



Swallowing Bitterness

Based on *Likutei Halachos* ג' אות טז-יז, כתובת קעקע, הלכה ג' אות טז-יז

"I've had it!" The ultimate victim of injustice was disgusted. Here he'd been promised a delicious meal but all he'd been subjected to was endless rambling and a meager, salty radish. And wine on an empty stomach?! Where did these people take their weird notions from? But the absolute worst was this last straw: Being sure that the long-awaited meal had finally arrived after waiting patiently for hours, he hungrily bit in to a large mouthful of the stuff they gave him, which turned out to be... bitter horseradish! Swearing and ranting, he stormed out of the house in frenzied anger, cursing his bad luck.

Sometimes, we too feel like the ultimate victim of injustice in the Rebbe's famous tale. We're working so hard and trying our best, yet all we get is bitter horseradish?

Bitter horseradish, bitter herbs;

bitter medication. Sometimes, it's too bitter for us! A human doctor would throw up his hands in despair if his patient refuses to swallow the bitter medication. But when we can't bear the bitterness which is intended to cure us of our sins, the all-merciful Doctor does differently. He hides some of our sins behind His shoulders, so that we require much less bitterness to heal us. Whenever it gets too hard, Hashem eases our suffering so that it should only be as much as we can tolerate, even though we really deserve much more according to our misdeeds.

This bit of bitterness we all have to undergo is the maror we eat on Pesach. It's impossible to be let off the hook with absolutely nothing, so Hashem gives us a small manageable amount for our atonement. However, we dip the maror into sweet charoses, alluding to the alleviated bitterness that

Hashem gives us in His mercy.

Down in the melting-pot of Mitzrayim, it got too much for us to bear, and we cried out to Hashem. Seeing that we couldn't take it anymore, Hashem eased the bitterness and hastened the time to redeem us from there.

But we had our formidable foe, Amalek, who gnashed his teeth and longed for our failure. He rushed to the site to provoke us to rebel against Hashem: not to bear the little suffering we had to undergo in order to complete our purification process. Then in 2448, and now in 5779, he's still not tired. Down below, he incites us to complain about the little bitterness we still have, while up in heaven he puts up a fight that we haven't received our due, our fair share of bitterness. At this instance, a person is in very great danger, for Hashem has alleviated the suffering he really deserves to

make it possible for him to bear.

But if a person succumbs to Amalek and refuses to swallow even this little bit of suffering that he has to undergo for the sake of his soul, Amalek's prosecution is reinforced and he is given the full portion of his suffering in accordance to his sins, which is indeed unbearable. If we storm out by the maror, cursing our bad luck, then we'll indeed be left with a bitter taste in our mouths. But if we wait it out, if we just stick it out another few minutes, we'll be served the most scrumptious mouthwatering meal! Purifying and cleansing the body comes with some bitterness, but after that comes the gratifying, rejuvenating vitality of being with Hashem!

But how do we stick it out? That moment is painful, excruciatingly bitter, seemingly endless. Even though it is just temporary, to us it stretches on and on, with no good ever appearing on the horizon. How on earth are we supposed to swallow it and let it just wash over us while we bend our backs in submission?

Going back to the charoses. The gooey brown mixture is a reminder of the mud in Mitzrayim. The mud we used to build the Egyptians' cities, and the mud we were stuck in. Thinking back to the mud and the slumps in which we were ensnared, we remember the depths we had fallen to due to our sins, and we realize how we really deserve much more bitterness! This little bit is nothing compared to what our deeds actually warrant. We might have it slightly hard, but we know that it is much less than we really deserve! When we realize how this bit of suffering is with Hashem's mercy, the load gets so much lighter and easier to carry! Hashem's kindness in not meting out the full punishment that befits our behavior, but rather sufficing with this little bit of discomfort becomes clear to us. Instead of complaining, we become filled with overwhelming gratitude and praise for His great kindness.

May His name be blessed forever and ever! And may we always be praising and thanking Him, recognizing all the good He gives us in our lives.

