

# Monthly Rays

Tammuz  
Breslov  
Inspiration



*Dear Readers,*

A glimpse through Reb Nosson's writings shows the incredible self-sacrifice he had, and the vital importance he affixed to printing the Rebbe's sefarim. All through his letters, he mentions the difficulties he had in finding decent printers, permission to print, and of course, funding to cover the costs, until he decided that his only option was to open a printing press in his own home and run it himself. There too, the hardships continued, but despite it all, he never let up. He knew how crucial the Rebbe's words were for generations to come, and he felt it his personal responsibility to do his absolute utmost to record it for the world.

And indeed, in his merit, we have all the Rebbe's words clearly accessible today. The Rebbe himself testified that if not for Reb Nosson, not one page of sheimos would have remained from his writings. The Rebbe toiled to give us such precious lights and advice, and Reb Nosson saved it for all of us. We have it all; Sichos Haran, Shivchei Haran, Likutei Eitzos, Chayei Moharan, Sippurei Maasios, Likutei Tefillos, Alim Litrufa and so much more. So what are we waiting for?

One of the flavors of the concealment which surrounds the Rebbe's radiant light, especially for us women, is the language barrier. Besides, most women aren't going to simply open up a sefer and learn, for various reasons. So, following Reb Nosson's example, we decided to start a monthly leaflet in which to present the Rebbe's wisdom in a format friendly for women, picking out the pieces we thought you'd most enjoy.

We hope it will indeed inject us all with the revitalizing sweetness of the Rebbe's way, and give us the strength and courage to follow his directives at all times.

Please send in your comments and suggestions for improvement to [raysof148@gmail.com](mailto:raysof148@gmail.com)

May the Rebbe's purifying waters quench our thirst, yet leave us striving to grow.

*Faigy Kahane*



# A Loving Letter

עלים לתרופה ט

*Baruch Hashem, Thursday Parashas Bo, 5584*

*I received your letter, my beloved son, and it gave me much pleasure... I read it well, and I understand your words from afar. I see that empty thoughts are going through your mind, those which strike the youth, whom the yetzer hora aims to confuse with depression of futility and vanity, and depression is more harmful to them than everything.*

*But I am surprised with you, my cherished son, apple of my eye, that you pay attention to this. I would expect you to understand from what you heard in my house and from the sefarim of the Rebbe that you shouldn't pay the least bit attention to any such depression at all, for such depression, sadness, misgivings and uncertainty are extremely damaging. They cause much more loss chas veshalom, than all the sins in the world!*

*Therefore, my beloved son, listen to my words which are the words of the holy awesome Rebbe: Be strong and fortified, and start anew every day. Don't pay attention to any doubts or depression at all, and don't take heart from these qualms at all. Just strengthen yourself to constantly be happy that we merited being Yidden, a holy nation, and that we are not opponents chas veshalom on the light of lights, the pure of pureness, the elder of elders, the holy awesome Rebbe, 'the flowing brook, the source of simcha.' How fortunate we are, how lucky is our lot that Hashem in His mercy removed the blindfold from us, which prevents many people from looking into the awesome sefarim of the Rebbe, and they oppose him, his people, and his holy awesome sefarim. Baruch Hashem Who saved us from this and separated us from those who stray in so many aspects. It is surely fitting for us to rejoice with this all our days forever with a deep, boundless simcha. There isn't a single depression or sadness that can ever obscure such happiness chas veshalom, as I heard and understood from the Rebbe's mouth explicitly.*

*Because the main hischazkus is simcha, as it is written, 'Ki chedvas Hashem hi ma'uzchem' - 'Rejoicing with Hashem is your strength.' It is impossible to elaborate further in writing; explore the Rebbe's sefarim and you'll find plenty to quench your thirst, to make your soul rejoice in every situation and at all times, which is the main thing...*

*There is no more to elaborate; peace, life, happiness, and everything good, as is your will and the will of your father who hopes, waits, and anticipates your true salvation, that the verse 'Be wise my son, and my heart will rejoice,' shall be fulfilled.*

*The small Nosson, the son of Harav Naftali Hirtz.*



# A Touching Tefila

ליקוטי תפילות א

*With Your mercy, let me merit that the yetzer hora should have no power to confuse my mind to withdraw me from Your true service chas veshalom, through his 'mitzvos' which he clothes himself in, as if he is convincing me to do some mitzvah, when he is really concealing a trap within it to make me stumble chas veshalom through these mitzvos that he clothes himself in, as You alone know all this.*

*Please Hashem, have mercy on my poor soul, and save me from him and his evil plans, so that he should have no power to fool me chas veshalom with these uncertainties.*

*And I throw myself completely onto You, my G-d and the G-d of my fathers, and I depend on You alone, that You will lead me with Your mercy on the straight, just, and true path, at all times and by every move, so that they shall all be according to Your good will, and I shouldn't stray from Your desire to the right nor to the left.*

*For You know that we are mere flesh and blood, and it is impossible for us to truly concentrate on Your good desire at all times. Therefore, help us with Your great compassion that the yetzer hora and the spirit of folly shouldn't have any power at all to confuse my mind any longer with any single confusion in the world. Rather, I should merit to rely on You alone, and You should have mercy on me with Your great mercy, and lead me and guide me on the true path constantly, at all times and at every second, in a manner that all my actions, business and movements, and all the movements of my children and all those who depend on me, should all be according to Your good desire alone from now until always.*



# *Me, Myself, and the Tam*

*By Tzipora B.*

Sometimes I think it's all about me  
About my idea of what I must do, where I must be  
Now in the mood, intent on growing  
Now so down, wondering where I'm going  
So close, so far, flying high, descending in free-fall  
Why am I so concerned with the 'I' at all?

