

TORAS REB KALMAN



סיפורי צדיקים

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

Dibuk and Decisions

In the times of the Shevt Mussar, there was a woman who suddenly began experiencing strange and painful symptoms. Previously a healthy woman, the onset of the mysterious malady was quick and sudden. She suffered terribly for eight months as her family took her from doctor to doctor seeking a diagnosis. However, the medical world was stumped by her condition. They had no answers, no relief, no treatment.

Eventually, it dawned on her concerned friends and family that perhaps a dibuk, the neshamah of a deceased individual in need of a tikkun, had entered her body and was the cause of her excruciating pain. They reached out to the holy Shevt Mussar, a great mekubal, and asked him to assist them. Perhaps he would be able to assist the suffering neshamah achieve atonement so that it would leave the woman's body.

The Shevt Mussar agreed to try. He boarded the wagon with the woman's family members and traveled to her home.

When the stricken woman caught sight of the Shevt Mussar, she fell flat on her face and became paralyzed with fright. The Shevt Mussar understood that the dibuk inside her could not handle the presence of kedushah, which is what caused her to become motionless.

Suddenly, noises began emerging from within the woman. The Shevt Mussar strained to hear, but he could not understand what was being said. After a few futile minutes, he told the family that he was going to daven Minchah and would try again when he returned.

After Minchah, the Shevt Mussar returned to her home along with a minyan of men. Once again, the woman collapsed on the floor at the sight of the holy tzaddik. The Shevt Mussar leaned forward toward her body and began to speak to the dibuk.

“If you don't come speak to me, I will put you into cheirem,” he threatened the dibuk. “I will excommunicate you. Therefore, please answer my questions. I would like you to tell me who you are and why you are causing this woman so much pain. I understand that you must have done something terrible in your lifetime that is causing you to have no peace, but why are you putting this poor woman through so much agony?”

A voice began emerging from the woman, yet once again, the Shevt Mussar could not understand what was being said. Then, different parts of the woman's body began moving around, which the Shevt Mussar understood meant that the dibuk was floating around her body.

Afraid that the dibuk's motion could pose as a danger to the woman, the Shevt Mussar

commanded, “Return to the place in her body where you were before. I’ll tell you when you can move around.”

Suddenly, the woman began to speak. “I hear voices inside my body,” she rasped. “The voice is saying that it can’t speak because it is in the wrong part of my body, but if the Shevt Mussar commands it to move to my neck, then it will use my mouth to speak.”

The Shevt Mussar turned to address the dibuk. “I command you to move to the neck of this woman so that you can converse with me in a manner that I can understand you.”

Gazing at the woman, it was clear that there was a force moving inside of her until it settled at her throat.

“Who are you?” the Shevt Mussar tried again.

“My name is Avrohom Shneur,” the dibuk responded in an audible, comprehensible voice.

“My name is Avrohom Shneur, and I come from such-and-such city.”

“What was the terrible sin you committed that you weren’t allowed to achieve atonement through Gehinnom?” the mekubal continued.

Gehinnom is a difficult punishment, yet it is also a gift, for it cleanses a neshamah of its misdeeds so that it can enjoy the schar it has earned. The neshamah that took possession of the woman’s body did not merit Gehinnom and was instead forced to float around, pursued by angels of destruction. Without Gehinnom, there was no way for it to reach its tikkun and achieve peace.

“I’ll tell you a little about myself,” the voice responded. “I am a baal teshuvah. In my youth, I did the gravest of sins, yet when I matured, I

became a shomer Torah umitzvos. Throughout my short lifetime, I tried so hard to atone for the aveiros I had unwittingly committed before I became frum.”

“Yes, yes,” the Shevt Mussar said in a reflective tone. “I remember you. You came to me once, to ask me how to atone for some of the terrible sins you had committed. I told you then that you did not have to worry, for you were on the right path. Hashem would forgive the follies of your youth.” The voice continued speaking. “Then I became a chosson and the financial burden was simply too overwhelming to bear. I was alone, a baal teshuvah with no family, no friends to lean on, and I was crushed under the enormous expenses. When I imagined myself standing under the chupah in my tattered garments, with no food for the wedding meal and no jewelry for my kallah, I could just feel the stinging humiliation.

“At some point, I came to the conclusion that anything would be better than embarrassment. I preferred to die than to live a life of shame. I was so alone, with no one to advise me, and at that point, suicide felt like my only choice. For three entire days and nights, I fasted, hoping to atone for the terrible sin I was preparing to commit. I said vidui, and I gave tzeddakah. Then, I put a sack over my head and choked myself to death. I simply could not handle the humiliation.

