

An ornate, black and white decorative border surrounds the central text. The border is composed of several layers: an outermost layer of intricate, symmetrical floral and scrollwork patterns; a middle layer of a repeating, smaller-scale decorative motif; and an innermost layer of a simple, thin black line. The overall effect is that of a classic, elegant book cover.

Tales of
Rabbi Nachman

Dedicated to

Our Master and Teacher, may his merit protect us,

Rabbi Yisroel Dov-Ber Odesser

who said:

"I am Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman"

and who said:

"G-d may He be blessed, knows and will attest that I am ready and willing, to give my life, my money and all that I own, in order to draw even one Jewish soul to G-d, or in any case, to instill in him some thought of repentance, even for just one moment."

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About Rabbi Nachman

Rabbi Nachman was the founder of Breslov Chassidus. He lived in various communities in the Ukraine, and his main period of leadership was during the late eighteenth century. A giant of Torah knowledge with an astounding intellect, he had a massive impact on the religious Jewish community in his region. Although he had a considerable following, many also rose in opposition to him. His teachings were revolutionary, and shook the established order of the Torah community. The main themes around which his teachings were based, included "hisbodedus", joyfulness, maintaining hope in all situations, and searching for the Tzaddik. His most famous works include Likutey Moharan, Sefer ha Midot, and the Tales. In addition, his most prized student, Rabbi Nathan, added other seminal works, such as Likutey Aitzot (Advice), Likutey Tefilot (prayers based on his teachings), and Likutey Halachot (discussions relating his ideas to practical halachic codes). Today his teachings are proliferating with an overwhelming momentum, and the ranks of Breslov are swelling with increasing numbers of new adherents. This is a clear fulfillment of the prophecy that was told to the Ba'al Shem Tov, the original founder of chassidism: "Your wellsprings will spread outward."



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Translator's Introduction

Rabbi Nachman is quoted in his biography, "Chai Moharan", with the following: "People say that stories are conducive to sleep. But I say that through stories, people are aroused from their sleep." Thus, Rabbi Nachman told the stories in this book with the intention of awakening his listeners. The key question that arises is, What is the "sleep" to which he was referring? In what sense are most people asleep, and how does listening to these stories awaken them?

The answer can be found within the stories themselves. Particularly in the story of the Lost Princess, we find that the main character, the Second to the King, falls twice into a deep sleep. This is discussed at length in the commentary following the story. In short, his sleep is directly related to losing his grasp of the goal he is pursuing, namely, to free the Princess. Temptation leads him to eat or drink what is forbidden, and thus he is drawn away from his purpose. When he finally awakens, he asks "Where am I in the world?", a clear reference to a state of aimlessness.

Thus, Rabbi Nachman perceived that most people in the world do not know what is their true purpose, and are not even aware of the need to search for it. In the story of the Master of Prayer, mankind had divided into a number of groups, each one with its own belief as to the goal of

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existence, and none of them open to hearing a differing opinion. Rabbi Nachman wanted to bring people to a state of willingness to listen. Even if a person has achieved very little in the realm of deeds, even if he is far removed from the ways of holiness, if he is at least willing to listen, in Rabbi Nachman's view, he is in a relatively good position. In *Likutey Moharan Tinyana, Torah 67*, it is said that the True Tzaddik has the power to open the eyes of all Israel. This is the same concept - bringing people to awareness of their true purpose.

Now, why are the Stories particularly effective in this work? The characters in the stories are presented with challenges and situations that we recognize from our own lives. The way they choose to respond brings them either to success or downfall, and we can apply what we learn from them. So, for example, in the story of the Clever and the Simple One, the two characters are described in parallel fashion. We see the greatness that the Simple One reaches, becoming the most powerful man in the country after the King, all due to his simple and humble ways. In contrast, the Clever One, despite all his sophistication, finds himself at the end of the story in a sea of sewage.

All of this is really not such a novelty. Most of the fairytales of the world have a moral lesson, in which the protagonist comes to a bitter or happy end according to his character traits. What is unique in Rabbi Nachman's stories, are the more specific hints aimed at helping direct the Jewish people in the path that they tread. For example, in the story of the King and the Emperor, the leading woman in the story uses deception to swindle massive amounts of merchandise, and does other types of damage to other characters. Yet strangely, she is understood to be the protagonist. If we read this as a parable, in which she represents the Jewish people, and the victims of her mischief are the other nations, the message becomes more

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understandable. She is elevating the cultural achievements of the nations, and endowing them with sanctity, thus "stealing" from the realm of impurity.

Or consider the Seven Beggars. Each of them had a bodily defect - one missing hands, another feet, one with a crooked neck, etc. With each one, it was explained that the defect was an illusion, and in truth their limbs were very beautifully shaped. However, because they used them only for very lofty actions, for which most people had no interest, the limbs appeared useless and defective. So it is with the holiest Torah sages. Quoting Rabbi Nachman, Likutey Moharan Tinyana, Torah 78: "Sometimes the True Tzaddik is a totally simple man, a "peasant", and does not reveal any teachings, and engages in petty conversation." Their holy service reaches an awesome level, yet they appear to the world as simpletons, not worthy of note. The Beggars teach us not to be fooled by the outward appearance.

A final example is the Master of Prayer. He is the archetype of the Tzaddik. At the beginning of the story is a short description of him and his followers. They would constantly be engaged in prayers, songs and praises to G-d. They dwelled outside of settled areas, but would periodically enter them to persuade people to go in their way. The Master of Prayer had the ability to change his appearance, and he would appear differently to each individual who saw him. Particularly, when he was unable to have influence over a person, he would present a deceptive appearance, and the person would not perceive his true, saintly aims at all. Here Rabbi Nachman gives us criterion for discerning who is an authentic tzaddik, and we can use this information to make an actual decision as to which religious leader is worthy of being followed.

Though the stories appear to be a form of lightweight

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literature, they in fact comprise some of the deepest teachings of Rabbi Nachman. As he said to his followers, "Seeing that my conventional teachings and discussions have not succeeded in bringing you back to G-d in repentance..... I will begin to tell stories (Rabbi Nathan's introduction to the Tales)." Thus also Rabbi Nathan attests to their awesome significance, in quotes such as the following: "All the scriptural verses and hints given at the end of some of the tales, are only faint indications, in order that people should know that they are not an empty thing..... but the real essence of the tales, and their true meaning, is beyond our understanding, and 'deep, deep, who can find it.' "

Rabbi Nachman was keenly aware of what are the tests facing these last generations before the Redemption. His stories are a crucially important gift, that he bequeathed to the People of Israel, in order to better their chances of passing the tests, and thus, to reach the final destination that G-d intended for them.



Introduction

Introduction

(written by Rabbi Nathan)

The concept of Man has already been established from the Beginning of Time. But only one Man merited to perfect the image of Man, that being the whole purpose of Man. Behold, he is our honored master and teacher, the Crown of our Glory, the Greatness of our Strength, the holy and awesome Rabbi, the great Light, the exalted Light, the precious and holy Light, our holy master, Rabbi Nachman, may his memory be for blessing. The grandson of the holy, awesome and g-dly Ba'al Shem Tov, may his memory be for blessing. From whose light the People of Israel have already benefited, through his holy and wondrous publications that have already been printed. Many saw and rejoiced, and the upright beamed. And the Truth will show the way.

And behold, now this may be added to our treasury. Wondrous and awesome Tales. That we merited to hear directly from his holy mouth. That he discerned, probed and perfected. And he en clothed and hid high and immense comprehensions within the stories, in wondrous and awesome ways. For this already has a precedent in the tradition of Israel. When they wanted to speak about hidden things, they would speak in the manner of riddle and allegory, and clothed the secrets of the Torah within various and manifold disguises. As it is explained after the story of the Son of the King and the Son of the Servant,

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that our Rabbi told how in the early years, when the Sages discussed the Kabbala, they would speak in that language. For until the time of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, they did not speak about the Kabbala openly. And for the most part, after the stories, he would reveal a tiny drop from the sea, only hinting at the true significance of the stories, as will be brought in the following pages in their proper place.

