


ISSUE 4 SHAVUOS 5777

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The Breslov Family Magazine



Rays of Ratzon

**'WHATEVER HAPPENS,
I STILL YEARN AND LONG
TO RETURN TO HASHEM
WITH A PASSIONATE DESIRE'**

**ADMIRE
MY
DESIRE?**

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DEFYING NATURE

**THE TRUE STORY OF MRS.
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Dear Readers

I was always used to Shavuot being a Yom Tov in which the men soar to spiritual heights, while we women get to make cheesecakes and complain about the increased calories we're gaining. But doesn't the Rebbe have something in the Yom Tov for us as well?

Wanting so much, we accordingly chose the topic of Ratzon, and dove right into the water. The discoveries were a balm to the soul.

We found a personal message from the Rebbe to us women. He was once asked, why did the Baal Shem Tov so admire his daughter Udel? In other words, what is the role of women? His answer, sweet to the ear like music to the soul, went as follows: Since she went around with a heart full of yearning, 'What can I do to give nachas to Hashem?'

Note that he didn't stress her actual achievements, but her yearning, her longing to do what Hashem wants.

Yes, we are women, and no, we don't need to stay up all night learning, nor are we required to say Tikkun Leil Shavuot, but the Rebbe tells us what the *real* Kabbalas Hatorah is.

Come drink from the Rebbe's waters, further explained in this magazine. Try Shavuot his way, and you surely won't gain any extra unwanted calories, although you will end up spiritually stretched.

A Git Yom Tov,

Faigy Kahane

Rays - The Breslov Family Magazine.

For comments or questions, to submit articles, place an ad, or sponsor the following magazine for a z'chus, please contact us at:

raysof148@gmail.com

Tel: 929-320-0515

Graphics By:

Yofi Hanachal

yofihanachal@gmail.com

Look out for the next magazine, coming out before Sukkos Bezras Hashem.

Dear Editor,

Thank you for putting together this delicious, sumptuous treat, that satisfies me forever, unlike grabbing a sweet snack which leaves you with a sickening feeling. Every single word, sentence and article is a pure piece of Gan Eden!

After reading every article, I felt myself naturally making a rikud, and thanking Hashem –Ashreinu that we are zoiche to be mekurav to the Rebbe!

F. Weitzhendler, Eretz Yisrael



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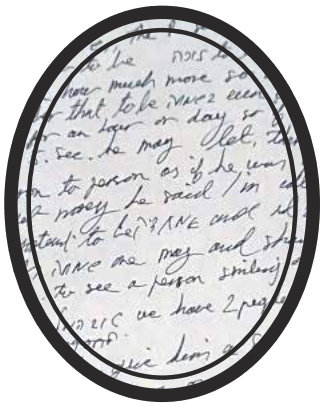
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Kabbalas HaTorah in our days

Rabbi Elimelech Silbiger Shlita

It is very appropriate to discuss the topic of Ratzon now before Shavuos, which symbolizes Kabbalas HaTorah. The accepting of the Torah means a deeper insight to understanding and appreciating what it means to be a Yid and the privilege of each of the 613 mitzvos.

Moshe Rabbeinu offered that Hashem Himself would say the Aseres Hadibros, but the Yidden refused, because as the Rebbe explains, then they wouldn't have any bechira whether or not to follow.

The giving of the Torah has to go hand-in-hand with the option of chalila not keeping the Torah. According to R' Nachman, this is the meaning of bechira, that we can choose to keep the mitzvos. Since Kabbalas HaTorah has to go with bechira, which depends totally on one's Ratzon, we see that Shavuos is all about wanting to do the mitzvos. The actual fulfilling of the mitzvos is not up to us; Hashem gives us the power and energy to do so. For example, to perform

Hadlakas Neiros, Hashem has to give us a candle, match, and the power to strike the flame, our part is wanting to do the mitzvah.

It is brought in Likutei Halachos that Hashem has little nachas from the mitzvah itself – it is His own doing after all. Therefore it says, *מי הקדימני ואשלם לו* – that nobody can really come to Hashem that we are deserving of a reward for doing a mitzvah.

The point of Kabbalas HaTorah is the Ratzon, the desire to do the mitzvah. The decision to perform the mitzvah is what the person is rewarded for. Free choice is not in action – it is in wanting to do good, and choosing it.

The meaning of the famous saying from Chazal: 'Nothing stands in the way of the Ratzon' is that nothing can prevent one from having a Ratzon. Hashem can prevent us from the actual deed, but He will never prevent us from wanting. Nothing will ever block us from desiring to perform mitzvos.

We find that once the Rebbe asked R' Nosson if he is happy on Shabbos. R' Nosson replied, *I want to be happy*. The Rebbe highly praised his response, that he wants to be happy. This Ratzon is very great.

A person is led in the way he wants. Hashem will lead a person to actualize his Retzonos either for the good, or for the bad.

Because Ratzon is so subtle and hidden, people should know to value Retzonos, even if it seems so insignificant.

The Rebbe emphasized Ratzon as the main bechira and the main nachas that Hashem has from us. Even when one has fallen low, he can still want to do more.

Ratzon spells Tzinor – a pipe, with which the shefa of Kedusha comes through. May we all be zoiche to this pipeline of Kedusha, and to always increase our holy Retzonos. ■

Revelation and Inspiration

Baesd on R' Nosson
in Likutei Halachos

What If I Can't?

My husband wants to travel to Uman for Rosh Hashana.

I agree like a good wife, and we face the first obstacle: his parents. After endless persuasion and explanation, they grudgingly relent. Then my parents find out and kick up a fuss, until we finally overcome that hurdle too. Worried friends from all over the world putting in their own two cents are politely ignored, and we prepare for the trip. But whoops, no money for the ticket!

Strengthening our resolve, we tighten our belts, make do without vacation this year, and sell our antique vase from great-grandma. The precious ticket is finally purchased, and we wait with bated breath for Rosh Hashana to arrive.

The morning prior to Erev Rosh Hashana, my husband is standing before the check-in desk, heart singing in anticipation. "Sorry Sir, your passport has expired," chirps the condescending clerk.

His heart dropping all the way

to his toes with a loud thud, my husband weakly inquires when the next flight to Kiev leaves. Maybe they'll be time to rush to the city and apply for an express emergency passport?

Bound by human limitations, we can't break through iron, nor can we split the sea when we need to cross it. So what does Hashem want from us???

"Flight PS178 departs tomorrow at 1900, arriving in KBP at 0500."

Just in time for Shacharis of Rosh Hashana. Whammo.

My husband being in Uman for Rosh Hashana now seems as likely as reaching the stars and becoming one of them.

What is there left for us to do?

Sometimes, it seems like Hashem put us in an impossible situation. We want to do the right thing, we really mean well and are prepared for the hardship, but it's just unattainable! Beyond reach!

We all have our stories of times when although we stood firm in the face of obstacles, we got to a point where the obstacles were larger than us. Bound by human limitations, we can't break through iron, nor can we split the sea when we need to cross it. So what does Hashem want from us???

* * *

Picture the ultimate perfection: Every mitzvah that comes your way is snapped up with enthusiasm, you infuse your children with love and fear of Hashem, and you eradicate every slightest bit of impatience and anger.

But can you honestly say that you are serving Hashem?

'According to the greatness of Hashem Yisbarach, I don't

know how anyone who realizes the least bit of His greatness can say that they serve Him. Even a Malach or a Saraf cannot pride himself that he can serve Hashem.' (Sichos Haran, 51)

Even our most strenuous efforts to serve Hashem and do His will are like a joke compared to His greatness, says the Rebbe.

We can be doing everything perfectly, we can behave like angels, but can we dare say it's enough?

R' Nosson takes it a step further: 'Our avoda itself isn't worth so much, since everything is from Hashem anyway. He is the One Who does everything.

We put a mezuzah on the doorpost, but who gives us the house?

We dress with tznius, but who provides us with clothing?

We refrain from sinning, but who grants us the strength?

So what does Hashem want from us? Why are

The main pride that Hashem takes in Klal Yisrael is from their holy desire and longing, that every Yid's heart constantly burns with a passionate desire to be zoiche to really serve Hashem.



we here? What nachas does He get from us?

'The truth is: the main pride that Hashem takes in Klal Yisrael is from their holy desire and longing, that every Yid's heart constantly burns with a passionate desire to be zoiche to really serve Hashem. This is the pride and nachas He takes in us.'

All that Hashem wants from us is our fierce, fervent wish to do His will. No matter what, I want! Whatever happens, I long, I yearn, I am desperate, to do His desire.

'And all the avodos, Torah, Tefila, mitzvos and good deeds are included in this.'

The Ratzon is the main Avodas Hashem!'

Whether we actually got there in the end is negligible, it's the desire that Hashem likes. Actual achievement is proof of our strong desire, but again, success is in the hands of Hashem. He decides when we get there and when not, our job is just to want.

We have it easy! All we need to do is *want!*

It's hard enough, not to let go of the desire ever. It can be exhausting, the obstacles daunting, and the road never-ending. A niggling voice inside taunts; 'Give up already, you'll never get there anyway.'

But no! I won't let any disappointments or failures keep me from wanting. I still crave, yearn, *long* to do Hashem's will, despite everything!

This is the pride Hashem takes in every single one of us, in our determination, resolve, and endless wanting.

'And through this is the main Kabbalas Hatorah'.

It's not the success, it's not the doggedly doing robotically, and it's not even the angelic perfection. It's the plain and simple pure will to do what Hashem wants, without ever giving up wanting. **No matter what.■**



**Peace and life to my beloved son, the
learned Rav Yitzchak,**

I was waiting and hoping until now that you would come, but what can we do if you were prevented from Heaven? R' Dovid came now and brought your letter with the money for a Pidyon. Hashem Yisbarach should have mercy on you and me, and send you a Refua Sheleima, a healing for your soul and for your body, amongst all the sick Yidden, Amen. You can well understand the great pain I had from hearing this, but even so, I was very relieved when I saw your letter with the explanation for your delay, because we were eagerly awaiting at least some news from you.

For this too, we are obliged to say that everything is surely for the good, even if we are prevented from doing mitzvos and good things. We can also fault ourselves for not strengthening our resolve sufficiently against the obstacles. Nevertheless, my dear son, certainly don't become despondent about this, because the ways of Hashem are very, very strong. I already heard from the Rebbe Z"l clearly that even if we don't manage to achieve the mitzvah we had wanted to do, still, the desire itself is very good... Although this in itself isn't enough, but nonetheless, if only we could take a hold of ourselves that we should at least always have a strong, passionate desire for Hashem and His Torah...

Baruch Hashem, your desire is good and strong, and what can we do, an oiness is exempt. Now I am waiting and hoping that you'll at least arrive on Monday G-d willing, like you wrote...

Shabbos is approaching and I need to go... Hashem in His mercy should send you a speedy healing, and you'll return to your complete health. Strengthen yourself with all your might to accept Shabbos with much happiness, that you were zoiche to have good desires to be together with us.

Hashem should help that we should always be together, even when we can't see each other, because although our bodies are far apart, our souls are close, and we are all connected at our source in the true Tzaddik, and this is our eternal hope.

*The words of your father, who hopes to
see you soon in peace, alive and happy,*

Nosson of Breslov



A Touching Tefila

For Shavuot


Let us all be zoiche to holy Ratzon, we should have a strong and powerful desire at all times to Your Torah, to serve and fear You; our heilige desire should increase and strengthen more and more every day and hour. For You know that we are flesh and blood, formed from earth. Who can have enough strength to truly serve You? Between all the Malachim, Serafim, and angels in heaven, there isn't even a single one who can pride themselves that they are able to serve You, because Your greatness is boundless, and Your Name is high above all praise.

All the more so a human being, tired and exhausted, whose end is to be devoured by worms. The Yetzer Hora rises up against us every day, weaving plots to trap our souls into his net. Have mercy on us, help us to fortify our Ratzon D'Kedusha, we should be zoiche to accustom ourselves with constant good desires to yearn, long, and pine for You with a fierce desire, with a true yearning and a great craving from the depths of our souls, as it says, 'My soul pines and yearns for Your courtyards, Hashem...'

Let us be zoiche to draw down upon us the holiness and purity of the holy Yom Tov Shavuot, which is the time of the giving of the Torah, when Klal Yisrael came close to You and were zoiche to accept the holy Torah through immersing in the mikvah. Let us all be zoiche on the Yom Tov Shavuot to immerse ourselves in the heavenly mikvah, in the mikvah of the fiftieth gate of holiness, which is great mercy, kindness and knowledge.

Help us to be zoiche to draw upon us the holiness of this mikvah into the whole year, we should be zoiche to purify ourselves and increase our holiness constantly, to speedily go out from the fifty gates of impurity and to enter the fifty gates of Kedusha, and fulfil in us soon what it says, 'And I will pour over you pure waters, and you will be purified from all your impurities...'





REVEALING THE RADIANCE OF MY INNERMOST RATZON

By C.R. Weissfish

Two mice once fell into a big pot of milk. The first mouse looked up at the tall sides and said, "I'll never manage to climb that high to get out of here..." He gave up instantly, and drowned. The second mouse decided, "I'm definitely gonna get out - I want to live!" With sincere determination, he started jumping up and down, trying to jump a little higher each time. It didn't seem like he'd ever reach high enough, yet he continued trying his best, wanting to get out. With all his jumping, the milk got churned into butter, and became a solid piece for him to stand on and climb out!!

Unbelievable!

We have to try our best and keep wanting – it's not the achievement and success in life that counts, it's the effort and Ratzon.

Chazal say: רצוני לעשות רצונך רק
השאור שבעיסה מעכב

Before Pesach, we all worked so hard to clean out every speck of chametz from our homes, and even though after Pesach the chametz comes back to fill our cupboards again, the concept and pure, clean feeling of working on ourselves to

overcome the Yetzer Hora remains, and continues to accompany us on our journey of Sefiras Haomer.

Standing at the Kosel is the place where you can really see the true Ratzon of every Yid.

People of all different types and origins, dressed in all the colors of the rainbow, on so many levels of Yiddishkeit, stand there together, yet each one alone with their Father in Heaven. The immense, intense Kedusha draws out from the depths of each neshama with a magnetic pull, the truest, holiest Retzonos that are buried so deep inside every Yid. And you can see it on their faces, no matter how low they may have fallen, the neshamos are yearning to come back. This is the emmes! The truest, deepest ratzon of us all is to return to our Creator.

