

**Good Shabbos Everyone.** It states in the verse in this week's portion, "And you shall love Hashem, your G-d" One of the inspirational explanations of this verse is as follows: The Sages explain, that the Name of Hashem should become beloved through a Jew's behavior. A Jew should study Torah and Mishnah, serve Torah scholars and deal graciously with his fellow man. Then others will say of him, "Fortunate is his father who taught him Torah! Fortunate is his teacher who taught him Torah! Woe to those who do not study Torah! He who studies Torah — how pleasant is his behavior and how proper are his deeds." To him may the verse be applied: (Yeshayahu 49:3). "And He said to me: 'You are My servant Israel, in whom I will be glorified' " (Yoma 86a). The following two stories illustrate the power of a "Kiddush Hashem" - behavior which brings honor to Hashem and the Jewish people.

Bernie, the gentile janitor at Beis Medrash Govoha (in Lakewood, New Jersey), was wholeheartedly devoted to the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Aharon Kotler, of blessed memory. One Friday morning, Bernie was seen running at top speed toward the yeshiva building, clutching a package in his hand. When someone asked him if everything was all right, he replied, "The Rabbi needs this," and he continued to run. As it turned out, all R' Aharon had needed was to know the time. However, when R' Aharon, with his broken English, had asked Bernie for the time, the janitor had mistakenly thought that R' Aharon was asking him to purchase a certain item in a local store. Faithful servant that he was, Bernie shot out of the building like a lightning bolt before R' Aharon could stop him.

The night after R' Aharon passed away, Bernie stood in the lobby of the yeshiva with his head bowed in mourning. "The Rabbi was a saint," he told a student. "You see this coat I'm wearing? The Rabbi gave it to me." And now for our second story...

Rabbi Leibish Langer is a rebbe at the Mirrer Yeshiva in Brooklyn and teaches one night a week at Yeshiva Darchei Torah in Far Rockaway, near Queens. One night, Rabbi Langer was on his way back to Brooklyn with a carload of talmidim-students when his car hit a pothole and stalled in one of the crummier areas of Queens. He could not restart the car.

The neighborhood where the mishap occurred was known to be dangerous and the boys were tense. Rabbi Langer told the boys that they should collectively pledge money to a R' Meir Baal HaNeis tzedakah and then recite a chapter of Tehillim together.

Rabbi Langer assured the boys that Hashem would surely watch over them. Almost immediately, two policemen cruising by noticed the stranded car and stopped. Just then a yeshiva student driving by also stopped. The police radioed a road service company, which responded that its crew could be there in an hour and a half. The police could not wait there all that time, but they cautioned Rabbi Langer that if he abandoned the car he would probably not find it intact when he returned. Rabbi Langer asked the yeshiva student to take the boys to the nearest yeshiva while he waited alone for the road service. The police cautioned him to remain in the car with the doors locked. The other two cars drove off and Rabbi Langer returned to his car, locked the doors from the inside and turned on a tape of a Torah lecture.

Almost immediately, a car passing by came to a halt and out stepped an African American fellow of imposing appearance. "Got a problem?" the man asked. "No, I'm fine," Rabbi Langer replied.

"Well, I'm a mechanic and I see you've got a problem. Open the hood and I'll see what I can do." Rabbi Langer remained in the locked car and opened the hood. It was obvious that the man was making a real effort to get the car started. Finally, the man came around to the driver's window and said, "The fuel is not going into the engine but I can't figure out why.

Listen, you can't stay here alone — this is a very dangerous neighborhood! What are you going to do?" Before Rabbi Langer could respond, the man went on. "I'll tell you what to do. Come out of the car and stand next to me. You'll see, any Jew that passes by and sees you will stop to help you out. I know — you Jews are humanitarians. And besides that, if you are standing next me, nobody will lay a hand on you!" Somehow, Rabbi Langer believed the man, and he stepped out of the car.

As they stood there, neighborhood teenagers walking by eyed them suspiciously. The man yelled at them in a language they understood to stop staring and get on their way. Within a few minutes, a former yeshiva student who had studied under Rabbi Langer pulled up. "Rebbi, what's the problem?"

"See!" the man shouted. "I told you someone would stop. Just wait, we'll be here long enough, they'll be twenty Jewish cars lined up to help you. I know you people. I worked for Elite Caterers, a fellow named Shlomo Katz runs it — now, that's a good man!"

While they were talking, the driver who had taken the boys to a local yeshiva returned to see if he could be of further help. Rabbi Langer assured the African American man that he now had enough help and that the man could leave. Rabbi Langer thanked the man and insisted that he accept some money for his services. The man refused, and he told Rabbi Langer that in truth, he was not a really mechanic, he merely claimed that he was, in order to be able to protect Rabbi Langer from neighborhood thugs. The man left and moments later, Rabbi Langer and the other two students got the car started. One of the other two drivers followed Rabbi Langer in his car until they were safely out of the neighborhood. (Rabbi Shimon Finkelman, p. 206 Shabbos Stories)

Jews have a challenge in this life. We must always be on our best behavior. We are Hashem's people. Whatever we do reflects on Hashem. The Talmud tells us that one who makes Jews look bad, can only achieve atonement at death! (Yoma 86a) Surely therefore, one who makes Hashem look good, is guaranteed great reward. **Good Shabbos Everyone.**