat Porat Yosef in its ruins and the Jewish Quarter in its desolation.

"They say that the Yeshiva will soon get a building here in Katamon." Rav Tzadka's eyes try to convey light and hope.

"If only..." Rav Chazan nods to him. Yes,

he'd already heard talk about this plan, but now, hearing it from his friend, Rav Yehuda, makes him even happier.

Rav Tzadka's visits were like a ray of light in the darkness of his days here, in Katamon. Day after day, Rav Yehuda made the long trek back and forth, just to visit and encourage Chacham Ben Zion. The younger *rav* made time in his busy daily schedule to come here and exchange *divrei Torah*, bringing joy to the heart.

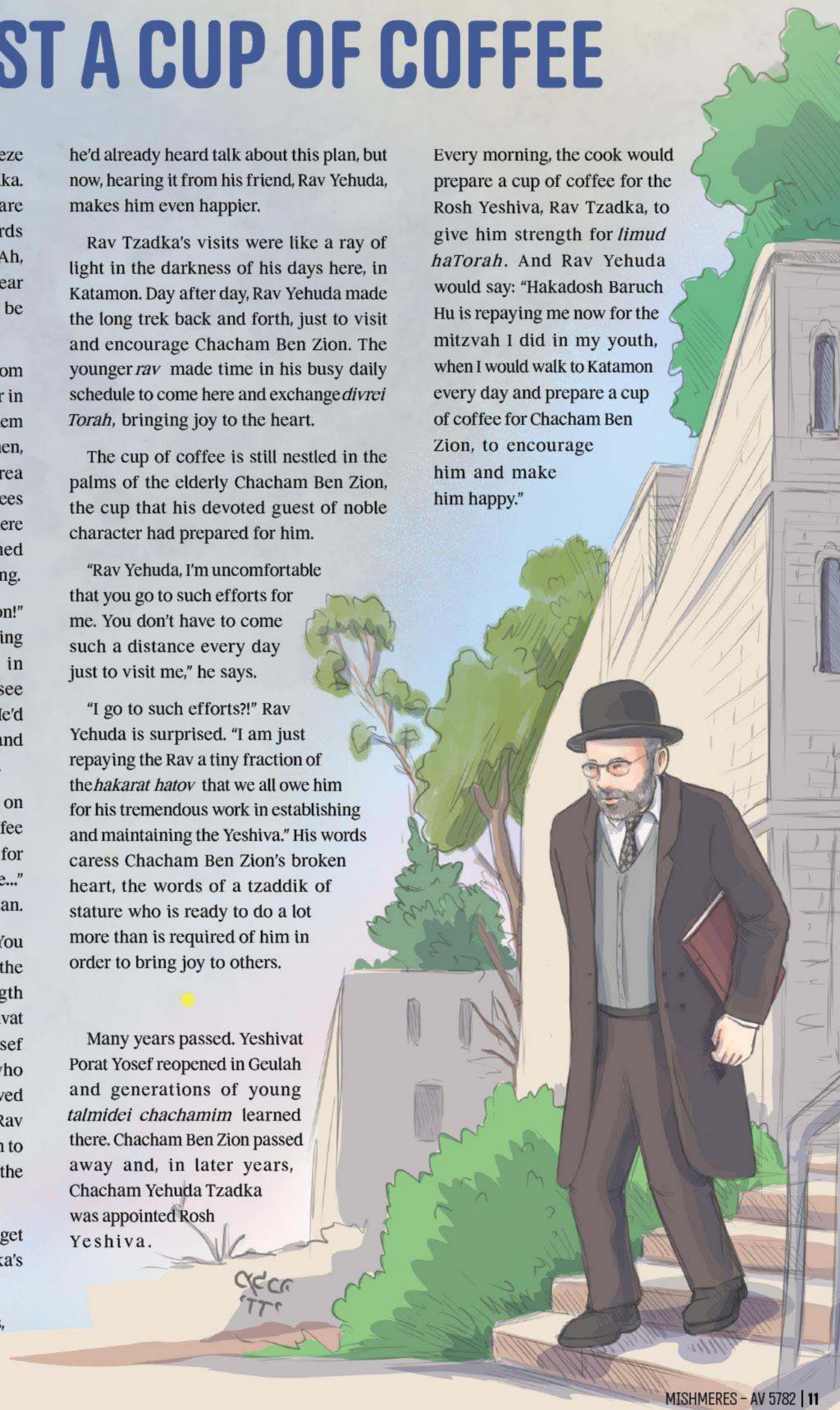
The cup of coffee is still nestled in the palms of the elderly Chacham Ben Zion, the cup that his devoted guest of noble character had prepared for him.