Yet in normal routine, we sometimes get blinded by the Yetzer Hora and confused where exactly we are heading.

Try to imagine this feeling:

You are full of excitement, eagerness and determination, equipped with a whole plan of how

you're going to succeed to really do something and achieve purpose in life. Your thoughts are travelling at top speed, when suddenly, you get told, 'STOP! Take the nearest exit from highway A, make a U-turn, and go down highway B instead.'

WHAT? I - should - travel - in - the - total - opposite - direction - to - all - my - thought - out - plans??? But how can it be? I meant so well! I so much wanted to fulfil my tafkid in life...

What is your underlying intention here? Are you trying to reach Kavod and self-satisfaction, or do you really mean the Retzon Hashem???

If my Father in Heaven sends me this message, it means to say: My dearest daughter, you wanted to serve Me like this, but I want you to serve Me like *that*!

Put aside your will, close your eyes, and then it'll be real proof that you meant to do the Retzon Hashem. Redirect your thoughts, and pour out your heart to Hashem:

"Please help me uncover the Kochos hidden inside me in order to be able to carry out Your will

in every circumstance You put me. Give me Siyatta Dishmaya to transform the tears and pain of disappointment into total acceptance of Your will, to be zoiche to rise to the present challenge with emuna and simcha, and to bring my sacrifice wholeheartedly, allowing the nisayon to bring me higher and closer to You than ever before."

Look at Sefiras Haomer in Breslov: The cries and shouts טהרינו! – coming out of Shul טהרינו! ואטהר ואתקדש בקדושה של מעלה
The determination and motivation like fire in their eyes
אין ברסלב ברענט א פייער
What is all this about if not Ratzon???

...לתקן את נפשותינו

To awaken and rediscover the Ratzon hidden inside. How much we must thank Hashem for being mekurav to the heilige Rebbe, who taught us what this means practically!

גיוואלד! זייט אייך נישט מייאש!!!
רק העיקר היא הרצון!

Someone once told the Rebbe that he wants to be an erliche Yid. The Rebbe answered, "וויילסטו אבער וועלן?" (How deep is your Ratzon...)

I once had a baby's bike with a broken part that needed to be taken off in order to fix it. I took it back to the store, but they tried and couldn't manage. Out of desperation, (my one year old really wanted his bike!) I tried again myself and... I succeeded Baruch Hashem!

A weak mother's willpower overweighed a big strong man's Koach! That bike got fixed not with physical Koach but with Koach Haratzon!

If we work at bringing out our Ratzon in Avodas Hashem with

all our might, - we'll reach very far! As it says, בדרך שאדם רוצה לילך, מוליכין אותו

As we approach Shavuos, we say in Likutei Tefillos:

ותזכנו לשמע קול הקריאה של הימים טובים הקדושים אשר הם קוראים ומגלים את הרצון...

The Shalosh Regalim are called מקראי קודש. Each Yom Tov calls out that this world is led exactly how Hashem wants, and there is no such thing as Teva – nature.

Pesach – Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim after the ten Makkos, split the sea... so many open Nissim!

Shavuos – Hashem gave us the holy Torah, revealing Himself to the Yidden with the Aseres Hadibros on Har Sinai, where all of our neshamos were present.

Sukkos – we remember the Ananei Hakavod, how we were protected and cared for 40 years in the midbar.

And we ask Hashem that we should be zoiche to hear the call of each Yom Tov as it proclaims that everything is always Retzon Hashem, and through this, be zoiche to a true simchas Yom Tov.

May Hashem help us all to say Naaseh Venishma this year with a new level of Ratzon and Cheshek, beseeching Him from the depths of our hearts: משוך because that's our whole avoda in this world; not to give up or leave go of our Ratzon in any circumstance, but to appreciate and value even the smallest true Ratzon that we are zoiche to express, and be clearly aware that like this, we are fulfilling our tachlis here, bringing nachas to Hashem and being mekarev the Geula Sheleima.■

**'HELP ME
TRANSFORM
THE TEARS OF
DISAPPOINT-
MENT INTO
TOTAL
ACCEPTANCE
OF YOUR WILL'**





A. Barnea

THE ETERNAL SECRET WHICH IS HARD TO REVEAL

I wanted to write about the secret which is being revealed to me all the time...

I always wondered about the days of Sefiras Haomer. They go directly from Pesach, a time of festivity, straight to the opposite extreme; days in which it is prohibited to listen to music or get married - in short, a heavy atmosphere. But each night, we recite a bracha, say 10 words, 'and through this, a big shefa should pour into all the worlds...'

What's the power of this counting?

Is there something in it that can change our sense of heaviness in these days?

I heard in the name of Rabbi Silbiger Shlita, that the Yetzer Hora- Amalek, is very, very scared

of... the Sefiras Haomer.¹

What is he so scared of?

Don't schoolchildren waiting for their trip also count down the days?

This is the exact same idea. Someone who counts the days until... shows that he's waiting for something very exciting, something he really wants. With the Sefiras Haomer, we show that Kabbalas HaTorah is something very important to us, that we really want it. This desire scares Amalek, - that a Yid, after all his setbacks and failures, still wants, still desires Kedusha.

¹ Like I saw in the medrash on Megillas Esther, that when Haman started his downfall, the talmidim of Mordechai Hatzaddik had begun to occupy themselves with the Korban Haomer.

Here we reveal the world's secret.

The secret to a happy life, the secret that all of humanity chases after, the secret that as much as we talk about it, it stills remains hidden, the secret that we need to remind ourselves again and again and again...

This secret is to want. To want to serve Hashem.

And I still haven't yet revealed the secret to you, because these words remain hidden.

The Ratzon is the engine, the gas, and the GPS. Lively, energetic people with initiative are those who know what they want very clearly and specifically, but on the other hand, the desires that the goyim talk about, are like gas that doesn't match to the car, or like sweets for a hungry child - in the

beginning it works even better than the regular, until...

When a person seeks to fulfil his desires, and his focus is on money, honor, fame or comfort, his life is bitter indeed. Rav Kivak Shlita often says that this world is like a poisonous bitter nut covered with a thick layer of chocolate – If you taste just a lick, you'll enjoy it, but if you bite into it, it's a different story altogether... On the other hand, someone who directs all his desires to do the will of Hashem, always has it good! That's how Hashem created the world! As Chazal say: 'Do His will like your will' – make your own Ratzon want to do Retzon Hashem, '...So that He will nullify the will of others before your will' – Hashem will annul all the accusers and enemies that stop all the good from reaching you.

So how come everyone isn't running to want to serve Hashem?

Because the Yetzer Hora convinces us that wanting only to serve Hashem means eating only bread and water, closeting yourself in a room and davening all day with hot tears and dressing in long black clothes while going around with a depressed and sour face due to your sins. This is definitely not for me, my life is complicated enough already as it is; it's something suitable for Tzaddikim who roll in the snow...

But we must know that this is so untrue and leads us to the bitterness of wanting this world – if I anyway won't merit to serve Hashem, let me at least 'enjoy' this world.

But Hashem created the world in order to do good for Klal Yisrael. He wants us to rejoice with His G-dliness and want to serve Him, with the life that He arranged for us – with this husband, these children, this job, these difficulties and successes... All this makes up the Retzon Hashem, that what He wants me to do, in a very individual way, which no one else in the whole world could ever, can never, and will never be able to fulfil.

Hashem wants me to believe in Him, to trust Him, rejoice in Him, and daven to Him about my life and my difficulties to come closer to Him. He wants me to rejoice with the mitzvos that I do because that's what He wants from me, and these mitzvos precisely bring me close to Him. Hashem wants me to wake up to want to do His will, like I really can. To progress in serving Him as much as I can, and the main progress is in how much I want Him, how much I strengthen my Ratzon for Avodas Hashem, how much this moves and affects all my deeds, how much I succeed to elevate myself from wanting the emptiness of this world to wanting Avodas Hashem. How much I rejoice that I did the Retzon Hashem, and if I know how to reject the feelings of sadness, frustration and emptiness in favor of great happiness for when I did merit to do the Retzon Hashem.

For example, when we cleaned for Pesach: How many times I remembered that this is what Hashem wants, the amount of times I was happy that I managed to run away from Ga'ava – what a Balabuste I am – to thinking

**HASHEM
WANTS ME TO
BELIEVE IN
HIM, TO TRUST
HIM, REJOICE
IN HIM, AND
DAVEN TO HIM
ABOUT MY
LIFE AND MY
DIFFICULTIES
TO COME
CLOSER TO
HIM. HE
WANTS ME TO
REJOICE WITH
THE MITZVOS
THAT I DO...**

that Hashem is happy with me. I escaped from laziness to working because it's the Retzon Hashem, I fled from wanting a clean house, to wanting a house clean from chametz. I shook off the depression that I didn't manage to work according to my plans, and instead was happy that Hashem is happy with what I did, and knows that I couldn't do more. And when the Retzon Hashem is the focus, it really makes you happy!

Other examples: When I am being mechanech my child, is it for my own personal honor, or for Hashem's honor? When I go to work, is it for my career, or is it to help my husband learn more, or to 'air out' in order to be a happier mother?

Each person has their own personal things which only she herself, the Tzaddik, and Hashem know exactly what it is.

How does one merit such a revolution? It seems like Yetzias Mitzrayim, Krias Yam Suf, and Kabbalas Hatorah all rolled into one!

Right, it's a ness which is impossible, without the Tzaddik...

Just like all the above nissim were with the Koach and merit of Moshe Rabbeinu, so too until today, this is the Tzaddik's tafkid. This is what he intended with all his Torahs, Sichos and Eitzos, and this is his tefilos for us: that we should be zoiche to do our Ratzon like the Retzon Hashem, that we should turn into being a 'Sheasani Kirtzono'. The tafkid of the Tzaddik is to pull us away from the pull of this world which constantly pushes us to want

**THE MORE WE
CONNECT TO
THE TZADDIK,
BELIEVE IN HIS
POWER, TRY TO
LISTEN TO HIS
EITZOS, AND
DAVEN WITH
HISKASHRUS
TO HIM, THE
MORE WE'LL
BE ZOICHE TO
AWAKEN TO
THE RETZON
HASHEM AND
TO ACCEPT HIS
TORAH**

Olam Hazeh and pursue it in order to eat, to be healthy, to live comfortably, to be 'with it', to keep up to the standards of... He pulls us away from all these things, to want Avodas Hashem.

Rabbi Silbiger Shlita asks: It says that an Egyptian slave woman saw at Krias Yam Suf what Yechezkel Hanavi didn't see. How do we understand such a thing? An Egyptian, the lowest of the low, who only converted to be a maid, saw holier things than a Navi?

He answers that it's all because of the Koach of the manhig – Moshe Rabbeinu. According to the manhig, a person is zoiche to want Hashem, and if he wants strongly enough, he can merit to become close to Him. The more we connect to the Tzaddik, believe in his power, try to listen to his eitzos, and daven with hiskashrus to him, the more we'll be zoiche to awaken to the Retzon Hashem and to accept His Torah. As Rabbi Kivak Shlita says, the Torah should be accepted by us, that Hashem has nachas from my mitzvos, I should accept that I have many true reasons to rejoice with my Avodas Hashem, and through this, B'ezras Hashem on the Yom Tov Shavuos, more retzonos and yearning to Hashem will be awakened, from now onwards, because if I know that I am succeeding in Avodas Hashem – like we explained what it means, then I'll have chizuk and retzonos for more and more.

The Rebbe says that in order to bring out your retzonos, you should say them out loud, and through this, you'll be zoiche to eventually get there. You should speak to Hashem about it, tell

Him what you so much want to do, and really yearn to reach, and beg Him to have mercy on you so that you should get there, and like this, you bring out your retzonos.

I heard an inspiring shiur or saw my friend do something good; it awakened a Ratzon in me. In order for that Ratzon to develop, the Rebbe tells us to talk to Hashem about it! To tell Him that you really want to do it! Even if I don't think I'm on the level of managing it, I should tell Hashem that I want to be! This brings Hashem so much nachas! And it's like a snowball of bounty and blessings that in the end rolls back to me. If I continue like this, I'll eventually be zoiche to get to that level too, and even more, to be happy with what I did do.

When I tell Hashem (and myself) about my good Retzonos, even for 'easy' mitzvos like netilas yodayim and brachos, through this Hashem helps that the mitzvah gets considered important in my eyes (since I said that I wanted to do it, and the power of our words is immense) and then I'm happy with the daily mitzvos that I was zoiche to do.

As soon as I began to connect to the Retzon Hashem with the Koach of the Tzaddik, I have triumphed! I chose good! I haven't yet fulfilled, I haven't yet changed, nor have I succeeded, but I have won, I did the Retzon Hashem – I connected to the Tachlis, I have Yiras Shamayim! Hashem is happy with me and has pleasure from me!

There's still a lot more to add, but I hope that this point has begun to shine in us all. The continuation can be found in every Torah, Sichah and Eitzah of the heilige Rebbe and his Talmid R' Nosson, because whoever hears this secret of wanting Hashem, this secret of a happy life, receives the key to understanding the words of the Rebbe and R' Nosson with a new and clear light.

May Hashem help us to be zoiche to draw upon us Retzonos and yearnings to serve Hashem, that will enlighten our days and nights, and we should be zoiche to accept the Torah on Shavuos with Ratzon, to receive new eitzos for Avodas Hashem and to come close to Him in the z'chus of the Heilige Rebbe R' Nachman. ■



A. Hoffman

To Want to Want

There once was a penguin
black and white and cute.

He stood at the riverside
and cried great tears
for our little penguin
couldn't swim.

He imagined himself flipping into the sea
with grace and ease,
black and white bodies
glistening and wet.
Flapping, frolicking,
free.

Oh how his little heart ached
as his penguiny pain peaked
and he sat at the side,
imprisoned.

He flip-flops over to Grandpa
and bemoans his fate.
Grandpa tells him
that all penguins can swim.
But if he doesn't want to
then he, Pengi,
should sort himself out.

Darkness fell
and dawn rose

pastel pink and yellow
rising on the horizon.

Pengi couldn't bear another day
and gathered all his courage
to sort himself out.

Why would Grandpa say:
"But if you don't want to"?
Is there anything I want more
than to be a regular penguin?

