

# Parsha Story

Stories and Parables from  
the famed Maggid of Dubno

by Rabbi Chanan Morrison

## END OF EXILE

Tish'a b'Av

A government minister once suffered from an insolent and rebellious son named Jack. When Jack's behavior hit a new low, and he failed to show any signs of remorse, his father decided it was necessary to teach the young man a lesson. He banished Jack from his house.

And yet, Jack was still his son. The minister made sure to quietly support the young man. He would secretly send him money so that he shouldn't starve.

As the weeks and months passed by, the minister became more and more agitated. He missed his son. Still, he felt it would be wrong to write him and invite him back home. After all, Jack had behaved abominably, without any expression of regret or remorse. How could he rescind the punishment, when Jack had not indicated any desire to change? And yet he missed his son terribly, and was at a loss as to what to do.

A good friend understood what the minister was going through. "I agree",

he told the minister, "that it would be a mistake to invite Jack to come back without any change on his part. But if you listen to my advice, your son will come back on his own volition, without inviting him home."

"How do you propose to accomplish that?"

"I know that your son is only getting by due to your financial support. Even though you do this quietly - perhaps even Jack doesn't realize where the money is coming from - but everyone knows that you are helping him out. Otherwise, how else could he be supporting himself?"

"As long as you keep sending him money, Jack will stay there, with his arrogance and insolence intact. But if you stop supporting him, he will have no choice. He will be forced to come back and ask for your forgiveness in order to be allowed back in your home."

### Time to Return Home

At the time of the Temple's destruction, God decreed that, due to our failings, we needed to be exiled far away from our land. Nonetheless, our Father in heaven still loves us; and He continues to support us, so that even in our dispersion among the nations, we should be able to survive.

But if we should see that this Heavenly support stops -- that God

"hides His face" from us and no longer protects us -- then this is a sign that God dearly wants us to come home. As the Sages commented in B'rachot 3a, "Woe to the Father Who needed to banish His children from His table!"

After all the wrong things we did, it is not God Who needs to appease us. But if God no longer supports and watches over us, if life in exile becomes unbearable -- then it is time for us to return home and ask for God's forgiveness.

This is what the Torah predicts: "When you are in distress, and all of these tragedies happen to you -- then you will return to the Eternal your God and obey Him" (D'varim 4:30).

*Adapted from Mishlei Yaakov, pp. 396-397*

*Ed. note: Sounds like this was just written for today!*