

TORAS REB KALMAN



סיפורי צדיקים

Captivating stories full of Yiras Shamayim taken from Shmuessin that Reb Kalman Krohn z'tl gave in Adelpia Yeshiva

Hashgacha Protis & A Judge's Wisdom

A few centuries ago, Jews who lived in Eretz Yisroel led difficult lives. They were constantly persecuted and harassed by the gentiles around them. In one small town in Eretz Yisroel during this era, a cunning Arab named Ibrahim devised a plot against Yechiel, a Jew.

Ibrahim approached Yechiel and offered to sell him a donkey. After examining the donkey, Yechiel saw that it was indeed a strong, healthy animal, and he agreed to purchase it for the price the Arab requested. However, Ibrahim explained that he was in the need of quick cash, and he would only sell the donkey if they would conclude the transaction right there on the spot. An unsuspecting Yechiel counted out the entire sum, handed it to the Arab, and walked off with the donkey. There had been no contract nor any witnesses who were able to attest to the validity of the sale.

The next day, Ibrahim went to court and reported that his donkey, his means of a livelihood, had

been stolen from him. He provided a complete description of the animal, and the police officer checked his records to see if anyone had reported having found a similar donkey. Not finding anything that matched the description the Arab provided, the office assured him that they would open an investigation and try to discover the whereabouts of the missing beast.

A few hours later, Ibrahim rushed back into court. "I found it!" He exclaimed triumphantly. "There is a Jew a few blocks away, with a donkey pulling his cart. I'm fairly certain that the donkey is mine!"

With a group of police officers at his heels, the conniving Arab led them through the streets until they came across Yechiel and the donkey. The officers approached the Jew and demanded to know where he had gotten his donkey.

"I bought it yesterday, from Ibrahim the Arab," Yechiel replied confidently.

The policemen exchanged glances. "So you say," One of them responded. "We have strong reason to believe this donkey was stolen. If you really purchased it yesterday, where is your proof of purchase, your contract of sale?"

"It was a very quick transaction," Yechiel responded, feeling a headache coming on. "The whole thing took a few minutes, and we never wrote up a contract. I paid him in full, right away, and he gave me the donkey."

The officers surrounded him, slapping handcuffs onto his wrists. "We are arresting you for theft," They informed him tersely. "If you really purchased the donkey, as you insist, you'll have to come to court to prove it."

When Yechiel was brought before the judge, his heart dropped. This judge was a famous anti-Semite, and it was well-known that he would always side against the Jews in every case.

Yecheil knew he was doomed even before the trial began.

Suddenly however, the door to the courtroom opened, and someone entered, speaking urgently to the judge. The judge stood up and left the room, and another judge came in to replace him. Yecheil was grateful to see that it was a man who was much more decent. Although he had no idea how to prove, in the absence of a transaction document or witnesses, that he had purchased the donkey, he could at least hope to receive a fair trial, instead of one that was biased against him from the start. The judge listened to both sides of the story, and immediately discerned that Ibrahim was lying. However, without proof, he could not condone Yecheil. He thought for a moment, and then hatched a plan.

Banging his gavel, the judge called the court to order. "Before I begin with the verdict," He announced, "I would like to request a small favor. There is a man in our town who is very ill, and we need money to help him. I'm asking that everyone give as much as they can to assist this unfortunate man."

The lawyers and spectators in the courtroom all jumped up to donate. Yecheil, the defendant, apologized, but explained that he didn't have any money to give. Seizing his chance to find favor in the judge's eyes, Ibrahim decided to donate a large sum. Withdrawing a large amount of bills, all from the money he had received for the sale of the donkey, he handed it to the judge.

The judge thanked Ibrahim for his generous contribution and put the bills on the table. Suddenly, he stood up angrily. "These bills are counterfeit!" He yelled. "Forget about the donkey; this is far more important. We need to get to the roots of this counterfeiting operation." Turning to Ibrahim, he demanded, "Where did you get these counterfeit bills from?"

Frightened, Ibrahim replied quickly, "I got this money yesterday, from the Jew, Yecheil."

"And why did Yecheil give you money, if not to purchase the donkey?" The judge asked, a small smile coming to his lips.

Unable to refute the judge's brilliant logic, Ibrahim was forced to withdraw his claim.

And Yecheil was filled with tremendous gratitude toward Hashem for orchestrating the events so perfectly. The *hashgacha protis*, of having a new judge preside of the trial in time to acquit him, was clear.

Have a Wonderful Shabbos!

This story is taken from tape # A159

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