Me? I'm not a regular penguin.

I am so much more.

I am different.

Better.

Not like all those penguins out there.

Look at me.

See me.

Handle me with extra care.

Give me VIP treatment.

Pengi contemplates joining
that black and white mass.

Horrors!

Who would even give me an extra glance?

Why, I would be just a regular penguin!

Oh no, I do not want to swim.

Not really.

Really not.

Back to Gramps he goes

and wails in confusion.

Grandpa, I want to want

But I don't!

I'm afraid I'll disappear

become just another black n white stripe.

Set me free,

make we want.

Take away the pain

let me be me.

Grandpa takes him into his fins

and sings to him softly.

All penguins are equally special

all are born by the same Creator

all are worth the same

all are equally special.

Black or white,

disabled or different.

respected or renowned

pitied or pained.

Equally special

and constantly the same special

today, tomorrow and yesterday.

Pengi tries.

He really does.



He experiences the joy of water

of setting his wings free

and letting his body fly

as he dips and dives

and flaps up a storm.

At times,

he feels a desperate urge

to stand apart

to swim directly

against the current.

To scream out to the sea:

Hey!

That's Pengi you're looking at!

And he feels the weakness overtake him

and loses his newfound skills.

But he keeps fighting

wanting to fight,

wanting to want

cuz that's all he really needs

to do.

And when he really doesn't want

he tries not to want

to not want. ■



F.K

FOLLOWING ^{THE} REBBE

INTERVIEW WITH MRS. HIRSCH FROM LONDON

During one of my precious visits to the Rebbe's tzion in Uman, I chanced upon a sweet, grandmotherly woman sitting close the tzion and davening. I was immediately drawn to her warmth and friendly smile, and we made friends. Since then, almost every subsequent visit was enhanced with meeting her by the tzion. She has a simple explanation for her frequent visits: 'If the Rebbe invites you, you come.'

Her devotion to the Rebbe and his directives always astounded me, and on my latest visit, I was struck with an amazing idea: How about interviewing her, so that more people could gain from her simple Emunas Chachamim? I posed the question to her while we were both standing next to the Kodosh Kadoshim, the holiest place on earth, and she agreed at once with her trademark gentle smile. "But not right now, - they're just about to start Ma'ariv."

After the final Kaddish, she turned to me with a smile. "I don't like talking next to the tzion, let's find somewhere else to sit." With one last kiss to the tzion, we settled down in the furthest corner, and began talking.

"I was born in Yerushalayim Ir Hakodesh, to Holocaust survivors. My father was very sick, and my mother worked hard to support the family, while looking after us children. I was an only daughter, and I helped a lot at home.

"What kind of home was it? Was your father a Breslover?"

"No, not at all. We were, you can call it Klal Chassidi. No specific Chassidus, but my father liked to go to all the Rebbe's. I had never even heard of Breslov."

"So when did you become acquainted?"

"The first time I heard about Breslov was after my Chasuna. My new husband came home, and started talking about Breslov, the Rebbe... I didn't know what on earth he was talking about! I hadn't known earlier, but my husband had become a mekurav at 14 years old. I asked him, what's it all about?

He knew that I liked reading, so he brought me home the set of books in Yiddish on the Rebbe's life. It's a set of nine books, going through the Rebbe's birth, his childhood, (you know he wrote Sefer Hamiddos at age six?! I was astounded!) and later too, his journey to Eretz Yisrael, his settling in Uman, and his histalkus at age 38, just like the Arizal," she tells me.

"You're well versed!" I exclaim.

She smiles, and continues talking. "After reading these books, I was completely overtaken. I think I can say that I became an even bigger Breslover than my husband! He also brought me home the set of Likutei Tefilos in Yiddish,

and since then, a day hasn't passed without my using the sefer. I have one set at home in London, and another set here in Uman.

I felt that Breslov was the truth. Reading about the Rebbe, his greatness... And as much as we think we know, we don't know anything! If we would know how great the Rebbe really is, we wouldn't be able to stand near the tzion!"

She pauses, and we both glance at the tzion in the corner. "Aahh, it's a z'chus to be here. Those years after my Chasuna, when Uman was closed, no one could get there. How they yearned to reach it at least once in their lifetime... But the borders were tightly sealed. They made the Kibbutz for Rosh Hashana in Meron in those times.

"And your husband always traveled?"

"Every single year, without fail. He wouldn't miss it for anything. Being together with anash for Rosh Hashana... it's a different story.

"Wasn't it hard for you?"

"It was very hard! I stayed alone

at home with all my children. Sometimes, I sent along the older ones. Later on, it got easier, because my married daughters stayed with me, so I wasn't alone. But even though it was hard, I wasn't going to stop him from going. What, it's his Yiddishkeit! How can I dare disturb him?!

Later, with the fall of the Iron Curtain, Uman was finally open, and they started traveling there for Rosh Hashana. The amount of money it cost... astronomical sums! And they could only be by the tzion for maybe ten minutes in total!"

"But it was worth it," I comfort her.

"Of course it was worth it. The Rebbe said to come to him for Rosh Hashana! No obstacle is too big to overcome. Since Uman was open, my husband never missed a Rosh Hashana there. I even sent all of my boys before seven too."

"Wow! You managed in those difficult times?" I marvel.

It was indeed hard; one of my boys were born in Adar, and he traveled to Uman under bitter cold weather conditions. I had never yet been to Uman then, and I was sending them to the unknown. But the Rebbe promised such wonderful things, it was impossible not to!"

"And your children grew up to be strong and proud Breslover Chassidim," I comment, being familiar with quite a few of them.

"Yes, Baruch Hashem," she agrees. "I have a Nachman, a Nosson, a Naftali... and Baruch Hashem, all my children are mekushar to the heilige Tzaddik. My husband used to talk to



them a lot about the Rebbe. Every Shabbos seuda, at every occasion, he would talk to them, tell them stories... my children still come to us Shalosh Seudas to hear my husband speak!"

"So they had a real Breslover Chinuch," I say in admiration.

"Baruch Hashem. The children absorb what you tell them when they're young, it goes into their bones. And they were zoiche to be born to a Breslover father, so naturally, they grew up to be Breslov.

I'll give you an example. A short while after my fifth child was born, I was preparing to take him to the baby clinic for shots, like all my other children. While I was putting on his coat, my husband said to me hesitantly, 'You know, the Rebbe didn't really like medications and shots.'

I instantly removed his coat. If the Rebbe says no to shots, than no it is. Since then, I never vaccinated any of my next five children, and I'm happy to say that they are all healthy and well, without being treated by any kinds of antibiotics or medications."

"It takes a lot of courage, and even more Emunas Chachamim, to believe so firmly in what the Rebbe says. I wish it on myself!"

"I was terrified to do something that the Rebbe doesn't let," she explains straightforwardly.

How did you end up in London, if I may ask?" I am too curious to be polite.

"The Rebbe sent us, what else can I say?" she shrugs. "I had never dreamt that I would live anywhere outside of Eretz Yisrael, but who knows? It seems like the Rebbe wanted us to set up the Breslov Kehilla in London."



A shiur in Breslov Shul in London.

Her eyes go misty. "The Breslov Shul started in our house, the first Shabbos after our move, with a minyan for Shacharis."

"You jumped right in, headfirst!" I exclaim. "Wasn't it hard, not even having settled in yet?"

"The adjustment to London was very difficult. It was extremely different to what I was used to! But it was all what you call Tikkunim, we don't know anything down here, we just trust in Hashem, He knows what He's doing.

But the Shul was the most exciting part! I loved it! They would daven, and I would sit in the other room and daven together with them... they also made Shalosh Seudos in my house, and I would listen to the zmiros... it was beautiful!

The Shul remained in my house for five years, and I remember feeling so disappointed when the minyan grew out of my house and started renting a bigger place. I really missed it!

"Seeing the booming Breslov Kehilla in London nowadays, it is hard to believe that only twenty years ago, it was almost non-existent!"

"Baruch Hashem, the Rebbe's light is spreading more and more, and I am happy to have been able to do my share in Hafatza. It wasn't always so easy, with little children running under-foot, but I can say that I gained the most from the whole deal.

You know, I always wanted that my husband should be able to sit and learn all day, without being bothered by parnassa problems, but with my nine children born one after the other, there wasn't much I could do to help with parnassa, besides davening. So daven I did! And Baruch Hashem, my husband managed to sit and learn all day.

At one stage, while we were marrying off our children, my husband had no choice but to go to work. All the time, I constantly davened that he should be able to return to his learning, and after a while, Baruch Hashem, he managed to leave the job.

While my kids were growing up, I did my best to keep the spending down, and not waste money so that my husband should be able to continue learning. Before Yom Tov, I would let down the hems of my kids' trousers, wash them, and iron them crisply, and what do you know? They had new

suits for Yom Tov! They felt a million feet tall! I would search out the cheapest deals, running to the furthest stores to find inexpensive clothes, and Baruch Hashem, I managed to find. Clothing can cost a lot less than you think!"

"Wow! So you helped your husband in the best way, being happy with little. It takes strength!"

"My husband was very supportive. Our children were not what you would call 'easy babies'. They cried through the night, and I could never afford to take a nap during the day, with all the other children around. My husband kept offering me to sleep through the night, and he would take care of the children, but I never took him up on his offer. I couldn't bring myself to disturb his sleep; how would he manage to learn and daven in the day, after being up all night?"

"The quintessential Eishes Chayil! I have a lot to learn from you!" I admit.

Whenever I picture the tzion in my mind's eye, I see Mrs. Hirsch sitting on her white chair with her shawl, the Likutei Tefilos in

Yiddish never too far from reach, earnestly talking to Hashem. *"I see you here in Uman almost every time I come. How many times a year do you come here?"*

Since we have an apartment in Uman, I come here very often Baruch Hashem. It gives me a real boost!

"I WAS TERRIFIED TO DO SOMETHING THAT THE REBBE DOESN'T LET."

"Were you ever in Uman for Shavuos?"

"Just once. It was many years ago, when there weren't so many people who came, and when everyone was eating the Seuda at night, my grandson came running to tell me that the tzion is empty! I stole in to daven for

a few minutes. But these days, you can't do such a thing. Baruch Hashem, there are so many thousands of men who come to Uman, that the tzion is full 24 hours a day!"

"That must have been a Shavuos to remember!"

Although wherever we are in the world, (and especially if we are zoiche to our husbands being in Uman for Shavuos, or anytime during the year) we can connect to the Rebbe, and be zoiche to his Tikkunim. Like the Rebbe says, 'Whenever people speak about me, they'll have a thought of Teshuva'.

Mrs. Hirsch nods in agreement. ***"What else can we say, besides for 'ASHREINU'!"*** ■



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WOMEN'S VIEWS

BY: T.C.S.

WHAT IS YOUR APPROACH WHEN YOU REALLY, REALLY WANT TO DO SOMETHING BUT YOU KEEP HITTING OBSTACLES?

To me, obstacles are big balloons that just need to be busted. They blow up, swelling to massive proportions, until it seems absolutely impossible to continue. But if I walk straight ahead, ignoring the bubble, I find that it... pops! Sometimes I hear the bang, other times it just dissipates into thin air quietly, but it always fizzles out in the end. I just need to be strong and resolute about what I am doing.

Asking Daas Torah gets me clear-cut answers of what's right to do, and once I am

confident about what I do, nothing in the world can stop me from doing it.

Large grey clouds might loom over me, threatening to swallow me, but I stride ahead - firmly facing forward, and watch all the clouds evaporate!

Name withheld, Eretz Yisrael


Editors note: We're blown away! See

ליקוטי עצות מניעות ז'
'בְּאַמֶּת אֵין שׁוּם קְנִיעָה
כָּלֵל, כִּי כָּל הַמְּנִיעוֹת הֵם רַק
בְּאַחֲזֵזֵת עֵינַיִם'

My approach to such a circumstance is so clear to me: Hisbodedus.

When I really want something and encounter obstacles, I daven to Hashem. I start with asking Him, 'Hashem, please help me remember that the only thing I have is tefilla.' The greater my ratzon is, the more I daven. I daven and daven and don't give up, until I manage to achieve what I wanted. Before anything big or important, I daven every second I have, that I should be able to achieve it. I'll ignore the phones, and just keep my lips moving. I try to keep my hishtadlus at minimal, and my tefilos at maximum. Once I do accomplish, I know that it's only with the help of Hashem, and bz'chus my tefilos. It's all about Hashem. He helps me daven, and He helps me achieve.

D. Jacobowitz, Monsey N.Y





There are many times when I have a powerful ratzon to do something good, but it's just not possible at that moment. In such cases, I would take that same uncompleted Ratzon and apply it to something that I can do.

I'll give you an example. It was Rosh Chodesh, and I really wanted to say Hallel. I had so much to praise Hashem for, and Hallel is an opportunity that doesn't come by so often. But with one eye on the racing clock and the other on my ever-increasing to-do list, I saw that I wouldn't get there. So I took that Ratzon to praise Hashem, and while I was cooking supper, I sang to Hashem. This was

something I could do, so I praised Him, I thanked Him, and that was my Hallel!

Whether it's a tzedaka breakfast that I can't attend, volunteering for Bikkur Cholim which I don't have the time for, or a tzedaka plea that I have to refuse for lack of funds, I develop that same Ratzon into something feasible. I'll serve my kids breakfast with extra enthusiasm, give some more TLC to my child stuck in bed with a strep throat, and find some other chessed which I can manage to do. And I daven to Hashem to accept my deed as if it was done the way I had originally desired.

Name withheld, Monroe N.Y.



I know with 100% clarity that when I hit lots of obstacles, then what I'm doing is very chashuv, and therefore the Yetzer Hora is working very hard to stop me.

My husband once traveled to America for business purposes a week before Rosh Hashana. I didn't find it hard to be alone, but from the moment he stepped foot onto the plane to Uman, my children suddenly started misbehaving unimaginably! They humiliated me in public, and did things I never knew they were capable of. (Just as one example, they took all the tomatoes from the fridge and squeezed them over the gate of the balcony, right into my neighbor's porch, making a tomato fountain.) My

first reaction was anger, but I soon understood the message that was screaming to me:

As long as my husband was in America for gashmius reasons, the Yetzer Hora was okay with it, and I stayed calm. But as soon as he was on the way to Uman for ruchnius reasons, the Yetzer Hora wanted me to become depressed and not let him travel to Uman again.

