

# TORAS REB KALMAN



## סיפורי צדיקים

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

### *The Bais Yosef*

The Bais Yosef is famed for having authored the Shulchan Aruch, the Kesef Mishna, and a commentary on the Tur, among other works. He was a tremendous *baal mekubal*.

When he was a young man, recently married, the Bais Yosef needed to find a source of income to support himself and his wife. Since he preferred not to have to devote so much of his time to earning a livelihood, his wife proposed that he open a store in partnership with someone else. “You can each work for half the day,” She suggested. “You’ll be able to spend the rest of the day learning, and you’ll split the profits.”

Her brainstorm was a good one, and the Bais Yosef thought of Eliyahu, an acquaintance, who might agree to partner with him in his business venture. Eliyahu was an honest man with valuable experience, and he had the know-how to get them started. He broached the suggestion to his acquaintance, and as he anticipated, Eliyahu agreed to open a business together with him.

They wrote up a contract in which each side committed to invest fifty percent of the initial capital needed to start up the business. They also pledged to each put in fifty percent of the necessary work. The profits, as well, would be evenly divided. The Bais Yosef and Eliyahu shook hands and signed the agreement. Since it was a Thursday, they agreed to begin their venture the following Sunday morning.

The Bais Yosef was a phenomenal *masmid*. He would learn until the wee hours of the night, sleeping little each night. On *motzai* Shabbos, he stayed up until the wee hours toiling in Torah, sleeping for just a few minutes before awaking to daven *Shacharis* at *netz*. While in shul, he continued contemplating a difficulty in the Gemara that he had been working on the night before. When davening was over, he sat down to transcribe his thoughts to paper, writing down his question and two different answers. He was so involved in learning that by the time he thought to check the time, it was already two-thirty in the afternoon.

Folding the paper with his *chiddushim* carefully, he placed it into his pocket and hastily made his way to the hut that would serve as his new store. It was the first day of his partnership with Eliyahu, and already he was late! He could not waste time stopping off in his tiny home to greet his wife and eat something.

“Where were you?” Eliyahu asked, not bothering to hide his annoyance. “The day starts at seven o’clock in the morning. It’s past two by now! You were supposed to be here a while ago! We made up to each take half the day.”

“I know, and I’m so sorry,” The Bais Yosef apologized, the sincerity evident in his voice. “I simply got caught up in learning and didn’t notice the passage of time. Please forgive me. I’m here now, and I’m ready to work very hard.”

“Well, don’t do it again,” Eliyahu said, grudgingly moving aside to let the Bais Yosef in. He directed him to the back of the room and explained what needed to be done: inventory, stocking the shelves, serving customers.

The Bais Yosef followed his instructions and worked efficiently for the next two hours. The sun crept steadily westward, and soon the Bais Yosef stood up. “We have to daven *Minchah* shortly,” he said to Eliyahu. “You know there’s no way we can go daven straight from work. I need to learn for a half-hour first, to prepare myself.”

“Alright!” Eliyahu conceded in a loud grumble. “Go learn!”

The Bais Yosef left the store and went to shul, immersing himself in learning for another wonderful half-hour. He took a break from his Gemara to daven *Minchah* and then settled down again before his *shtender* to learn until *Maariv*. He then lingered after *Maariv* to learn some more. “Where were you?” His wife cried in concern when he finally walked through the door. “It’s so late already! You must be hungry!” She ushered him into a chair and served him something to eat. The Bais Yosef ate a little to satiate his hunger, and then put his head down on the table for a much-needed nap. After a few minutes, he sat up again and resumed learning.

The next morning, Monday, when he got to shul, he suddenly stopped short and slapped his forehead. *The pipul!* He thought to himself. *I was in middle of solving that difficulty in the Gemarah yesterday!* He reached into his pocket and removed the sheet of paper that he had been writing the day before. When davening was over, he continued covering the paper in his scrawl, his mind churning as he wrote out possible explanations for the Gemara.

Ten o’clock came and went. Eleven, twelve, one o’clock. Time kept passing and the Bais Yosef kept learning. “Eliyahu!” He suddenly cried, as he

remembered his new store and the partnership he had formed. “It’s three o’clock!”

Jumping up from his seat and pocketing his papers, he practically ran all the way to the store. “I’m terribly sorry,” He told Eliyahu. “I completely forgot about coming!” “We had a deal,” Eliyahu responded frostily. “You gave fifty percent of the capital, and you are supposed to be putting in fifty percent of the work. You need to show up!”