Sometimes I remember it's only about His will  
to do it, accept it, simply His word fulfill  
from chochmos disentangle, from expectations let go  
"Ay ay prustik" is quite simple when there is no ego  
To realize that a three-cornered shoe really is great  
That is something to celebrate.



# The Glittering Hand

By Aviva Gross

(Based on Sichos Haran 6)

A man is running with his hand held outstretched. Fingers clenched tightly closed; he holds his hand up teasingly, tauntingly, enticingly. His appearance elicits a swell of curiosity in the hearts of all those he passes. What is the secret of his hand? What does it contain? A rush of overactive imagination flows through minds abound, inviting a plethora of ideas. Is he holding mouthwatering Belgian chocolates? Or a sparkling diamond bracelet? Maybe a winning lottery ticket? Keys to a dream villa? Weight reducing pills? Two tickets to sunny Florida? A cure for cancer?

He incitingly asks, "What do you think I'm holding?" That which everyone is dreaming of settles in their mind, and they are certain that he holds the fulfillment of their deepest desire. He becomes the new piper, leading throngs of people running after him. Between twists and turns, through winding paths and up sloping trials, they follow him determinedly, all the while concentrating on his clenched

fist, which holds their greatest wish.

This goes on for days on end. At long last, after he has attracted an enormous multitude of adults who are hankering for him to just open his fist, he stops. Slowly, slowly, he releases one finger at a time, and then holds up his hand to show the crowd. It is empty.

The disillusioned crowd breaks up, and they all return home, only to come running at the next call. "Look what I have in my hand!" And so they chase and pursue him endlessly.

\* \* \*

Every pre-1A girl, as excited as she might be with her graduation, knows that the real big girl is only the first grader. But the first grader knows that she's not big, it's those huge and tall eighth graders who've reached the height of maturity. As long as she has yet to reach that stage, she can't really be proud of herself that she's a BIG GIRL. But when she finally reaches eighth grade, the excitement might last a week or

so, until she realizes that high school is the real thing. However, even after reaching the peak of maturity - 12th grade, she can't yet admit that she's attained satisfaction and joy. The kallahs -they're the really happy ones. As long as I'm not yet engaged, how can I be happy?

But every single kallah knows that it's totally not true. To really feel happy, you first have to set up your own apartment just so, get everything ready, and then as a fresh newlywed, you'll feel that swell of happiness.

However, the newly married stage is just a waiting period, it's no destination of joy. You're waiting for life to really begin. Once you have your first baby, you're finally considered a mother! Now life finally begins, you're really living! You feel accomplished and good about yourself.

But ask a mother of little children if she's reached that moment of long-awaited joy. She won't even be able to find a spare second to explain to you that once all her children are settled and married and she's sitting on a rocking chair in an organized clean house with a warm cup of tea, reading her grandchildren's letters to Bubby, she'll have her moment of joy, fulfillment and nachas. That's happiness!

But if you listen to that grandmother in the rocking chair, what is it she's saying? "Oh, when I was an oblivious pre-1A girl, I felt so great! When I was newly-married, I had such a good time! But now...? I'm too old and tired to really enjoy life."

So when's that happy time? When is that moment that we're chasing our whole lives? When is it?

NOW!

זֶה כָּלֵל גָּדוֹל בְּעִבּוּדַת הַשָּׁם, שְׁלֵא יִשִּׁים לְנֶגֶד עֵינָיו

כִּי־אִם אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם... וְאוֹתוֹ הַשָּׁעָה

(ליקוטי מוהרן רעב)

"It is a great rule in avodas Hashem that a person should only put before his eyes the present day and the present hour."

We are trained to think that only something really amazing and out of the ordinary is a cause for enjoyment, happiness or excitement. Yes! Next week, at Rivky's wedding, I'll be happy. So okay, I'm sitting at the wedding, but I'm totally not ecstatic. All right, when we sit down to the meal and I'll schmooze with that old friend or cousin... that's when I'll feel that thrilled state of bliss.

So we chatted. It was nice. But totally not what I was awaiting so eagerly. So the dancing will do it... the dancing is finished, the long-anticipated wedding is over, but where is my happiness? Oh, it's probably because the food wasn't so good, my dress was so inappropriate, and truthfully there wasn't anything really exciting there at all...

So who is this lucky finder of joy? Who IS happy?

Little children. They don't expect some extraordinary unusual happening tomorrow to satisfy them. They built a tower of five blocks and it crashed down onto the floor, what an excitement!

The secret is to find the thrill and pleasure in the simple and sweet now! Now I'm sitting in my house, serving supper to my own sweet children; a mixture of ages, natures, noises, laughter and crying, AND I AM THE MOTHER! How special, how sweet, indulge in the now, in the simple, ordinary present moment. Not "only if the supper would be spiced well enough," or "only when everyone will sit nicely and enjoy the food." Not "only if we eat in a clean and tidy

kitchen” or “only if supper passes without the children fighting.” Grab the moment, the simple now. See it, face it, and simply enjoy it as it is!