I thank Hashem, that Baruch Hashem, I was zoiche to see my situation as a Breslover. I feel privileged to let my husband travel to Uman for almost all the z'manim, and I don't let my menios scare off my retzonos to do what's right.

F. Weitzhendler, Eretz Yisrael.

**HAVE YOU
EXPERIENCED
THE RESULTS
OF A STRONG
RATZON?
CAN YOU
THIINK OF A
TIME WHEN
ALTHOUGH
ALL THE
ODDS WERE
AGAINST
IT, YOU
MANAGED
TO ACHIEVE
WHAT YOU
WANTED,
JUST OUT OF
A STRONG
WILLPOWER?**

Eretz Yisrael was calling to us. We were eager to make the big move from Monroe, NY to Eretz Yisrael. We talked about it at length, discussed every angle, asked Da'as Torah, and finally made the decision: We would go for a six month trial. It sounded simple, but oh, the menios... I felt like I was drowning in endless red tape, knee-deep in plans and problems. We were looking to rent our house in Monroe, and we needed to find a fully furnished apartment with space for our family of seven kids in Eretz Yisrael. To make things even more complicated, we weren't sure if it would be a permanent move, or if we'd be coming back, so I wanted to leave my possessions back home. But who in the world would want to live in a house with strange peoples' stuff all over the place?

Since it was clear to us that this move was the correct thing to do and we so wanted it, we just disregarded our setbacks and booked tickets for our entire family. The balloons would have to burst... and burst they did! At the peak of our difficulties, on the most complicated day of my life, when the menios were threatening to swallow us, I got a phone call: "A family from Beis Shemesh with eight kids were coming to the States for a tryout, and were looking to exchange houses. Were we interested?"

You bet we were! I was flying in the air, high above all the nasty looking inflated clouds. And needless to say, my tryout turned into an enriching lasting move - Baruch Hashem!

C.R. Weberman, formerly from N.Y, now Eretz Yisrael

Editor's note: How moving! See

ליקוטי עצות, מניעות ז': 'כל המניעות שיש לאדם מעבדות השם, אע"פ שנדמה להאדם שהמניעה שלו גדולה מאד ואי אפשר לשברה... כי אין השם יתברך שולח על שום אדם מניעות, רק כפי כחו ויכולתו שיוכל לעמד בהם, אם ירצה להתגבר עליהם'

I really wanted to bake Shlissel Challos for the first Shabbos after Pesach. But with one kid lying in bed with chicken pox, the pile of laundry still reaching the sky from Pesach, and the house in general disarray, a little voice was screaming into my ear: Just skip the challos!

With one last wistful glance at the flour sitting on the counter, I shelved my plans for the Challos. I stretched out my hand to put away the flour, and froze in mid-movement. I had a brain flash. If I am being prevented in so many different ways from baking these Challos, it must be something very significant!

I instantly whipped out the mixer and cracked the eggs. Once I had made up my mind to do it, it actually went very easily.

Name withheld, Monroe N.Y.

Editor's note: That's rising above a challenge. See

ליקוטי מוהר"ן ס"ו: 'ראוי לאדם לדעת כשיש לו מניעות גדולות מאד מאיזה דבר שבקדשה... שזה הדבר שרופה לעשות... דבר יקר מאד'





I had a baby on Lag B'Omer last year and we were very tight in money. Although it seemed impossible, my husband said, 'I still want to be in Uman for Shavuot (the ruchnius'dige Rosh Hashana). The Rebbe said that the main thing is the ratzon; what do I lose from wanting?'

He really davened a lot, and the unbelievable

happened. At my son's bris, my grandfather was sandek, and kindly handed over an envelope with enough money for my husband to travel to Uman and even for me to travel abroad to my parents for Shavuot! I had a really relaxing visit, which I would never have done otherwise.

F. Weitzhendler, Eretz Yisrael




I'm one of those lucky people who received an apartment when I got married. As soon as I entered, I said, "Great! Until six kids." Baruch Hashem, it filled up fast, until I had seven kids in one bedroom. I desperately needed a bigger apartment, and extending wasn't an option. I so much wanted a spacious place to raise my children, where they can have plenty space to play, and plenty space to sleep, never mind!

Since the Rebbe tells us to speak to Hashem about our retzonos, and daven that they should be fulfilled, I davened a lot that year. I told Hashem how much I needed a bigger house - in order to be a good mother and to raise happy children, and begged Him to provide me with a larger apartment. I also said Parshas Haman, and the Tefila L'bayis from R' Nossan every day. Within a year, I was living in my dream apartment.

M. Frank, Eretz Yisrael

Editor's note: You turned to the right address! See

ליקוטי עצות רצון וכיסופים ב': צריך לדבר בפה הכסופין ונהשתיקקות ש'לו, ועל ידי זה פועל שיהיה נעשה בקשתו ונזכה להגיע למחשבה נכסר



I can vouch for this! (And I think every single one of us on the team will agree!)


This magazine didn't stand the slightest chance of working out. It really seemed impossible. But we really really wanted it!

If you're reading this, you are proving the power of Ratzon.

F. Kahane

Editor's note: Thanks for giving us a first-hand hair-RAYS-ing Ratzon experience.

ליקוטי מוהר"ן חלק ב' מ"ו: 'והעקר - לב חזק ואמיץ, ואז אין לו שום מניעה




Every time I want to go to Uman, I face huge, monstrous menios. But I feel that every time I get there, it's only through my burning desire to get to the Rebbe.

D. Jacobowitz, Monsey N.Y.

Editor's note: Powerful willpower! See

ליקוטי מוהר"ן תו' מ"ו: 'נדע, שהמניעות שיש לכל אחד לעבודת הבורא יתברך שמו, כגון לנסע להצדיק האמת וכיוצא, ולכל אחד ואחד נדמה לו, שהמניעות שלו גדולים יותר משל חברו, וקשה לעמד בהם'




My first step in reaching any madreiga (even something very small) is always a ratzon. (Oh! I so want to be zoiche to this, or that...) Then I would daven to Hashem to be zoiche to fulfil my ratzon. At times, it would develop into daily prayer. I would keep in mind that my ratzon is very chashuv, that I'm doing hishtadlus (in the form of Tefila) and I would wait patiently.

Taking baby steps towards my goat works well for me. About a year ago, I had a strong ratzon to make an hour of hisbodedus every day. 'Me? An hour every day?' It sounded so far-fetched and nearly impossible. I spoke to Hashem about my desire and started doing an hour of hisbodedus once a month. By now, I Baruch Hashem do one hour of hisbodedus once every week, and I look forward to be zoiche to a daily hour shortly, with Hashem's help.

Name withheld, Brooklyn N.Y.

Editor's note: Let's learn to yearn! See

ליקוטי הלכות ברה"מ ד' אות כ': ועקר עבודתו הוא רק הרצון והכסופין דקדושה... ואי אפשר לזכות לשום דבר שבעקדושה כי אם על ידי זה



A few years ago Hashem sent me an opportunity to grow in a certain area of tznius. Despite the internal and external obstacles, I merited to carry it through.

I believe that when such a strong desire comes your way you need to believe in yourself and your ability to grow. You need to examine if the ratzon is coming from an emes'dige place and that by fulfilling this ratzon you will be 100% in accordance with what is

expected of us as Shomrei Torah u'mitzvos. As long as there is no contradiction and it will not negatively impact your emotional/physical well being- go for it!

I do believe that if one reaches a time that they are blessed to fulfill a strong ratzon they are the beneficiaries of a truck load of siyata dishmaya!!!!

F.R. Monsey N.Y.





DEFYING NATURE

THE TRUE INSPIRATIONAL STORY OF MRS. ESTHER LEFKOVITZ

WRITTEN BY HER GRANDAUGHTER, F. BECK

My life started in Meron, by R' Shimon Bar Yochai.

I was actually born in the Old City of Yerushalayim as the eighth child to my dear parents R' Shmuel and Freida Shapira, but from there to where I started living is a long story. I started out as a regular newborn, eating, sleeping, and growing, but my first Shavuot, spent crying in my mother's arms pathetically while burning with fever, made its mark.

She didn't know it then, but I had been struck with Polio, the savage disease that was then rampant in Yerushalayim, gathering thousands under its wings. It had claimed me as a victim too, paralyzing my entire young body from head to toe. Thus began my admission to

the hospital gates, from which no one knew if I would ever be freed.

Trying helplessly to prevent the spread of the disease, the doctors put me into isolation for a long few months. My Tzaddik of a father sat opposite the window of my room, in the closest proximity he was allowed, spending hours in fervent tefilla and hisbodedus. My mother poured out her heart to Hashem, begging Him to heal me, but so far, there was no change.

Throwing up their hands in despair, the doctors searched for a place to dump me, and transferred me to ALYN – An orthopedic hospital for crippled children. ALYN had been established for cases where there was no hope of recovery, a place for children to lie while

containing their illnesses and keeping infections from spreading. To make matters worse, it was a government owned irreligious institution, heavily under the influence of the nearby Christians. But my parents had no choice in the matter. Since the doctors had deemed me contagious, they were legally free to do with me as they pleased.

I lay there, a pitiful baby amongst all the freier staff and patients, unable to move. This was to be my home, or to be more exact, my prison, until... I was stuck on my cot, my eyes staring blankly around, my ears taking in all sounds, but my body pinned down.

My devoted parents never gave up on me. They paid visit after

visit, sometimes bringing along my siblings, other times alone. Showering me with love and with tefilos, their very presence infused the treifene air with Yiras Shamayim.

After about a year, there was a breakthrough: I started talking, like any other regular toddler. My mother was overjoyed, sure that this was only the first step, and soon I would be fully recovered. But alas, my progress stopped right then and there. It seemed like I was destined to stay a lifeless, paralyzed doll for the rest of my life.

My earliest memories are of lying in that room where, although the sun used to shine in through the window, it somehow always seemed dark and dull. The air was heavy with hopelessness; lethargy so pervaded the atmosphere that any kind of movement seemed out of place.

I drew all my vitality from my family's visits. They would come, bringing along with them love, warmth, liveliness, and just plain life! My whole world lit up when my siblings came, and I would use the only working tool I had at my disposal, my mouth, to connect with them.

As I grew older, my parents, worried for my body and soul, taught me the rudiments of Yiddishkeit: Shema, Brachos, some Halachos, emuna and Yira'as Shamayim. I remember once, there was an electricity cut in the area, and the building was plunged into darkness. There were petrified screams from all sides, none of the children knew what to do with themselves for fear. But I was invigorated with my parents' recent visit, and I calmed myself by reciting the words of Shema that they had taught me, over and over again. Whispering those timeless words brought me an inner peace, and I had no fear. My irreligious friend was desperate to know what it was that kept me calm, but she couldn't relate. I was lucky enough to have been born in such an erliche, Breslover family, with such parents...

This was how I spent the first few years of my life, ignorant of the

world outside, chained to my bed with iron shackles. My parents would turn away at the end of every visit to prevent me from seeing the tears in their eyes while they davened to Hashem from the depths of their hearts that He should send their darling daughter a speedy healing, and I should return home. But my mother didn't always manage to turn away fast enough...

We reached the Aseres Yemei Teshuva of the fifth year since my paralysis. My father used to travel to Meron before Rosh Hashana to join the kibbutz, (since Uman was still locked behind the Iron Curtain) and remain there until after Yom

**MY PARENTS
WOULD TURN
AWAY AT
THE END OF
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PREVENT ME
FROM SEEING THE
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THEY DAVENED
TO HASHEM...**

Kippur, while my mother stayed home with the children. That year, my mother's heart couldn't take it anymore. She couldn't bear the pain of watching me wither away, lying like a stone instead of shooting up like a blooming flower. Drastic action was needed!

Boldly, she went to the director of ALYN, and requested permission to take me home over Shabbos. They looked at her as if she had fallen from the moon, but after seeing that she

wouldn't take no for an answer, they miraculously agreed.

My mother had a plan. She left my big sister Udel in charge of all the younger siblings, and together with my seven year old brother Aharon, we left for Meron. She must have been really desperate and really strong in her belief in R' Shimon, because the trip to Meron in those days wasn't as simple as it is now. First you needed to take the bus to the train station, then catch a train to Haifa, and then wait a few hours for the bus to Tzfas, which stopped off at the bottom of the hill to R' Shimon. To do all this while schlepping a paralyzed five year old child in your arms... But she did it. We bumped along, my mother and Aharon taking turns to carry me, and after an exhausting journey, we arrived at the foot of Mt. Meron.

Aharon ran up to find my father and call him down, while my mother rested on a stone with me still in her arms. Finding it hard to believe what he had heard, my father came flying down the hill, Aharon in tow. Seeing my mother and me there, his mouth dropped open in astonishment. Not wasting any precious time, he picked me up, carrying me all the way up the hill to R' Shimon. Putting together a makeshift bed from a pile of blankets, he lay me down near the tzion of R' Elazar. Like Yitzchak and Rivka, my parents settled in opposite corners of the tzion, my father in the men's section and my mother right next to me, keeping a watchful eye in between her heartfelt tefillos. And they davened...

I lay there silently on my blanket, watching with wide open eyes as my mother poured out her broken heart to Hashem. She had reached the end of her Kochos, and she told Hashem so. From behind the partition, I could hear my beloved father's voice as he talked to his Father, begging Him to send me a Refua Sheleima. And I too, quietly whispered to Hashem, asking Him to please have mercy on me, to make a ness, and my immobile body should become alive again. Hot tears escaped from the corners of my little eyes; I realized that this was a once



in a lifetime opportunity for me, I was actually in the tzion of the holy R' Shimon!

Two days passed in this manner, the tefillos soaring to heaven. On the third day, I was looking around at my already familiar surroundings, and the tzion of R' Elazar suddenly caught my eye. Impulsively, I tried to turn myself in that direction, trying to force my uncooperative body to a sitting position. Unbelievably, it listened to me! I stretched out my little hands, attempting to catch hold of the gate surrounding the tzion, and slowly slowly, my fingers grasped its iron poles. My fists closed tightly around it, and as if in a dream, bit by bit, I raised myself onto my legs, ending up... standing! I was actually standing! Me, the paralyzed Polio victim, was standing on my own two feet!