And behold, until now these works were concealed in our care. However, since many people are asking us, "Who will show us good?" For there are many among our congregation who have longed and thirsted to hear the words of the living G-d, that came from Rabbi Nachman's lips, may his memory be for blessing. And especially the stories he told, which they still had not merited to hear. Excepting through copies hand-written by various scribes. Which were filled with mistakes and which distorted the intended meaning. And we deferred their great desire and powerful longing, until we reached the point of having to fulfill their request. So we brought the stories to be printed.

Also, Rabbeinu revealed his intention, at one point, that he wanted to print a book of the stories. Such that on the upper part of the page would appear the Hebrew, and on the lower page, the vernacular. And he said, "Really, what can the world say against these? After all, in any case they are pleasant stories to hear, etc." Words along these lines we heard from him explicitly, in person, and they aroused us to bring the works to print. And though we are well aware that many rose against him. Nevertheless, the truth is witness to itself, and we are duty-bound to do his will. And the L-rd will do what is good in His eyes, and one willing to listen will hear, and one who is not will not.

And praise to G-d, until now His mercies have helped us, for Rabbeinu's holy publications have spread among the holy people. In the congregations and communities of

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Israel, and his words have given them joy and happiness, and are on their lips with the sweetness of honey. As cream and dew, it is satisfying their souls. And their lips are flowing with praises. And there are more with us than with the opposing side, those warring against the Truth, that speak calumny with arrogance and pride against the Righteous One. And it is not for us to speak at length about this, for it is an aspect of the hidden ways of the L-rd. How many worlds have been overturned through the increasing dissension that has spread in our days between the tzaddikim. And who can question the ways of the L-rd, who has caused all this turmoil to happen?

The stories are deep beyond imagining. Someone with eyes to see and a heart to understand will perceive this. For these words stand at the most exalted heights. And we heard explicitly from him that every word of the stories has enormous significance, and one who changes even one word from these stories, he causes much to be lost from them. And he said that these stories are very, very wondrous and awesome novelties. And there are within them hidden ways and incredible depths. And it is fitting to recite them in public gatherings and synagogues. For they are great and awesome novelties.

Further, one with a full heart, and who is well-versed in holy books - especially those of the holy Zohar and writings of the Ari - can understand and know a bit from the hints in some of the stories, if he puts his heart and mind to it.

Additionally, there are within them wonderful and awesome moral teachings, that the insightful will understand on their own. For nearly all of them arouse and draw the heart powerfully after the Holy One blessed be He. To return to Him in total truth, to be involved only with Torah and holy service always, and to turn one's attention

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from the vanities of this world entirely. As the reader will discern with his own intelligence. If one will look at them in truth, he will see that their intention is far removed from human intellect, and very deep, who can find it? And it is not for us to expand in the praise of the great beauty of the stories. For they are beyond our grasp. And all who add praise of their greatness and deepness, detracts. We only thought to arouse the hearts of our congregation somewhat, so that these wonders, which we saw from afar, will not be forgotten. To express to just what extent these things reach. Through the few hints he revealed to us, after each story. For even though these hints we heard from him were written down. Even so, it is clear to any intelligent person that there is no comparison between one who hears the teaching in person, and one who reads it in a book. Especially in the case with hints like these. For through a movement of his limbs, or a shake of his head, or a wink of the eye or raising of his hand and so forth - sometimes through them precisely, the person can understand a small fragment of meaning. And be awed at the image he sees. And from afar he will perceive the greatness of G-d and of His holy Torah. That were clothed in various garments, as is explained in all the holy books. Unto this point can reach our few words, that contain much. Our hearts will contemplate in awe - who can number, who can weigh, from where will come our help? Who will pass on for us the burning fire, who will stand at our side? We lift up our hearts in our hands, to our Father in Heaven, in His hand we will entrust our souls. To You, L-rd, we lift up our souls. Until now, Your mercies have helped us. Help us, for we depend on You. And may the pleasantness of the L-rd our G-d be upon us. Until a righteous teacher will come to our congregation. And build our holy and glorious Temple. Look down upon Tzion, the city of our festivals. May our eyes gaze upon the King in His beauty, speedily in our days, Amen.

Introduction

Behold, these are the words of the writer, organizer and copier - words that will satiate desire, and give the faintest intimation of our Rabbi's greatness - the lowly Nathan, son of my master and father, the Rabbi Naftali Hertz, may his memory be for blessing, from Nemirov. The son-in-law of the great genius and chassid, famous throughout the land, the honorable and holy teacher, Rabbi David Tzvi, may he be blessed with the life of the World to Come. Who was a judge in the community of Kremnitz and its surroundings, and the community of Sharigrad and Mahaliv, and their surroundings.

Before telling the first story in this book, Rabbi Nachman said: "In the stories that the world tells, there are many things that are hidden and very lofty. However, they are in a deficient state, for there is much missing from them. They are also jumbled, and are not told in the correct order. For what is relevant to the beginning, they tell at the end, and the opposite, and other like things. However in truth, there are in the stories that the world tells, things very deep and hidden. And the Ba'al Shem Tov, may his memory be blessed, could make spiritual unifications through a story. When he saw that spiritual channels were damaged, and it was not possible to repair them through prayer, he would repair them through stories." He spoke some more on this theme, and then began to recount the first story in this book, and said "Along the way, I told a story", etc.

And know, that the stories that Rabbi Nachman told, are nearly all totally new stories, that were never before heard. He simply told them from his holy heart and mind, according to his lofty comprehension, which he reached with his holy spirit, which he en clothed in each story. And the story itself is an awesome image and a very exalted comprehension, that he understood and perceived in the place where he perceived it. Also sometimes, he would tell

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traditional and known stories, but he would add much to them, and changed, fixed and reordered them, until they were totally different from the originals. However, in this book, only one or two from those are included, and the rest are completely new, never having been told before.

At the same time that Rabbi Nachman began telling the stories, he said explicitly, in this language: "Behold, I will begin to tell stories." His intention in these words was, "Because you have not returned to the Holy One through my holy teachings and discussions and the like (with which he labored with great effort all his days to return us to G-d in complete truth), therefore I will begin to tell stories." Thus, at that time, he taught the Torah which begins: "Rebbe Shimon opened and said: A time to act for the L-rd, they ceased from Your Torah, etc. This is the most ancient Torah." (As printed in *Likutey Moharan*, page 157.) There, at the end of the teaching, is discussed the concept of stories told by a true tzaddik, that have the power to arouse people who have fallen asleep, and are sleeping away their days. And there are stories that are within historic time, and stories from the earliest years, which are the aspect of "ancient", see the teaching there. And understand a tiny part from the one who taught it to what heights these stories reach, and what was his intention in telling them. And in truth, there is in these stories a very great arousal to return to the Holy One, blessed be He. Even on the simple level, aside from the hidden understandings. For all of them are very awesome secrets, and they have great power to arouse everyone to G-d.





