

March 12, 2022

VaYikra — Parshat Zachor

9 Adar 1, 5782

Take Away the Pail

I love this story and it seems very apt to share right now. Wishing everyone good health, strength and joy.

The two brothers, the famed Rabbi Elimelech of Lizensk and Rabbi Zushe of Anipoli, often wandered about together, posing as simple beggars. They would mingle with the masses, listening, teaching, speaking, helping and guiding whomever and whenever they could.

Once, while they were traveling with a group of vagabonds, members of the group were accused of being thieves, resulting in the entire bunch being thrown into jail. Confident of their innocence and eventual release, the two brothers sat quietly. As the afternoon progressed, Rabbi Elimelech stood up to prepare himself to pray the afternoon service.

"What are you doing?" his brother asked.

"I'm getting ready for the afternoon prayers," replied Rabbi Elimelech.

Rabbi Zushe pointed at the pail in the corner of the room. "It is forbidden," he said, "to pray in this cell, because the odor coming from that pail makes the room unfit for prayer."

Dejected, the holy Rabbi Elimelech sat down.

Soon after, Rabbi Elimelech began to cry. "Why are you crying?" said Rabbi Zushe. "Is it because you are unable to pray?" Reb Elimelech answered affirmatively.

"But why weep?" continued Rabbi Zushe. "Don't you know that the same G-d who commanded you to pray, also commanded you not to pray when the room is unfit for prayer? Be happy that G-d has afforded you the opportunity to obey His law at this time, no matter what it is."

"You are right, my brother!" exclaimed Rabbi Elimelech, suddenly smiling. The feelings of dejection banished from his heart and mind, Rabbi Elimelech took his brother's arm and began to dance from joy as a result of performing the mitzva (commandment) of not praying in an inappropriate place.

The guards heard the commotion and came running. Witnessing the two brothers dancing, the guards asked the other prisoners what had happened. "We have no idea!" they answered, mystified.

"Those two Jews were discussing the pail in the corner, when all of a sudden they came to some happy conclusion and began to dance."

"Is that right?" sneered the guards. "They're happy because of the pail, are they? We'll show them!"

They promptly removed the pail from the cell!

As Jews, we need to know that refraining from a Jewish practice such as attending synagogue because of a danger to life and health is as much a mitzva as engaging in those practices under normal circumstances. We need to joyously thank G-d for allowing us to fulfill his Holy Will, whatever it is. And, perhaps, in merit of that joy, He might just take the pail away ...

(by Rabbi Yochanan Rivkin from http://www.lchaimweekly.org/)

Take the Purim Heroes and Villains Quiz

Giving Of Your Talents

"Yaacov, can you please organize the project for us??"

"There are 50 boys in the Yeshiva, why do only a few of us 'get the call'?"

"Some people have the capability and others don't."

When the Torah tells us that a poor person could bring a very inexpensive sacrifice (Vayikra 5:11) the Chofetz Chaim, based on a Gemorra in Arachin, says that a rich person who brings a poor person's sacrifice has not fulfilled his obligation!!

Rabbi Zelig Pliskin adds, that this concept also applies to people donating their talents!!

(by Rabbi Chaim Flom from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