\* \* \*

We are all chasing something. Chasing some promised happiness. We spend all our efforts, sacrifice our sanity and composure for this something. For someone, it's financial stability, or it's fitting into society, becoming size two, or a clean organized home. Everyone has a goal which they promise themselves that whatever happens, they will not (or let their children) be A. B. C. D... No matter what or how much it'll cost them. They are convinced that only when that goal is reached is life worth living. That's when everything will be settled and perfect.

The Rebbe refers to that 'something' as animals. In sippurei maasios, in the story of the exchanged children, the prince was spending his life chasing his lost animals. Nothing mattered to him, he was ready to sacrifice everything while pursuing his animals, until the person from the forest told him, “You're not chasing animals, you're chasing your sins!” It's an illusion, the yetzer hora is making you see something which isn't real. The alluring success dangling before you is only an illusion. No external object can fulfil your yearning for happiness, and even though it seems like this will finally satisfy your burning thirst for happiness and satisfaction, it is an absolute trickery. It's that same man who is inciting you that following him and attaining the secret which lies in his closed fist will bring you happiness. And we who are starved for some bit of happiness are pursuing him and his fallacy of joy.

For the past five years, Esty was explaining to her husband that the reason she was always in a bad mood was because of the terrible

state of their house. If they would only redo their house, the children would be better behaved and she would be happy... The day finally arrived, her husband took out a huge loan and they renovated their house. She put her whole heart and soul into choosing the nicest styles, and indeed, the result was absolutely beautiful. All her friends and neighbors came over to view the effect and compliment her, she felt great!

After two weeks, I asked her on a quiet morning how she feels about the house now. She burst out crying, saying that up until now she had always told the husband that it's the house which is making her so upset. If they would only redo their house, she'd be happy. But now, the house is remodeled yet she still feels empty and sad. She doesn't know how to face her husband, she feels like such a fool, why isn't she happy now?

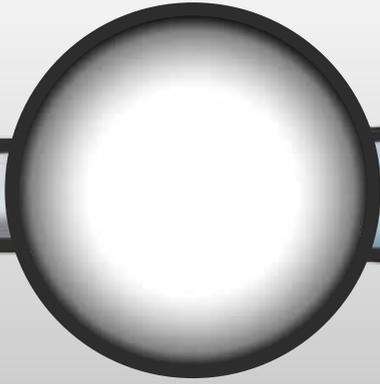
We know why! It wasn't the house! It's not the size 10-16 that I am, and it's not due to a lack of money or because that friend snubbed me.

The Rambam says:

”לא בדברים שמחוץ לנפש שוכן האושר... כצל עובר  
הוא מה שההמון חושב לתענוג ואושר.”

“Not in objects outside of your own self resides satisfaction... Like a fleeting shadow is what the common folk consider to be a pleasure and fulfillment.”

Why waste 20, 30, or even 50 years chasing that illusive 'something,' only to be bitterly fooled that we were chasing the yetzer hora's empty hand? Let's focus on the simple, enjoyable now. This is the moment which you were waiting for twenty years ago, and the moment which you'll be missing in twenty years' time.



# *The Light of our Lives: Reb Nachman of Breslov*

## *Chapter One*

Feiga was getting nervous. It was already two weeks since her husband Simcha had been gone, the details of his journey shrouded in mystery. The knowledge that he was clinging to his Creator and spending his time in hisbodedus left Feiga with no objections; on the contrary, she encouraged his holy behavior. But it was already Thursday night, which meant that Shabbos was fast approaching, and her husband had told her that he would be back for this Shabbos.

Besides for being the progeny of such holy ancestors such as the Baal Shem Tov, Feiga was a prophetess. Using her holy powers, she tried finding her husband to see where he was, but she was unable to

locate him. While performing the special women's mitzvah of kneading the challah dough, she made another attempt which also failed. Numerous tries while she was preparing for Shabbos brought no results. Her custom was to light the Shabbos candles several hours before sunset, and while she did so, she again tried to find her husband in the merit of the mitzvah. But no go.

In desperation, she fled to her grandfather the Baal Shem Tov's kever and poured her heart out in that holy spot. Worn out from her pleading, she fell into a deep slumber, and her mother Udel appeared to her in her dream, together with the imahos Sarah, Rivkah,

Rochel and Leah. They told her, "Don't worry, your husband will arrive home for Shabbos." So saying, they took her into the chamber of souls up in heaven, and showed her around. One shining soul with a dazzling light caught her attention, and she inquired who it was. "That's the soul of your grandfather the Baal Shem Tov," they revealed. They then led her further on, and Feiga saw an extremely great light, a glowing soul whose radiance was infinite. "Whose is that soul?" she asked in wonder.

"That is the soul which they want to give you..."

Feiga immediately awoke from her sleep, and indeed, her husband arrived home in time for Shabbos. The question she had for him was: "How come I searched for you yet I didn't find you?"

Reb Simcha replied that he had set out on his homebound journey on Friday morning, being 15 parsas distant from Mezibuzh. He wandered on all day long, losing his way, until the late afternoon when he looked around and to his great wonder, he saw that he was very close to Mezibuzh! And so he arrived home in plenty time for Shabbos.