"Rav Yehuda, I'm uncomfortable that you go to such efforts for me. You don't have to come such a distance every day just to visit me," he says.

"I go to such efforts?!" Rav Yehuda is surprised. "I am just repaying the Rav a tiny fraction of the *hakarat hatov* that we all owe him for his tremendous work in establishing and maintaining the Yeshiva." His words caress Chacham Ben Zion's broken heart, the words of a tzaddik of stature who is ready to do a lot more than is required of him in order to bring joy to others.

Many years passed. Yeshivat Porat Yosef reopened in Geulah and generations of young *talmidei chachamim* learned there. Chacham Ben Zion passed away and, in later years, Chacham Yehuda Tzadka was appointed Rosh Yeshiva.

Every morning, the cook would prepare a cup of coffee for the Rosh Yeshiva, Rav Tzadka, to give him strength for *limud haTorah*. And Rav Yehuda would say: "Hakadosh Baruch Hu is repaying me now for the mitzvah I did in my youth, when I would walk to Katamon every day and prepare a cup of coffee for Chacham Ben Zion, to encourage him and make him happy."



Whoever answers correctly enters a raffle for prizes
Last month's winner: Gitty Banda, Beit Shemesh



ENCOUNTER ON THE WAY TO THE BEACH

On the bus to the separate beach, Dovid meets his classmate Elazar. "You don't have to tell me what happened with Chaim Cohen. I already heard about it yesterday..." Dovid says to Elazar. Chaim is their classmate who lives in Elazar's building, and until a few days ago, he was considered Elazar's good friend. Was---

Since Dovid already knows about the fight that broke out between them, Elazar decides that there's no problem of *lashon hara* here and he allows himself to tell Dovid all the details of his fight with Chaim.



Look up *sefer Chofetz Chaim, Hilchos Lashon Hara, Klal Heh, Se'if Ches, Beer Mayim Chayim 11*, call 072-337-2212 Ext. 33, listen to a question based on the story, and choose an answer. Those who answer correctly will automatically enter a raffle.



The idea that won the prize was from Munk family, Givat Shaul, Yerushalayim

THERE'S ALWAYS ANOTHER SIDE

Michael Elbaz's story:

Again, I look at my watch, shift my weight from one foot to the other, and cast another glance at the stairwell. That Yitzchak! I've been waiting for him for four minutes already! He must be dawdling on purpose, just to get on my nerves. Oof. I'm sorry I ever agreed to take him with me to the shopping center. I'd be better off managing the shopping myself than standing here like a golem and waiting for that "punctual" brother of mine. I thought that if I told him I'd be waiting downstairs, that would speed him up. I see that the opposite is true...

The cool evening breeze flutters my *peyos*. Another three irritating minutes have passed. All I can think about is my bad luck that I got stuck with a brother who is sorely lacking a concept of time. Suddenly, I realize that it is getting late and the store is liable to close! Now, that is just too much!! When I left the house, Yitzchak was almost ready; he just had to put on his shoes. How much time does that take???

"Michael!" I suddenly hear a cry from the window above me. I look up and see our neighbor, Moishy Roth, from the first floor. He shouts: "Your brother Yitzchak asked me to tell you to come home."

What? If Yitzchak wants to tell me something - let him come down and talk to me.

He leaves me standing out here for all of this time and he has the nerve to tell *me* to go back up the three flights of steps...



GOING TO THE SHOPPING CENTER

Yitzchak Elbaz's story:

This time, I thought that Michael would be pleased with me. I was all set. I quickly put on my shoes, closed the Velcro strap, and ran to the door...