The ness my mother had dreamed

of had actually happened. Hashem had heard the tefillos, and we had proven all the doctors wrong. It is not nature which rules the world, but Hashem. He alone decides what will be, and after seeing this miracle, even the irreligious Doctor admitted that for the first time, 'he believes that there is a G-d'.

After many operations and treatments, I was finally released from the hospital prison, free to go home. Home! After so many years of living amongst freier children, stuck in ALYN, I almost didn't know what the word meant! My siblings welcomed me with open arms, delighted to get a chance to know their long-lost sister, and I drank in their company thirstily.

Not everything was apples and roses. I had years and years of rigorous therapy ahead of me, laboriously getting to know my

**I STRETCHED OUT
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AROUND IT...**

limbs and forcing them to obey me. My ears are still ringing with the therapist's encouraging words, "You can! One step after the other, don't be scared."

I was determined to learn to walk by myself, and so, despite the torturous pain, I persisted with the agonizing exercises. Bezras Hashem, with the help of our merciful Father, I indeed learnt to walk with the help of crutches, eventually using only one.

As soon as I was walking, my parents enrolled me in the nearby school, Bais Yaakov Hayashan. You would think that having spent many years in the irreligious ALYN, I would be lagging behind not only physically, but mentally and spiritually as well. But Baruch Hashem, being blessed with parents like mine, I didn't have a problem there. My special father took hours from his precious time to teach me all that I needed to know, Limudei Kodesh and even general knowledge such as reading the clock. Within a short time, I was on par with my classmates and could keep up with them. I wasn't going to use my disability as an excuse to act like a rachmanus case – I would do exactly what anyone else could do! Some things did take me longer, but I wasn't looking for an easy way out!

I remember once in math class, the teacher called on me to find a solution to a problem on the blackboard. I marched up with my stick, took the chalk, and blanched. I couldn't lift my

arm higher than my shoulder!

I wasn't going to put myself to shame before the entire class. Telling myself fiercely, 'You can!' I searched for a solution, and Baruch Hashem, Hashem planted an idea in my mind. With my left hand, I supported my right arm, and so slowly pushed it higher and higher, until I managed to reach the blackboard.

I proudly graduated school like any other student at the age of 17, and I was ready for the next stage: Marriage.

B'Chasdei Hashem, I was zoiche to a wonderful shidduch, and I was the proudest, happiest Kallah when I married Moishe Lefkovitz from Monsey, amidst much simcha. We settled down to build our new home, hoping to raise erliche children, Yerei Shamayim, who would bring nachas to Hashem.

The doctors warned me that with every child I would give birth to, my legs would lose more of their strength. My reaction to that was strong and firm. What did I come down on this world for, if not to raise children to serve Hashem and continue the Yiddishe chain?! I wasn't here to serve my body and keep it strong, that was for sure!

Ignoring their advice, I Baruch Hashem gave birth to 13 precious children. After the first few children, I indeed began using a wheel chair, but how can I sufficiently thank Hashem for it? When

'WHAT DID I COME DOWN ON THIS WORLD FOR, IF NOT TO RAISE CHILDREN TO SERVE HASHEM?!'

my mother schlepped me to Meron in my paralyzed state, there were no wheelchairs then. In my younger years, before I had learnt to walk with crutches, every time I needed to move, I was dependent on someone to carry my chair for me. Now, with the press of a button, I can reach places even faster than walking! I might not be able to get to all places – there were plenty of times when I had to miss simchas since they were celebrated in halls on high floors with no elevators, or I had to stay home because the elevator wasn't working. But Baruch Hashem that there are simchas! I am so grateful for what I can do! I am so thankful to Hashem for providing me with special tools so that I can get around on my own, - my electronic wheelchair, my special 'grabber', a stick with which I can lift objects from the floor or from far away, reaching them easily, and so much more! How can I thank Hashem enough?

I once went out with my oldest daughter, and she suddenly noticed a man sitting in a wheelchair. "The poor thing – he can't walk, and he's stuck in a wheelchair!" What about her own mother? My daughter has Baruch Hashem been raised in such a happy home that she had never even realized that her own mother is the exact same 'poor thing' as that man...

Baruch Hashem, I am zoiche to lead a happy and satisfying life, shepping nachas from my children and grandchildren around the world. Emuna in Hashem and in His true Tzaddikim accompanies me at every step in life – a yerusha which my dear mother left me with when she carried me in her arms to R' Shimon. ■



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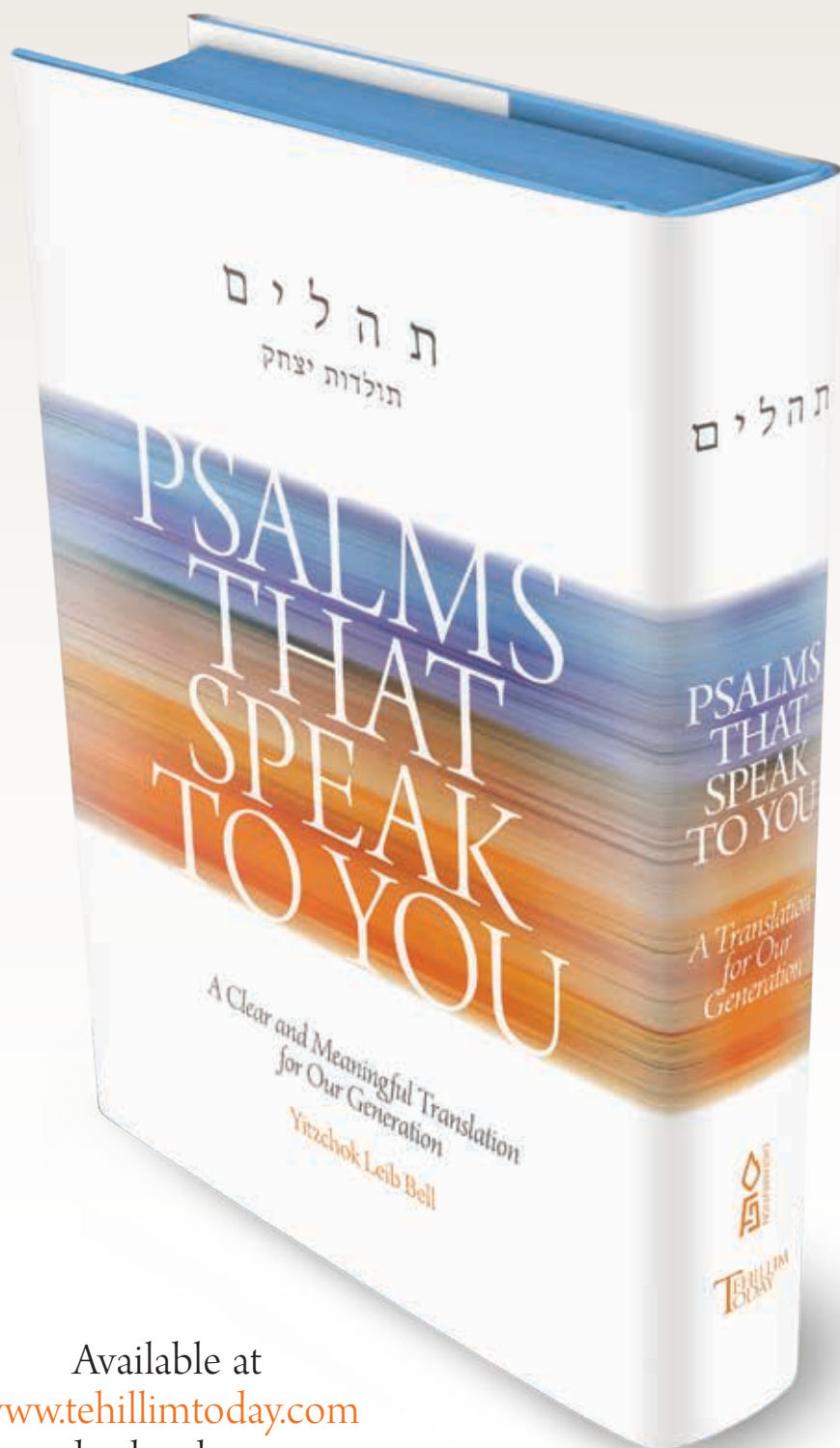
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T. SILBINGER

ADMIRE MY DESIRE?



I quickly closed the two bottom doors of my bookcase and sighed. My photos. They needed to get organized, and I was determined to get the job done. I made a mental note to buy some photo albums on the way home from the supermarket, and develop my pictures at my earliest convenience. There! In another little bit, my albums will be neatly filled, and line my shelf in a soldier like fashion – begging to be seen.

My daughter needed to bring a picture to school. I absentmindedly opened the bottom doors of my bookcase and jolted. Didn't I want to get this organized? The pile was now way bigger and the dust way thicker. My unfulfilled desire was shamefully mocking me.

Mornings in the office were always hectic. I checked the fax, read my post-it note reminders, and began to sort my e-mails. The phone rang. "Good morning – how can I help you?" It was my boss. I assured him all was going well, but he is always so detail oriented – just the way bosses are. "Can you please check the bank? I just want to make sure the deposit from yesterday went through. You know we urgently need the funds available today..." Oops! The deposit. Help! "Oh! I Umm... I wanted to make the deposit right before I left... I got tied up... It slipped my mind – do you...?" "Well, your good intentions aren't gonna help me much today," he interrupted - the annoyance in his voice intensifying my guilty conscience. I

knew he was right, and I knew I will have to pay the price.

Life was just great. Well, today for sure. The house was clean (immaculate!), supper cooked (yum!), and the pile of mending done (all of it!). I even had some time to socialize with my friend on the phone (luxury!) I started to blend the soup, and thought to myself – 'Mincha! Today I really want to daven Mincha! I want to thank Hashem for beings so good to me – today and always. I want to take the time to daven for my family and for Klal Yisroel---' The front door burst open. My kids came home from school and along came their homework. My husband came home, I served supper. The kids got baths, and were tucked into bed. MINCHA! I raced to my calendar. Yup – it was already nacht. I

wasn't so sure it was a great day anymore.

But... I remembered the chashivus of a ratzon. כי העיקר היא הרצון

Unlike a desire to something gashmiyus, a ratzon to anything ruchniyus is an entire entity in and of itself, and remains unaffected whether the actual

deed was accomplished or not.

I know my ratzon now ascends to shamayim. Malachim hover over it and carry it all the way to the Kisei Hakavod. Hashem lovingly caresses my ratzon. It is so very precious to Him, and will be cherished for eternity. ■

HASHEM LOVINGLY
CARESSES MY RATZON. IT
IS SO VERY PRECIOUS
TO HIM...



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By A. Krieger

Where There's a Will, There's a Way

"I've had enough! How many times a day can I shine my windows, polish my furniture and dust my ornaments? It's a never-ending job!"

"Yanky!!! Don't dare touch that door, I've just washed it!"

"Sruli – Stand straight, don't slouch! Tuck your shirt in and wash your face. Why can't you be more careful about your looks?"

"Toby, take some money and go buy new cufflinks for all the boys' shirts. Make sure it's the same shade of orange and grey as their ties."

"Okay, everybody go outside to play – I need to clean up here. Get out quickly, and remember to stay neat and clean – don't play with sand, don't climb, don't touch anything, don't shout or laugh too loud – just behave properly."

Charnie plops onto the couch with no energy to move. It's such a pressure to impress everyone all the time! Why can't my family be more cooperative? Why do I have to give speeches all day about appropriate behavior

and cleanliness?

'I wonder,' she muses, 'do people admire me at least for my hard work? Are they impressed by my house, looks, and children? How can I ever know? Who would ever tell me the truth? The only time people are open about their admiration is after 120 and then the person can't even enjoy the compliments!'

"I have an amazing crazy idea. I'm going to pretend that I've died. Like that, I'll get to hear all the compliments and praise I so much need to hear in order to have strength to continue. Of course, I'll have to let my family in on the secret, but it's worth it for them – they'll get to hear so much praise about their mother!"

* * *

"Hi, Boidman's Funeral Association, Dan speaking, how can I help you?"

"Well, I'd like to order a casket please."

"Sure, when's the funeral?"

"I haven't decided yet, probably next week."

"Can you repeat that please?"

It could be the week after, I'm not sure. Anyway, make sure it's comfortable, not too tight, not too hard."

"What're you talking about? They're all made the same way – no padding or anything."

"So then this will be an exception. Think of it as adding some spice to your job. Please pad the bottom and top, and make quite a few air holes on the top and sides."

"Air holes?! Now I've heard it all! Why would anyone need air holes in a casket?"

"Of course air holes – you don't want me to die of suffocation!"

* * *

Charnie is comfortably ensconced in her padded casket, her skin tingling in the anticipation of finally getting a chance to hear what she so craves.

The eulogies begin...

"Oh Charnie, we're all going to miss you greatly! You left us so young, what'll your children do?"

"Once a week, Charnie used to say Tehilim, and when anyone was ill, she was so concerned. She also usually gave tzedaka when asked to. She was married for quite a few years, so she was probably a good wife..."

Charnie is getting rather annoyed in the stifling casket. 'What's going on? Why is no one mentioning my wonderful qualities – is this what I worked so hard for?!

She bursts out of the casket in her impatience. Everyone at the funeral screams, fleeing for their lives from this demon who has come to haunt them. Charnie marches home and has a good think about what is really important, and what her 'will' - her Ratzon should be. ■

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HOW DO I APPLY?

If you happen to live nearby, join the existing group.
If you happen to not, it's time YOU start your own
group for your Breslov community.
If your internal bossy elephant starts laughing at
the idea, go along and open a private class, just for
yourself, and dance him down – We've especially
added motions to the lyrics.

THEME SONG

Tune: Mitzva Gedola..