Home for them was in a very special setting; they were fortunate enough to live in the very house of the Baal Shem Tov. Reb Simcha had received the Baal Shem Tov's house as a dowry from his mother-in-law Udel, the daughter of the Baal Shem Tov; she had presented it to the couple upon their marriage. Her two other sons, Reb Boruch'l and Reb Efraim, each had their own dynasty with many

chassidim travelling to them from far and wide, so they had no need for their grandfather the Baal Shem Tov's house. But how did the house fall into the hands of Udel, rather than the Baal Shem Tov's only son Reb Tzvi?

This Reb Tzvi was a hidden tzaddik, who was known in the world as a big businessman. He dealt in oxen, and was constantly journeying from city to city, and from state to state. The cloak of businessman was the perfect disguise for his hidden purity and holiness, and he had no desire to draw attention to himself by taking up residence in the Baal Shem Tov's house. And therefore, it was Udel who inherited it and passed the sacred house on to Feiga following her marriage to Reb Simcha, a son of the tzaddik Reb Nachman of Horodenka, devoted and loyal talmid and attendant of the Baal Shem Tov.

Although it was already years after the Baal Shem Tov's passing, it was he who had set up their shidduch. The Baal Shem Tov's closest talmid, Reb Nachman Horodenka, was famous as part of the Baal Shem Tov's household. Nothing was hidden from him; he was his Rebbe's loyal attendant, appointed to take charge over everything that went on in the house.

The tasks were many; the Baal Shem Tov, being the guider and leader of Klal Yisrael, suffered along with the troubles of every Yid and would personally help out physically and spiritually. His house was always filled with Yidden in need of assistance, be it with making a living, dealing with a wicked landowner, and mainly for spiritual problems. Each one

was individually given the Baal Shem Tov's attention, who would daven for their sakes and lend his assistance in every way possible. Collectors and askanim would arrive to seek advice and ask for blessings. And Reb Nachman Horodenka had a finger in every one of these hidden undertakings.

In the year 5519, a governmental ordained debate took place between the evil Franks, and the other side which was led by the Baal Shem Tov, Reb Chaim Cohen Rapaport, and Reb Dov of Yoslevitch. Prior to the big event, the Baal Shem Tov closeted himself in his room together with Reb Nachman Horodenka to talk things through.

The loyal talmid was also sent on secret urgent missions for Klal Yisrael. He would often be found hurrying along his way with a sack of gold coins. Where could he be going? Simply to carry out one of the Baal Shem Tov's assignments in rescuing Yidden from imprisonment. The dejected and frozen Yidden sitting and starving in a rotting cell would almost faint from wonder when their dreaded landlord would suddenly appear over their heads accompanied by a saintly looking Yid. A substantial amount of coins would change hands, and the Yid would find himself freed together with his wife and children. Nobody ever found out who the mysterious rescuer was; Reb Nachman was long gone, hurrying back to the Baal Shem Tov and the next mission.

Many hidden tzaddikim used to gather in the Baal Shem Tov's home to seek his advice and talk things through. Reb

Nachman was the one to greet them, take care of their needs, and show them in to the Baal Shem Tov.

He was referred to by the Baal Shem Tov as "holy and pure," and described in a letter as follows: "Reb Nachman himself is very humble and modest, his whole life is sanctified for Hashem and to serve Him. He rolls in the dust of his holy Rebbe so that he shouldn't miss a single word, and his whole pure desire is only to listen and fulfil that which his Rebbe shows him..."

Reb Nachman also had a hand in drawing the Mezritcher Maggid close to the Baal Shem Tov. In the beginning of the Maggid's interest in the Baal Shem Tov, when they were corresponding via mail, the Maggid writes in one of the letters which he sent to the Baal Shem Tov through the faithful messenger Reb Nachman Horodenka: "the truth is that I see a good sign in the talmid to whom I handed over this letter, Reb Nachman Horodenka, for he is a tzaddik and a holy person. If the talmid is like this, then what must the Rebbe be like! He instilled a spirit of vitality into me, and therefore I have high hopes..."

Since his first wife had passed away, the widowed Reb Nachman Horodenka had received distinguished proposals of marriage, yet he turned them all away. Besides for his own prominent standing, he had illustrious ancestry, being a seventh-generation descendant of the Maharal of Prague, who traced his lineage back to Rav Hai Gaon. The Gaon Reb Avraham Chaim of Apta was also a great-grandfather of Reb Nachman

Horodenka, and he himself was one of Rashi's grandchildren.

Understandably, it was his Rebbe the Baal Shem Tov who was the one to find him an appropriate match. The sister of Reb Itzikel Drobitcher was a rich and childless widow, an exceptional woman who was looking for a worthwhile shidduch. Although she was approached with suggestions of fine pedigree, she wanted something more, and to that end, she turned to the Baal Shem Tov for help. "I don't need a wealthy husband; I have plenty of my own money to support him with. I just want him to be one of your people."

Indeed, the Baal Shem Tov gave her a more than satisfactory proposal; his faithful talmid Reb Nachman Horodenka. The talmid agreed to his Rebbe's suggestion and mazel tov! The shidduch was finalized.

Reb Nachman, a fresh chassan, turned to the shadchan and asked what he could give as shadchanus. The Baal Shem Tov's answer was swift: "If you have a son, let us make a match between us." Reb Nachman Horodenka was famed as a descendant of David Hamelech, so the Baal Shem Tov took out his family tree which traced his roots back to David Hamelech too, showing that it was indeed worthy for their children to marry, and Reb Nachman gave his approval for when the time would come.