But, to my surprise, it was locked.

I looked at the shelf next to the door - but the key wasn't there. That meant that Michael had taken it with him and locked the door from the outside...

What do I do now?? Wait here until Michael decides to come back up and see what happened to me?

"If only we had a window facing the street, I could call out to him," I think sadly. Suddenly, I have an idea! I pull out the neighborhood phone directory, look up the number of the Roths, who live on the first floor, right over the building entrance, and, when Moishy answers, I ask him: "Look out your window. Do you see my brother Michael? Please tell him to come upstairs, urgently..."

Michael must be really upset at me. I hope that when he hears what really happened, he'll calm down...

Based on an idea from the Munk family, Givat Shaul, Yerushalayim. The prize was sent.



Summary: Dov, a new boy, joins the group of boys learning, and he has an unusually frightened reaction to the water stoppage. It turns out that he is a refugee from Ukraine, who experienced hunger and thirst, and that's why he's so nervous. The boys try to allay his fears.

10



ON THE WINGS OF A STORY

WAR AT THE OTHER END OF THE LINE

Slowly, Dov started breathing normally. He even smiled. Two bottles of soda water stood on the table (Dovid had brought them), and Hillel assured the boy that water stoppages in Eretz Yisrael were not very long.

"It was simply Russian. We're almost certain," Shapiro corrected himself. "Would you listen to it and explain?"

"Sure!" Dov replied. "If I can be of help, I'd be glad to! Just... first let's finish learning. We're in the middle... Okay?"

We all took a deep breath and tried to concentrate, because the recorded message

had really gotten us curious. We'd already tried

finger pressed hard on "end call."

"W-what was that?" Dov sank into the chair behind him.

"Nu, what *was* that?" we all asked in unison.

"Some strange call to... war! *Everyone who calls this number, so they said, declares that he is in favor of armed war! That he wants to fight to the end! That---*"

"To fight?" "Over what?" "What does it have to do with us?" Now we were all frightened.

"I have no idea." Dov breathed deeply. "Maybe they were talking about a terror organization. Or Russia's war with Ukraine. I didn't hear the end," he panted. "I didn't want to. You are pure boys. Boys who learn *hilchos shemiras halashon* and want a lot of peace and good. So why... and how... what is this number?"

"It's precisely the number written here!" Hillel flipped open the *sefer*. "It's here in print. Look..."

"So it's a mistake," Hillel muttered.

"A serious mistake. *Hashem yishmor!*" I added. "Can I pour you some soda?" I offered white-faced Dov.

We made *berachos*. Had a little drink. Then we looked again at the screen and inside the *sefer* and confirmed that, indeed, the number is the one we dialed. It was a mistake.

"So should we try again?" Shapiro and Yudi shuddered, and I, too, tensed.

"Once more and that's it!" said Dovid courageously. But when he pressed in the numbers, I could see that his fingers were shaking.

A moment of silence. Three.

"There!" Dovid whooped, putting the phone on "loudspeaker" so we could all hear. "To order a *sefer Shemiras Halashon* at no cost for groups, press three!"

Dovid pressed and the hearts of all of us pressed down, too.

What a miracle that we'd found how to correct the mistake. How wonderful that we said 'No' to fighting and 'Yes' to peace.

Will the boys receive their *sefarim* for free? About that in the next and final chapter...

I'm in shock! That is precisely the number written here!

"Baruch Hashem!"

Dov sighed in relief. He mumbled some unfamiliar words to himself, leading Shapiro to ask again,



That's why you cannot believe written words of *lashon hara*, too... Believe me, it can turn out very bad

"Wait, you actually know Russian?"

"Of course I do," Dov said. "For nine years, it was my language."

"So maybe you'll understand!" Dovid jumped up. "Maybe you can help us with a complicated mystery."

"Mystery---?" murmured Dov, puzzled.