Tales of Rabbi Nachman:

- . Story I: The Lost Princess
- . Story II: The King and the Emperor
- . Story III: The Cripple
- . Story IV: The King Who Decreed Annihilation
- . Story V: The Prince Who was Made of Precious Stones
- . Story VI: The Humble King
- . Story VII: The Fly and the Spider
- . Story VIII: The Rabbi and his Only Son
- . Story IX: The Clever and the Simple One
- . Story X: The Merchant and the Poor Man
- . Story XI: The Son of the King and the Son of the Maid who were Switched
- . Story XII: The Master of Prayer
- . Story XIII: The Seven Beggars
- . Story XIV: The Story of Trust
- . Letters of Rabbi Israel concerning the stories
- . Recordings of Rabbi Israel concerning the stories

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The Lost Princess

The Lost Princess

He said: Along the way, I told a story, that everyone who heard had thoughts of repentance. And it is as follows:



There once was a king, who had six sons and one daughter. This daughter was very precious in his eyes. He loved her exceptionally, and took great delight in her. One time, he spoke with her and lost his temper, and the words "May the no good one take you!" flew from his mouth. In the evening she went to her room, and in the morning, no one knew where she was. And her father was very distraught, and he went everywhere looking for her.

The second to the king stood up, for he saw that the king was very troubled, and asked that he provide him with a servant, a horse, and money for the journey, in order to search for her. He searched for a very long time, until he found her. (And following is the account of his search, until he found her). He went from place to place, for a very long time, in deserts, fields and forests. And he searched for her a very long time.

As he was crossing a desert, he saw a path to the side, and thought to himself: "Seeing that I've been going such a long time in the desert and I cannot find her, I'll try this path - maybe I'll come to a settled area." And he went a very long time on that path.

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Afterward, he saw a castle, with several soldiers standing guard around it. The castle was very attractive and well-built, and the soldiers were impressively aligned around it. He worried that the soldiers would not allow him to enter. But he said to himself, "I will go and try." So he left the horse behind, and approached the castle. And the soldiers did not hinder him. He went from room to room without disturbance, and came to one reception hall, in which the king sat, wearing his crown. And there were a number of guards, and musicians with their instruments standing before him. It was all very pleasant and beautiful, and neither the king nor any of the others inquired about him at all.

And he saw there delicacies and fine foods, and he approached and ate and went to lie down in a corner, to see what would transpire there. He saw that the king ordered for the queen to be brought. They went to bring her, and there ensued a great commotion and joy. The musicians played and sang a great deal, being that they were bringing the queen. They placed a chair for her and sat her next to the king. And she was the above-mentioned princess, and he (the second to the king), saw and recognized her.

After that, the queen gazed about and saw a man lying in a corner, and recognized him. She stood from her chair and went over to him, nudging him, and asked him, "Do you recognize me?" He answered, "Yes, I do. You're the princess who was lost." And he asked her, "How did you come to be here?" She answered, "Because my father blurted out the words 'The no good one should take you', and here, this place, is no good."

So he told her that her father was very saddened, and that he had been searching for several years. And he asked, "How can I get you out of here?" She answered, "The only

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possible way to take me out is if you choose a place, and dwell there a full year. And the whole year, you must long to take me out. Any time that you have free, you should only long and request and hope to free me. And do fasts, and on the last day of the year, you should fast and not sleep the entire day." So he went to do this.

On the last day of the year, he fasted, and did not sleep, and rose and began the journey back. And on the way he saw a tree, and on it were growing very attractive apples. And they were tantalizing to his eyes, and he approached and ate from them. Immediately after having eaten, he dropped and fell asleep, and he slept a very long time. His servant would try to wake him, but to no avail. Afterwards, he awoke from his sleep, and asked the servant, "Where am I in the world?" And the servant told him the story: "You were sleeping a very long time, several years. And I survived on the fruit." And he was very pained upon hearing this.

So he returned there and found her. And she revealed her great distress to him. "If you had only come on that day, you would have removed me from here, and because of one day, you lost everything. Nevertheless, it is very difficult not to eat, especially on the last day, when the evil inclination is very overpowering. (That is to say, the princess told him that now she would make the conditions more lenient, that from now he would not be expected to fast, for that is a very hard condition to meet.) So now, choose a place again, and dwell there also a year, as before. And on the last day you will be allowed to eat. Only you must not sleep, and must not drink wine, that you should not fall asleep. For the essential thing is not to sleep." So he went and did accordingly.

On the last day, he went there, and saw a spring, with a red appearance and the fragrance of wine. He asked the

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servant, "Did you see that spring, that ought to have water in it, but its color is red, and its scent is of wine?" And he went and tasted from the spring. And he immediately fell into a sleep that lasted several years - seventy, to be exact. And great numbers of soldiers passed with the equipment that accompanied them. The servant hid himself from the soldiers. After that passed a covered carriage, and in it sat the princess. She stopped by him, descended and sat by him, recognizing who he was. She shook him strongly, but he did not wake. And she started to bemoan, "How many immense efforts and travails he has undergone, these many years, in order to free me, and because of one day that he could have freed me, and lost it..." And she cried a great deal about this, saying "There is great pity for him and for me, that I am here so very long, and cannot leave." After that, she took her handkerchief from off of her head, and wrote upon it with her tears, and laid it by him. And she rose and boarded her carriage, and rode away.

Afterwards, he awoke, and asked the servant, "Where am I in the world?" So he told him the whole story - that many soldiers had passed there, and that there had been a carriage, and a woman who wept upon him and cried out, that there is great pity on him and on her. In the midst of this, he looked around and saw that there was a handkerchief lying next to him. So he asked "Where did this come from?" The servant explained that she had written upon it with her tears. So he took it and held it up against the sun, and began to see the letters, and he read all that was written there - all her mourning and crying, and that she is no longer in the aforementioned castle, and that he should look for a mountain of gold and a castle of pearls. There he would find her.

So he left the servant behind, and went to look for her alone. And he went for several years searching, and thought to himself, "Certainly a mountain of gold and a

The Lost Princess

castle of pearls would not be found in a settled area." For he was an expert in geography. So he went to the deserts. And he searched for her there many years.

Afterwards, he saw a giant man, far beyond the normal human limits of size. He was carrying a massive tree, the size of which is not found in settled areas. The man asked him, "Who are you?" He answered, "I am a man." The giant was amazed, and exclaimed, "I have been in the desert such a long time, and I have never seen a man here." So he told him the whole story, and that he was searching for a mountain of gold and a castle of pearls. The giant answered him, "Certainly, it does not exist at all." And he discouraged him and said that they had muddled his mind with nonsense, for it surely does not exist. So he started to cry bitterly, for he felt certain that it must exist somewhere. And this giant discouraged him, saying that certainly he had been told nonsense. Yet he (the Second to the King) still said that it must exist.

So the giant said to him, "I think it is nonsense. But since you persist, I am appointed over all the animals. I will do this for you: I will call them all. For they traverse the whole world, perhaps one of them will know where is the mountain and the castle." And he called them all, from the smallest to the largest, all the varieties of animals, and asked them. And all of them answered that they had not seen these things. So he said, "You see that they told you nonsense. If you want my advice, turn back, because you certainly will not find it, for it does not exist." And he pleaded passionately with him, saying, "But it absolutely must exist!"

So the giant said to him, "Behold, in this desert also lives my brother, and he is appointed over all the birds. Perhaps they know, since they fly at great heights - perhaps they saw this mountain and castle. Go to him and tell him

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that I sent you to him."

So he went for several years searching for him. And again he found a very large man, as before. He was also carrying a massive tree, as before. And this giant also asked him as had the first. And he told him the whole story, and that his brother had sent him to him. This giant also discouraged him, saying that it certainly did not exist. And he pleaded with him as with the first.

Then the giant said to him, "See, I am appointed over all the birds; I will call them, perhaps they know." So he called all the birds, and asked them all, from the smallest to the largest, and they answered that they did not know anything about this mountain and castle. So the giant said to him, "You see, it certainly does not exist. If you want my advice, turn back, for it simply does not exist." But he pleaded with him, saying "It certainly exists!"