Soon after his marriage, following the wedding meal, Reb Nachman informed his new wife that he would need to set out on a journey for important matters, and would be back as soon as he could. The righteous wife had no compunctions and Reb Nachman left.

Days and weeks passed, but there was no clue of his whereabouts. Nobody knew where he was, nor when he planned on returning home. At her wits end, his wife traveled to the Baal Shem Tov to enlist his assistance. He assured her that he would discuss the matter with Reb Nachman as soon as the latter would come to see him.

When the missing husband finally appeared before the Baal Shem Tov, he was immediately questioned why he wasn't going home. Reb Nachman shed light on the matter at once. He revealed that he had seen that his wife would depart from the world as soon as she bore her first child, and therefore he was delaying his homecoming. Although it was impressive of him, his Rebbe answered that he needed to ask his wife's opinion on the subject before making any decisions based on his own understanding. Upon his wife's subsequent visit to the Baal Shem Tov to hear of any updates, the Baal Shem Tov gently informed her of her husband's answer. The virtuous woman humbly accepted the decree and said, "Reb Nachman knows what he's saying, and I am ready." And so Reb Nachman returned home.

Not long afterwards, the time came for their child to be born. Knowing what she knew, the mother started weeping bitterly, begging Hashem to give her at least a month to live, in order to be with her child.

Her desperate tefilla was accepted, and she spent a precious month in the sweet company of her delightful child whom they named Simcha, before her holy soul ascended to Gan Eden. Her husband later

revealed that while she was davening during the labor, it was an auspicious time; had she asked to live a long life she would have gotten it. However, he was not permitted to disclose it to her at that time, and she received that which she asked for, but no more.

Given that the father of the month-old orphan was the Baal Shem Tov's messenger on important missions which only Reb Nachman Horodenka could be trusted with, little Simcha was brought into the home of the Baal Shem Tov to be raised under his protective wings. The small boy absorbed the Torah and holiness which permeated the very air he breathed, giving him the impetus to grow up to be exceedingly great. Watching him, the Baal Shem Tov once remarked to his daughter Udel, "He is a good boy!"

In the year 5520, after Simcha had merited soaking up the holiness for ten years, the illuminator of the Yiddishe world, Reb Yisroel Baal Shem Tov, passed on from this world. The loss was keenly felt; his memory was constantly on the lips of the forlorn Yidden who walked around feeling orphaned.

Udel had understood from her father that she should take Reb Simcha as a son-in-law, and so he became engaged to her daughter Feiga. The words of the Baal Shem Tov to Reb Nachman Horodenka about making a match between their children years earlier finally came true in this worthy

chassan and kallah.

Feiga was known for her piety and great levels; tzaddikim would refer to her as 'Feigale the neviah.' The tzaddeikes Udel, whom the Baal Shem Tov held in high esteem since she always went around with a heart full of longing to Hashem, recognized that the tzaddik Reb Simcha was worthy of being her daughter's husband.

Reb Simcha was indeed a holy man. Deep in the forests, far from people, commotion and the town, he would spend days completely removed from physicality; his whole heart, desire and mind were focused on cleaving to the Creator. He was totally detached from the world around him, and his thoughts were occupied with the Torah of his Rebbe the Baal Shem Tov, which opened up for him new gates to wondrous places. Clueless that people in town were searching for him and worrying for his welfare, he forgot all about his marriage to the righteous Feiga. Weeks and months were spent meditating in the cracks of rocks, in caves and under tree shades; he was reluctant for people to have an inkling of his conduct. Once in a while, he would make a short visit home, and then immediately disappear between the trees again, his heart burning and yearning to serve Hashem.

Less than a year after that fateful Shabbos before which Feiga was waiting anxiously for her husband to return home, when she envisaged her

enlightening dream, the glowing soul that was up in heaven awaiting its time to come down on earth in order to bring the world to its complete tikkun, made its appearance. The world which had been anticipating a new light since the Baal Shem Tov's passing breathed a sigh of relief. For on Shabbos Rosh Chodesh Nissan in the year 5532, the light arose in the house of the Baal Shem Tov, in the town of Mezibuzh: a son was born to the righteous Feiga and Reb Simcha.

The luminous soul was now clothed in a pure body which would remain in that state throughout its life on this world. After the birth, when the baby made his first appearance in the world, his mother washed each of his tiny hands three times. So too, every time he woke from his sleep, she would wash his hands to purify them. She also prepared a little hat for him in advance, and she covered his head as soon as he was exposed to the air of this world.

Shabbos Hagadol was the slated special date for the bris. Many distinguished guests came flocking to take part in the special occasion. Great tzaddikim and talmidim of the Baal Shem Tov and the Mezritcher Maggid arrived, between them Reb Boruch of Mezibuzh, and Reb Efraim of Sodilkov, who were both uncles of the newborn child, being brothers of his mother Feiga.

Reb Boruch'l gazed at the baby's

face in the moments following the bris, and with his ruach hakodesh, he revealed to the parents some of the hidden traits and special qualities that the child possessed. He then blessed them with the customary blessing that they should merit raising him to Torah, chuppah and good deeds.

The baby's mother listened seriously to the bracha from her illustrious brother, and to the surprise of everyone present, she added a special request. "Rebbe! Bless me that he shouldn't have any opposition; there shouldn't be any opponents to his path!"