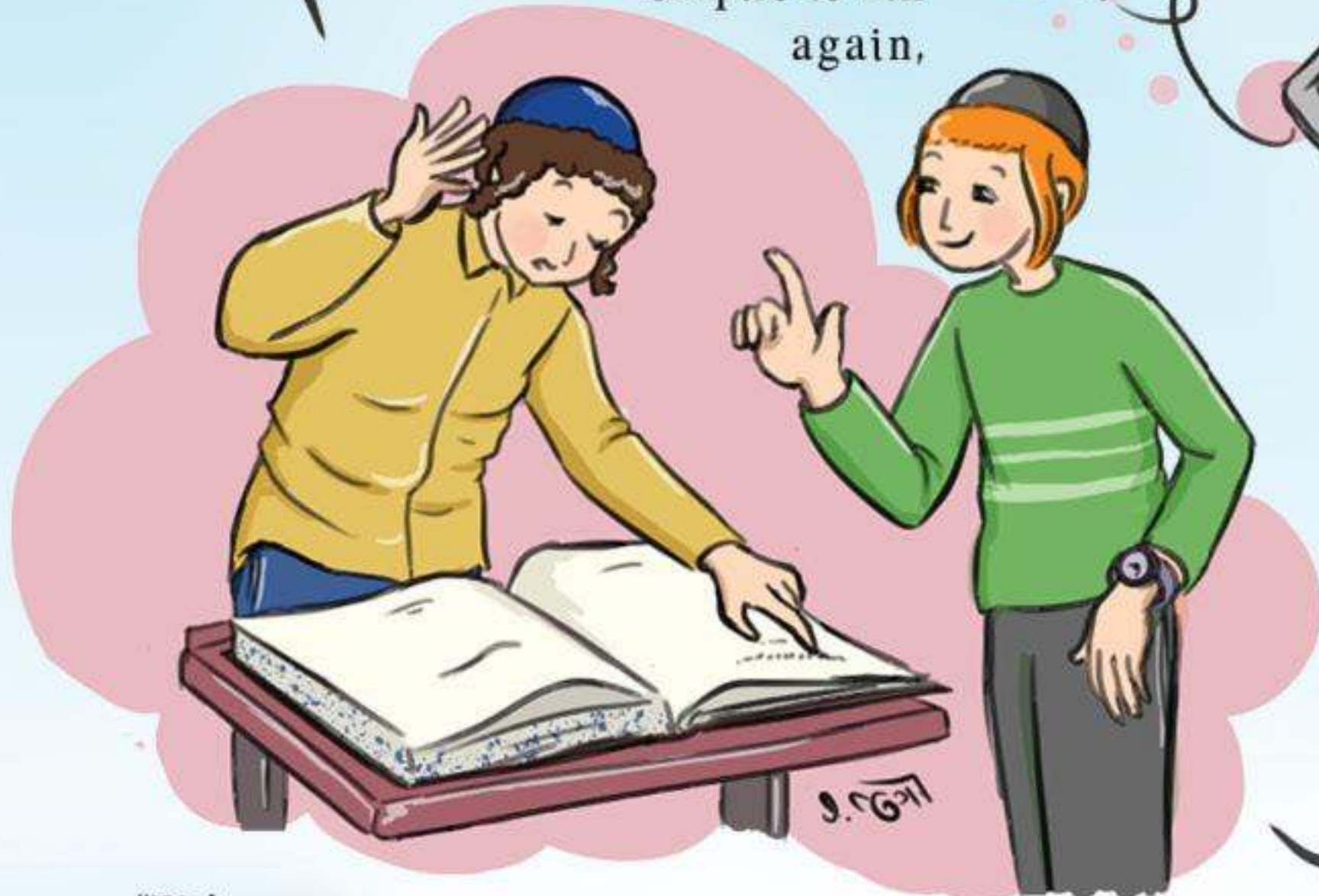
"A real mystery!" Shapiro repeated. Then he explained: "Right we've been learning from Eli's *sefer Chofetz Chaim* every week? Right we all crowd around one *sefer*? So we were very happy when Eli noticed that on the first page, it says: To get the *sefer* at no cost for groups" and it has a phone number. But when we called, there was a strange recorded message, something that sounded to us like authentic Russian."

