

Vayelech Wrap-Up

by Sammy Schaechter

In this week's Parsha, Moses continues the speech that he began in last week's parsha. He informed the people that he would not be the one to take them into the Land of Israel. Instead, a new leader of the Jewish people would take them. The new leader's name was Joshua. He was one of Moses's best students.

Moses wrote a new Torah scroll and gave it to the tribe of Levi as a sign that they will also be the ones who will help make sure that everyone keeps the Torah. He told them to place the scroll inside the ark, next to the tablets that

had the Ten Commandments on them. He told the Jewish people about the mitzvah of hakhel. The mitzvah of hakhel is that every seven years all the people, men, women and children, should come to the Temple. There, the Jewish king would read a part of the Torah.

TORAH COMICS



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No One to Help Her

For in You the orphan finds mercy (Haftorah Parashas Vayelech, Hoshea 14:5)

When R' Yisrael Meir HaCohen, the Chafetz Chaim, was thirty years old, he served as rosh yeshivah in the town of Vishilishuk, not far from Vilna, at a salary of fifty rubles for each term.

It was before Pesach. R' Yisrael Meir had received his fifty rubles and was

about to return home to spend the Festival with his family, when he heard a shocking story:

A young orphan girl in Vishilishuk was to have been married that Nisan, but the match had been dissolved for lack of funds.

As soon as R' Yisrael Meir heard this, he rushed to the home of the girl and

gave her his entire winter salary, the fifty rubles, not leaving a penny for his own traveling expenses or the Festival needs of his family.

When people asked him why he had given his entire salary, he replied, "I know that I will have no difficulty borrowing money for my own needs. But that poor girl — who would give her money? Who would help her?"

TALES OF TZADIKIM

Whom Did the Watchman Punish?

Who pardons iniquity and passes over transgression (Haftorah Parashas Vayelech, Michah 7:18)

R' Tarfon was one of the richest men of his generation. He owned much land, many fields, orchards and cattle. R' Tarfon did not concern himself with the administration of his property. He was involved in studying and teaching Torah, and preferred to delegate such matters to those whom he employed. He had so many workers that they did not all even know their master.

Thus it happened that when he went to visit one of his own vineyards, one

morning, the watchman did not recognize him. "Aha!" the man exclaimed. "I have finally caught the man who has been stealing grapes from my master's vineyard. You are the culprit!"

He fell upon him with his stick and beat him black and blue. R' Tarfon took the beating, but would not reveal who he was.

"You deserve worse than blows!" said the watchman. He seized R' Tarfon, threw him into a large sack and began dragging him towards the river, intending to drown the "thief."

When R' Tarfon realized that his life

was in danger, he shouted, "Wait! Go to R' Tarfon's house and tell his family to prepare shrouds for their master."

The watchman let go of the sack in a hurry, realizing that the thief he had caught was none other than his own master!

He threw himself at R' Tarfon's feet, weeping, "Forgive me! I did not know who you were. I was merely trying to do my duty. Please forgive me!"

"I forgive you for each and every blow that you gave me," said R' Tarfon earnestly.

(From Yerushalmi, Pe'ah 4:2)

TALES OF TZADIKIM

Yours and Mine Is Hers!

And their children who do not know shall listen and learn (Devarim 31:13)

Kalba Savua earned his unusual name through his unusual deeds. A wealthy landowner, he was also generous and hospitable. His house was open to all the poor and the hungry. Whoever came to him as hungry as a dog, it was said, left sated.

Kalba Savua had a modest and accomplished daughter, Rachel.

He had hoped to marry her off to

a young talmid chacham. But Rachel chose her father's shepherd, Akiva. He was thought to be a simple man and poor and he had never learned Torah.

Yet, Rachel thought otherwise. She saw, what others did not, that if he were to learn, he would stand higher than all the others in wisdom and piety.

She asked Akiva, "If I become your wife, will you agree to begin studying?"

"Yes," he replied.

She needed nothing more. And so, she married the simple shepherd, Akiva.

When Kalba Savua found out, he disinherited his daughter and drove her away.

In their want, the young couple went to live in a shack adjoining a brick factory. The straw that was used for making the bricks was stored there. They slept on straw and covered themselves with it to keep warm.