A Touching Tefila

ליקוטי תפילות ח"ב ל"ז

I should merit receiving the holy Yom Tov Pesach, the time of our freedom, with much holiness and happiness. And we should merit fulfilling all the mitzvos of Pesach with great holiness, happiness and joy. And help us, and save us with Your mercy from the least bit of chametz and leaven, so that there shouldn't be the tiniest bit of chametz in our homes and properties all Pesach. Because it is revealed before You, Master of the world, that it is impossible for a human being to be careful of a tiny bit of chametz without Your help and compassion. Have mercy on us with Your great mercy, powerful Redeemer, true Compassionate One, and save and guard us from any chametz all through the holy days of Pesach. And help us and let us merit going from slavery to freedom, from sorrow to happiness, from mourning to Yom Tov and from darkness to great light. And we should merit making the seder with much awakening and wondrous excitement, and great deep happiness.



A Loving Letter

עלים לתרופה קל"ד

Baruch Hashem, Monday 12 Nissan 5594

My beloved, cherished son.

...The happiness of the chag should be sweet for you, and you should merit to receive the holy coming Pesach with happiness and a good heart. And the main thing is that wherever you are up to now, the whole seder of the avoda of Pesach and the sefira should be like new in your eyes. Because there will be new positive wonders done with every Yid in this holy Yom Tov, and surely you too between them. Especially since we merited to know about the Baal Hanifla'os, the owner of wonders, whose every simple, deep, word and the ways he left us as a good inheritance are all fathomless wonders of wonders.

That's enough for now to make your soul rejoice no matter what, and I too have no simcha and vitality only through these above words. You'll understand more of this yourself, because we've already spoken a lot about this, but the main thing is to remember them anew every day, especially in this holy time when it's a mitzvah for us to increase telling about yetzias mitzrayim, in every generation and every single year.

And my soul well knows that there is no one in the whole world who knows and feels these wonders that we in our pain have merited. The mouth will tire of speaking, and the imagination cannot contain such wonders that our master, the owner of wonders, has done with us so that we should merit receiving such great, awesome lights as these from the light of lights...

Up until now, His mercy has accompanied us... We have to spend our days to thank, praise and exalt every single day to the One Who made all these miracles for our parents and us in this generation, especially in this period of Pesach, when it's a mitzvah for us to increase telling the wonders that Hashem did with us, and that He does with us in every generation.

The fact that I'm writing this is also one of Hashem's wonders because I didn't imagine that I would have a messenger to send you these words now. Blessed is Hashem Who helped until now.

The words of your father, who hopes to see you rejoice with His help at all times,

Nosson of Breslov



Pesach Prose

By C.R. Weissfish

"Pesach's coming," says my brain.

My eyes glaze
with a pressure-induced haze
I go into a panicked craze
a frenetic race.

The yetzer hora smoothly replays
the voice I too often raise
dropping my mood to blacks and grays...
"Gevald! Don't give up!" I'm no lost case!
My negative thoughts I'll rephrase
my sour face I'll replace
the Rebbe's comforting words I'll embrace
and approach the present with Breslover grace!

Sinking into depression (if so I may say)
eyeing my kitchen in utter dismay
my house in hopeless disarray
desperation threatens to lead me astray
this will NEVER be clean enough anyway...
In walks my husband and asks, "Hey!
But what did the Rebbe say?
chumros yeseiros are really not our way
since they lead you to the yetzer hora's prey..."
Oh, how this saved my day!



The Point of Pesach Cleaning

By R.E. Beck

In the maze of cobblestoned alleyways and narrow backstreets that make up the area of Beis Yisrael, between hanging laundry and piles of broken furniture, sits one of Yerushalayim's famous loonies under the steps to some dinky apartment. His day's occupation is to ask every passerby, "Shabbat Kodesh hayom? Is it Shabbos today?" For variety's sake, he'll sometimes throw in a Yom Kippur, or Pesach. You can hear him marvel, "Shabbos, Pesach, Yom Kippur, all in one day? How can that be?"

Everyone understands that they're dealing with the mentally ill and treat him accordingly: either clucking their tongues, quickening their pace in fright, humoring him with a response, or taunting him. However, if we look behind our backs, we'll see that there's someone thinking the same about us!