“I’m sorry,” The Bais Yosef replied, his tone contrite. “I’m ready to work now.”

For the next while, he worked industriously, trying to make up for the lost hours that morning. “I’m leaving now,” He told Eliyahu after two hours. “I need to daven *Minchah* soon, and I need to prepare myself first by learning a little.”

Eliyahu rolled his eyes. “I don’t know how much longer I can put up with this,” He muttered. “Fine, go.”

The Bais Yosef hurried off to shul. He learned, davened *Minchah*, learned, davened *Maariv*, learned, headed home to eat and rest briefly, and then learned until the morning.

The same scene repeated itself on Tuesday. The Bais Yosef did not show up to work until most of the day had passed. This time, Eliyahu refused to let him off the hook.

“R’ Yosef,” He said wearily. “We need to discuss this. This partnership is not working out. At the end of the day, you are not putting in your fair share, and I am doing far more than I committed to. I want to dissolve the partnership and find someone else to work with.”

“No, please, don’t dissolve the partnership,” The Bais Yosef countered. “I do want to work with you. It’s just that I get so caught up learning

sometimes. This is my only option for *parnasah*. Please don't leave me in the lurch."

Eliyahu shook his head. "This is the business world, my friend," He said. "You want to be a *masmid*? You want to be a *talmid chochom*? Then this isn't the place for you. I need a partner who will shoulder half of the business, not someone who pledges to do half the work and then leaves me to sweat by myself all day. I'm done with this!"

"I'm not really a businessman," The Bais Yosef admitted. "This whole partnership was my wife's idea. She understands these things more than I do. Please give me until tomorrow before tearing up our contract. I want to discuss this with my wife."

"Alright," Eliyahu agreed. "I'll wait until tomorrow for you to let me know if you are genuinely ready to commit yourself to start showing up on time and putting in your fair share of hours."

When the Bais Yosef came home, he explained the situation to his wife. "What should I do?" He asked her. "You can't give up Torah," She responded immediately. "We do need *parnasah*, so I suggested you try to work for half the day, but it seems that even that is too much for you. I think you should give up the partnership."

"We'll lose money," He warned. "We each gave fifty percent of the initial outlay, and the venture has not turned a profit yet. Since Eliyahu put in more work than I did, he'll net seventy to eighty percent of the partnership if I pull out now." "Do it anyway," She advised. "This is not the right partner for you."

After davening on Wednesday morning, the Bais Yosef returned to the store. "I'm sorry, but I would like to go ahead and dissolve the partnership," He told Eliyahu.

"Don't be sorry," Eliyahu responded quickly. "I'd like the same. It's best for everyone if we part ways."

They spent some time bent over the books, making calculations, and then split up the money. A document was written up to void the original contract, and both men signed it. The Bais Yosef put his share of the money into his pocket and went off to shul to immerse himself in learning.

Later that night, when he sat down with his wife to a meager meal, he took the sum out of his pocket and put it on the table. "This is what I got back from the failed partnership," He explained. "It's not much, but it'll last us for a short while."

On Thursday morning, his wife cornered him before he went to shul. "Yosef," She said somberly. "You realize that we cannot use the money from the partnership to buy food. If we do, it will be gone sooner or later, and we will starve to death."

"What do you suggest we do?" The Bais Yosef asked. "I don't have a job anymore, and trying to form a partnership did not work out."

"I think we should take the money from the partnership and invest it," She said slowly. "You can use the funds to buy something at the marketplace for a bargain price. We'll flip it a few days later for a higher price, and turn a profit. We can keep doing this and live off the profits we earn. It shouldn't take much time, just a few minutes to buy something every few days, and then some time to sell it every few days."

"Great idea!" The Bais Yosef exclaimed. His wife handed him the sack of money, which he placed into his pocket before heading off to shul. After *Shacharis*, he lingered to learn for a while, fully intending to stop at the marketplace later in the day to purchase his first investment. However, his astounding diligence and utmost concentration made his intentions remain just that: intentions.

He never did go to the marketplace. On his way home that night, he stopped into the bakery to buy some bread for his wife to eat.

“What did you find in the market?” His wife asked when he walked through the door.

“I’ll tell you the truth,” He responded sheepishly. “I completely forgot it. I was so engrossed in learning, that I ended up staying in shul all day.”