"Au-thentic?" Dov wrinkled his forehead. Again Shapiro had used a word that was hard him to understand.

calling three or four times, and each time, we listened a bit, and then hung up. It's strange that the book invites people to order *sefer Shemiras Halashon* and then speaks in an unintelligible language, isn't it?

Yudi volunteered to read the last three lines and Shapiro, as usual, found a real-life example for the halachah, something that is liable to happen to us. Then we closed the *sefer* and kissed it. Hillel volunteered to ask someone in shul for a cell phone and we dialed the series of numbers, handing Dov the phone, set on "loudspeaker."

The first word (we already recognized it), the second, a full sentence. We all stood there, watching Dov, who at first smiled, but from word to word, his face turned paler. His eyes fluttered. His mouth gaped. His fingers trembled a bit, and after three sentences, his





A VACATION "BURSTING" WITH FUN

Our vacation that year promised to be a real dream.

It was "born" a few months earlier, together with Ruti, my little sister...

At the Mother-Baby Convalescent Home, Ima shared a room with Mrs. Kraus. After schmoozing a few hours and finding lots of things in common, they felt as if they'd known each other for ages. It was clear to them that the connection would continue, even though the Krauses lived in a town way up north and we lived in Yerushalayim.

Indeed, even after they each went home with a little baby in their arms, phone calls from Kraus to Stern (that's us) and back became a matter of routine. On one of these calls, the idea came up to exchange apartments.

Mrs. Kraus told Ima how much they longed to spend time in Yerushalayim, go to the Kosel, and get together with relatives living there. Ima was thrilled by the idea of a vacation in a picturesque, far-off town. The very next day, they "signed" a contract. Okay, not a real contract, with complicated subsections and signatures in front of a lawyer. It was just a simple oral agreement that excited all of us, young and old.

The days inched by slowly. We waited excitedly for the trip to Alalim – the town Ima had described to us, based on her friend's stories. We made countless plans. "You want to cram all that into just a few days?" – Abba laughed.

Finally, the second week of Bein Hazemanim arrived. The sun had barely come up on that special Monday when the phone rang.

Ima rushed to answer. Mendy, Sruli, Shalom, and I (Tzvi, nice to meet you!) stood around and tried to understand what had happened based on Ima's reactions:

"Really? What do you say!"

"Oy vey!"

"Aha..."

"Yes, of course. What is the question?"

It was clear that something had gone wrong.

Ima hung up and confirmed our suspicions: "The Krauses woke up this morning to a *mabul*. All of the rooms were flooded with water! Before they even sopped it up, they called the plumber to check what it was all about. It turns out to be a serious problem. The repair will take several days and involves picking up the floor and a big mess.

"So what will we do?"

"How will they switch apartments with us?"

"How can we enjoy a vacation with all the drilling and dirt?"

The flood of questions we poured on Ima was almost like the flood in Alalim...

"Obviously, our plan is canceled. You can't bring vacationers into a home in that condition. But don't worry" – she added, as our faces all turned sour. "We'll find a substitute..."

That evening, the alternate program took shape. First of all, the Krauses were invited to us with great pleasure! Yes, in spite of the flood and the mess, or, actually, *because* of it. "A family with small children cannot manage for several

days without water and in such pandemonium," Ima explained. "They need a pleasant place to stay in until everything is back in order and – that place will be *our* house!"

"But where will we be?"

"We'll go to Tante Zelda!" Zelda is Abba's elderly aunt, who is really anxious to have guests. True, it's not the vacation we planned, but it will be a tremendous *zechus*, and, *be'zras Hashem*, we'll try to enjoy it, as well!"