All those assembled looked to the holy Reb Boruch'l to see how he would react to his sister's interesting supplication. To their astonishment, Reb Boruch'l merely hinted that it was already a done deal, the request was futile. Hearing and understanding his holy intentions, the exchange was embedded in the hearts of the tzaddikim gathered there.

The infant was named Nachman, after his grandfather Reb Nachman of Horodenka.

*To be continued...*



# *A Taste of the Rebbe's Treasures*

***Since thoughts are only a fleeting thing, do we need to give them any attention?***

***The thinking mind has an extreme power, and it can bring about great feats!***

As the Rebbe says in Likutei Moharan 193: "Know that the thoughts have a very great power, and if a person will strengthen and fortify his thoughts on any matter in the world, he can bring about that it should be accomplished. And even if he'll concentrate his thoughts intensely on having money, he'll surely attain it, and so on by everything. The thought just has to nullify all feelings."

The Rebbe also brings in Sichos Haran 62: "A person can achieve whatever he's thinking of with his thoughts. And even the high prices in the market chas veshalom come from people's thoughts. For when the thought is completely focused on something being a certain way, meaning all the aspects that there are in thought; inner, outer and all other aspects, when they are all united in concentrating that it should be so, without any confusion or leaning to any other thoughts, then they'll surely achieve that it should be like they're thinking. The thought also has to be very specific, not general."

If the thought has such power, then we must be careful to guard it! As the Rebbe says in Sichos Haran 46: "A person must guard their thoughts very well, for thinking can bring about a literal live thing! And a person should know that every aspect which is higher by a person can reach and achieve higher things. For example, the feet can kick things up, but the hand can throw things much higher. With speech, one can reach even further, because a person can speak from far. The sense of sound is even higher, for one can hear something from an extreme distance; the sound of a gunshot can be heard for miles around. And the sight is even higher, for a person can see up until the sky. So we see that every aspect which is higher up can reach greater things. And the thought is greater than everything, and it can reach and achieve the highest things, therefore one must guard it so much."

***Is it at all possible to control our thoughts?***

***A person's thoughts are in his own hands, for him to direct wherever he wants to.***

So says the Rebbe in Likutei Moharan 2,50: "A person's thoughts are in his own hands, for him to direct wherever he wants to, as is explained in a different place, that it is impossible to have two thoughts at once.

And even if sometimes, a person's thoughts fly to all different, strange places, it is in the person's control to force it to return to the straight path, to think what is worthy of thinking. It is exactly like a horse which turns from the path and strays to a different place. He is pulled by the reins and forced to return to the straight path. So too with the thoughts, one can drag hold of it and force it to return to the proper path."

***Why are there always obstacles blocking my way whenever I want to do something good?***

***Obstacles create a vessel in order to receive the bounty, and the vessel grows according to the size of the obstacles.***

Like the Rebbe says in Likutei Moharan 185: "Every person who has greater toil and exertion in the beginning of his coming close to Hashem, meaning that he has many great obstacles such as from his father, wife or father-in-law, or from other people who pursue him, or financial obstacles and other kinds of problems and confusion which lie before him and block his way, and he needs to work very hard to break them: All this exertion and toil which he has in the beginning of his hiskarvus are a great favor for the person, because through them he merits receiving much holiness and purity. For these obstacles create a vessel, and the more obstacles he has, the greater his vessel to receive a bounty of holiness and purity to bring him close to Hashem becomes."

The obstacles also generate desire, and according to how great the matter is, that's how great the obstacles are. As the Rebbe says in Likutei Moharan 66: "It is impossible to do anything without desire. For example, when a person says something, he must first have a desire to speak. And so too when he performs any action, if he wouldn't have a desire for it first, he would surely not do it.

Therefore, before every holy thing that a person needs to do, such as travel to a tzaddik or any other holy thing that a person must do, he is first given a desire to do it, in order for him to do it. And the main desire is caused by obstacles being sent his way. For when a Yid needs to do something for his Yiddishkeit, especially when he needs to do something which is very important for his Yiddishkeit, that his whole Yiddishkeit depends on, such as to travel to a true tzaddik, he is given obstacles. And these obstacles are in order to generate the desire, so that through this he should have a greater desire to do the thing. For through a person being prevented and blocked from doing something, he gets a much greater desire for it.

Like for example when we show a child something sweet, and then immediately take it away and hide it from him. The child then chases the person, begging him and really wanting the thing. So we see that the main desire is made through taking away and hiding the object. So too, a person is prevented from doing what he needs to do, so that he should have an even greater desire for it. For the more something is hidden and prevented from a person, the more pleasant it is to him and his desire for it grows. This is where the temptation for an aveira

comes from chas veshalom, for since the aveira is prohibited to us, because we are commanded not to do it, we are prevented from it, and therefore we have such strong desires to it. So too in holiness, when a person has obstacles, his desire is strengthened.

And the greater the desired thing is, the greater the obstacle is. Because there is desire for an object, a person who desires, and the object which is desired. And according to the value of the object which is desired, that's how great the desire for it needs to be. And therefore, when the desired object is extremely great, there must be a very great desire for it. Therefore, there is such a great obstacle for it, through which the desire will grow. For the greater the obstacle, the more the desire increases."