So the giant said to him, "Further ahead in the desert lives my brother, who is appointed over all the winds, and they run over the whole world. Perhaps they know." So he went several more years searching, and found also this giant, and he was also carrying a giant tree. And the giant asked him, as the others had. And he told him the whole story, as before. And the giant discouraged him, as before. And he pleaded with him as well. So the third giant said to him, that for his sake he would call all the winds and ask them. He called them, and all the winds came, and he asked them all, and not one of them knew about the mountain and the castle. So the giant said to him, "You see, they told you nonsense." And the Second to the King began to cry bitterly, and said, "I know that it exists!"

As they were speaking, one more wind came. And the one appointed over them was annoyed with him, saying, "Why did you not come with the rest?" He answered, "I was delayed, for I needed to carry a princess to a mountain

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of gold and a castle of pearls." And the Second to the King was overjoyed.

The one appointed asked the wind, "What is expensive there? (That is to say, what things are considered valuable and important there?)" He answered him, "Everything there is very expensive." So the one appointed over the winds said to the Second to the King, "Seeing that you have been searching for her such a long time, and you went through many difficulties. Perhaps now you will be hindered by expenses. Therefore I am giving you this vessel. Every time you reach into it, you will receive money from it." And he commanded the previous wind to take him there. The wind came storming, and brought him there, right to the gate. There were guards posted there, that would not let him enter the city. So he reached into the vessel, took out money and bribed them, and entered the city. And it was a beautiful city.

He approached a man, and rented lodgings, for he would need to stay there some time. For it would need much intelligence and wisdom to free her. And how he freed her, he did not tell, but in the end he freed her.

Notes:

It is well-known from all the books of the Zohar and the Tikkunim (additions to the Zohar), and from the writings of the Ari Zal, that the "Princess" is an expression for the Shekhina (the Divine Presence) and the Jewish People, as it were. We have already been given the approval to speak in this language by the Rishonim who preceded us, and by whose words we live. Also, King David and his son Solomon used these expressions frequently, for example, "All the honor of the Princess is hidden within", and other such terms. And the whole book of Song of Songs, which is Holy of Holies, and the entire world is not worthy of it – it is all founded on this theme. And as we say in the prayer before reciting Psalms: "To unite the Woman of Youth with her Lover", and so on. Thus also in the prayer

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before donning Tefillin, we speak of uniting the bride and groom (see the prayerbook 'Sha'ari Tzion'). And one who studies the writings of the Ari will see that all of the Kabbalah is based on uniting the aspect of the bride and groom, male and female... All of our Rabbis, may their memory be blessed, expressed the existence of the worlds and their unification using the image of the joining of the bride and groom. For G-d created man in His image, and all the limbs of the male and female body are in the image of G-d. As it is written, "And G-d created the man in His image, in the image of G-d He created him, male and female He created them." For the human being - man and woman - are truly a part of G-d above, and the name of the L-rd is embedded within them... And all of the ancient sages used the language of bride and groom to express the drawing near of the Jewish People to their Heavenly Father, for all our Service in its highest root hints at the uniting of the Bride and Groom, the aspect of uniting the Holy One Blessed be He and the Divine Presence.

From all this and more, we can see that the exile of the Shekhina and the Jewish People is an aspect of the Lost Princess, and her estrangement from her Lover... In the story of the Lost Princess, it is clear that she signifies the Shekhina in exile. For the Exile of the Shekhina began before the Creation of the World. As soon as the First Man was created, he was supposed to repair this - to raise all the worlds to their proper place, and to reveal the Kingship of G-d immediately, as His Kingship will soon be revealed with the coming of the Messiah. However, he did not withhold himself from eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. We see this hinted at in the story, at the point when the Second to the King fails his test and eats the apple. And through this, Adam defiled all the worlds, and the Shekhina descended below, into the Impure Side, as is known. After this, Noah came and attempted to repair. But he did not succeed, for he drank wine and became drunk. Just as the Second to the King failed the second test, and drank the wine. And since then, all the Sages in every generation have been working to make this repair, until the Coming of the Messiah, when the repair will be complete.

And this story unfolds within every individual, and at every time. For also every individual experiences virtually the entire story in his own life. For every Jew needs to be involved with this Repair, the Redeeming of the Shekhina from the Exile,

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raising Her from the dust. To extract the Kingdom of Holiness from among the gentiles and the Other Side, among whom she had fallen. All of our Service, all the Mitzvot (commandments), and good deeds we do, and all the Torah we learn all our lives, all revolves around this point, as is explained in the writings of the Sages. Even the simplest Jews with limited understanding, if they go in a straight path, choosing the Good and shunning Evil, merit to make this repair, to raise the Shekhina from its downfall, according to the degree they sanctify and purify themselves.

Thus, every Jew is involved with the search for the Princess, to return her to her Father, and to her Father's house, where she had been in her youth. For the Jews are the aspect of the Second to the King, for they rule over the world. Just as G-d revives the dead and heals the sick, so do the Jews. And each one, according to the degree he merits to accomplish his mission, through which he searches for and raises the Shekhina - to that degree, the Shekhina reveals herself to him. She comes to him and reveals to him her location, and what he must do to find her. This is what we see in the story: The Princess lets the Second to the King know what schemes he should use to free her. And the schemes she sets forth are laid out clearly and simply. Namely, one must choose for himself a place, and establish there a routine of repentance and fasting, and to long and yearn continually for the L-rd, that he should merit to know Him, and that His Kingdom should be revealed in the world. For the central point of raising the Shekhina out of exile is the publicizing of the presence of G-d in the world, that all should know of Him and acknowledge His kingship.

Now, when a man begins to do this, and chooses a place to serve the L-rd and to yearn for Him. Sometimes he succeeds to continue for a time, and then, when he is very close to the goal, then, on the very last day, he is sent a test according to his level of mastery. Then, on that critical day upon which all depends, the Evil Inclination and his cohorts overwhelm him powerfully, and sway him with cunning words, and lead him according to their crooked advice. And he takes from the fruit and eats it, G-d forbid, and does not pass the test given to him, that he must pass according to that place and time. Thus, he immediately falls asleep, and sleep signifies losing one's intelligence - that his wisdom and understanding leaves him... In these periods when a person is in the aspect of sleep, G-d

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forbid, he passes through what he must - the aspect of the troops that passed by the Second to the King while he slept. Then, upon waking, and finding out how long he has been asleep, he returns to the Princess. She then grants him an easier test - he need not fast, only to abstain from wine that he should not fall asleep. So he returns to his place and yearns to free the Princess. But on the last day he once again fails the test...

Since also the second time, he does not pass the test, and tastes from the wine, he falls into a very deep sleep, lasting seventy years. The theme of sleeping for seventy years is elucidated in the Torah "Petach Rabbi Shimon", (Likutey Moharan, chap. 60). There it is explained that one can fall into such a sleep, that he falls from all seventy faces of the Torah, in the aspect of seventy years. From such a sleep, it is only possible to be awakened by Stories from Ancient Years. When the Princess finds him in such a sleep, she cries bitterly, and informs him of her newest location - the Castle of Pearls on the Mountain of Gold. The message is clear: No matter how many times one falls, the Shekhina continually offers him new advice how to search for the source of his holiness, the Princess, so to speak. And the Second to the King, after all his strivings, wanderings and painful sufferings which he undergoes to find the Princess, and then, on the verge of reaching her, loses everything. And he falls in this way twice. In spite of all this, he refuses to give up hope entirely, G-d forbid, and forges on to find the Castle of Pearls on the Mountain of Gold. Then, after passing through much more trials and tribulations, he finds the giant carrying the tree. In this giant, and later in his two brothers, we see the aspect of towering obstacles that lead one to think his mission is without hope of succeeding. Yet in spite of all their discouragements, he refuses to be swayed, saying he knows he will find what he is searching for. Until finally, the very last wind returns and informs him of the location of the Princess. And he goes there and frees her.