Haman is sure that all of us Yidden are crazy. We've just

recently read the megillah on Purim, where he complains to Achashverosh about the Yidden, saying 'there's a single nation dispersed between your kingdom...' The Gemarah explains that Haman said, "They spend the entire year saying 'Today's Shabbos, today's Pesach, we can't work.' What a weird and terrible nation - every day they say it's Shabbos today, it's Pesach today!"

But where did he get that from? We sane people know that Shabbos is only one day a week, and Pesach is only one week a year, and we don't spend our days asking each other if today is Shabbos. I doubt this lunatic was already around in Haman's times, so whatever could he be referring to??

Haman- the strongest כח הרע in the world, knows well what he's talking about. He knows even better than us what matters up in heaven. When he complained about Klal Yisrael celebrating Shabbos and Pesach all year

long, he meant something deep and profound behind it. Haman isn't so bothered by the Shabbos and the Pesach Yidden have; it is indeed something awesome, extremely strong and powerful, but not bad enough for him. It's something else entirely that bothers him.

The Rebbe tells us that every move, every thought, and every bit of preparation that a person makes for any good deed is never lost; it all causes holy things higher up. Great things come out of it.

Why is that? We can understand that the mitzvah itself has a big effect up in heaven. But why should the preparations we do for it matter? They're just the necessary technicalities we need to take care of so we should be able to do the mitzvah. Why should they even be paid any attention, let alone cause great things?

Let's explain with a mashal: *Imagine one day the president announces that he wants to*

grant your neighborhood with a onetime giveaway of 10 billion dollars. On the next Monday a helicopter will fly over the streets of your neighborhood and simply throw down \$100 bills by the millions.

What's the smartest way to make sure you end up that day with the most money collected? Everyone knows about it and will be outside grabbing the flying bills too. What can you do to make sure not to lose a single bill that comes flying your way?

The best idea would be to prepare yourself. Get hold of large boxes, get all your friends, cousins and family, whoever you can get think of, and make them stand outside with those large boxes on Monday. Then get more boxes and spread it all around the neighborhood.... and all you have to do that Monday is watch those flying bills land into your boxes. Collect them all at the end of the day and they are yours to keep!! No working hard and running around hysterically on Monday necessary (and it won't help much either!)

Every Shabbos and Yom Tov, we are showered from above with tremendous gifts and wealth; huge priceless אורות we all so badly need to help us survive spiritually in galus. But we are limited in how much we can accept. (You personally can surely recall big moments, special auspicious times or holy moments when you were on a spiritual high but the next day it was all gone.) The only way

to guarantee that the day's precious אורות and השפעות should stay with us and be ours forever is if we are smart enough to prepare for ourselves boxes. Huge boxes and containers for the אורות to fall into when they are showered towards us from the heavens. These boxes are called כלים to hold the השפעות, and according to how many כלים we ourselves prepared beforehand that's how much we will take out of that special day.

No need to sit at the seder table all nervously with furrowed eyebrows while saying the hagaddah afraid of missing the אורות of this special moment. If you wake up only then, it's too late - you're right. The day is huge and the אורות are tremendous. How can we get enough to give us strength for the entire year...? But Hashem, knowing that, made sure that we prepared enough כלים. We spent the past weeks and even more to prepare them. Every single drawer we cleaned was another box, every single prayer of "Hashem, help me get this room clean of chametz" was another huge container. All of them are at your side on Pesach by the seder and they are the כלים which collect all those big אורות and השפעות. Those weeks of physical preparation and even more so the tefillos and retzonos you had to have your home prepared and ready for Pesach, all those preparations are what makes your actual Pesach be so great, meaningful and most importantly: provide you with treasures that will

remain yours even after Pesach and help you be a better Yid easily for the next year (and forever.)

Haman knew well enough that Pesach is one week and not the entire year. What made him so upset was that they spend the entire year saying פסח היום - We Yidden make too big hachanos!!!! That's too dangerous for him. That can kill him completely.