Motions:

Low	We're all here today	Right hand, left hand
	To jump away	Four jumps
	To dance away our troubles	Big right kick, big left kick (hand on hips)
	In the Rebbe's way.	Hands up, hands down.
Low	We'll giggle and we'll roll	Every pair pulls and bashes
	And connect with our soul	Hands up, leg up
	It couldn't be cuter	Click fingers to right and left
	With Milta D'shtooter	Twiddle fingers and...
High	So go along and roll down those blinds	Hands on hips, twirl and roll blinds,
	And let loose that troubled stressed out mind	Support heart and roll
	Get ready to roll	Brush hands while hopping,
	And dance to the beat	Continue hopping twice
High	And lift off those smelly feet.	Right hand touch left leg, then change (X 4)
	You'll be surprised at what you find	Turn and choo-choo train, jogging,
	Since real rays of pure sunshine	Stick out right arm, then left and slowly raise as semi-circle
	Are waiting for permission	Holding hands,
High	To come to fruition	Four slow steps backwards
	And brighten up our Breslov lives.	Raising hands, walking four steps to center circle. ■

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Chapter Four

The Rebbe's Journey to Eretz Yisrael

The story until now:

His heart set on reaching Eretz Yisrael, the Rebbe departs on his perilous journey. He sets sail from Istanbul and tackles a massive storm. They forge on, despite being left with no drinking water, and finally reach the shores of Eretz Yisrael. After being refused entry in Acco, R' Nachman enters the Holy Land in Haifa. He is overflowing with joy, and they spend an uplifting Rosh Hashana in Haifa. Following this, the Rebbe's mood changes, and he becomes very troubled. Meanwhile, his life is threatened by an Arab youth, who challenges the Rebbe to a duel. R' Nachman flees, and the Arab comes looking for him...

The Arab repeats his question. "Where is that man?"

Seeing the tangible fear on the people's faces, his expression changes, and his face softens. "Never fear, you should know that I love him very much. I won't harm as much as his little finger, he has no need to worry about me at all. I shall even give him donkeys and my own horse to travel with the caravan to Teveria."

His words are relayed to the Rebbe, who emerges from his hiding place. Returning to his previous lodgings, the Rebbe settles in, and a short while later, the Arab youth comes to visit... Indeed, it is as he said. The

Arab remains completely silent, not emitting a single word. All he does is smile patiently, showing great love towards the Rebbe.

The Rebbe is very relieved when he finally leaves. He tells the people, "I suffered much more from that Arab's love than from his hatred and rage. I was in a great danger – this Arab was the מ"ס himself! Baruch Hashem we were saved from him in peace, with the kindness of Hashem."

Despite the delegation from Teveria who have come to invite the Rebbe for Sukkos, R' Nachman stays in Haifa for the Yom Tov. On Chol Hamoed, they all go to the Me'arah of Eliyahu Hanavi, and the Rebbe joins

them. Once there, they break out in a joyous dance, singing, playing music, and being very happy. But the Rebbe sits apart from them, seemingly lost in his thoughts. 'This is the place where Eliyahu Hanavi stood and had hisbodedus...!' The Rebbe pictures for himself Eliyahu Hanavi talking to Hashem. ¹

From time to time, searching glances from the circle of dancers reach the Rebbe's face, but they are disappointed to see that he isn't joining in to the simcha at all. If anything, he seems to very subdued and broken hearted.

R' Zev is extremely worried about all this. He presses R' Yitzchak, "What's all this about? Why is he so sad since Rosh Hashana already? Only Hashem knows if it's a good thing." But R' Yitzchak is as clueless as the rest of them.

The mystery deepens, when the Rebbe's depression stretches on. Simchas Torah arrives, the day of great joy, when all of Klal Yisrael rejoice with the Torah. Everyone is excitedly looking forward to the lively hakafos. The Chassidim dance up and down as if on springs, spinning in circles around the heilige sefer Torah. Once again, the Rebbe is sitting in a corner of the Shul with his head bent down, refusing to dance for even one hakafa.

But those who know the Rebbe realize already: This is the Rebbe's way. Every time before achieving what he wanted, he was

¹ Later on, he shared this experience with his close talmid R' Nosson. Upon hearing this, R' Nosson became overwhelmed with emotion, thinking, 'Eliyahu Hanavi was also a human being, yet he reached what he did simply through taking to Hashem!' He immediately rushed into the Ezras Nashim, and started pouring his heart out to his Father in Heaven. The townspeople were searching for him to invite him to an engagement that was taking place, but R' Nosson was nowhere to be found. They finally realized that he must be in the midst of Hisbodedus, and went round the town, calling 'R' Nosson!'



**Me'aras Eliyahu: Above: Inside view
Below: Outside View.**

very broken hearted. Now too, he must be up to something very big.

Simchas Torah passes in a swirl of simcha, and soon Sukkos is over. Hammers are banging, nails are falling, and the sukkas are no more. R' Nachman turns to R' Yitzchak. "Baruch Hashem, I achieved what I had wanted to in the best way possible. Although I had planned to stay here for a while due to my great love for Eretz Yisrael, now I want to travel home, so please go and rent a ship to Istanbul."

A glimmer of disappointment crosses R'

Yitzchak's face. Pouting, he answers, "But I want to go Teveria and see all the places in Eretz Yisrael. We're finally here, after such a long journey, I don't want to go back home so fast!"

"Since you wish to be in Teveria, go and hire donkeys to there," R' Nachman answers him. The Rebbe's way is never to insist on anything. This was clear especially when someone asked him advice. He would only give suggestions, but he would never insist that someone do a certain thing. He wouldn't even push his attendant to do specifically what he needed to do.

R' Yitzchak hires donkeys for the second time, the memory of the first ill-fated trip flashing through his mind. He is filled with appreciation again, and whispers to Hashem, "Thank you that the Rebbe prevented me from traveling last time, when I would have fallen sick on the way."

The donkeys hired, R' Yitzchak returns to their

lodgings, two donkeys in tow. They pack their belongings, and set out on the trip. Bumping along the stony dirt paths and trails between hills and mountains, they reach Teveria towards evening.

The news spreads like wildfire: The heilige Rebbe is arriving to Teveria!

All the townspeople go out dressed in the Shabbos finery, overflowing with joy at the great z'chus which has fallen into their hands: greeting the tzaddik! R' Nachman stays in the house of his cousin, the grandchild of R' Nachman of Horedenka, and all night long, people come in; to welcome him, to see his shining face, to honor him... R' Nachman doesn't get a chance to sleep all night long.

The crowd decides that it is not befitting the honor of the Rebbe for him to reside in such a small regular house – the heilige Rebbe needs a spacious, airy house so he should have peace of mind. They arrange better lodgings for him, in the house of the famous Rav and Chassid, R'



Tzvi Harker, and the Rebbe moves over.

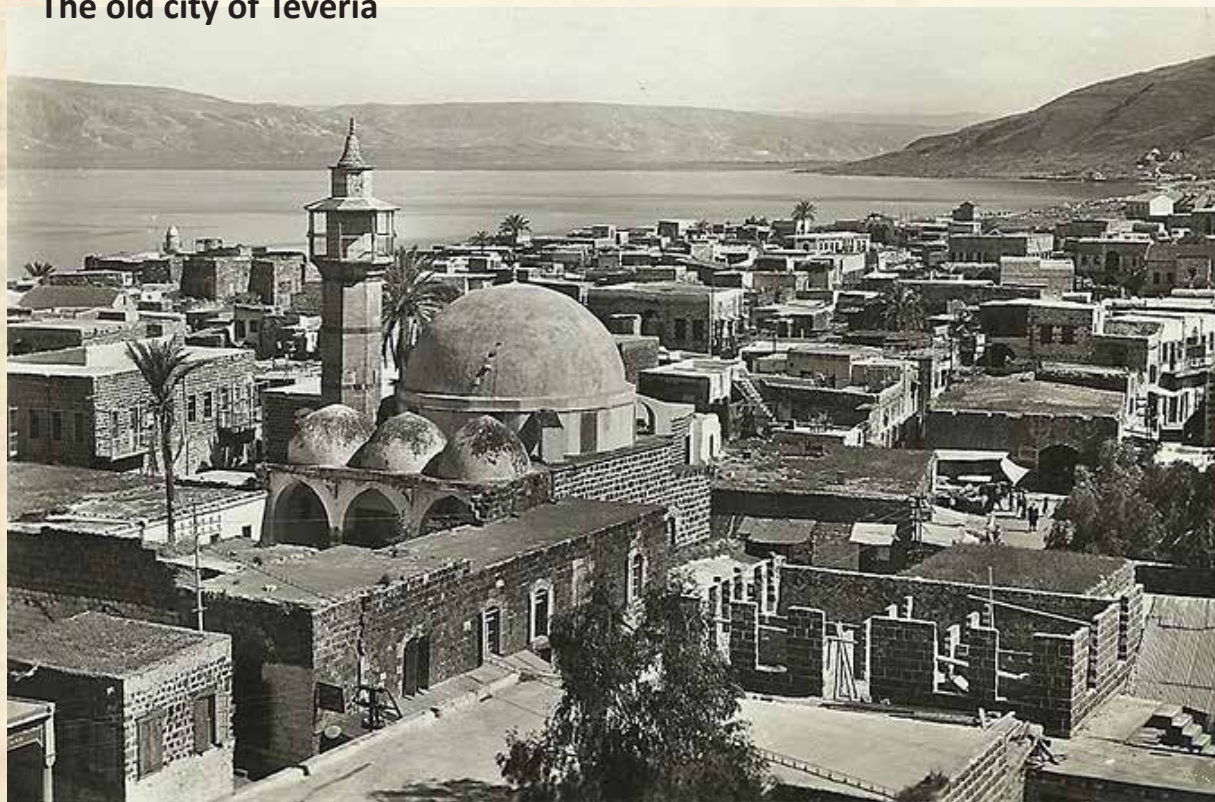
The heilige Rav R' Avraham Kalisker, (whom the two Yidden in Istanbul had ironically been sure that the Rebbe wanted to harm) sends a message to the Rebbe, excusing himself for not coming to pay his dues, explaining that he has just been treated for a medical condition today.

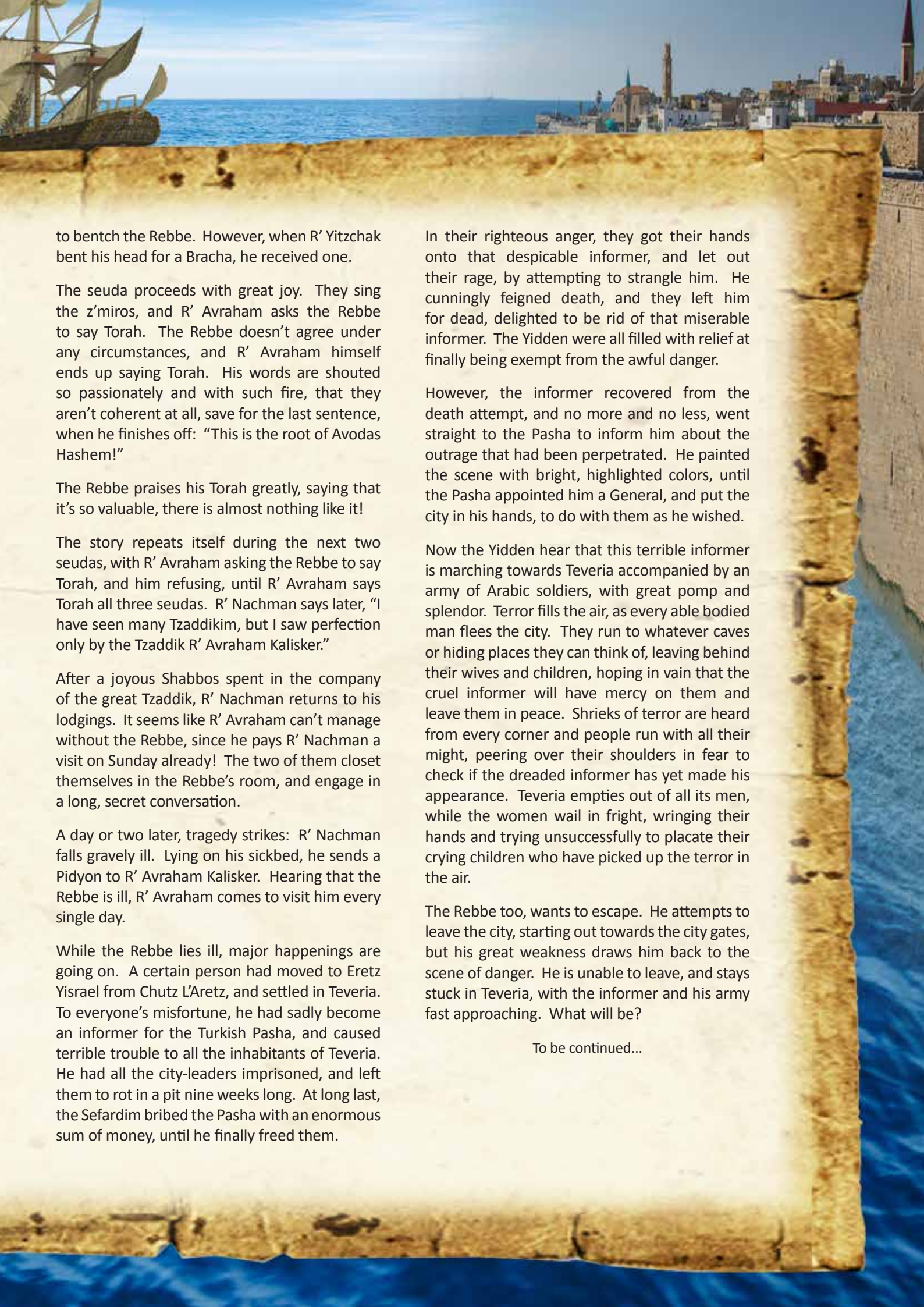
'I had planned to come visit you anyway!' the Rebbe responds to his message. Immediately, he picks up and makes his way to the Tzaddik's home. R' Avraham receives him with great honor and very much love and affection. His fondness and love towards the heilige Rebbe is unimaginably great, it is something impossible to describe. R' Avraham pleads with the Rebbe to grace his home with his presence, but R' Nachman answers that it's impossible for him to move in permanently. He does consent to spend a Shabbos in his home.

The very next day, R' Nachman receives an invitation from R' Avraham, inviting him to spend the first Shabbos, Parashas Noach, with him. The Rebbe accepts the offer, and R' Avraham eagerly prepares for a special, uplifting Shabbos.

The rest of the week passes quickly, and soon enough, it is time to light the candles for Shabbos. The Tzaddikim return home from Shul accompanied by numerous malachim, and ready themselves for the Seuda. R' Nachman inclines his head, bending low and waiting for a Bracha from R' Avraham. Jumping back four paces in fright, R' Avraham trembles violently at the thought of it, unintelligible words pouring from his mouth in excitement. No one can understand what he is saying in his great passion, but the final few words are unmistakable. "How are we not ashamed before the descendant of the Baal Shem Tov Z"l?!" He absolutely refused

The old city of Teveria





to bentch the Rebbe. However, when R' Yitzchak bent his head for a Bracha, he received one.

