

It was Gavriel's first big deal. Fresh out of law school, he had landed a good job with a large firm, and this morning he was headed to his firm's branch office on the other side of Manhattan with some papers that were vital to the negotiations.

When he got off the subway, he was eager to get to the office and get down to business. He passed by a ragged man standing in the subway station holding out a cup, obviously meant to collect donations.

Heard from Rabbi Chaim Zvi Sender on a Netzor presentation



He Was a Businessman and Didn't Know It

Gavriel dug into his pocket and pulled out a coin. He dropped it in and continued on his way.

"Mister! Mister!" called the man after him.

Gavriel turned. "You forgot to take your pencil," the man said.

Returning to the man, Gavriel took the pencil, looked the man in the eye, and said, "I like doing business with merchants."

Many years later, now a successful attorney,

Gavriel stopped at a newsstand to buy a paper. The vendor looked at his face and said, "Hey, I know you!"

"I don't think so," Gavriel said. "I don't think we've ever met."

"We have. I'll never forget your face," said the man. "You bought a pencil from me in the subway station, and you called me a merchant. I thought to myself, 'A merchant? Well, yeah, I'm selling pencils. But if I'm a merchant, I could sell pens too. And newspapers. And soda.' So I began expanding my inventory, and now I own newsstands all around the city."

That's the power of a good word. It's the power that Hashem gave us to carry on with His work of creating the world we live in. As the pencil "merchant" showed us, choosing the positive word, the one that says, "I see your value," can literally change someone's life.

Wednesday morning at 7:20 a.m., the minyan at Beis Shalom V'Shalvah* was just starting Shemoneh Esrei. This was a quiet shul, a serious shul, the perfect place for anyone who wanted to really focus on his davening.

So, when Danni

Ring... Ring... Ring... Enough Already!

Epstein's cell phone began playing its ringtone—a little riff from a Mozart piece—the sound shot through the room like a firecracker. Danni wasn't fazed. He stood deep in his tefillos, bowing at the right place, looking up to Heaven when his heart moved him, as his ringtone repeated eight times.

The men of the *kehillah*, whose *middos* were as refined as their *avodas*

Hashem, never looked his way. They just concentrated harder and kept on going. So did the phone. Every few minutes it started again.

Naftali, who sat a few seats away from Danni, was beginning to simmer inside. He knew Danni was hard of hearing, but he wasn't *that* hard of hearing. Someone was obviously eager to speak to Danni. But why wasn't Danni doing something to stop the racket?

*All names have been changed.



Submitted by Naftali, an Aderaba participant

Can you Crack the case?

After davening, Naftali overheard Danni apologizing to another man for the disruption. He explained that his phone is connected to his hearing aids, so he normally hears the ringtone directly in his ears, and no one else can hear it. Before davening, when he tried to shut off his phone, he accidentally disconnected it from his hearing aids instead. Because Danni is hard of hearing, he didn't realize the ringtone was now playing out loud through the phone's speaker. He assumed the ringing was only in his ears, the way it normally is. "I feel so bad," he said. "Everyone was probably distracted. Of course I would have shut it off immediately if I had realized what was going on!"