PARSHA STORIES

One day, a pauper came knocking at the door of their shack. They opened it. "Please help me!" he wept. "My wife just gave birth and has no blankets to keep herself and her baby warm. Could you not give me some straw?"

They willingly gave him a bundle of straw. After he had left, Akiva turned to his wife and said, "Would you have believed it? There are people worse off than we. This man did not even have straw!"

Little did they know that this man was none other than Eliyahu Hanavi, sent to comfort them in their poverty by showing them that there were others worse off than they.

Akiva agreed to leave and study Torah for twelve years. He went to study under R' Eliezer ben Hyrkanos and R' Yehoshua ben Chananya, leaving Rachel to live alone in poverty.

When these twelve years were completed, he returned home accompanied by many students. He was about to knock on the door when he heard voices from within.

He recognized the voice of an evil neighbor. "You see, your father was right in disowning you and chasing you out of his home. Your husband is a good-for-nothing who has abandoned you."

But Rachel answered, "If he were to ask me, I would tell him to remain an additional twelve years in the beis medrash."

R' Akiva did not enter, for Rachel had given him permission to learn for an additional twelve years. Turning around, he went back to study.

Twelve years later, he was a scholar of renown with a flock of twenty-four thousand disciples. When he returned home this time, he was accompanied by them all. The city turned out to greet the great man who was coming to live in their midst. A huge throng assembled as he entered the city. Everyone rushed forward to be as close to the tzaddik as possible.

Rachel left her home and was about to go to greet her returning husband, the great scholar. When her neighbors saw her, they said, "How can you go in such a simple dress?"

She replied, "A man as great as R' Akiva will not mock me even if I come dressed plainly."

She saw him from afar, and pressed forward to get as close as possible. She forced her way to the front and threw herself at his feet. The talmidim, who surrounded their Rebbe, tried to push her away, thinking her to be a common woman, but R' Akiva recognized

her and said to them, "Leave her be! Your Torah and my Torah — is really hers! For she inspired me to study; she agreed to live a life of suffering and deprivation so that I might learn."

Among those gathered to pay homage to the famous rabbi was the prominent Kalba Savua, Rachel's father. He had been estranged from his only daughter for twenty-four years and hoped that the Sage could annul his vow.

And so, he, too, came before R' Akiva, not knowing who he was. He explained how he, truly, regretted having made the vow cutting his daughter off from all of his possessions. R' Akiva listened and, seeking a valid reason to cancel the vow, then asked, "Had you known that her husband was to learn Torah, would you still have denied her your help?"

"Oh, no!" Kalba Savua hastened to assure him. "If he had learned only one chapter or one halachah, I would not have made such an oath."

"If that is so, then your oath is absolved. Know that I am Akiva, your former shepherd, and husband to your daughter, Rachel.

(Adapted from Tractate Kesubos 62b; Avos D'R' Nasan 6:1)

TALES OF TZADIKIM

"He Raises the Poor from the Refuse"

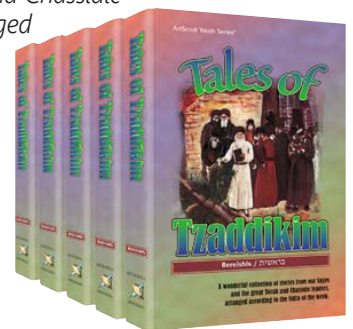
Who pardons iniquity and passes over transgression (Haftorah Parashas Vayelech, Michah 7:18)

R' Eliezer ben Hyrkanos walked through the marketplace one day, past a row of houses standing on a hillside. One of the women living there was cleaning her house. Just as he passed by, she threw the collected refuse into the street — in his direction.

R' Eliezer did not get angry. On the contrary, he did not even think of telling her to stop or to demand that she beg his pardon. Instead, he said happily, "I hope that my friends will treat me better, as it says in Tehillim, 'He raises the poor from the refuse.'"

(According to Yerushalmi, Moed Katan 3:1)

Tales of Tzaddikim by G. Matov is a wonderful collection of stories from our Sages and the great Torah and Chassidic leaders, arranged according to the Sidra. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or online at artscroll.com.