“I was sure that through death, I would be able to not only escape the shame, but also become cleansed of the terrible aveiros I had committed in my youth. However, as soon as my neshmah left my body, I heard a bas kol.

““Why have you forsaken, in one instant, everything you have toiled for years to build up?” the bas kol demanded. ‘Why haven’t you consulted a friend, a mentor, someone who could guide you and assist you? In the instant that you took your own life, you lost everything – your

Torah, your tefillah, your teshuvah, your good deeds, your fasting, your tzedakah, even your aveiros! You have nothing left! As the result of one foolish decision you have now descended into the ultimate darkness! Why? Why didn't you go to someone for help?!

"Indeed, I am in the most bitter place imaginable," the voice concluded. "Each day, I am taken and placed in front of my grave. There, I am subjected to the most terrible humiliation. Day after day, I suffer from this utter shame. I have nothing! Nothing but shame!"

"After my death, my kallah married another man. Together, they had a child. The neshamah of this child was supposed to be my child, my kaddish'! This, too, I lost due to my foolish act. On top of all that, the woman who was once my kallah will suffer tremendously, since she was destined to be my wife but wasn't able to fulfill that destiny. The child, too, will suffer terribly."

The Shevt Mussar leaned toward the woman's mouth. "I understand that you are suffering," he said softly to the dibuk. "But how did you get into this woman?"

"She was ill," the voice responded. "Her family prepared hot water for her to drink to help her feel better. Seeing an opportunity, I jumped into the water. When the woman drank from the water, I was able to enter her body."

"And why were you allowed to enter her body?" the Shevt Mussar questioned.

"This woman has committed a sin," the voice announced. "Had she not sinned, I would not have found entry into her body. It's only because she sinned that I was able to take up presence inside of her."

The voice grew more pained, almost desperate. "Rebbi!" it cried. "You cannot imagine the torture I go through daily! It's frightful! When I took my own life, my neshamah left my body and I ascended to shomayim. The malachim began my din, bringing millions of mitzvos that I had done in my lifetime. I was shown the most beautiful plot in Gan Eden, the tremendous reward I was to receive for the mitzvos I had done."

"And then, as I gazed excitedly at the portion in Olam Habah that would soon be mine, I was torn ruthlessly away. 'Yes, that was all to be yours,' I was told by the malachim. 'All this was your reward! But with your final deed, you have relinquished your rights to all of it. You will get nothing!' Can you imagine the agony of viewing a reward you worked to earn and then realizing that due to your own foolishness, you have lost it all?!"

"Not only did I lose the most wonderful schar, I am also tortured daily by evil spirits who chase me constantly. I am constantly on the go and can find no peace. Inside this woman, I can finally find some peace from my pursuers."

"Please, you mustn't cause this woman to suffer!" the Shevt Mussar beseeched the dibuk. "I'm willing to say kaddish for you and help your neshamah atone for its terrible misdeed, but you must leave this woman's body!"

"How do I know you will do as you say?" the dibuk challenged. "Bring a pair of tefillin, and let the tefillin bear witness to the agreement."

"As you say," the Shevt Mussar agreed.

Someone was dispatched to bring tefillin, and he returned shortly thereafter, holding a pair.

“We have tefillin here,” the Shevt Mussar announced. “I promise that if you leave this woman and never return, I will assist your neshamah in attaining atonement, in achieving peace from your incredible suffering.”

Immediately thereafter, the dibuk left the woman’s body.

Often, we are faced with decisions, decisions that can determine the course of our lives. One foolish decision can lead to tremendous darkness and difficulty. Don’t do it to yourself! Don’t decide alone!

There was a dentist who came to Aish Hatorah at fifty-seven years old and became a baal teshuvah. He was asked how he made this difficult decision at such a late stage in his life, and this was his response. “I woke up one morning and realized, ‘Hey! Why am I a dentist? Because when I was sixteen years old, I decided to become a dentist.’ I realized that I was living my entire life based on a decision I had made as a teenager. How could I let a sixteen-year-old kid decide on my future? That’s when I thought about what I, my adult self, wanted, and here I am.”

Don’t leave your decisions for a sixteen-year-old, a thirteen-year-old, a twenty-year old to decide. Don’t make your major decisions alone. Find someone older, wiser than you to assist you in making the decision. Find a mentor, a rebbi, a wise and respected individual who can point you in the right direction so that forever you can look back joyfully at the decision you had made.

Have a Wonderful Shabbos!
This story is taken from tape # A208

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