One who gazes on all this with the eye of truth will clearly understand how much one needs to strengthen oneself in serving G-d, and to what extremes one needs to be stubborn in serving Him, beyond all estimation. Each person according to his level, his ascents and descents, and regardless of what happens to him. Contemplate and understand from this story, how much the Second to the King strived and struggled, and afterwards fell into depression on not having stood in an easy test twice, until

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he fell to the level of seventy years of sleep. Even so, he did not give up, and had more struggles afterward, and refused to listen to the discouraging characters telling him to abandon his search. And the more he resolved not to listen to these people, the more they shifted from adversaries to helpers. Each one gathered the animals or birds he oversaw, sending them to search for him, to no avail. Until he came to the one appointed over the winds, through which he finally came to his goal. Consider this and understand, look upon every detail of the story, and see hints and wonderful encouragements to strengthen oneself at all times in the search for serving G-d. As it is written, "Search His presence always." For even though the full meaning of the story is beyond our understanding, and we have no conception of what is meant by "mountain of gold" and "castle of pearls", and the other themes of the story, nevertheless, all these hints are true and understood in the light of truth. And each reader can derive progressively deeper understandings and inspirations, if he is willing to listen and accept the import. And so with the rest of the stories. (See the entire teaching in Likutey Moharan, Part I, Chap. 60, for it is a commentary on this story, as we understood from Rabbi Nachman, may his memory be blessed.)



The King and the Emperor



There once was an emperor, who had no children. And a king, who also had no children. The emperor went to travel across the land, to wander and search - perhaps he would find some counsel or medicine to conceive children. The king also set out in the same manner, and they happened to meet in a particular inn, though they were not acquainted with each other. And the emperor noted in the king, that he had royal manners. So he asked him, and he informed him that he was a king. The king also recognized the same in the emperor, and the emperor informed him as well. And they revealed to each other that they were travelling for the aim of having children. So they made a pact, that if after returning to their homes, their wives would conceive a son and a daughter, in a manner that they could be married, then they would have them married. The emperor returned home and conceived a daughter, and the king returned and conceived a son, and they forgot about the pact.

The emperor sent his daughter to study, and also the king sent his son to study, and the two of them happened to be enrolled under the same teacher. They came to love each other very much, and they made a pact to get

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married. The son of the king took a ring and placed it on the finger of the emperor's daughter, and they married. Afterwards, the emperor sent after his daughter, and the king sent after his son, and brought them home.

They spoke of matches for the emperor's daughter, but she did not want any match because of the aforementioned pact. And the son of the king pined for her. Also, the emperor's daughter was constantly depressed. The emperor would lead her through his courtyards and palaces, and displayed her wealth to her, and still she was sad. And the king's son longed intensely for her, until he became sick. And when they asked him why he was sick, he would not answer. So they said to his servant, "Perhaps you can investigate why?" He answered them that he already knew. For he was with him then, in the place where he had studied, and he explained to them the matter.

Then the king remembered the agreement he had made with the emperor. So he wrote to the emperor, that he should prepare himself for the wedding, for they had already agreed to it. The emperor did not want it, but he did not dare to refuse. So he asked the king to send his son to him, and he would see if he had the quality of rulership, and if so, he would give his daughter to him. So the king sent his son to him. The emperor seated him in a room, giving him papers of government matters, to see if he could rule the country.

The king's son longed deeply to see the emperor's daughter, but they did not allow him. One time he went to a glass wall, and saw her, and collapsed in weakness. And she came to him, woke him, and revealed that she did not want any other match, because of the pact between them. He asked her, "What will we do, seeing that your father does not want the match?" She answered, "Even so." Afterwards, they came upon the idea that they would sail

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out to sea. They hired a ship and sailed.

They continued to sail, and eventually wanted to come to shore. They reached the shore, and there was there a forest, and they entered it. The daughter of the emperor took off the ring and gave it to him, and she went to sleep there. Afterwards, the son of the king decided to rest next to her, and he laid the ring next to her. Afterwards, they rose and returned to the ship.

Meanwhile, the emperor's daughter remembered that they had forgotten the ring there, so she sent him back for it. He went there, but could not find the place. So he went to another place, and still could not find the ring. He went from place to place looking for it, until he became lost, and could not find his way back. So she went to look for him, and she also lost her way. And he continued on, become more and more lost. After a time, he saw a path, and followed it to a settlement. He did not have anything to do there, so he became a servant. Also she became increasingly lost, and decided to go and sit by the sea. She went to the shore, and there were fruit trees there. So she sat there, and in the day she would walk by the sea, hoping to find ships passing by. She lived off of the fruits, and at night she climbed up into the trees, to be protected from the wild animals.

And it was, that there was a very powerful and impressive businessman, who had dealings all over the world. He had an only son, and the businessman was elderly. One time, the son said to his father, "Seeing that you are old and I am young, and your ministers are not looking out for me at all, and you will pass away, and I will be left empty-handed, without what to do. Why don't you give me a ship with merchandise, and I'll set to sea, to become expert in business." So his father gave him a ship with merchandise, and he went to various countries, sold

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his goods, bought others in their place, and was successful.

While he was at sea, he saw those trees wherein was the emperor's daughter, and thought it was a settlement. He wanted to go there, and as he drew closer, he saw that it was only trees, and he wanted to turn back. Just then, he happened to gaze on one tree, and within it was the form of a man. He thought he might be misperceiving, so he told the other people who were with him, and they looked and also saw the form of a man in the tree. They decided to approach the place, and sent out one man in a small boat. They kept watch on him to direct him, so that he would not lose his way, so that he would keep headed toward that tree. He arrived there, and saw that there was a person sitting in the tree, and he told them.

So the trader's son went himself, and saw that she was sitting there (the emperor's daughter), and he told her to come down. She answered that she would not descend unless he promised her that he would not touch her, until they returned to his house and he married her lawfully. So he promised her, and she boarded the ship with him. He saw that she knew how to play instruments, and she also spoke several languages. And he rejoiced in his find.

Afterwards, as they began to near his house, she said to him that it would be proper for him to go to the house, and inform his father and relatives, and all his friends, so that all of them would come out to welcome her, and after that she would reveal who she was (for even before, she had demanded that he not ask her name until after the wedding - only then he would know who she was.) He agreed to this. She added, "It would also be fitting, seeing that you are bringing such an important woman with you, that you should honor all the sailors in the ship with fine wine, so that they should know that their captain is marrying such a woman." And he agreed.

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So he took good wine that he had in the ship, and gave it to them, and they became very drunk. Meanwhile, he went to his house, to tell his father and relatives. And the sailors left the ship and collapsed in a drunken stupor.

While the family were preparing themselves to go out and receive her, she went and released the ship from its moorings, and spread the sails, and sailed away. The family went down to the ship, and found nothing there. And the old businessman (the trader's father) was very angry with him. The son exclaimed excitedly, "Believe me, I brought a ship full of merchandise!" And they did not see a thing. He said, "Go and ask the sailors." They went to ask them, and found them lying drunk. Afterwards they awoke. And when they were asked, they did not know at all what had happened to them. They only knew that they had brought a ship with merchandise, and did not know where it was. The father was enraged at his son, and banished him from the house, warning him not to come within his presence. And so he wandered aimlessly, and she (the emperor's daughter) sailed on the sea.