Pesach itself he can manage with. What kind of Pesach can tired Yidden in galus have already? But the year-long preparations of thinking what to keep Pesachdig and what not, and the weeks of cleaning, gives them such enormous כלים which catch all the hashpa'os so that they stay with them, (not to mention when they say הריני מקשר beforehand, so that they have a Pesach like the Rebbe himself) it's that which Haman can't deal with.

The same thing is with Shabbos. What can an exhausted and confused Yiddishe Mamme already take out of a Shabbos... But the whole week revolves around it! That he can't take, because with such preparations, they receive such big אורות which are already too much for him.

So Baruch Hashem, Haman comes out the loser. We aren't afraid of him at all! We continue with our שבת היום and פסח היום all year long, and we prepare ourselves enormous כלים which will give us an amazing heilige Pesach Bezras Hashem.



A Taste of the Rebbe's Treasures

Should we take on halachic stringencies in everything?

This only causes a person to lose out, and leads to depression and anger. It is just confusion and imagination that brings people to search for stringencies.

So says the Rebbe in Likutei Moharan 2, 44: "One must distance themselves greatly from chochmos in avodas Hashem. Because all these worldly chochmos that those who enter a little into avodas Hashem have, aren't even chochmos at all. They're just fantasies, nonsense and great confusion. And these chochmos discourage a person very much from avodas Hashem. This means when someone contemplates, analyzes and is far too careful whether he properly fulfilled his obligation by everything he does. Because it is impossible for a person of flesh and blood to fulfil his obligations perfectly, and 'Hashem doesn't come with fights,' and 'the Torah wasn't given to ministering angels.' On those who behave stringently and overly-strict with extra stringencies, it is written: "And you shall live with them," (Vayikra 18) 'and you shall not die with them.' (Yoma 85)

For these people have no lives at all, they are always depressed since it seems to them that they didn't fulfil their obligations with the mitzvos they do, and they have no liveliness from any mitzvah due to their stringencies and depression."

What about Pesach, in regard to stringencies and suspicions?

Pesach too, one shouldn't take on extra stringencies.

Reb Nosson writes in Sichos Haran 235: "On the subject of extra stringencies for Pesach, he didn't agree at all with those who are increasingly overly-stringent and go into deep depression. He talked about it at length, because there was one of our people who asked him a question about how to behave with some kind of chumrah on Pesach. He laughed at him, and he talked at length how we don't need to search after extra

chumros, craziness and confusion. He said that he himself also used to be stuck in this subject; many, many chumros would come up in his mind. Once he was thinking about the subject of water on Pesach, fearing that maybe there would be something in the drawn water. Preparing water in advance for the whole Pesach, as some people do, would also not be good enough for him, because it is very hard to guard the water well enough from erev Pesach for the whole Pesach. No water was good enough for him besides for spring water which flows... where new water comes constantly. But no such spring could be found in the place where he lived, so he considered moving to a place with a spring for Pesach. That's how far he went into chumros, depression and extra stringencies. But now he laughs at it, because there is no need to search for extra chumros, even on Pesach.

He talked at length about it then, because the main true avoda is temimus and peshitus, to increase Torah, tefilla and good deeds without searching to come up with new chumros. Just to go in the way of our forefathers, and the Torah wasn't given to ministering angels."

Do we need to worry that we haven't behaved according to stricter shittos in halacha?

There is no need to fear or worry about this.

Like Reb Nosson writes in Chayei Moharan 444: "He once spoke with me, and he had a bit of a desire to make me into an Av Beis Din in some kehillah. I told him that I got depressed and had many suspicions on the subject of paskening whether something is permissible or forbidden, and I was very scared about the matter of paskening.

He answered me, "What's there to worry or suspect? If you have someone to rely on, there's nothing to fear anymore." That means that if there is an opinion that allows it and you rely on that opinion, there is nothing to fear anymore at all. (Reb Nachman Tulchiner: It is obvious that one cannot rely on an opinion that is not in accordance to halacha. He meant to say that one shouldn't harbor extra suspicions on this subject.)