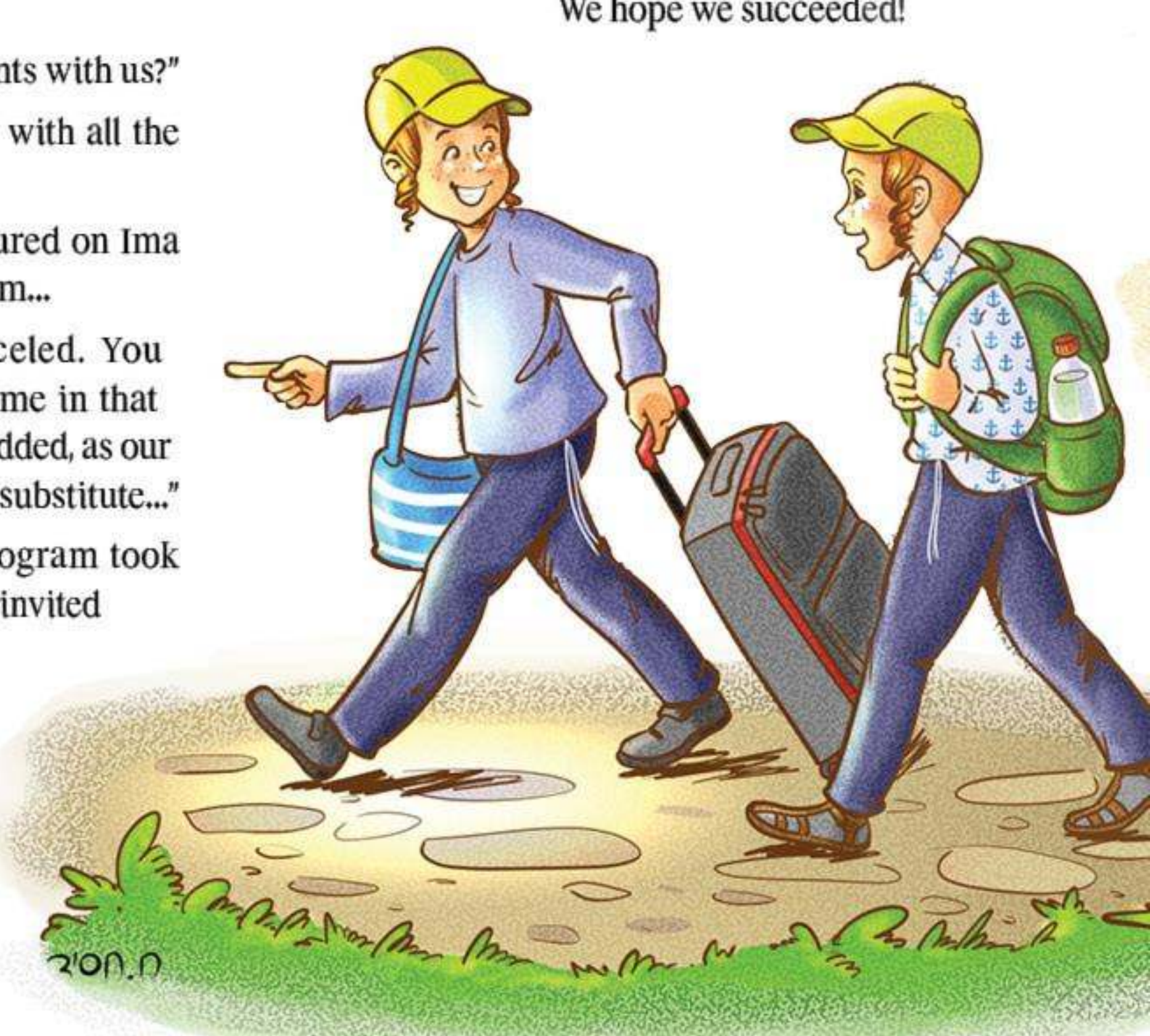
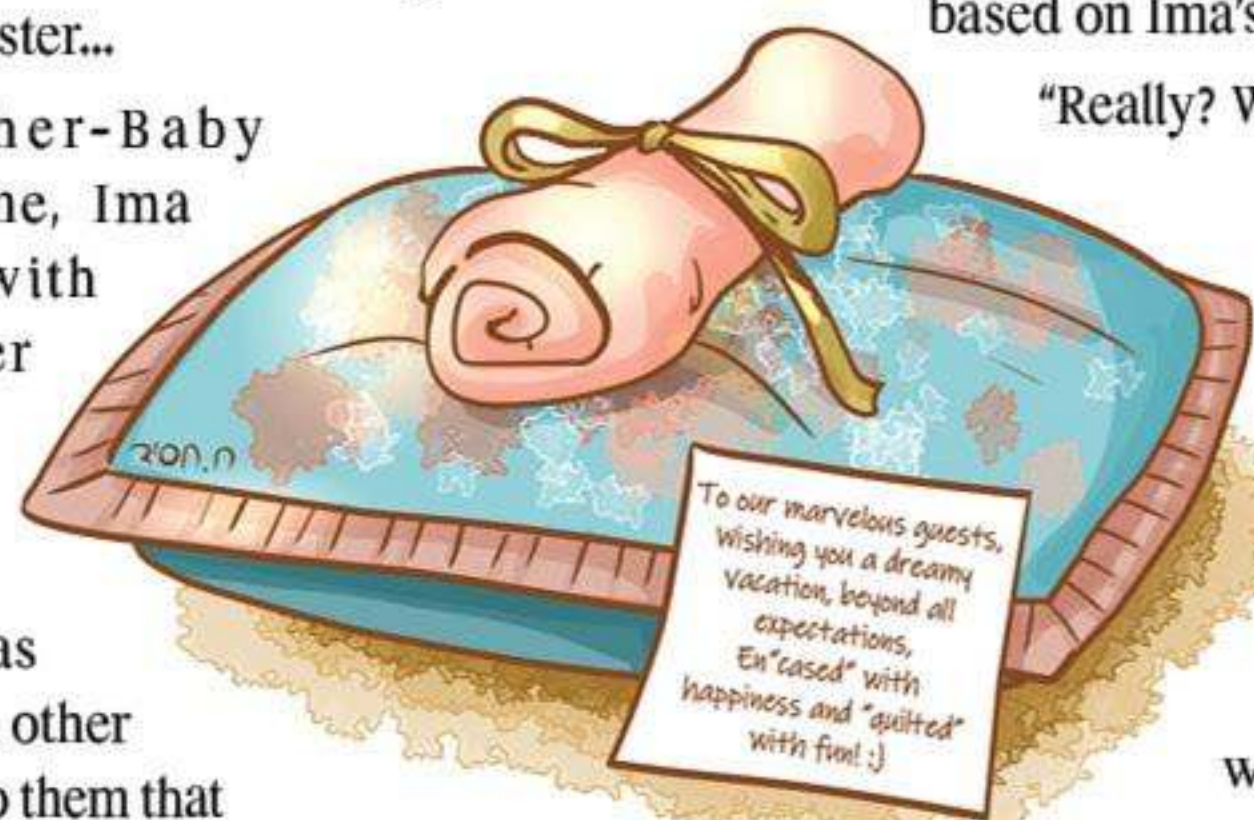
After the enthusiastic way that Ima presented it, we felt that we *could* find a way to enjoy the new arrangement. As for our guests, we, too, wanted to contribute our part and do more than required.