And it was, that there was a certain king, who had built a palace on the sea, for it pleased him to build palaces on the sea, because of the sea air. And the ships would pass there. And the emperor's daughter was sailing the sea, and she came close to this king's palace. The king gazed and saw a ship without anyone directing it, without people at all. He thought he was mistaken, so he asked his people to look, and they also saw likewise, and she drew closer to the palace. Afterwards she thought to herself, "What do I need with this palace?" So she started to turn back. But the king sent to bring her back, and he brought her into his house.

And this king had no wife, for he could not choose one. For the ones he desired, did not want him, and also the opposite. When the emperor's daughter came, she

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asked him to swear that he would not touch her until he married her lawfully. And so he swore. And she said that it was fitting that he not open the ship's hold, nor tamper with it. Rather it should stay in its place on the sea until the marriage. Then everyone would see it all - the abundance of merchandise that she had brought. That people should not say he had taken a woman from off the street. And he promised her accordingly.

So the king wrote to all the nations, that they should gather together and come to his wedding. And he built a palace for her. And she demanded that they bring her eleven of the ministers' daughters, to be with her. Thus the king commanded, and they sent her eleven daughters of very high-ranking ministers. And they built a palace especially for each one, and she also had her own palace. They would gather together with her, and would play on instruments and pass the time with her.

One time, she asked them to come with her onto the ship, and they went with her and entertained themselves there. Then she said she would honor them with fine wine that she had, and she gave them from the wine on the ship, and they became drunk and fell into a stupor. Meanwhile, she went and released the ship, and spread out the sails, and made off with the ship. Now the king and his people looked and noticed that the ship was not there, and were shocked. The king said, "Beware not to tell her all at once, for she will be very distressed at the loss of such a valuable ship as that one (for the king did not know that she herself had escaped with the ship, and assumed that she was still in her room). She also might think that the king gave the ship to someone. Simply send one of the ministers' daughters to tell her with wisdom." They went to one room and did not find anyone, and then to another, and so to all the eleven rooms, and found no one. So they agreed to send an elderly mistress in the night to tell her. They

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went to her room and found no one there. And they were very shocked.

Meanwhile, the fathers of the missing women, who were accustomed to receiving letters from their daughters, now noticed that they were not receiving any letters. So they took matters in their hands, and travelled there themselves. Upon not finding their daughters, they were enraged. They considered banishing the king, and sending him to the prison for those deserving the death penalty. For they were the ministers of the nation, having the power to mete out punishments such as this. However, they thought to themselves, "What is the King's sin, that he should be imprisoned? For he had no control over the matter." So they agreed to dethrone and banish him. They did, and he went his way.

As for the daughter of the emperor, she escaped with the eleven ministers' daughters, and sailed away in the ship. Afterwards, the daughters woke up, and resumed their play, for they did not realize that the ship had already left shore. Presently they said to her, "Let's return!" She said to them, "Let's stay a while longer." After this, a fierce storm developed, and they said, "We must return home!" Then she revealed to them that the ship had already left the shore. They asked her why she had done this, and she explained that she feared the ship would be broken apart by the storm wind. Therefore she had no choice but to unfurl and spread the sails. So they sailed on the sea, and they played their instruments. Then they passed by a palace, and the daughters said to her, "Let's approach it!" But she did not want to do it, being that she regretted having come near the first palace (the one belonging to the king who wanted to marry her).

After this, they saw an island, and approached it. There were twelve thieves there, who wanted to murder

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them. So the emperor's daughter asked, "Who is the chief among you?" So they introduced her to him. Then she asked him, "What is your trade?" He answered that they were thieves. She said, "We are also thieves. However, whereas you use brute force, we use wisdom. For we are learned in languages and in playing of instruments. So what would you benefit by murdering us? Better to marry us, and then you can also acquire all our wealth." And she showed him the riches that were in their ship, and her words won them over. So the thieves also showed them all their wealth, and led them through their whole camp. They agreed that they would not marry all at once, rather one pair after another. Further, that each of the thieves should choose a bride befitting him, the most honored according to his high standing, and so on.

Then, she announced that she wanted to honor them with a fine and wondrous wine that she had in the ship. She told them that she had intended never to use it, guarding it instead for the day when she would meet her intended match. Then she served them the wine in twelve goblets, and asked each of the thieves to drink from one. They drank, became intoxicated and collapsed. She said to her companions, "Go now, each one and slaughter her husband." So they did. And they found incredible wealth, beyond that of any king. They agreed not to take any brass or silver - only gold and precious stones. And they threw from their ship possessions which were not so valuable, and loaded it with the treasure - the gold and stones they had found. They agreed to cease dressing as women, and sewed for themselves mens' clothing, and sailed away in the ship.

Now, there was an elderly king who had an only son. He married him off, and bequeathed the kingdom to him. And the king's son said that he and his wife should take a cruise at sea, that she should be accustomed to the sea air,

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in case, G-d forbid, they might at some point need to escape on the sea. So he went with his wife and his ministers, and they were very jubilant and in a spirit of festivity. At one point, they decided they should strip off all their clothes, and so they did. They left on nothing except their undergarments. And they began to dare to climb up onto the prow, the king's son among them.

Now the emperor's daughter came along in her ship, and saw this other ship (the ship with the king's son and his company), and at first she was afraid to draw near it. After coming a bit closer, she saw that they were merrymaking, and realized that they were not thieves. So they drew near. Then she said to her friends, "I can bring that baldhead toppling into the sea (that is, the king's son, who was climbing the prow)." For he was in fact bald. Her friends replied, "But how? We are so far away from them!" She explained to them that there is a lens with the power to burn, and she would use one to topple him. She added that she would not topple him until he climbed to the very tip of the prow. For if he fell from the middle of it, he would fall into the ship. But if he climbed to the tip, he would fall into the sea. So she waited until he climbed all the way to the tip, and then she took the lens and held it up to the sun, and directed its ray squarely at his head, until his brain was burned and he fell into the sea.

When the friends of the king's son saw that he had fallen, it threw them into upheaval, for how could they return home - the king would die from sorrow. So they decided to draw near to the ship they saw nearby (the ship of the emperor's daughter), perhaps they would find a doctor on board who could give them advice. So they came next to the ship, and told them (the emperor's daughter and her friends) not to be afraid, they would not do them any harm. Then they asked, "Perhaps there is a doctor among you who could advise us?" And they recounted the

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whole story of how the king's son had fallen into the sea. The emperor's daughter answered that they should retrieve his body from the sea. They went and found his body and retrieved it. Then she took his pulse, and said that his brain had been burnt. So they cut open his head, and saw that it was just as she had said, and they were astonished. And they asked her to come home with them, and to be the king's doctor, and said she would be very important and esteemed. But she did not want to go. And she added that she was not really a doctor, she just happened to know these things.

The ministers of the king did not want to return home, so the two ships sailed together. And they were very strongly in favor of their queen marrying the doctor, because of the impressive wisdom they saw in him (for they thought that the emperor's daughter and her friends were men, because they were dressed as men. Thus, they wanted their queen (the wife of the king who had died), to marry the doctor, (who was really the emperor's daughter). And that he should become their king, whereas their original king (the elderly king mentioned at the beginning), they would murder. They all wanted this very much, yet they felt they could not speak about it to the queen, that she should marry the doctor. She herself also wanted very much to marry the doctor. But she feared from her country's people, lest they not be willing to accept him as king. So they agreed to throw parties, so that during a party, at an opportune moment, they could talk about this. So they held a party for each one, each on a different day.

When the day arrived for the doctor's (the emperor's daughter's) party, she gave them to drink from her aforementioned wine, and they became drunk. At the opportune moment, the ministers said, "How fine it would be for the queen to marry the doctor." "It would be very fine," the doctor replied. "If they would only say it without

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being drunk." Also the queen responded, saying how fine it would be for her to marry the doctor, only that her nation should agree to it. The doctor (that is, the emperor's daughter), responded again as before, saying "It would be very fine, if only they would say it without being drunk."