Reb Nosson also writes in Chayei Moharan 483: "I once tarried with Kiddush Levana. He told me that when I see it between the clouds however it is, I should immediately make Kiddush Levana. His intention was that I shouldn't be extra careful with chumros at all, for since it is visible between the clouds however it is, it's a mitzvah to make kiddush levana."

In Chayei Moharan 506, Reb Nosson writes: "I once spoke with him about the many thoughts that confuse me on the subject of depression in doing mitzvos, such as netillas yadayim, where I had many suspicions that would confuse me greatly. He answered me, "I already told you that you don't need to look at it." I spoke to him further about these matters, and I told him that this too mixes me up. He answered me, "Don't start thinking at all."

And this is wonderful advice for everything, because many times thoughts are very confusing, and the more we want to push them away, they more they confuse us. The main advice is not to start thinking about them at all, just to remove your mind from them completely, and do yours in whatever it is you're doing."



Women's Views

How does the Rebbe's light add meaning to your Yom Tov Pesach?

The Rebbe's light adds meaning to every single aspect of my avodas Hashem, but in particular regarding Pesach, it has brought a clarity and focus on the joy and simplicity of Yom Tov. Instead of guilt that I may be "missing something" in my Pesach preparations, I can know that I'm absolutely doing the best that I can do, and that makes Hashem happy. Hisbodedus allows me to tap into Hashem's desires for me and my family, and focus on being happy, which is really the point. In this way, I'm truly ridding myself of spiritual chametz along with the physical. What an incredible bracha to have the Rebbe's guidance!

Michal Miller, Denver, Colorado

Every balabusta's challo's taste different. Even if you follow someone else's recipe exactly, the temperature of the room and ingredients, the freshness and type of flour, the strength of the kneading, the proofing time, even the type of pan and oven you use, all contribute to the minor but noticeable differences in flavor and texture.

Everyone's spiritual chometz "tastes" different, too. Rebbe Nachman says "...a person must safeguard his mind from becoming chometz." Chometz is foreign ways of thinking that twist our thoughts and sour our emotions. The chometz of the mind rises up and hides Hashem from our consciousness.

For one person, a chometzdig mind is fermented with the belief that psychology or other secular sciences or wisdoms offers something more "real" than the truth of the Torah. For another person, a chometzdig mind might be roiled with confusion and anger at others, because she has forgotten that Hashem is the Source and Cause of everything. Everyone's psychospiritual chometz is different.

In order to banish chometz, we can't be afraid to look in the corners of our minds. We need to have honest talks with Hashem about how we're progressing. Now is the time to recommit to hisbodedus, even if that means you have to do it while physically making Pesach preparations. The order that results—in our closets and drawers and in our minds and hearts—banishes chometz and prepares us to fully experience the Seder (order) with internal order and joy, too.

Chaya Rivka Zwolinski, Brooklyn, N.Y

It makes my Pesach way calmer and less stressful! How much more meaning there is if you go with the Rebbe's eitzos of no chumros yeseiros. It leaves more space in your heart to take in Pesach with the Rebbe's light, and with much happiness and joy!

Ch. Mendlowitz, Beis Shemesh

The Rebbe injects into me a deep sense of excitement and positivity that geula, personal and global, can happen just based on wanting and desiring good things.

Chaya Hadar, Beis Shemesh

The Rebbe's teachings don't only impact my Yom Tov, but my preps too! By heeding the Rebbe's guidance (Sichos Haran 235) to stay away from extra stringencies – I can stay calm and happy in these hectic days!

Now, of course the Rebbe's light shines into my Pesach, just as it does into all other Yomim Tovim, for it is only possible to experience the kedusha of Yom Tov through hiskashrus le'Tzaddik. The Rebbe teaches us that every Yom Tov is not merely a commemoration of what once was, but is in reality a phenomenon that occurs each year over through our fulfilling the mitzvos of that specific Yom Tov. Reb Nosson writes in a letter to his son (letter 238) **"This year will be a completely new Pesach which never yet was!"**

When I sit by the Seder with an awareness that I'm now going out of my own mitzrayim towards kirvas Elokim, the Seder no longer seems like, "Okay, another year," but "Wow! Hashem is liberating me from my personal mitzrayim (which includes stuff I'd rather not list) and is bringing me close to Him! I'm so fortunate!"