How?

With notes, of course! – the family hobby that you'll get to know well in this new series.

We sat down and wrote cute notes, like the one that opened this story, so that the Krauses would feel loved and wanted in our house, even though they weren't able to give us theirs.

We hope we succeeded!





RAFFLE WINNERS FOR THE PUZZLE SECTION:
MICHAL ZWARTZ - MOD'IN ILIT

DRAWING IN DOTS

On the grid before you, the lines are marked with letters and the columns with numbers. You need to mark off "dots" – according to what is marked at the bottom of the grid..

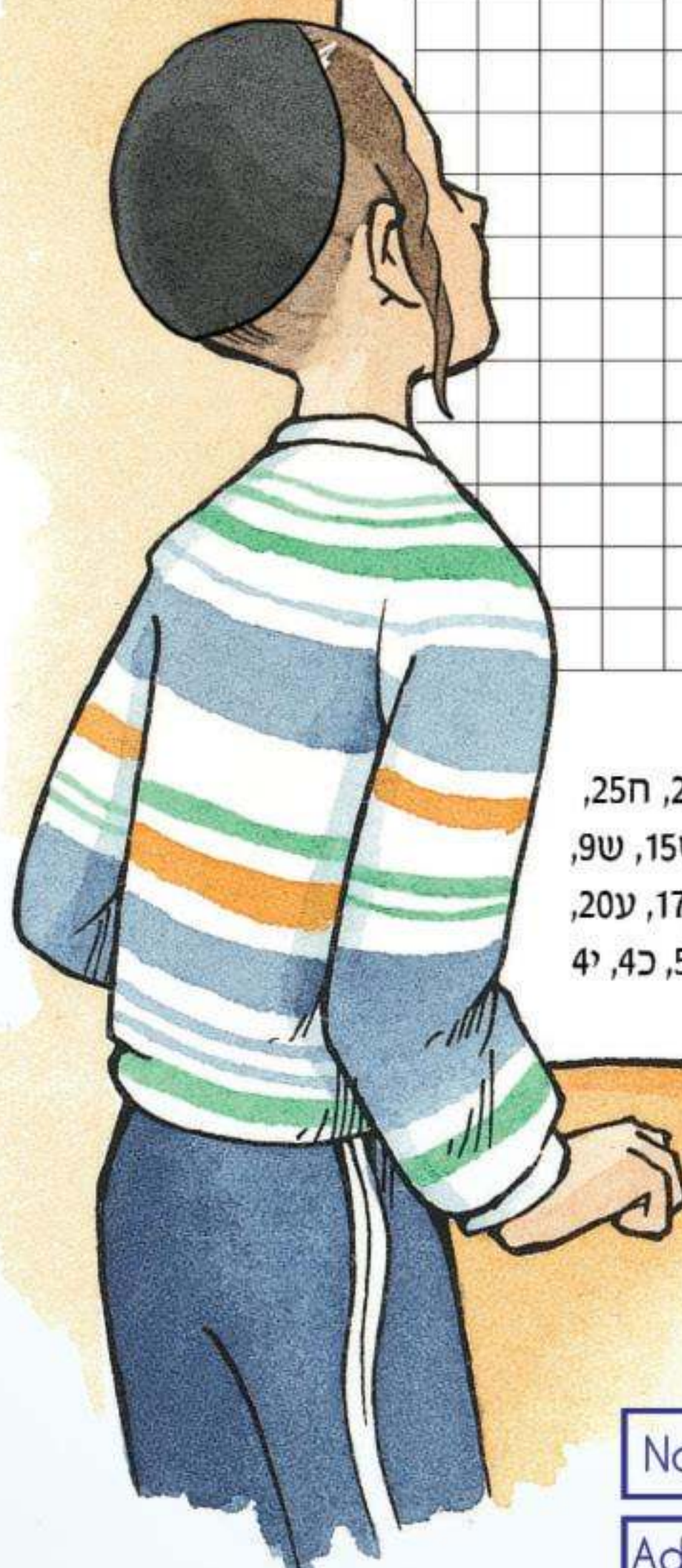
If you do it correctly, you will get a picture that is connected to the Maamar Chazal:

"אין העולם מתקיים אלא בשביל מי שבולם"
"עצמו בשעת מריבה"

"The world exists only for those who restrain themselves when there's a fight."

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Raffles follow the protocol at Mishmeres
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Controlled EXPLOSION

Written by B. Halevi
Illustrated by C. Chusid

2

Summary:
In Russia, researcher Igor receives additional funds to study the consequences of the explosion in the nuclear reactor. In Eretz Yisrael, Meir, an only child, hears about a guest his age who will be coming for Shabbos.



I see that there are good counselors here and lots of friends.

But the main thing, Alexander, is that you'll have clean air to breathe, without dangerous nuclear fallout. We need to thank the good people who are taking you far away from the dangerous area.



Alexander, want to come with me to the *bet kneset*? There are lots of boys there who will be happy to hear your stories about Russia...

Abba says it will take them years to clean the country from the damages of the radiation. When will we meet again??

And in Eretz Yisrael:
That reminds me of candles my Babushka* lights in Russia.

Sure, I want...
Too bad Abba and Ima aren't here...

Asher, come! There's a boy here who came from Russia. He's talking about the explosion in the nuclear reactor!

As usual, Meir is in the center of things. It's not enough that he's so spoiled, with tons of games. Now he also has a guest from Russia...

* Grandmother