The obstacle itself teaches us how precious and valuable the deed is, which is why it has so many obstacles. "And therefore, it is fitting for a person to know that when he has such great obstacles for any holy matter, he should understand from this that the matter he wants to do is very very precious, which is why there are so many obstacles. And especially when a person wants to travel to a true tzaddik, for there are many tzaddikim, but there is an aspect of the true point between the tzaddikim, that when a person wants to come close to him, in which everything is dependent, then a person has exceedingly great obstacles, and from this alone a person can understand its value."

Reb Nosson writes in Likutei Halachos, "The main reason for the soul coming down to this low world is only because of desire, in order for it to merit complete desire. And that's why the soul needs to distance itself from its high place and descend in a physical body to this lowly world which is so far from its honorable place; it is all because of the desire.

For Hashem wants to give the Yidden the merit of earning all good, complete true good which is greater than everything. And Hashem knows that the main good tachlis is to merit complete desire; therefore the soul has to distance itself from its honorable place and descend to this physical world, so as to strengthen the desire. For we see ourselves that the more we are distanced, the more the desire is strengthened. As long as a son is near his father, although his love is very strong, he cannot say that he has longing and desire for his father since he is always next to him. But when the son travels away from his father to some place, then he misses him and has a strong desire for his father. And the more the son is distanced from his father, the more his desire, yearning and longing for his father increase. Therefore, the soul has to descend from its high place and dress itself in this physical world which is so far from the root of the yiddishe soul, in order that the soul's desire should grow, since it is far from its father's table, for the more one is distanced from one's father, the more the desire is strengthened."

***How do we strengthen ourselves to continue despite obstacles being placed in our path?***

***Through strengthening our desire and yearning to attain that goal.***

As Reb Nosson writes in Likutei Halachos Birchos Hamazon 4, 20: “We heard the great value of holy desire from his mouth, that it is the main avodas Hashem. And all the avodos, Torah, tefilla, mitzvos and good deeds are all included in it. And it is impossible to merit a single holy thing besides for in this way; through intense wanting, desiring, yearning, longing, and pining, without leaving the desire in any case. The more the obstacles increase, he should see to reinforce himself with even more deep-seated desires, wanting and yearning. And so on forever, until he’ll merit reaching that mitzvah or good deed which he wanted to do. And so too afterwards, with every avoda or good deed that he’ll want to do, he should strengthen himself with fervent desires. And the more the obstacles, preventions and confusions overwhelm him, the more he should strengthen himself with stronger desires until he’ll achieve that mitzvah too, and so on always. As it says in Likutei Moharan that the obstacles are only because of the desire, and if he’ll strengthen himself with strong desires according to the obstacles, it will surely break.

So we see that the main hischazkus to strengthen oneself over obstacles to holiness is only with ratzon and desire. And this is the main glory that Hashem glorifies Himself with every Yid; the main glory is from their insistence and resolve...”

Reb Nosson also writes in Likutei Halachos Birchos Hareich 5: “The summary of all the work that a person has to do on this world is to break obstacles. For that is the whole advantage of a person over angels, and whole worlds are dependent on him. And the whole depth of the person’s virtue is that he is on this physical world which is full of obstacles that prevent one from coming close to Hashem. And the person is created in order to break and shatter all the obstacles which are the sum of all temptations, enticements and lures of this world, which all prevent one from coming close to Hashem. And a person must strengthen himself over them and break them through his great yearning for the truth. And therefore, his virtue is greatly increased.”

And Reb Nosson writes further in Likutei Halachos, “This way is a good and true eitzah for every person in the world, large to small, whether a great tzaddik or a truly righteous person, who needs to rise a level higher, and also very small people, even those who lie very low, and are sullied with lots of bad deeds, even though, through the aspect of ratzon - desire, everyone can come from the lowest level to the absolute highest.”



# The Cripple

## *Sippurei Maasios Story 3*

There was once a wise man. Before his passing, he called together his sons and family, and commanded them to water trees. They would also be permitted to engage in other types of work, but they should make a special effort to constantly water trees. Then the wise man died and left behind sons, one of whom could not walk. He could stand, but could not walk. His brothers would support him and they provided him with so much that he had money to spare. Now this son saved up the extra money until he collected a large sum. Then he said to himself, "Why should I accept charity from them? Better that I start to do some business." Even though he was not able to walk, he decided to hire a carriage, an escort and a driver, and travel with them to Leipzig (a city in East Germany, well known for its trade and fairs). There he would be able to do business, even though he could not walk.

When his family heard this, they approved and said, "Why should we support him? Better let him have a trade." And they lent him more money, in order that he could conduct his trading. He hired a carriage, an escort and a driver, and set out. When they came to an inn, the escort said that they should stay there for the night, but he did not agree. They tried

to convince him, but he was stubbornly set so they went onward. They became lost in a forest and were ambushed by robbers.

These men had become robbers because of a famine that had been at one time. A man had come to their city and announced, "Whoever wants food should come to me." And several people gathered around him. He acted with cleverness, rejecting anyone he judged that he did not need. To one he would say, "You would be fitting as a craftsman." To another he would say, "You should work on a mill." He chose only intelligent young people, and went with them to the forest. He persuaded them to become robbers, being that they were at a crossroads, with roads leading to Leipzig, Breslau and other cities. Traders would pass there, so they could rob them and amass money. (So said the robber to them). And these robbers fell upon the son who could not walk and his companions.

