

A certain Reb Gad tore himself away from his shop only twice a year to journey to the Heliger Rizhiner Rebbe -- for Chanuka and Shavuos. The spiritual energy he gleaned at the Rebbe's court recharged him enough to last the entire stretch of months in between. One year, the weeks leading up to Chanukah were bitterly cold, with massive snowfalls, and Gad's family were loathe to let him travel in such conditions. But Gad would not be dissuaded from his mission. He donned every piece of the warmest clothing he had, filled up his brandy keg, and set out in his wagon to be with the Tzaddik. His route was well-trodden, and he customarily got as far as a Yiddishe kretschma (a country inn), where he lit the first Chanukah lamp, and continued the next day on to Rizhin for the remaining holy days. That year, because of the heavy, drifting snow, it was the middle of the night when he reached the kretschma door. Despite the late hour, the innkeeper received his old customer warmly and set down some cake and hot tea to refresh him. This was not Gad's style. He held fast to the Halacha and refused to eat or drink until he had davened maariv and kindled the first Chanukah lamp. After a small repast, he lay his head down to rest, utterly exhausted, and in a trice was in the deepest sleep. It was not to last. Within the hour, he was rudely awakened by raucous pounding on the kretschma door. A band of robbers had broken into the inn, in search of victims. The ringleader of the brigands ordered his men to tie up and rob anyone they found in the inn, showing mercy to no one. Reb Gad did what any pious Jew would do in such dire straits. He beseeched Hashem intensely to save him from the hands of the robbers, but now with an added element: He gazed at the single Chanukah light, which was still burning brightly, and intended specifically that the miracles that Hashem performed for our ancestors should serve as a "precedent" for a new miracle performed for him and his fellow Jews, then and there in the country inn. Moments later, the door to his room was flung open and the ringleader stood there, stretched up to all his fearsome height. Gad trembled from head to toe, thinking that the time to say his final "*Shema Yisroel*" had arrived. But things took an unexpected turn. "**Gad'!**" the criminal shouted. "**Gad'!** Can that possibly be you?" Petrified,

STORY
OF THE WEEK:
Saved from peril
by one Chanukah light
-- and a wayward
brother returns!

Gad nodded meekly. "Calm down, my old friend. No harm will come to you. Just stand by; I'm coming back in a jiffy." The villain went to the other members of his sordid band and told them to untie all the captives and to return their money to the last kopeck, and then to return to their hideout, with him following some time later, not saying exactly when. The chief returned shortly. Gad, now calm, took to finding an explanation for the sudden, unexpected mercy the brigand showed him. Then it hit him: "I know that man from somewhere... Wait! Can it be? Yes! It's you, Itzik Feffer, my old buddy, right?" The two boyhood friends fell into each other's arms, tearfully renewing the old bond between them. They had been the fastest of comrades, but went their separate ways after marrying. Gad felt, in the marrow of his bones, that he had experienced a personal miracle of Chanukah, but still felt he had to grill his erstwhile friend about his downward path. Itzik's tale was hair-raising. "My father-in-law was looking for a Torah scholar for his daughter, and I filled the bill. A band of robbers would come to my father-in-law with so-called "halachic" inquiries about dividing their ill-gotten gains. He deflected them to me and, without balking at the absurdity of the situation, I got dragged into responding to their specious questions. That was the start of a slippery slope. The rogues liked my answers and after a few months, they wanted to appoint me as their leader, threatening to inform on me to the authorities as an accomplice in a robbery ring if I did not comply. By that time, I was in up to my neck in illicit dealings and went along with them. *Aveira goreres aveira* ("One sin brings on another in its wake"), as everyone knows. And lower and lower I sank. But now, I feel your Chanukah menorah shining light into my dark heart and I yearn to cast off my rotten sins and become a *ba'al teshuva!*" That's all that Gad needed to hear. "My old comrade, you're coming with me in the morning to the Rizhiner Rebbe for the rest of Chanukah. I'm not taking 'no' for an answer." And so it happened. The Rebbe welcomed Itzik "back home" and prescribed a path of repentance. Itzik became a prominent *ba'al teshuvah* and a staunch chosid of the Rizhiner Rebbe, all thanks to the miracle of Chanukah. As for the wicked robbers, they never did figure out how their leader vanished into thin air.

Parshas Vayeishev 5777, #285

Our editor, Mr. Rose לן חן חן is reachable at davidrose10@gmail.com, and is available for Anglo-Judaica editorial assignments. A publication of *Seforim World*. 1000's of seforim: new and old; 4403 16 Ave. Brooklyn N.Y. 11204 U.S.A. 718 438 8414 718 633 5500 -www.seforimworld.com or seforim@gmail.com - hours 11-7:30 Subscriptions: pardesyehuda1@gmail.com - hours 11-7:30. Gilyon is available by email or on Ladaat.info, or www.parshasheets.com or www.seforimworld.com. For sale rare sefer Hespel on Chafetz Chaim in Hungary \$500. Handwritten Tzedaka ledger of Rav Henkin 1924, all rabbanim worldwide, \$7000. 2 Kesuvos filled in by Reb Moshe Feinstein Zt"l \$500 Letter from Reb Yaakov Emdin to Reb Moshe Chagiz \$85000. 57 page manuscript from Reb Mendel Meshklav Talmid of Vilna Gaon \$100,000. Collection of Chidushei Torah 7 letters Chazon Ish, 2 Reb Mayer Simcha, Rogotchof, Brisk, Reb Elchanan, Reb Baruch Ber total of 42 letters \$125,000. Many more for sale.