PARSHA PUZZLERS

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

**CRACK THE
PARSHA CODE**

by Sammy Schaechter & Dovid Saleman

by Rabbi Yaakov Levine
Answers on page 7.

Answers on page 7.

EASY Qs

1. What did Moses write down and give to the tribe of Levi?
2. Why did he give it to them?
3. How often would the Jews gather in the Temple to read a part of the Torah?
4. Where did he tell them to put it?
5. Who did Moses appoint to be the next leader of the Jewish people?
6. Who would read it?

7. What advice did Moses have for Joshua?
8. What part of the Torah did he read?
9. Who did God call upon to be witnesses to the words he had spoken to Moses and Joshua?

HARD Qs

10. What time of year would they gather?
11. Who spoke to Moses and Joshua about the future of the Jewish people?
12. What was the king permitted to do in the temple that was normally prohibited?

MEDIUM Qs

1. M is 120 Y O, and tells B Y that he will not be L them into E Y
2. The L D of M L is the 7th D of A
3. M A Y, in front of E, as the new L to T them into E Y
4. M tells B Y to be S and C and not be A of the N in E Y
5. The M of H is every 7 Y during the Y T of S
6. All of B Y comes to the B H, and L to the K while he R from the T
7. Even the very Y C were B to L to the T R
8. H tells how B Y will S in the F, and H will "H" from them
9. M was C to put the T in the A, so it can never be C
10. When the other 12 S C that they didn't get a S T, M W a S T for each S, a total of 12!
11. There a M for every J to W his own S T

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PARSHA STORIES

TALES OF TZADIKIM

Urgent Matters

Return, O Israel (Haftorah Parashas Vayelech, Hoshea 14:2)

It was the week between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur: the Ten Days of Penitence. A harried chasid entered the study of the Gerrer Rebbe, the Sefas Emes, and poured out all of his

problems.

His business affairs had become all entangled. He needed advice on many matters and relied implicitly upon the Rebbe to solve his problems. After having thoroughly described the situation, he concluded, "Rebbe, the matter

is most urgent. Please tell me exactly what to do."

The Rebbe raised inquiring eyebrows and said in wonder, "Urgent? Really? During the Aseres Yemei Teshuvah the only urgent matter that a Jew can possibly have is his teshuvah!"

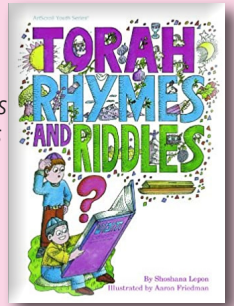
PARSHA PUZZLERS

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

Answers on page 7

1. Moshe was a holy man
And mitzvot, he did plenty;
But he knew his life had to end
At one hundred and _____
2. On Sukkos, every seven years,
In the land where you shall dwell,
Your king will read the Torah,
When you gather for _____

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PARSHA STORIES

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

The "Tenth" Man

"Hashem, your G-d — He will cross before you; He will destroy these nations from before you" (Devarim 31:3)

The life of a Jewish man was once saved through a remarkable display of hashgachah pratis. Here is his story.

"When the 'White Army' ruled Russia after World War One," the man begins his tale, "it was the first time in many years that the Jews enjoyed freedom. The Jews who dealt in diamonds and jewels became especially prosperous. I was one of them.

"Every morning, I went to my office in the diamond exchange at 8 a.m., and stayed there all day. One morning I decided to go to the office early. As usual, I had with me a briefcase full of diamonds and jewels. As I walked along, I heard someone call out. Turning my head, I saw a man standing at the door of a small shul, looking for a tenth man to make up a minyan. He called to me to come in. As I had a little time to spare, I went in to become the tenth man.

"However, as I walked into the shul I saw that there were only three other men there besides myself and the man who had called to me — and who was now standing in the doorway again, calling out for a 'tenth' man.

"'What's this?' I complained. 'I'm not the tenth, I'm the fifth. This will take all

morning!'

"'Don't worry,' the fellow told me. 'Many Jews pass this way each morning.'

"I began to recite Tehillim. During the next ten minutes, he managed to get one more man for the minyan. I got up to leave, but he pleaded, 'Listen, today is my father's yahrtzeit and I have to say Kaddish. Please stay! I'll try to organize a minyan quickly.'