The seuda proceeds with great joy. They sing the z'miros, and R' Avraham asks the Rebbe to say Torah. The Rebbe doesn't agree under any circumstances, and R' Avraham himself ends up saying Torah. His words are shouted so passionately and with such fire, that they aren't coherent at all, save for the last sentence, when he finishes off: "This is the root of Avodas Hashem!"

The Rebbe praises his Torah greatly, saying that it's so valuable, there is almost nothing like it!

The story repeats itself during the next two seudas, with R' Avraham asking the Rebbe to say Torah, and him refusing, until R' Avraham says Torah all three seudas. R' Nachman says later, "I have seen many Tzaddikim, but I saw perfection only by the Tzaddik R' Avraham Kalisker."

After a joyous Shabbos spent in the company of the great Tzaddik, R' Nachman returns to his lodgings. It seems like R' Avraham can't manage without the Rebbe, since he pays R' Nachman a visit on Sunday already! The two of them closet themselves in the Rebbe's room, and engage in a long, secret conversation.

A day or two later, tragedy strikes: R' Nachman falls gravely ill. Lying on his sickbed, he sends a Pidyon to R' Avraham Kalisker. Hearing that the Rebbe is ill, R' Avraham comes to visit him every single day.

While the Rebbe lies ill, major happenings are going on. A certain person had moved to Eretz Yisrael from Chutz L'Aretz, and settled in Teveria. To everyone's misfortune, he had sadly become an informer for the Turkish Pasha, and caused terrible trouble to all the inhabitants of Teveria. He had all the city-leaders imprisoned, and left them to rot in a pit nine weeks long. At long last, the Sefardim bribed the Pasha with an enormous sum of money, until he finally freed them.

In their righteous anger, they got their hands onto that despicable informer, and let out their rage, by attempting to strangle him. He cunningly feigned death, and they left him for dead, delighted to be rid of that miserable informer. The Yidden were all filled with relief at finally being exempt from the awful danger.

However, the informer recovered from the death attempt, and no more and no less, went straight to the Pasha to inform him about the outrage that had been perpetrated. He painted the scene with bright, highlighted colors, until the Pasha appointed him a General, and put the city in his hands, to do with them as he wished.

Now the Yidden hear that this terrible informer is marching towards Teveria accompanied by an army of Arabic soldiers, with great pomp and splendor. Terror fills the air, as every able bodied man flees the city. They run to whatever caves or hiding places they can think of, leaving behind their wives and children, hoping in vain that the cruel informer will have mercy on them and leave them in peace. Shrieks of terror are heard from every corner and people run with all their might, peering over their shoulders in fear to check if the dreaded informer has yet made his appearance. Teveria empties out of all its men, while the women wail in fright, wringing their hands and trying unsuccessfully to placate their crying children who have picked up the terror in the air.

The Rebbe too, wants to escape. He attempts to leave the city, starting out towards the city gates, but his great weakness draws him back to the scene of danger. He is unable to leave, and stays stuck in Teveria, with the informer and his army fast approaching. What will be?

To be continued...

Yummy Shavuos Recipes

By: T. Friedman



Heavenly Cheesecake

This cheesecake always gets rave reviews – and constant recipe requests! No one can believe how simple it is to make something so delicious – “With cottage cheese?? Can’t be!” Yet it really is. You just need to try it out to experience the mouthwatering taste and texture. Have it with a coffee and you’ll give yourself a truly delectable delight.

Ingredients:

- 8 oz. sour cream
- 16 oz. cottage cheese
- 3 eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla sugar
- 3 Tbsp. cornstarch, dissolved in bit of boiling water
- Two 9 inch pie crusts

Blend ingredients well with hand-blender until smooth. Fill pie crusts and smooth over. Bake at 180 for approximately 30 minutes.

Garnish with grated chocolate, or as desired.

Cheese Blintzes

I make these for so many different occasions, and they are so well received every time – As an after school Rosh Chodesh treat for the kids, a special snack before bedtime, for someone making a simcha to serve to their guests, for a new mother... and of course, Shavuot wouldn't be the same without them! Definitely worth the calories.

Blintzes:

- 8 eggs
- 12 Tbsp. sugar
- ½ cup oil
- Pinch salt
- 2 cups flour
- 2 cups water/milk

Beat eggs, mix with sugar, oil and salt. Add flour and milk alternately while mixing constantly, until smooth. (Tip: A hand-blender helps!)

Heat oil in pan, cover with a thin layer of batter (not too thin) and fry on both sides.

Filling:

- 1 lb. farmer cheese
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla sugar
- 2 eggs

Mix well. Spread 1 Tbsp. on each blintz, roll up or fold, and enjoy.



Mango Salad

This salad pairs really well with a milky menu, or as a healthy Yom Tov snack – it is light and refreshing, almost a meal of its own! It can often serve as dessert after a heavy meaty meal too, since we can't seem to fit anything else in afterwards!

Ingredients:

- 1 bag of lettuce
- 1 mango – cubed
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup slivered almonds – roasted in oven

Dressing:

- 3 Tbsp. vinegar
- 3 Tbsp. oil
- 2 Tbsp. sugar

Mix well and pour over salad just before serving.

Note – don't skip the roasted almonds; they add so much flavor and they make the entire house smell of Yom Tov!



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KIDS RAY'S



A TALE OF A THIEF

Part One

Kalman used to sit in the Beis Medrash all day long, learning the heilige Torah. He was extremely poor, but that fact couldn't keep him away from the Beis Medrash – He stayed glued there from early morning until late at night. One Thursday, a famous astrologer arrived in the small town. All the people lined up excitedly before him, waiting to hear what he saw in the stars regarding them. Obviously, Kalman stayed in Shul learning. Kalman's wife came to pay a visit to her husband, and found him sitting solitarily in the quiet Beis Medrash, chanting the Gemara softly to himself.

"Kalman!" she shrieked loudly. "Why are you sitting here?"

Kalman lifted his pure eyes from the Gemara in surprise, wondering what was going on. "What's the problem?" He asked innocently.

His wife heaved a sigh of exasperation. "You lazy

and unlucky poor man, why don't you go to the astrologer? Everyone has gone, look around you and you'll see for yourself that the Shul is empty!"

"I want to learn Torah, what do I have to do with a star gazer? Hashem provides for us!" Kalman didn't want to hear of it.

"Oh, c'mon. Enough is enough. You've learnt plenty for today, now it's time to get up. Let's go! I'm waiting to hear from you what the astrologer told you." She swept out in a huff, sticking her chin out determinedly to Kalman and squaring her shoulders as if in combat.

Kalman felt that he had no choice. Sadly, he closed his Gemara and gently stroked its worn cover. Kissing the mezuzah, he left the Beis Medrash and walked towards the center of town, following his ears for directions to the star gazer.

Standing on a platform in the town square, stood a short, rotund man with an interestingly shaped hat. His mouth moved faster than a flying cheetah, and an ever-present beaming smile was perched atop his double chin.

Wrinkling his nose in distaste, Kalman fortified himself with patience, thinking longingly about the Gemara waiting for him in Shul, and positioned himself at the end of the long line. What one doesn't do for their wife!

The sun dipped



lower in the sky, and Kalman bit his lip worriedly. The time for Mincha was fast approaching! Finally, he arrived to the front of the line. The astrologer raised his head importantly, and let his gaze settle over the person standing before him. Kalman suddenly felt very uneasy.

"Your fortune is," proclaimed the astrologer, "to be a thief."

"Excuse me!" Kalman doubled over in shock. "Thank you very much," he muttered, and beat a hasty retreat. 'What a phony,' he thought to himself on his way back to Shul.

Kalman was deep in his Gemara with his thumb up in the air, after having caught the last minyan for Mincha, when he was treated to his second visit for the day.

"Okay Kalman, so what did the astrologer have to say?" His wife was back in position, hands on her hips.

"He told me 'Beggar, you'll remain a beggar.'" Kalman brushed his wife away with a wave of his hand and resumed his studies. His nose stayed stuck inside the Sefer until late at night, when his growling stomach let him know quite clearly that it was supertime.

Kalman gave a quick knock on the door, and pushed it open. His supper was waiting for him at the table. Kalman washed his hands, and dipped the slice of coarse black bread into a pinch of salt. He made a fervent Bracha, and started eating his supper, which consisted of a plain slice of bread. His wife joined him at the table, and inquired about his day. While he ate, he suddenly broke out in a small smile.

"What's this, why are you smiling?" his wife asked suspiciously. "You surely know something and you don't want to tell me."

"No, no, not

at all! Nothing of the sort! I don't know anything!" Kalman protested, and she let him off the hook, although her steel gaze never moved from his face. She was rewarded for her efforts a few minutes later, when Kalman's lips parted into a smile again.

"Now you have to tell me. I'm not taking no for an answer. What do you know? What did the astrologer tell you?" She pressed her lips together firmly, a purposeful expression on her face.

"Absolutely nothing, I tell you. He didn't tell me anything!" Kalman exclaimed, and continued eating his bread. But after a short while, he burst into peals of uncontrollable laughter.

His wife had had it. "Okay Kalman, out with it."

Kalman spilt the beans. "The star gazer told me..." he chuckled again, and his wife leaned forward, all ears. "Yes?" she prompted.

"He told me, that my fortune is to be a thief." The cat was finally let out of the bag.

His wife's eyes opened wide in shock; for once she was taken aback. "Kalman, I don't want you to be a thief," she said simply. "I prefer that we should be poor, and have whatever Hashem provides, without you stealing."

Kalman let out a sigh of relief. "Me too! We have a Torah, and we listen to what it instructs us. The Torah says, 'Do not steal', and that's the end of the story!" He finished the last piece of bread, wiped his beard from any fallen crumbs, washed his hands and mouth, and started bentching. When he reached the words, 'Parnasseinu, v'chalkeleinu,' he shot a meaningful glance at his wife, who got the message loud and clear.

She went back to the kitchen, to prepare for Shabbos. She didn't have much to cook, not having any fish or chicken, but she could still clean the counters and wipe the walls, so that it should shine from cleanliness.

Friday passed in a

whirl of activity, and soon the mother was tzingding licht. She stood with her hands covering her eyes, her five daughters surrounding her quietly, while she davened to Hashem. Then she opened her eyes, and kissed them all 'Git Shabbos'. The girls played quietly while they waited for their father to come from Shul, and their mother davened in a corner of the room, singing Lechah Dodi softly.

Kalman entered the calm scene, beaming in joy to see everyone so happy. The girls' stomachs were grumbling already, and they started pestering him to make Kiddush already, so he quickly sang Shalom Aleichem heartily, and stood at the head of the rickety table, with the earthenware Kiddush cup in his hands. They couldn't afford grape-juice, so he would make Kiddush on the Challah. They washed their hands, and bit in to the challah. It was not quite like the coarse bread of the week, although it was still black, stale leftovers from the bakery.

Then the fighting began.

"You're piece was bigger than mine!"

"Not true, yours was much bigger! It's just that mine was an end piece, and that's much staler!"

"You had six bites, and I only had five!"

"But you split your challah into much bigger pieces!"

Two crumbs stayed innocently in the center of the table, until they were noticed by the youngest

daughter, Chani. She immediately reached out to grab them, but was stopped by the oldest.

"It's my turn this week to have the crumbs! You had it last time! Anyway, I have a bigger stomach than you, so I'm hungrier than you!"

"But I'm still so hungry!" wailed Chani. Her mother's heart melted and she silently passed over her piece of Challah. Chani gobbled it up quickly, and turned to her mother, "Are we going to have anything else to eat this Seuda?"

Her mother looked away, unable to answer. After the Sedua, when their daughters were sleeping already, and only Kalman was in the room, she lifted her voice and cried out, "Ribbono Shel Olam, I can't bear this poverty anymore! It's too hard for me! I even prefer that Kalman should be a thief, so that we shouldn't suffer like this anymore!"

After Havdala on Motzei Shabbos, she started working on Kalman, convincing him to go steal. Whether he wanted to or not, he went. He left the house at midnight, treading silently and quickly towards the store of the wealthiest man in town. The guards were all sleeping; no one asked him any questions. He tried the door, and was elated to see that it was open! Indeed, his luck was to be a thief! He confidently walked into the store, heading straight for the cashbox. Picking out four-five silver coins –



the

minimum
he needed to
support his family,
he turned and fled. He
couldn't believe he had
really stolen.



jump
into,
giggling
in delight

when they fell
breathlessly onto
each other. The mother
rubbed her hands vigorously
from the cold, grateful that her
children were keeping warm with

His wife was waiting up for him at home. She looked at him questioningly, and he handed her the coins. She whooped in delight, thinking of all the food and clothes she could buy for the family with it, but Kalman stopped her with a warning glance. "See, I did what you wanted and I got you this money. But make sure not to waste it, and use it wisely, because I refuse to steal ever again."

"Of course, of course," she soothed him. "I too, don't want you to steal ever again. It's just that now you had to, because of the unbearable poverty. It's not even considered stealing, it's just like taking a small tzedaka donation from the owner of the store, and really, he should have given it us himself," she justified the deed.

The money stretched for quite a while, and Kalman's wife beamed to see her children dressed in neatly patched clothes, no elbows visible through the holes. Their cheeks began filling out from the meals they were served; why, they could even afford potatoes and butter for supper on a regular weeknight! The Shabbos Seudas too, passed with no fighting over the Challah, although we won't mention the squabbling over who got to lick the pot of the watery chicken soup.

The summer turned in to fall, and
the cold set in. The children ran
around outside kicking the
leaves and seeing who
could collect the
largest pile to

their antics. Inside the home, the temperature was identical to the outside, although the wind didn't blow as strongly through the cracks in the roof. One Sunday, when Kalman arrived home after a peaceful day spent in the Beis Medrash, his wife was waiting for him at the table with her hands on her hips. As soon as Kalman took his first bite of bread, she attacked. "You luckless beggar! You were in the store already, why didn't you take another two coins so that I should be able to buy a coat?!"