“Yosef,” She said chidingly. “Tomorrow is erev Shabbos. We need to have what to eat for Shabbos, and we can’t spend the money from the partnership on food. Tomorrow, immediately after davening, please make sure to go straight to the marketplace to purchase something to flip.”

Friday dawned, and the Bais Yosef went to purchase food for Shabbos. He bought fish and meat and *challos*, and brought them home for his wife to begin cooking for Shabbos.

“Thank you,” She said gratefully. “But please, Yosef, there is still some time. Take this money and go straight to the marketplace to buy something.”

Despite his wife’s repeated reminders, the Bais Yosef completely forgot about the sum of money sitting in his pocket and instead headed straight to the *bais medrash*. He was so engrossed in learning, that he was shocked to suddenly notice young bachurim entering the shul in their Shabbos clothing to learn a little before *kabbalas* Shabbos.

“Oy, Shabbos is almost here,” He exclaimed, jumping up from his seat and closing his Gemara. He rushed home to bathe and get dressed for Shabbos, throwing a quick greeting to his wife in his haste to be ready on time.

“Yosef, what will be?” His wife cried. “I can’t believe you forgot again!” There was no time to discuss it further after that, as Shabbos was steadily approaching.

On Sunday morning, she stood by the front door, blocking the entrance. “Yosef,” She said. “Enough is enough. Unless you want me to walk with you to the marketplace to make sure you are actually going, I insist that you come home today with something. Go right now, don’t get distracted by anything else. Just go, and purchase the first item you see. You are doing this *l’shem shamayim*, so that you can sit and learn for most of the day and still support your family. Buy the first item you see, and may we have *siyata dishmaya* that it be successful.”

“Okay,” The Bais Yosef agreed. With utmost effort, he forced his mind not to stray from the task at hand: purchasing something as an investment. *Buy something, buy something, buy something*, he thought as he willed his legs to carry him not in the direction of the *bais medrash*, but to the marketplace. When he felt himself being tugged to learning, he directed his thoughts to the *halachos* of commerce. His shalom *bayis* depended on this. *Buy something, buy something, buy something*.

As he entered the marketplace, he encountered an old man with a long beard. “Shalom aleichem, R’ Yosef!” The man greeted him.

“Aleichem shalom,” The Bais Yosef responded. “Do we know each other?”

The man made a gesture that could be interpreted in a few different ways. “What are you doing in the marketplace?” He asked.

“I came to buy something, to keep the peace at home,” The Bais Yosef admitted. “Anything I find, really. I just need to come home with something.”

“Are you interested in an olive press?” The man asked, his eyes glinting in the sun.

The Bais Yosef remembered his wife’s bidding to buy the first thing he came across. “Sounds

good,” He said. “How much are you selling it for? And how much is it really worth?”

The man showed him a bulky piece of machinery.

“This is the olive press,” He said, naming a price.

“That’s not a lot for such equipment. After you clean and *kasher* it, you can sell it for double or triple what you paid for it.”

The Bais Yosef walked around the cumbersome apparatus and tried to lift it. “This is too heavy for me to carry home,” He commented. “To be honest, I don’t even know how to work this. Where do the olives go, in the top? In the bottom?”

“R’ Yosef, let me assure you that this is a valuable olive press,” The man replied, stroking the dirty metal with his hand. “You don’t need to know how to work it; you just need to take it someone who does. Don’t worry about the weight. Pay me now, and I’ll have it delivered to your home later today.”

The Bais Yosef told him his address and paid him the asking fee for the press. Then, glad that he had finally accomplished what his wife had wanted, he continued on to the *bais medrash* for another wonderful day of learning.

When he returned home at night, his wife was waiting to see his purchase. “Did you go to the market?” She asked pointedly.

“I did, and I bought an olive press,” He responded “An olive press?” She asked, wrinkling her forehead. “And where is it?”

“He said he would deliver it,” The Bais Yosef said, looking around. “Maybe it’s outside.”

“Who did you buy it from?” She continued questioning as she followed him out of the house. “I can’t believe you paid for it before he even delivered it! Who said he’s trustworthy?”

“He looked honest,” The Bais Yosef replied, squinting in the dark. There was a large shape in their front yard, and they both approached it.

His wife’s expression when from incredulity to hopelessness. “Is this what you bought, Yosef?” She asked, trying not to let her voice quiver. “This old, rusty piece of junk? Who will ever want to buy it off us?”