"'I can't wait,' I said. 'I have to be at my office at 8 o'clock — which is right now!'

"Forcefully, he said, 'Listen, I'm not letting you go. I have yahrtzeit, I have to say Kaddish. The minute I have ten men, we'll daven, and you can go.'

"Not wanting to enrage him further, I reluctantly returned to my place and continued saying Tehillim.

"Another ten minutes passed, during which time he managed to snag another two men. Again I started for the door. But he stopped me, saying sternly, 'Listen to me now: If you had yahrtzeit for your father, you'd want me to stay. Right? And I would stay! Now I want you to do the same thing for me!'

"Hearing this, I decided that part of my morning's plans would have to be abandoned. Whatever happened, I would stay!

"At about 8:30, we finally had a minyan. I thought the man would say some mishnah and then Kaddish, but no — he began from the beginning of davening. Impatiently, I glanced at my watch. I would be very late getting to the office today, I thought.

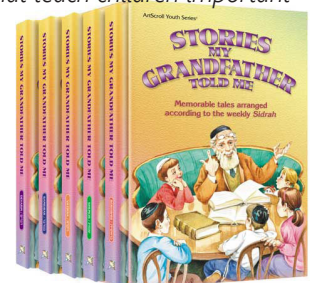
"I kept looking around to see whether anyone new had joined us so that I could leave, but the ten men remained ten men. When we finished, the man with the yahrtzeit served cake and drinks and then let us go.

"I began to make my way to the office, carrying my briefcase of jewels. I was two doors away from my building, when a man I knew came sprinting toward me, waving frantically.

"'Hurry! Get away from here!' he screamed wildly. 'The Communists took over the government today. Some of them came in and killed the

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lessons from the weekly Parsha. The five-volume set is available from your favorite Jewish book store, or at artscroll.com.



PARSHA STORIES

Jews in the diamond exchange, and now they're gathering up the booty. Run for your life!

"And that's exactly what I did. I

stayed hidden for several days — and, as you can see, with Hashem's mercy I managed to escape from Russia. You can imagine what would have hap-

pened to me had I left that minyan early."

STORIES MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME

R' Baruch's Letter

"Hashem — it is He Who goes before you; He will be with you; He will not release you nor will He forsake you" (31:8)

The Jews of Morocco had moved out of the Jewish section into other neighborhoods, where they discarded their special Jewish dress and began to learn from the ways of the gentiles. Enlightenment and French culture became widespread among them. Many Jews — especially the younger set — became uprooted from their heritage. They grew distant from their Torah and scorned the rebuke of their parents and rabbis.

This spiritual holocaust was promoted by the French "Alliance" schools whose goal was to spread "culture" among the Jews. This organization built a network of secular schools throughout the developing lands, including Morocco.

By way of these schools, a secular attitude seeped into Jewish homes. "Enlightenment" became a byword. Many Jews began to imitate the French and their culture.

It is not surprising, then, that many opposed R' Raphael Baruch Toledano when he was appointed Chief Rabbi of Meknes. They saw in this fiery and uncompromising man an obstacle in their chosen path.

One such Jewish activist, a leading opponent of R' Baruch, wanted to introduce many aspects of French culture into the community. R' Baruch stood like a stone in his way, rising up against anything that seemed contrary to the spirit of the Torah.

In return, the activist tried in every way to foil R' Baruch's plans. He expressed opposition to R' Baruch's opinions and actions at every chance he got. His ultimate goal was to find a

way to remove R' Baruch from his rabbinical post and thereby remove his influence over the people.

One day, the man received news that made him dance with joy. He had the perfect weapon with which to finally get rid of R' Baruch!

The Jewish court was recognized by the government and considered a government bureaucracy. Therefore, as a government employee, R' Baruch was not permitted to engage in business.

When his opponent heard that R' Baruch had just published a sefer and was selling it to the public, he thought he had found the perfect chance to accuse him before the authorities and ruin his good name. He was quick to spread the news of the Rabbi's terrible "crime": "Attention! A government employee, who must work only at his job, is conducting a private business!"