Afterwards, when they awoke from their stupor, the ministers remembered what they had said and were embarrassed before their queen on account of it. However, she herself had said the same. She was also embarrassed before them, but on the other hand, they had also said it. So they started to talk about it, and came to agree on it. And so the queen was married to the doctor (the emperor's daughter, who they believed to be a doctor), and they travelled to their country.

When the people of the country saw them coming, they were very joyful, for it had been a long time that the king's son had been gone, and they had not known where he was. The elderly king had already passed away before their return. Afterwards, they noticed that the king's son, who should now be their king, was missing. So they asked, "Where is our King?" So they explained to them the whole story, how he had already died, and that they had already accepted upon themselves this new king that had come with them. And the people were very joyous that a new king had come to them.

Now the king (the emperor's daughter, who had now become a king) commanded to declare in every state, that everyone in every place, be he a foreigner, a guest, a fugitive or one banished, that all should come to the king's wedding, without exception, and that all would receive great gifts. And the king commanded that they should dig wells surrounding the whole city, so that when one would want to drink, he would not have to go far, but would find a well right beside him. And the king commanded to paint

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a portrait of himself by every well, and to station guards by each one, that they should watch for someone who would come and stare an unusually long time at the portrait, and make a disturbed face (that is, one whose expression would change, upon seeing something significant and being amazed and disturbed by it). For such a one, he commanded that they arrest and hold him. And so they did. And the three aforementioned characters came: The son of the first king, who was the true husband of the emperor's daughter, and the son of the businessman (whose father had banished him because of the emperor's daughter, who escaped with the ship loaded with merchandise), and the king who was dethroned (also by her doing, for she escaped from him with the eleven ministers' daughters). And each one of them recognized her portrait, and gazed at it, and remembered, and was pained. And they were all arrested.

At the time of the wedding, the king (the emperor's daughter) commanded that the prisoners come before her. So they brought the three, and she recognized them, but they did not recognize her, for she was dressed as a man. The emperor's daughter spoke up and said: "You, King (that is, the king who was dethroned as described). They dethroned you on account of the eleven daughters that were lost. Here are your ministers' daughters. Go back to your country and your kingdom (for the eleven ministers' daughters were here with her)." Then, she turned her face to address the son of the businessman. "You, businessman. Your father banished you on account of the ship with all the merchandise which you lost. Here is your ship with all the merchandise. And as for all the time lost, now you have riches in the ship many times the original value (for the ship itself, with all the merchandise of the businessman's son, was still with her in perfect condition. And in addition, it now held all the treasures she had taken from the thieves - a very tremendous wealth, overflowing in

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abundance). And now you, son of the king (that is, her true husband) - let us go and travel away." And they returned to their home.

*Blessed is the L-rd forever, amen and
amen.*



The Cripple

The Cripple



There once was 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 do other types of work, but they should make a special effort to water trees. Afterwards, the wise man died, and left behind his sons, and he had one son who could not walk. He could stand, but could not walk. His brothers would support him, and they provided him so much that he had money to spare. Now this son saved up the extra money until he reached a certain sum. Then he said to himself, "Why should I accept charity from them. Better that I start to do some business." And 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 were approving, and said, "Why should we have to support him? It's good that he should have a trade." They lent him more money, in order that he could conduct his trading. And he hired a carriage, an escort and a driver, and set out. They came to an inn, and the escort said they should stay there the night,

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but he did not agree. They tried to convince him, but he was stubbornly set, and so they went onward. They became lost in the 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, "He who wants food, come to me." And several people gathered about him. He acted with cleverness, and anyone who he judged that he did not need, he pushed away. And to one he would say, "You would be fitting as a craftsman." And to another he would say, "You should work on a gristmill." He chose only intelligent people, and went with them to the forest. There he said that they should become thieves, being that they were at a crossroads, with roads leading to Leipzig, Breslov, and other cities. And traders would pass there, so they could steal from them and gather up money. And so they fell upon the son who could not walk, and his two companions.

Now the carriage driver and the escort, who were able to escape, did so. So 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 escaped to where they escaped. They had unpaid debts in their hometown, so they reasoned, Why should we go back? We could end up in chains. Better to stay here, and be an escort and carriage driver here.

And as for the son, as long as he had the dried cracker-bread that he had brought from home, he ate it. Afterwards, 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. And he slept alone,

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frightened, in the open field. His strength waned, until he could no longer even stand, he could only crawl. And he would eat the grass surrounding him, until he finished all the grass within his reach. At that point, he would crawl forward a ways, and eat there. And he ate grass in this manner for some time.

One time, he came to a patch of grass, the likes of which he had not eaten before. And it attracted him, for he had been eating grass a long time, and had never seen grass like this. He decided to pull it up from the root, and under the root there was a precious stone. It was square, and each side had a different magic power. On one side was written, that the one who grasps this side would be transported to the place where day and night come together, and where the sun and moon come together. And when he uprooted the grass which grew over the stone, he happened to grasp this side. And 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.

And he heard the sun and the moon talking together. 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 in bringing children, another for wealth, another for curing this disease, and another for curing another disease - each one effective for a different aim. And this tree needed watering, and if it were watered, it would be very effective. "And not only is it not being watered. Further, because I shine on it, I am drying it out."

The moon answered and said, "You think you have problems. Let me tell you about mine. It so happens that I have a thousand mountains. Surrounding these are another thousand, and it is a place of demons. And these

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demons have chicken feet, and they do not have power in their feet, so they draw power from my feet, and because of this I do not have power in my feet. And I have a dust which can heal my feet. But the wind comes and takes it away.

The moon answered, "Is that all you are worried about? I'll tell you of a cure. There is a road, that splits into several roads. One is a road of the righteous. Even the righteous of this place (who one would think would not need this done, being that the dust is plentiful here) with every step takes, they spread under him the dust from that road. So that every step he takes, he treads upon that dust. And there is a road of the blasphemers. Even a blasphemer from here, with every step they spread under him the dust of that road. And there is a road of the insane. Even an insane one from here, with his every step, they spread the dust as described before. And so there are several such roads. And there is another road, upon which walk righteous ones who accept suffering upon themselves. And the wicked ones lead them in chains, and they have no power in their feet. Then dust from that road is spread under their feet, and they receive power in their feet. Therefore, go to that place, where there is much of that dust, and your feet will be healed." And the sun listened to all his words.

In the midst of this, he looked on another side of the stone, and saw written there, that one who grasps that side, would be taken to the place of the road that splits into several. So he grasped that side, and was transported there, and began to walk on the road with the dust that brings healing to the feet, and was healed immediately. And he went and took dust from each of the roads, and made clumps from each type of dust - the dust of the road of the righteous in one clump, and likewise the varieties of dust from each of the roads. He made each into a separate

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clump, 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 thieves would start when they went to steal. He took the dust of the righteous and the dust of the insane, and mixed it together, and spread it out on the road. Then he climbed up the tree, and waited to see what would happen to them. And the head thief sent out several of his men to go and steal, and when they came to this road and stepped on the dust, they immediately became righteous, and began to cry for their souls, that they had stolen until now, and had murdered several people. But since there was mixed into this dust, the dust of the insane, they became insane 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 by means of you that we stole!", and so on, until they murdered each other. So another group was sent, and the same happened. And so the next time as well, until they were all murdered. Until the son realized that there was no one left alive except the leader of the thieves, and one other. So he came down from the tree, and swept the magic dust off of the road, and sprinkled the dust of the righteous alone. Then he went and sat up in the tree again.

