

Had gad-ya. Had gad-ya.

An only kid. An only kid.

He was only a kid. Only a kid. Oi Vay!

A kid at heart.

He tried to make this crazy world into kid's stuff

As if the world was a program you could turn on or off like T.V.

To be at the controls. To pick your channel.

A really great way of treating Reality,

With canned laughter in the background.

He, Stuart, really our Zal (Zalman) had a gift for irony.

The root of laughter. He was a quipper.

The joke was on this cruel world- that the world missed

Appreciating the real Zal. Not his fa*ade.

Behind his fa*ade lay a specially gifted-with-insight human being.

Who didn't find his niche. Nor his mode.

Except to be a shtickel jester.

And a jester is only an employee of the King.

On the King's payroll. He searched but didn't find his King nor the

To display his jibes and wit.

Instead he used his humor to make people feel good.

Any Yid, every Yid has to expect he's been bought,

in the market place to be a Pesach kid or lamb.

A sacrificial tachlis, born to be slaughtered, G-d forbid!

Like sheep to slaughter. A two zuzim sheep or kid.

Our Dad, one of his proudest days was Stu's bris day.

He became a young father again. Thirteen years after my bris.

He had a wide circle of professional associates

and smaller circle of cronies: Sam, Red, Nayach, Yona, you name them.

The site of the bris was our game room on Belmont Circle.

It was jam packed-and it was a large room.

Everybody came to say Mazal Tov to Norm.

And the cigar box was quickly emptied.

Here I was the baby's big brother. To be a spectator at a bris.

I climbed the front hall steps, that green-carpeted stairway

to the game room turn off. I got to the doorway and got a queasy sick feeling.

Just the thought, the picture of a mohel aiming a scalpel at my baby brother.

And I'm not especially squeamish person. But I nearly keeled over

And never crossed over to the far side where the bris ritual was.

Oi vay: ai-yay.

Some built-in-connection with my brother's being and welfare.

But one-sided; me toward Zalman.

A special connection. One could imagine how I took the news

that he was demolished, in football language, by a motor vehicle

a big one, with serious head injuries.

Even over the telephone, as Ron described it to me, how the accident happened.

I had a throw back instant replay of Zal's, Stuart's, bris day.
Imagine!

A link between brothers. A sympathy, a wave length.

Some by-product of being the fruit of Mom's womb,

Being intra-uterine passengers in same place, womb mates.

Oi vay. So close and so far. Even if we lived out our adult years

in the same town, we'd have been so close and so far. Let alone me in Israel,

thirty years since our last rendezvous. Year of Dad zal's death.

Had gad-ya. Had gad-ya.

Along came a cat and swiped the kid that Dad bought for two zuzim.

Along came an SUV and sideswiped the kid that Dad bought for two zuzim.
Et cetera.

Had gad-ya. The predator-prey, the attacker-avenger, the chaser-pursuer.

Is it Keystone Cops or for real? Buster Keaton slapstick?

Who holds the stick that klops the day-lights out of the dog that bit the cat?

Someday the Angel of Death himself will get the stick.

Only after the Angel of Death slays the slaughterer that slaughtered the ox.

Et cetera, et cetera.

The Angel of Death. The Grim Reaper scythes down
and mows down thousands of victims, road accidents.

A bumper crop he scythes down. Zal got scythed down, another statistic.

But a Jewish Neshama is never a statistic.

I'm reminded of a parallel story. Hard to relate also. About a car accident.

How a shochet was slain by the angel of Death.

The victim Rav Yehoshua Berman, zal, brother to my friends, Ozer and Simcha.

Rav Yehoshua was coming home from Friday night services in Birmingham, Alabama.

A teenager on a joy ride, a drunken driver lost control and the car climbed

the curb to the sidewalk and ran over the shochet.

The family, the widow and kinder, now in their twenties and older,

(This happened around 1980.) I believe didn't get a cent of insurance.

Not even two zuzim.

The Bergmans had gone to America because parnassa-income was tight in Israel.

Only to incur tragedy. Along came the Angel of Death and slayed the shochet.

Is this what you call accident?

The Angel of Death doesn't act on his own.

He's only the target hit man.

He's in the employ of the A-Imighty, Boruch Shmo.

So it's not accidental.

We learn from the Plague of the First Born, with what pinpoint accuracy

the Egyptians were mowed down. Seeing that only First Born chaps were targeted.

That night the Angel of Death sat on the sidelines.

He, HaShem, was the Bomber. He didn't send an agent against the oppressor.

He, Himself, was the Avenger. Not one accident.

Along comes the Angel of Death and slays the slaughterer, the shochet.

The shochet whose ritual knife feeds meat to Jewish people.

What did he do to be a victim?

Just to show that the Provider, Who provides our shopping carts

At the butcher counter too is the direct source.

The shochet, even he is dispensable.

We're all dispensable in the long run.

But only once we served our purpose in the world.

That Dad bought for two zuzim, two measly zuzim.

The sages tell us that two zuzim was a cheap purchase.

It cost Dad, our Daddy in Heaven, just a couple dollars for the kid.

What is a person, a human being?

A bag of chemicals and minerals in the lab sense.

A human body is only worth a couple of bucks,

A couple of zuzim. Oi vay! Oi vay!

But the Jewish person is a soul, a neshama is a rare jewel.

A jewel in the King's Crown.

Every yid is a Kimberly diamond mine at least.

Had gad-ya. All of Am Yisroel is that kid.

In the Humash it says they offered up the Pesach sacrifice, in the singular.

Tens of thousands were offered up on Erev Pesach in the Beis HaMikdash.

What's the idea of the Pesach sacrifice?

The entire nation is viewed as a unit, one entity. One sacrificial kid or lamb.

My brother, Stu, or Zal as he preferred to be called recently,

was an undercover Mitzva agent, carrying out good deeds. A gite mensch

A gite Yid, who only wanted the best for people.

A Jewish in-born trait. And he had sterling examples in Dad, zal and our Mom.

HaShem bless her, bis hundret tzvanzig, one hundred twenty,

Zal, you were everybody's kid brother.

Even your cousin Shoshy. A couple week's difference in age.

You were her kid brother before Danny came on the scene.

Dr. Max Sindberg's pal and brother. Jonathan Teich and countless others

Valued your friendship to no end.

Zal, consider I'm at your gravesite and I'm asking for forgiveness

for anytime I didn't give you the proper respect.

Even with a big brother's prerogative to pull rank.

I have to doff my yarmulke to you (without removing it.)

You were never a phoney. Never a tryer.

The biggest compliment I ever got in my life was from you.

One year back. Now it's my turn to repay that compliment.

Genuinely. Because an insincere eulogy only backfires.

Because in Shamayim they ridicule exaggerated praises in a eulogy.

Actually this is not a eulogy which the sages prohibit
in this tremendous, holy month of Nissan.

It's a tribute to a great guy. Zalman Hayim Ben Nachum Simcha. Alav
haShalom.

Zal. See you round sometime. We'll miss you in the meantime.