

Good Shabbos Everyone. The Torah tells us this week how Moshe Rabeinu set up the Mishkan (the Holy Tabernacle). At the conclusion of the account of setting up the Mishkan, the Torah tells us how the Shechina - Hashem's holy spirit filled the Mishkan.

The Torah tells us that the Shechina dwelt on the Mishkan (the Holy Tabernacle) of the Bnai Yisroel "throughout their journeys." (Shemos 40:38) Because we know that the lessons of the Torah are eternal, we can learn out an inspirational lesson from this verse. Namely, that wherever the Bnai Yisroel will travel in exile, the Holy Shechina will escort them, as is hinted to in the verse "throughout their journeys." The following amazing true story shows how the Shechina escorts even those Jews who are the farthest from Hashem.

A secular Jew in Israel from a Chassidic background once related the following story about his son. The man's son was a commander of a Tank Artillery division. Sadly, the Army commander had become vehemently anti-religious over the years. He even went so far as to complain about a photograph of his grandfather which hung on the wall in his father's house. The photograph of the grandfather, in traditional Chassidic garb with peyos and a long beard, was particularly offensive to the young soldier. "That man is a barbarian. Take the picture down", he would shriek.

One day, the soldier became religious! What happened? It was June 1967, the Six Day War, in the Sinai Desert. The tanks were all spread out. If attacked, they would have to regroup and fight together. Suddenly, Egyptian tanks approached. The commander turned his tank around and raced back to the platoon. The fastest way was straight across an open stretch.

Suddenly, he saw an old man davening, enwrapped in tallis and tefillin, right in his path. "Doesn't the fool have any place better to pray than in the middle of the desert", he screamed. "I'm going to run him over." But at the last minute he swerved to avoid the old man.

The Egyptian tank in hot pursuit behind him didn't have any such tinge of sympathy. As it ran over the old Jew it exploded into a fiery inferno as it tripped a landmine underneath.

When the soldier visited his father after the war, the photo was still on the wall. Although he had seen it hundreds of times before, the face familiar in a strange way. He recognized the face of the old Jew who was praying in the desert. "I realized that he was praying for me that I should live", explained the newly religious soldier, "And I want to be like him." **Good Shabbos Everyone.**