The slander did its job well. Within a few days, R' Baruch was summoned for an investigation. His staunch supporters, concerned about their beloved rabbi, wished to accompany him and testify on his behalf. But R' Baruch saw no need for this. Placing his trust in Hashem, he went to face his interrogators with a tranquil heart.

Back home, his family waited fearfully for the results of the investigation.

R' Baruch was called up by the official in charge of his case, and accused at once of conducting a book business. "You are betraying your position!" the bureaucrat barked.

Instead of answering, R' Baruch handed the official a letter. It was from the city's governor, granting R' Baruch permission to sell his sefer.

Taken by surprise, the bureaucrat stammered in confusion, "Of course,

you have full permission to sell your books if you wish. There is no problem, no problem at all!" And he let R' Baruch leave immediately.

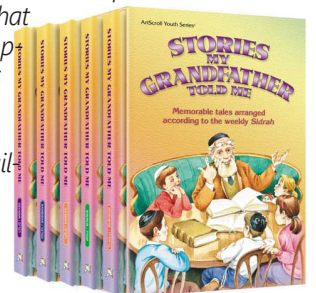
The furious official summoned the activist who had made the accusation against the Rabbi. Had the official acted as the other man had wanted, the governor's wrath would have fallen on his own head. No wonder he was enraged!

Abashed, the activist left. Not only had he not succeeded in ruining R' Baruch, but he had managed to lose the government's favor as well. For his efforts, he had received a stinging slap in the face.

As for R' Baruch, his thoughts on the way home were filled with wonder. "When I published my sefer, I had no special reason to request permission from the governor to sell it. Many rabbis publish sefarim without a thought of getting a permit! But Hashem planted the notion in my mind to have this letter prepared, and it has now foiled my agitator's plot!"

When R' Baruch's family and supporters heard what had happened, they realized afresh that a special hashgachah watched over him. Hakadosh Baruch Hu rewarded His beloved R' Baruch by leading him always along the correct path.

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JEWISH LEADER OF THE WEEK

Hacham Ben Zion Abba Shaul

31 July 1924 – 13 July 1998

Rav Ben Zion Abba Shaul was one of the leading Sephardic rabbis, Torah scholars and halakhic arbiters of his day, and the rosh yeshiva of Porat Yosef Yeshiva in Jerusalem for the last 15 years of his life. He was responsible for a religious revival among Sephardic Jews with his founding of Ma'ayan HaChinuch HaTorani, a network of Torah schools for Sephardic children in Israel, and was widely known for his ability to give blessings that were fulfilled.

Rav Ben Zion Abba Shaul was born in Jerusalem to Eliyahu and Benaya Abba Shaul, immigrants from Iran. A shoemaker by trade, Eliyahu was also a Torah scholar and kabbalist; he was Ben Zion's first teacher. Eliyahu served as gabbai (caretaker and fundraiser) for the Ohel Rachel synagogue in the Bukharim Quarter of Jerusalem for 50 years. In his old age, his son Ben Zion became the rabbi of the synagogue and another son, Yaakov, became the hazzan.

Abba Shaul was the eldest boy in a family of sixteen children. Despite their poverty, his parents were committed to raising a family of Torah scholars, even

as many other families from Oriental and Sephardi backgrounds were lured into sending their children to Zionist schools. The family kept many halakhic stringencies, including grinding and



baking their own matzot before Passover and avoiding all processed foods — even sugar — during the holiday itself. Abba Shaul continued to keep these stringencies even after he estab-

lished his own family.

At the age of 11, Abba Shaul entered Porat Yosef, the pre-eminent Sephardic yeshiva in Jerusalem. His first teacher was Rabbi Yehuda Tzadka (who was only 21 at the time) and his classmates included the future Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef.

His vast knowledge from years of learning became evident in his later years. As his eyesight dimmed, he asked students to come and to read the Talmud to him. One boy recalled being corrected on a Rashi in the tractate of Nazir; another on a Tosafot in Gittin. His son said that Abba Shaul corrected him while he read the words of the Rambam to him.

He died in Jerusalem on 13 July 1998 (19 Tammuz 5758). An estimated 200,000 people of all denominations — Sephardic, Hasidic, Ashkenazic — attended his funeral. He and his wife are buried in the Sanhedria Cemetery in Jerusalem.