Baily Friedman, Brooklyn N.Y

The first thing that comes to my mind is what Reb Nosson answered to those who complained that they had no funds for purchasing for Pesach:

"אויף פֿסח וועט זײן, ווי נעמט מען דעם פֿסח אַליין."

So too, for Pesach we'll have IY"H everything; we need the tefillos for the freedom of the yetzer hora and all bad middos we are enslaved to; self-pity, anger, laziness, stubbornness, haughtiness, etc.

Reb Nachman says that Nissan is a zman of Teshuva like Tishrei, so while we do the Pesach cleaning, we should make a tefillah behiskashris to the Rebbe: "Hashem just as I am decluttering all the chometz, help me declutter all grudges and all negativity etc. Help me clean all the chometz of my heart and mind."

Actually, we should be looking forward for the preparations of Pesach just like to making chasuna. Of course, there are tons of things to tend to, but the excitement and joy for the wonderful simcha gives us the boost and energy for the work. So too, the excitement of the freedom of the yetzer hora and then the closeness to Hashem, becoming a servant of Hashem instead of Pharaoh should give us the boost for all the overwhelming work. And let's remember what Reb Nachman said about having no chumras Yeseirus- extra chumras, even on Pesach. So let's do a הידור making beautiful the yom tov without the nervous chumras and of course, serious tefillos that Hashem should save us from any chametz and truly be free of everything that makes us far from our Beloved King and be able to come close and ultimately be zocheh to the geula, both personal and generally. And we should be zocheh to be together this year with everyone in the Beis Hamikdash and be makriv and eat the korban Pesach, Amen.

Esty S. Yerushalayim



The King and the Emperor

Sippurei Maasios Story 2

There was once an emperor who had no children, and a king who also had no children. The emperor travelled across far and wide in search of some counsel or medicine to conceive children, and the king also set out in the same manner. They happened to meet in a particular inn, though they were not acquainted with each other. The emperor noted that the king had royal manners. So he asked him, and he informed him that he was a king. The king also recognized that same in the emperor, and he emperor informed him as well. They revealed to each other that they were travelling for the aim of having children. They made a pact, that if after returning to their homes, their wives would conceive a son and a daughter, in a manner that they could be married, then they would have them married. The emperor returned home and fathered a daughter, and the king returned and fathered a son, and they forgot about the pact.

The emperor sent his daughter to study, and the king sent his son to study, and the two of them happened to be enrolled under the same teacher. They came to love each other very much, and they made a pact to get married. The son of the king took a ring and placed it on the finger of the emperor's daughter, and they married. Afterwards, the emperor sent after his daughter,

and the king sent after his son, and each brought his child home.

They spoke of matches for the emperor's daughter, but she did not want any match because of the aforementioned pact. The son of the king pined for her, and emperor's daughter was constantly depressed. The emperor would lead her through his courtyards and palaces, and displayed her wealth to her, but still she was sad. The king's son longed for her so intensely that he became sick. When they asked him why he was sick, he wouldn't answer. They said to his servant, "Perhaps you can investigate why?" He answered that that he knew, for he was with him then, where he had studied, and he explained to them the matter.

Then the king remembered the agreement he had made with the emperor. He wrote to the emperor, to prepare himself for the wedding, for they had already agreed to it. The emperor didn't want it anymore, but he didn't dare refuse. He asked the king to send his son to him, to see if he had the quality of rulership, and if so, he would give him his daughter. The king sent his son to him. The emperor seated him in a room, giving him papers of government matters, to see if he could rule the country.

The king's son longed deeply to see the emperor's

daughter, but they didn't allow him. One time he went by a mirror and saw her, and he fainted. She went over to him, woke him, and revealed that she did not want any other match because of the pact between them. He asked her, "What will we do, seeing that your father doesn't agree to the match?" She answered, "Even so." Afterwards, they came upon the idea that they would sail out to sea. They hired a ship and sailed.

