

MAKE EVERY DAY A JEWISH HOLIDAY!

by Rabbi Label Lam

"No, my lord; listen to me! I have given you the field, and as for the cave that is in it, I have given it to you; in the view of the children of my people have I given it to you; bury your dead." So Avraham bowed down before the members of the council. He spoke to Ephron in the ears of the members of the council saying: "Rather, if you would listen to me, I give you the price of the field, accept it from me, that I may bury my dead there." And Ephron replied to Avraham saying to him: "My lord, listen to me! Land worth 400 silver shekels; between me and you- what is it? Bury your dead." Avraham heeded Ephron, and Avraham weighed out to Ephron the price which he had mentioned in the ears of the children of Heth, 400 silver shekels in negotiable currency. (Breishis 23:11-16)

The Mishne in Pirke' Avos states that, "Avraham Avinu was tested with ten trials and withstood them all. This teaches you how great was the love of Avraham Avinu." What were the ten tests? It's a matter of great dispute amongst the giants of Torah thought. Curiously Rabbeinu Yonah accounts the 10th and final test for Avraham was his purchase of the field from Ephron to bury his wife Sara. What's the test? Land is bought and sold every day! Assuming the tests were in ascending order of difficulty, how could that be a greater ordeal than sacrificing his beloved son Yitzchok?

Rabbeinu Yonah explains, "Avraham was told, "Arise, traverse the Land, its length and breadth, because to you I will give it." Despite this promise, when his wife died he could not find a place to bury her until he purchased a plot at great expense, and yet Avraham never doubted."

How is that more difficult than "the Akeida"? I heard from a great person that dying for Kiddush HASHEM, as difficult and holy as it is, is still not as lofty as doing an honest business deal and living Kiddush HASHEM. How is that so?

Amos Bunim writes about his father Irving Bunim, in "A Fire in His Soul": *Once in the early 1950's, Julliard, in the midst of selling their company to United Merchants, was closing out its inventory and sold Bunim a large amount of velveteen. The shipment of many large boxes seemed fine until Bunim received the bill.*

"Carton #1", it read, "38 yards." Bunim looked at it quizzically. "38 yards?" he asked himself. "I did not receive anything with 38 yards of goods." Puzzled, he went to the basement to check and discovered that the billing clerk at A.D. Julliard had inadvertently dropped the first digit. Carton #1 contained not 38 yards of velveteen, but 338 yards. "Carton #2," he read, "42 yards." A quick glance at carton #2 showed the same thing had happened. Bunim checked every item on the list and found

that they were all the same. In every case, the first digit had been omitted. \$40,000.00 then, an enormous sum. "Too big for them to miss," Bunim thought. "They will correct it shortly."

In the meantime he paid for the merchandise as the bill was rendered. Julliard did not find the error. After waiting two months, Bunim called Julliard's billing department and told them that he thought there had been a mistake. "I'd like to know," he asked, "is everything settled?" Do I owe you any money?" The clerk checked Eden's file and told him that everything was clear and that they owed no money. "In fact, Mr. Bunim," he added cheerfully, "your account is closed. You're all paid up." Bunim thanked the man, hung up, and called Julliard again.

The second time, he asked for the president's office, and made an appointment with Mr. Valentine for the next day. When the two men met and cordially shook hands, Bunim told Valentine, "I want you know that today's a Jewish holiday. Valentine, who did business with many Jews, looked puzzled. "I was not aware today is a Jewish holiday," he said. "What is it?" "Today is the day," Bunim answered, "that a Jewish businessman shows you what our Torah ethics and morality demand of us." He then explained to the surprised Valentine what had happened. "I received merchandise from you," Bunim said, "and I owe you money for it. Here is a check for \$40,000.00- money that you had no idea was ever coming to you." "That moment," Bunim later told his family, "when Mr. Valentine realized what G-d's holy Torah means to us, was the greatest Kiddush HASHEM a man could ask for."

Dying for HASHEM is in an instant. Living Kiddush HASHEM is an extensive way that may **make every day a Jewish Holiday!** DvarTorah, Copyright © 2007 by Rabbi Label Lam and [Torah.org](https://torah.org).