Her husband bowed his head. “I’m sorry. I guess business is just not for me. The man said it was valuable, and so I thought...”

Together, they pushed the heavy machinery into their home and left it just beyond the front door. Both of them stared at its grimy metal frame.

After a few moments, the Bais Yosef’s wife shrugged and turned away from the olive press. “There’s nothing we can really do right now,” She said. “We’ll deal with this tomorrow.”

In the morning, she told him that she was willing to take care of flipping the olive press. “You aren’t really cut out for business,” She explained. “You go learn, and I’ll go to the market to try to find a buyer.”

The Bais Yosef thanked her gratefully, needing no second invitation. His wife donned her shawl and made her way to the marketplace. “Does anyone know anything about olive presses?” She inquired of the various vendors dotting the open square. “I’m looking to sell my olive press.” To her relief, she found one person willing to assist her. “I might be able to find you a buyer for the olive press,” A tall man informed her. “I would need to see it and appraise its value first.” “It’s in my home,” She responded. “It’s very heavy. I don’t know how I would manage to bring it to you for an appraisal.”

“Alright,” He conceded. “I’ll come to your house to appraise it. Normally, I would never do this, but since you must be a *choshuv* woman; you are the

wife of R' Yosef. Show me where you live so that I can see the olive press for myself.”

Gratefully, the Bais Yosef's wife brought the appraiser to her small home and showed him the olive press. The man looked at the dusty, grimy machine and frowned. He crouched on the floor and began poking around at the mechanism. “Lady,” He called. “This thing is too dirty to see anything. Can you please bring me a bucket of water?”

She quickly brought water, and he began scrubbing away at the metal, removing dust and grime that looked decades old. Suddenly, he let out a yelp. “This is no olive press!” He exclaimed, jumping up to his feet and pointing at the exposed yellow metal. “Look here! It is an olive press, but it is made entirely out of gold!”

“Gold?” She asked breathlessly. “Gold!” He confirmed, scrubbing more energetically to remove the dirt on more of the olive press. “This must have once belonged to an extremely wealthy person. It's worth a veritable fortune!”

When the Bais Yosef returned home later that night, a full day of learning behind him, his wife greeted him with the astounding news that the heavy machinery he had bought as an investment was made out of pure gold.

He staggered back in shock. “But I bought it for a few pennies!” He exclaimed, pensive. “I'm sure the person who sold it to me did not realize how much it was really worth. It is stealing for us to keep it. And yet I don't even know how to find the person who sold it to me!”

Troubled, the Bais Yosef fell into a fitful sleep. As he slept, he had a dream in which the seller of the golden olive press came to speak to him. “I am really a messenger from Heaven,” The seller of the olive press said. “It is destined in *shomayim* that you be a wealthy man. However, your wealth was not supposed to come through your

partnership with Eliyahu. As long as you were connected with Eliyahu, the gates of abundance were closed to you. However, now that you broke the partnership, I was given permission to descend to your world to give you the olive press, your ticket to wealth.

“Sell the olive press, Yosef. Sell it, for it is worth a lot of money. Then, you should go with your wife to Eretz Yisroel and settle in the city of Tzefas. You will see much success there.” With those words, the man departed from the Bais Yosef's dream.

The Bais Yosef awoke and related the dream to his wife. They sold the olive press for a tremendous sum and, as per the man's instructions and moved to Tzfas. The money from the sale was enough to support his family for the rest of his life, allowing him to learn in piece. The *sefer* Beis Yosef was also printed using the money from the olive press.

*Have a Wonderful Shabbos!*

This story is taken from tape # A362-1997

### **TORAS REB KALMAN HOTLINE**

Vaadim & Shmussen given by **Reb Kalman Krohn zt"l** are now available by phone.

USA **732.913.5616** or **718.557.7711**

E.Y. **02.313.6038**

**Option 1:** Vaadim given in BMG  
**Option 2:** Shmussen given in Adelpia  
**Option 3:** Captivating stories taken from shiurim

To receive Vaadim by email or for questions and suggestions call/text 609.807.1783 or email torasrebkalman@gmail.com

Toras Reb Kalman  
Lakewood New Jersey  
609.807.1783  
torasrebkalman@gmail.com

Sponsored by:  
Eli & Malky Friedman  
Chatz & Leahle Schwab