Kalman heaved a long suffering sigh, and whether he wanted to or not, he went. When the clock struck midnight, he left the house again, walking towards the store. But this time, he was in for a surprise. He walked in to the store, finding the door open again, and was shocked to see a man standing there! His heart racing in fear, he started murmuring Shema Yisrael. His life could be ended right here with one bullet, or in the best case scenario, he would end up in jail. Would his wife be happier this way? Why had he listened to her? She could manage without a coat, like she had until now! Would she be able to manage without a husband at all? He shivered in fear, thinking of his poor children while in the back of his mind, he tried to come up with some kind of reason to explain what he was doing here in the middle of the night.

"Who are you?" the man asked him roughly.

To be continued...

Kids Talk

How real is
Breslov to
you?

Rays of Ratzon interviewed a kid
about how real Breslov is to him.

Name: Hershy T.

Age: 13

City: Beis Shemesh

Cheder: Talmud Torah Tuv
Yerushalayim

Hi Hershy!

Have you ever been to Uman?

When I was six years old, my father took me there. All kids want to travel to Uman for many different reasons – because it's interesting to see new places around the world, it's an exciting experience to fly on a plane, and then you have lots to describe to all your friends who are envious, (especially those who aren't Breslov) but this is only when you're a little kid. When you already understand why you travel to Uman and what the Rebbe promised for all those who come to him, you want much more!

My father wanted to take me again before my Bar Mitzvah, but I wanted to go especially for the Rosh Hashana before my Bar Mitzvah. The tickets are at least triple the price then, and it didn't look like my father was about to take me then.

I davened a lot that I should get there for Rosh Hashana, and I said תפילה ע"י of Likutei Tefillos every single day. I collected all my savings, and I started walking to Cheder every day – A half hour's walk in the boiling heat! And I put the money that I saved from the bus fares towards a ticket to Uman for Rosh Hashana! I also gave up on the hall my parents wanted to book for my Bar Mitzvah, and we celebrated it in a Shul instead. Hashem saw that I had done the most I could, and He sent me donations from kind Breslovers, and Baruch Hashem I was in Uman for Rosh Hashana!

Wow!


Did you say Tikkun Haklali there?

That was the reason I went to Uman! And I was indeed zoiche say it every day that I was there, especially the Tikkun Haklali Ha'olami – the worldwide one on Erev Rosh Hashana.

Are you proud of being Breslov?

I am proud to be a chassid of the Rebbe, to behave like the Rebbe wants us to, in every place and under every circumstance.

When I come into class, I hum a Breslover soulful song under my breath so that everyone should know that a Breslover has arrived!



“I am proud to be a
chassid of the Rebbe, to
behave like the Rebbe
wants us to, in every
place and under every
circumstance.”

Can you share something that the Rebbe says which is especially meaningful to you?

Tefila and Hisbodedus! Like the Rebbe said, ‘my whole thing is Tefila’.

Once in Shul, I arrived early to the Chevra, so I took out a Likutei Tefilos to use while I waited. A man came over to me, “Ah! Ashrecha that you are zoiche!” He also repeated to me what he had heard from my zeidy, that if he would be taken far away, and only be allowed to take along one sefer, he would choose Likutei Tefilos, since that includes everything!

And even when I daven a lot and I see that I don’t get what I davened for, I find chizuk with what the Rebbe said that no Tefila ever goes to waste. Like I learnt with my father in Hishtapchus Hanefesh that there are tefilos that are answered after a day, there are tefilos that take three days to be answered, some take three weeks, and some are only answered after forty days... So even though I don’t know how many days it’ll take until I get an answer, I believe that it’ll eventually be answered.

That’s so inspiring!

Can you tell us how you make yourself happy?

How can we not be happy when we have such a Rebbe! We don’t have what to worry about, because he said he’s going before us. Baruch Hashem, even if someone isn’t in a good mood, he has a Breslover friend who can cheer him up, because wherever you go nowadays, you find Breslovers. Besides, we all have to be happy that we were zoiche to be in Uman for Rosh Hashana. So everyone be happy!

Hershy, you’ve convinced us! Thank you!

Would you like to be interviewed in the
following magazine?

Send your name, age and contact details to

raysof148@gmail.com

or leave a message on 929-320-0515



Baking with Udi

A cheesecake so delicious

Just so simple 1 - 2 - 3

Any child will delight

*With preparing this -
you'll see...*



Ingredients:

15 biscuits

½ tsp. coffee

½ cup wine

1 chocolate pudding

250 gr. creme cheese

1 vanilla pudding

1 tsp. vanilla essence

1 foil loaf tin

½ cup sugar



1 - Mix cheese with sugar, vanilla essence and coffee in a bowl.

2 - Dip 5 biscuits into wine and place on the bottom of the foil tin. Pour half of the cheese mixture over the biscuits and spread evenly.

3 - Cover with another layer of dipped biscuits and then spread the rest of the cheese mixture. Spread evenly, and add the last layer of biscuits

4 - Spread the chocolate badi onto the top of the cheesecake

5 - Using a syringe/piping bag, draw lines with the vanilla badi along the length of the cheesecake

6 - With a toothpick, go back and forth across the width of the cheesecake, to create a beautiful design!

7 - Allow to set in refrigerator for a few hours/overnight, and enjoy!




Craft it

By Chaya Hendy
and Suri

Pekelach so original and cute
With which your kinderlach to surprise
Or let them prepare on their own
And decorate with a mouth and eyes...
(You can make them big or small
– Any size)




What you need:



Small snack bags
like Bissli or Bamba


2 freeze-pops or
individually wrapped
wafers



A4 Paper (white or
colored)

Markers, stickers,
tape...


How to create these characters:



1 Cut a piece of A4 paper
into two lengthwise.

2 Roll the paper over a
wafer or freeze-pop from
each side, and stick with
tape.

3 Decorate the inside of
the paper as desired.



4 Stick onto the snack bag
and enjoy giving out Sefer
Torah Pekelach!

*Note: Can be used as Chalake
Pekelach – add a photo of your
yingele holding a Sefer Torah*



A Freilichen Yom Tov!

The STEEL Soldier

One of the harshest decrees that the Yidden were treated to around two hundred years ago, was the decree of the 'Cantonists'. Under the instructions of the evil Czar Nikolai, hundreds of Yiddishe children were cruelly grabbed away from their parents and from their erliche Yiddishe upbringing, to be taken to military training camps, until they were ready to be faithful soldiers in the Russian army. These poor children underwent terrible treatment; they were forced to live squashed together with low class, filthy goyim. Their supervisors made them do melachos on the heilige Shabbos and gave them only treifa food to eat.

This awful 'Cantonists Decree' lasted 25 long years, and those who were

caught in this terrible period were cut off from any connection to Torah and mitzvos. Most of them didn't even remember that they were Yidden, after going through so many years in the Russian army. There were times when the parents of the children who were grabbed away from them, didn't believe that this grown-up goy who was knocking on their doors was really their son who had been taken from them with peyos and a kappel. Out of pain, they cried out, 'Better that we should have died than to see our son like this!'

But there were also chances of Hashgacha, when their sons managed to stay with their Yiddishekeit, and everyone saw that Hashem doesn't leave Am Yisrael.



It was the worst day in the lives of Family Reichman. Wild soldiers banged on their door and kicked it open, grabbing their son Yitzchak Dovid into their hands. The family's cries, shouts and begging for mercy reached deaf ears. Pure Yitzchak Dovid was taken away with the soldiers to some unknown destination, and everyone knew well what it meant.

Yitzchak Dovid found himself in a military training camp together with many other children who had been grabbed away from their parents. At first, the youngsters tried to disobey their supervisors, ignoring their instructions to desecrate Shabbos or eat pork, but after a while, their spirits were broken by the brutal Russians, who put all their energy into making the small boys forget their Yiddishkeit.

But the young Yitzchak Dovid Reichman proved to be a hard nut to crack. He knew that he was a Yid, and he never forgot it. He had secretly taken along his tefilin, and every single day, he would take them out of their hiding place, deep beneath his mattress, and put them on when no one was looking. He would quickly say 'Shema Yisrael' and then put them back in their hiding place.

Many long years passed, and Yitzchak Dovid, no longer a young boy, used to continue his daily custom, putting on his heilige tefilin every day, although he knew nothing else about Yiddishkeit. He was already a strong, strapping soldier, well-built and robust. He served in the Russian army like any other devoted soldier, besides for his little secret when he stole away from everyone else and donned his precious tefilin.

One day, when Yitzchak Dovid was already forty years old, one of his supervisors entered the room suddenly, when Yitzchak Dovid was in the middle of saying Shema, wrapped in his tefilin. Shocked out of his wits to see that Yitzchak Dovid had still remained a Yid after all, he quickly recovered, and he started burning with anger. His face turned red, with his veins bulging out of his neck. He marched over to Yitzchak Dovid and grabbed the tefilin Yitzchak off his head.

Yitzchak Dovid, a strong soldier, could not control himself. He lunged, and struck the supervisor on his head with the butt of his rifle. The force of the attack threw the supervisor off course, and he fell to the floor, writhing in his blood. A short while later, he was dead.



It seemed like seconds to Yitzchak Dovid, between the supervisor's death, and his landing in front of the Russian Military Court. He was sentenced to a choice of two options; either immediate death, or to pass through two rows of 100 soldiers who would be striking him with murderous blows all the while. Those who chose the



Yitzchak
Dovid

learnt what it
means to be a Yid. He
started learning Torah, and
became a very erliche Yid. With time,

he got engaged to a wonderful woman,
and they happily married. The chasuna
was a big affair, people came from far and
wide to rejoice with the simcha, marveling
to see how Hashem looked after Yitzchak
Dovid so that he should Chas v'Shalom not
be stuck in the Russian army for too long.

Not long afterwards, Yitzchak Dovid was
one of the happiest men on earth. He had
become a father! His wife had given birth
to a beautiful baby boy! At his bris, he was
given the name 'Naftali', and he grew up to
be the flaming Chassid R' Naftali Kohen. He
was connected to the heilige Rebbe with
all his heart; when he was the chazzan,
his sweet and fervent tefillos melted the
hearts of all those who heard him. When
he became engaged to the daughter of
R' Avraham b'Reb Nachman, the great
Breslover Chassid, Yitzchak Dovid's
happiness and nachas knew no bounds. ■

second option usually died while trying to
run through the soldiers.

Yitzchak Dovid, not wanting to despair,
bravely chose the second option. He
wanted at least a minimal chance at life!

He took a deep breath, and started running
with all his strength through the rows of
soldiers. He ran and ran, his back bending
and smarting from their blows, and a
miracle occurred: He made it through alive!

According to Russian law, those who
remained alive after getting this punishment
were released from the army. Yitzchak
Dovid was set free, and the first thing he
did was travel to the nearest village which
had a Yiddishe community, and ask for the
Rav.

Yitzchak Dovid told him his whole story, and
begged the Rav to teach him Torah. With
much patience, persistence and hard work,

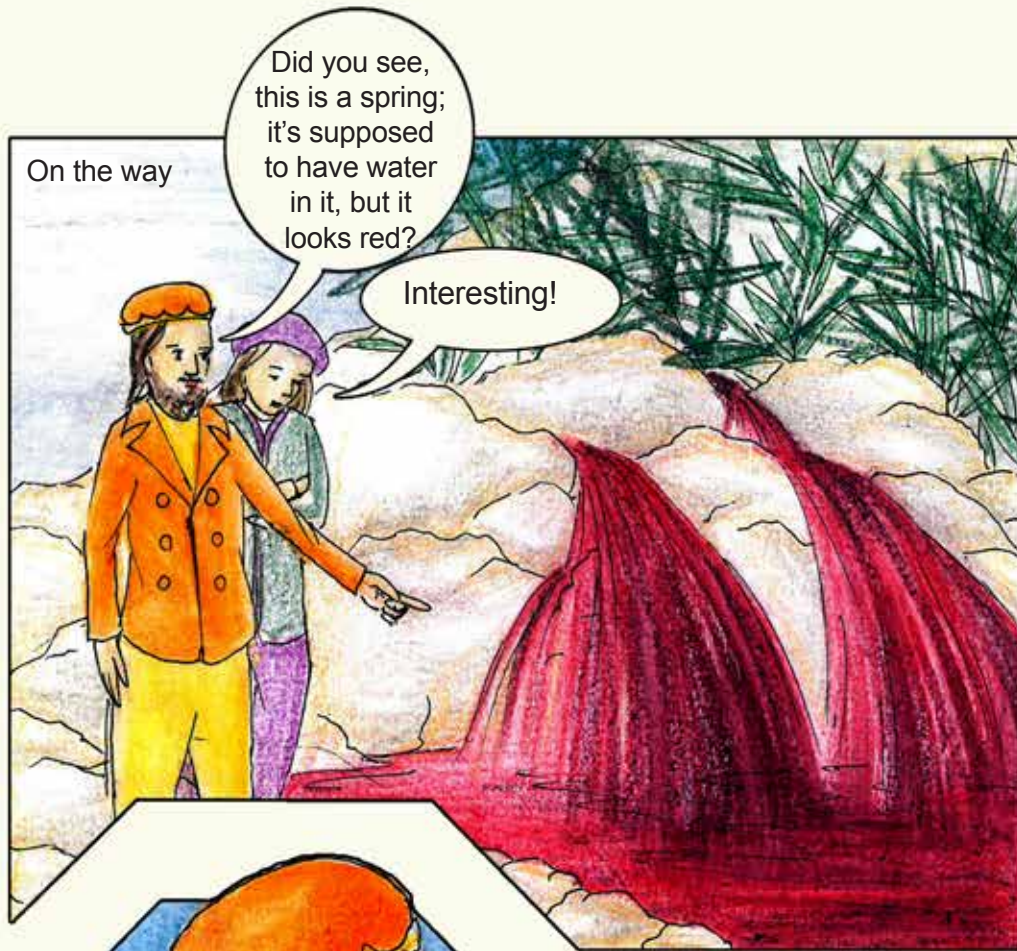
The princess tells the king's servant that the only way he can take her out is if he longs for her for a whole year, and on the last day, he fasts and stays awake. He does so, but on the last day, he eats an apple and falls asleep for many years. When he goes to the princess, she tells him that he should long for her another year, and on the last day, he shouldn't drink wine so that he shouldn't fall asleep.

THE LOST PRINCESS

By: Felgy Weissfish

Chapter Four





To be continued...