He is survived by his only son, Eliyahu, who is rosh yeshiva of Ohr LeZion Yeshiva in Jerusalem. R' Eliyahu passed away on Monday morning, 9 May, 2022, at the age of seventy.

PUZZLERS ANSWERS

PARSHA CODE

1. MOSHE is 120 YEARS OLD, and tells BNEI YISROEL that he will not be LEADING them into ERETZ YISROEL
2. The LAST DAY of MOSHE LIFE is the 7th DAY of ADAR
3. MOSHE APPOINTED YEHOSHUA, in front of EVERYONE, as the new LEADER to TAKE them into ERETZ YISROEL
4. MOSHE tells BNEI YISROEL to be STRONG and COURAGEOUS and not be AFRAID of the NATIONS in ERETZ YISROEL
5. The MITZVAH of HAKHEL is every 7 YEARS during the YOM TOV of SUKKOS
6. All of BNEI YISROEL comes to the BAIS HAMIKDASH, and LISTENS to the KING while he READS from the TORAH
7. Even the very YOUNG CHILDREN were

BROUGHT to LISTEN to the TORAH READING

8. HASHEM tells how BNEI YISROEL will SIN in the FUTURE, and HASHEM will "HIDE" from them
9. MOSHE was COMMANDED to put the TORAH in the ARON, so it can never be CHANGED
10. When the other 12 SHEVATIM COMPLAINED that they didn't get a SEFER TORAH, MOSHE WROTE a SEFER TORAH for each SHEVET, a total of 12!
11. There a MITZVAH for every JEW to WRITE his own SEFER TORAH

TEST YOUR PARSHA KNOWLEDGE

1. A Torah scroll

2. As a sign that they would be the one to help make sure that people keep the Torah
3. Every seven years
4. In the Holy Ark
5. Joshua
6. The Jewish king
7. He should be a strong leader
8. The book of Deuteronomy
9. The heavens and the earth
10. After Sukkot
11. G-d
12. Sit

TORAH RHYMES & RIDDLES

1. Twenty.
2. Hakhel.

HALACHA OF THE WEEK

Yom Kippur prohibitions

There are a number of things that we are not allowed to do on Yom Kippur:

- 1) Working (like on a regular Shabbat)
- 2) Wearing leather shoes

3) Bathing or washing

4) Putting on creams or lotions

5) Adults over bar/bat mitzvah do not eat or drink. However, even children who can eat, should try to participate in some way like by not eating candy and chips.

FOCUS OF THE MONTH

Yom Kippur

Yom Kippur is the Day of Atonement. On this day we are forgiven for all of our sins. We spend much of the day in shul praying to God for this forgiveness. Although children cannot spend the entire day praying, it is important to spend time praying and asking God for forgiveness. It is important to keep in mind that when we pray, it is not just about what is in our mouths but rather what is in our hearts as well. Use the following story to illustrate this point.

Many years ago, before there were fire engines or electric fire alarms and most houses were built of wood, a fire could cause tremendous damage in a town. Therefore, when a fire broke out, everyone would rush to help put out the fire. They would leave their

work or whatever they were doing and form a human chain, to pass pails of water to put out the fire.

Once, a young boy came through a town and happened to stay at an inn on the edge of the town.

Suddenly he heard a bugle blowing in the distance and asked the innkeeper what it was for. The innkeeper said: "Whenever we have a fire, we sound the bugle and the fire is quickly put out."

The boy thought that this was a wonderful idea and when he reached his own village he wanted to show everyone the new trick he had learned. So he set fire to a house and called all the villagers over to show them

how he would put the fire out all by himself. So he started to blow a bugle. He blew and he blew but the fire, of course, did not go out.

The village burned down completely and all the men were very angry with him. When he tried to explain about blowing the bugle, they said: "You fool! Did you think it is the blowing which puts out the fire? It is only a call of an alarm to wake up people or to tell them to interrupt their work in order to send them to the well to draw water!"

So it is with our prayers. By saying words, we won't lose our sins as if by magic. It is only when we listen to what the prayers are telling us and repent in our hearts that we are forgiven.

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