They continued to sail, and eventually wanted to come to shore. They reached the shore where there was a forest, and they entered it. The emperor's daughter took off her ring and gave it to him, and she went to sleep there. When the king's son saw her stirring, he laid the ring next to her. Afterwards, they rose and returned to the ship.

Meanwhile, the emperor's daughter remembered that they had forgotten the ring there, so she sent him back for it. He went back, but couldn't find the place. He went to another place, and still couldn't find the ring. He went from place to place looking for it, until he became lost, and couldn't find his way back. She went to look for him, but she also lost her way. As he continued on, he became more and more lost. After a time, he saw a path, and followed it to a settlement. He didn't have anything to do there, so he became a servant. She too became increasingly lost, and decided to go and sit by the sea. She went to the shore, and there were fruit trees there. She sat there, and in the day, she would walk by the sea, hoping to find ships passing by. She lived off the fruits, and at night she climbed up into the trees to be protected from the wild animals.

Meanwhile, there was a very powerful and impressive businessman, who had dealings all over the world. He had an only son, and the businessman was elderly. One time, the son said to his father, "Seeing that you are old

and I am young, and your ministers are not looking out for me at all; when you will pass away, I will be left empty-handed, without knowing what to do. Why don't you give me a ship with merchandise, and I'll set to sea, to become expert in business." His father gave him a ship with merchandise, and he went to various countries, sold his goods, bought others in their place, and was very successful.

While he was at sea, he saw those trees wherein was the emperor's daughter, and thought it was a settlement. He wanted to go there, but as he drew closer, he saw that it was only trees, so he wanted to turn back. Just then, he happened to gaze on one tree, and within it was the form of a person. He thought he might be misperceiving, so he told the other people who were with him, and they looked and also saw the form of a person in the tree. They decided to approach the place, and sent out one man in a small boat. They kept watch on him to direct him, so he would not lose his way, so that he would keep headed toward that tree. He arrived there, and saw that there was a person sitting in the tree, and he told them.

The trader's son went himself, and saw that she was sitting there (the emperor's daughter), and he told her to come down. She answered that she would not descend unless he promised her that he would not touch her until they returned to his house and he married her lawfully. He promised her, and she boarded the ship with him. He saw that she knew how to play instruments, and she also spoke several languages, and he rejoiced in his find.

Afterwards, as they began to near his house, she said to him that it would be proper for him to go to the house, and inform his father and relatives, and all his friends, so that all of them would come out to welcome her, and after that she would reveal who she was (for

even before, she had demanded that he not ask her name until after the wedding – only then he would know who she was.) He agreed to this. She added, “It would also be fitting, seeing that you are bringing such an important woman with you, that you should honor all the sailors in the ship with fine wine, so they should know that their captain is marrying such a woman.” He agreed.

He took good wine that he had in the ship, gave it to them, and they became very drunk. Meanwhile, as he went to his house to tell his father and relatives, the sailors left the ship and collapsed in a drunken stupor.

While the family was preparing to go out and receive her, she went and released the ship from its moorings, spread the sails, and sailed away. The family went down to the ship, and found nothing there. The old businessman (the trader’s father) was very angry with him. The son exclaimed excitedly, “Believe me, I brought a ship full of merchandise!” But they did not see a thing. He said, “Go and ask the sailors.” They went to ask them, and found them lying drunk. When they awoke, they were asked but they did not know at all what had happened to them. They only knew that they had brought a ship with merchandise, and did not know where it was. The father was enraged at his son and banished him from the house, warning him not to come within his presence. And so, he wandered aimlessly, and she (the emperor’s daughter) sailed on the sea.

Meanwhile, there was a certain king who had built a palace on the sea, for it pleased him to build palaces on the sea, because of the sea air, and ship would pass there. The emperor’s daughter was sailing the sea, and she came close to this king’s palace. The king gazed and saw a ship without anyone directing it, with no one on it. He thought he was mistaken, so he asked his people to look, and they also saw likewise. She drew closer to the palace, but then thought to herself, “What do I need with this palace?” So she started

to turn back. But the king sent to bring her back, and he brought her into his palace.