Now the carriage driver and the escort, who were able to escape, did so, but the son was left behind on the carriage. The thieves came and took the chest with the money, and asked him, "Why are you sitting?" He answered them that he was unable to walk. So they stole the chest and the horses, and he was left on

the carriage. Meanwhile, the escort and the driver who had escaped reasoned that since they had taken 'prukladen' from the government back in their hometown, why should they return home? They could end up in chains. Better to stay here and be an escort and driver here.

As for the son, as long as he had the dried cracker-bread that he had brought from home, he ate it. When his supply ran out and he had nothing to eat, he pondered what to do, and then threw himself from the carriage to eat grass. He slept alone in the field, and he was so frightened that his strength waned until he could no longer even stand, but only crawl. He would eat the grass surrounding him as long as he could reach it, and when he finished all the grass within his reach, he would crawl further and eat there. He ate grass in this manner for some time.

One time, he came to a patch of grass, the like of which he had not eaten before. It attracted him, for he had been eating grass a long time, and had never seen grass like this. He decided to pull it out with its root, and under the root there was a precious stone. It was square, and each side had a different special power. On one side was written that whoever grasps this side would be transported to the place where day and night come together, meaning where the sun and moon come together. When he uprooted the grass with its root (on which the stone was), he happened to grasp this side. It transported him and he came to the place where day and night are brought together. He looked about, and behold, it was the place where the sun and the moon join together.

He heard the sun and the moon conversing. The sun was complaining to the moon that there is a tree with many branches and fruit and leaves. And every single branch,

fruit, and leaf has a unique power - one is effective for bringing children, another for wealth, another for curing this disease, and another for curing another disease - each one effective for a different aim. This tree would need to be watered, and if it were watered, it would be very effective. "But not only do I not water it, but I shine on it, and dry it out!"

The moon answered him, "You're worrying superfluous worries. Let me tell you about my worries. It so happens that I have a thousand mountains. And surrounding these are another thousand, and that is the place of demons. And these demons have chicken feet, so they do not have power in their feet; therefore they draw power from my feet. Because of that, I don't have power in my feet. I have a dust which can heal my feet, but a wind comes and carries it away."

The sun answered, "Is that what you're worried about? I'll tell you of a cure. There is a path that splits into several paths. One is a path of the righteous. Even the righteous on this path, with every step he takes, dust from that path is spread under him, so that with every step he takes, he treads upon that dust. And there is the path of the heretics. Even a heretic on this path, with every step, the dust of that path is spread under him. And there is a path of the insane. Even an insane person on this path, with his every step, dust is spread as described before. There are several such paths. And there is another path, upon which walk righteous ones who accept suffering upon themselves. The rulers lead them in chains, so they have no power in their feet. Dust from that path is spread under their feet, so they receive power in their feet. Therefore, go to that place since there is much of that dust there, and your feet will be healed." And the cripple heard all this.

In the midst of this, he looked at another

side of the stone, and saw written there that whoever grasps that side would be taken to the place of the path that splits into several paths. So he grasped that side and was transported there. He put his feet on the path with the dust that brings healing to the feet, and was immediately healed. He went and took dust from each of the paths, and made packets from each type of dust - the dust of the path of the righteous in one packet, and likewise the varieties of dust from each of the paths. He made each one into a separate packet, and took them with him.

He came upon a plan, and returned to the same forest where they had robbed him. Once there, he chose a tall tree which was close to the road from which the robbers went out to plunder. He took the dust of the righteous and the dust of the insane, and mixed them together and spread it on the road. Then he climbed up the tree and sat there, waiting to see what would happen to them.

He saw how the head robber sent out several of his men to go and plunder, and when they came to this road and stepped on the dust, they immediately became righteous and began to cry for all their past days and years, during which they had stolen and killed so many people. However, since the dust was mixed together with the dust of the insane, they became insanely righteous, and began to argue with each other. This one said, "it was because of you that we stole!" and the one he accused replied, "but it was your fault!" and they fought on in this way, until they murdered each other.

The head robber sent out another group to steal, and the same thing happened; they also killed each other. And so it happened several times, until they were all murdered. The son understood that there was no one left alive besides for the head robber and

one other. He then came down from the tree and swept the dust up from the road, and spread the dust of the righteous alone. Then he went and sat up in the tree again.

Now, the head robber was very amazed that he had sent all his men, and not one had returned to him. He went himself, with the other who had remained with him, and immediately upon treading that road (where the dust of the righteous was sprinkled), he became a righteous man. He began to wail to his friend about all his years and days during which he had murdered so many people, and robbed so many. He began unearthing graves, and returned in complete penitence, and was very regretful. When the son saw that he regretted and repented so deeply, he came down from the tree. When the robber saw that he had found a man, he began to cry, "Woe unto me! I did such and such things, oh, give me a way to repent!" The son answered him, "Give me back the chest you took from me" (for they had kept a written account of every robbery, the day it occurred, and from whom they had robbed). The robber answered, "I'll return it immediately. I'll even give you all the hordes of goods I plundered. Just give me a way to repent." The son answered, "Your repentance is simply to go back to the town, and announce, 'I am the one who made that announcement, and drew many people to robbery, and murdered and robbed many souls.' That is your repentance."

The robber gave him all his treasures and went with him into the town and did as he had been told. They judged in that town that due to the many murders he had committed, he should be hung, so that people see and learn a lesson.

Later, the son decided to go to the two thousand mountains mentioned before, to see what was happening there.

*To be continued...*