This king had no wife, for he could not choose one. The ones he desired did not want him, and vice versa. When the emperor’s daughter came, she asked him to swear that he would not touch her until he married her lawfully, so he swore. She said that it was fitting that he not open the ship’s hold, nor tamper with it. Rather, it should stay in its place on the sea until the marriage. Then everyone would see it all – the abundance of merchandise that she had brought. Then people would not say he had taken a woman from off the street. He promised her accordingly.

The king wrote to all the nations, to come to his wedding, and he built a palace for her. She demanded that they bring her eleven of the ministers’ daughters to be with her. Thus the king commanded, and they sent her eleven daughters of very high-ranking ministers. They built a palace especially for each one, and she also had her own palace. They would gather together with her, and would play on instruments and pass the time with her.

One time, she asked them to come with her onto the ship, and they went with her and entertained themselves there. Then she said she would honor them with fine wine that she had, and she gave them from the wine on the ship, and they became drunk and fell into a stupor. Meanwhile, she went and released the ship, and spread out the sails, and made off with the ship. Now the king and his people looked and noticed that the ship was not there, and were shocked. The king said, “Beware not to tell her all at once, for she will be very distressed at the loss of such a valuable ship as that one (*for the king did not know that she herself had escaped with the ship, and assumed that she was still in her room*). She might also think that the king gave the ship to someone. Simply send one of the ministers’ daughters to tell her with wisdom.” They went to one room,

and did not find anyone, and to another, and so to all the eleven rooms, and found no one. They agreed to send an elderly mistress in the night to tell her. They went to her room and found no one there. They were very shocked.

Meanwhile, the fathers of the missing women, who were accustomed to receiving letters from their daughters, now noticed that they were not receiving any letters, so they went to see for themselves. Upon not finding their daughters, they were enraged. They considered banishing the king, and sending him to prison for those deserving the death penalty. (They were the ministers of the nation, having the power to mete out punishments such as this). However, they thought to themselves, "What is the king's sin, that he should be imprisoned? He had no control over the matter." So they agreed to dethrone and banish him. They did, and he went on his way.

As for the emperor's daughter, she escaped with the eleven ministers' daughters, and sailed away in the ship. When the daughters woke up, they resumed their play, for they did not realize that the ship had left shore. Presently, they said to her, "Let's return!" She said to them, "Let's stay a little longer." After this, a fierce storm developed, and they said, "Let's return!" Then she revealed to them that the ship had already left the shore. They asked her why she had done this, and she explained that she feared the ship would be broken apart by the storm wind. Therefore, she had no choice but to unfurl and spread the sails. So they sailed on the sea, and they played their instruments. Then they passed by a palace, and the daughters said to her, "Let's approach it!" She did not want to, and she said that she regretted having come near the first palace (the one belonging to the king).

After this, they saw an island and approached it. There were twelve thieves there who wanted to murder them. The emperor's daughter asked, "Who is the chief among you?" and they introduced her to him. Then she asked him, "What is your trade?" and he answered that they were thieves. She said, "We are also thieves. However, whereas you use brute force, we use wisdom. We are learned in languages and in playing instruments. What would you benefit by murdering us? Better marry us and then you can also acquire all our wealth." And she showed him the riches that were in their ship, and her words won them over. The thieves also showed them all their wealth, and led them through their whole camp. They agreed that they would not marry all at once, rather one pair after another. Further, each of the thieves should choose a bride befitting him, the most honored according to his high standing, and so on.

Then she announced that she wanted to honor them a fine and wondrous wine that she had in the ship. She told them that she had intended never to use it, guarding it instead for the day when she would meet her intended match. Then she served them the wine in twelve goblets, and asked each of the thieves to drink from one. They drank, became intoxicated and collapsed. She said to her companions, "Go now, each of you, to slaughter her husband," and they did. Then they found incredible wealth, beyond that of any king. They agreed not to take any brass or silver – only gold and precious stones. They threw from their ship possessions which were not so valuable, and loaded it with the treasure – the gold and stones they had found. They agreed to cease dressing as women, so they sewed themselves German men's clothing, and sailed away in the ship.

To be continued...