Now, the leader of the thieves was amazed that he had sent all his followers, and not one had returned to him. So he went himself, with the other who had remained with him, and immediately upon treading that road (where was sprinkled the dust of the righteous), he became a righteous man. He began to wail to his friend for his soul, that he had murdered so many people, and stolen from so many. He began unearthing graves, and returned in complete penitence, and was very regretful. And when the son saw that he regretted and repented so deeply, he came down

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from the tree. And when the thief saw that he had found a man, he began to cry, "Oh, mercy on my soul! Such and such things I did. Aha, give me a way to repent!" The son answered him, "Give me back the chest that you took from me (for they had kept a written account of every robbery, the day it occurred, and from who they had robbed)." The thief answered, "I'll return it immediately. I'll even give you all the hordes of goods I stole. 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 thievery, and murdered and robbed from many souls.' That is your repentance." So the thief gave him all his treasures, and he went with him to the town, and he did as he had been told. And they judged in that town, that due to the many murders he had committed, he should be hung, that people should see and be warned.

Afterwards, the son decided to go to the two thousand mountains mentioned before, to see what was happening there. When he came, he stood far off from the two thousand mountains, and saw that were many thousands upon thousands, and myriads upon myriads of families of devils. For they multiply as do people, and they are very numerous. And he saw their king sitting on a throne, the likes of which no mortal man would sit on. He observed that they were engaged in ridicule - one would recount how he had hurt a baby, another how he had hurt someone's hand, yet another how he had damaged a foot, and other similar ridicule.

In the midst of this, he noticed a father and mother walking along and crying, and he asked them, "Why are you crying?" They answered that they have a son, and it was his habit to go out on his own, and he would come back at the same time each day. And now it had been a long time, and he had not returned. So they brought the

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couple to the king, and he commanded to send messengers all over the world to find him. And as they were returning, they happened to meet one who had often been together with their son (however now, he was alone). He asked them, "Why are you crying?" So they recounted the story. He answered them, "I will explain. There was an island in the sea, and that had been our place. But then came the king whose province the island was in, and wanted to build buildings there, and he set down foundations. And my friend (the son of the devils who was lost) said to me that we should hurt the king, so we went and took away his power. He went to many doctors, but they could not help him. So he began to go to sorcerers. And one of those sorcerers knew his family, but my family he did not know. Thus, he was not able to do me any harm. But his family he knew, and he caught him, and tortured him severely."

Upon hearing this, the parents brought their son's friend to the king, and he told his story to the king. The king said "Return the king's power to him!" He answered, "There was one among us who did not have any power, so we gave the king's power to him." The king said, "Take the power away from him and return it to the king." He answered the king, "But he became a cloud." So the king said they should summon the cloud and bring him here. So they sent a messenger to get him.

Now the son, who at the beginning was unable to walk, and who came here and saw all this, said, "I will go to see this thing, how one of these people can become a cloud." So he followed the messenger, and came to the town where the cloud was, and asked the people of the town, "Why has this cloud covered up this town so completely?" They answered, "To the contrary, in this place there had never been a cloud, and now for some time this cloud has covered us." Meanwhile, the messenger went and called the cloud. So it left the place. And the son

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decided to follow them, to listen to what they were saying. He heard the messenger ask, "How did you come to be a cloud here?" The other answered him, "Let me tell you a story."

"One time there was a wise man, and the emperor of the country was an atheist, and he brought the whole country to become unbelievers. Then the wise man called together his whole family, and said to them, "You see that the Emperor is an unbeliever, and has drawn the whole country after him, and even a few from our family have also become unbelievers. Thus, we are going to retreat to the desert, in order to preserve our faith in the L-rd, may He be blessed." They agreed with the plan. Then the wise man uttered a name (that is, one of the holy names of the L-rd), and brought them instantly to the desert. This desert did not find favor in his eyes, so he uttered another name, and brought them to another desert, which was also not favorable to him. He uttered another name, and brought them to another desert, which he found favorable. And this desert was adjacent to the two thousand mountains. The wise man went and drew a circle around his family, so that no one could come near them.

And there is a tree, that if it were to be watered, there would not remain a trace of the devils. And therefore, there are guards there from among our people, who stand night and day, digging around the tree and preventing water from reaching it."

The one listening to the story asked, "Why do they stand there night and day? Wouldn't digging one time be enough to prevent the water flowing in?"

The teller of the story answered, "There are gossipers among us, and these gossipers go and create conflict between our king and another king. This develops into war, which causes an earthquake, and the trenches that

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were dug collapse, and then water can come to the tree. Therefore, they stand guard and dig constantly. And when a new king arises among us, they boast of all their mischief before him, and everyone is merry. This one tells of how he hurt a baby, and how the mother is grieving over it, and another tells some other like story, and so many other similar mockeries. And as the king becomes more light-hearted, he goes and wanders about with his nobles, and tries by himself to uproot the tree. For without this tree, it would be very good for us. And he gathers up all his power of will to uproot the tree. But when he approaches the tree, it screams fiercely, and then fear falls upon him and he turns back.

One time, a new king was declared, and they performed all their mockeries before him, as described above, and he became very merry, and his heart swelled with vanity, and he boasted he would uproot the tree entirely, and went out wandering with his nobles. And he girded his resolve powerfully, and ran to the tree to uproot it completely. When he arrived, the tree let out a great scream, and fear fell on him, and he turned back. Then he became very angry and returned. On his way, he looked and noticed some men sitting (they were the wise man and his people), and he sent some of his men to abuse them, as was his custom always. When the wise man's people saw them, they became afraid. And the wise man said to them, "Do not fear."

And when the devils came near to them, they could not reach them, because of the circle the wise man had drawn around them. So the king sent other men, and they could not either. So he flew into a rage, and went himself, but he also could not come near them. He asked the wise man to let him in. The wise man responded, "Since you ask, I will let you in. And since it is not honorable that the king should go unescorted, I will allow one other to come

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in with you." He opened an entrance for them, they came in, and then he closed the circle again. The king now asked, "How did you come to settle in my place?" Answered the wise man, "Who is to say it is your place? It is my place!" The king said, "Are you not afraid of me?" He answered "No!" Then the king repeated, "Are you not afraid of me?" And he extended himself and became very large, as high as the heavens. And he wanted to swallow the wise man. But he responded, "Even so, I am not afraid at all. However, if I want, you will become afraid of me." So he went and prayed a bit, and he became a great stormcloud, with loud thunderings, and the thunder killed his men. All the king's nobles were killed, and only he and the companion that came into the circle with him remained. The king begged for the thunder to stop, and then it stopped.

The king now said to him, "Because you are such a unique man, I will give you a book with all the families of the devils. For there are spiritual masters who only know of one family, and even that they do not know completely. I will give you a book with all the families, for the king has the list with all the names. Even the newly born are on record with the king." And he sent the companion who came with him to go and bring the book (so it turned out to be a wise choice to let one companion enter with the king, for if he had entered alone, who would have gone after the book?) And he brought the book to him. He opened it, and saw written there thousands upon thousands of devil families. Then the king promised him that they would never do harm to his family. He commanded to be brought the portraits of every member of his family. Even when a new child would be born, they should immediately bring him the child's portrait. In order that no one from the wise man's family would ever be harmed.

Later on, when the wise man reached his time to pass

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on from the world, he called together his children and commanded them, saying: "I leave you with this book. You see that I have the power to use this book in holiness, and nevertheless I do not use it. I simply put my trust in the L-rd, may He be blessed. Neither should you use it. Even if there be found among you, one who is able to use it in holiness, even so, do not use it, and rather trust in the L-rd." So he passed away, and the book was handed down, and came to his grandson. He had the power to use it in holiness. But he had faith in the L-rd, may He be blessed, and he did not use it, as the wise man had commanded. And the gossipers among them tried to tempt the grandson: "Seeing that you have mature daughters, and you can neither support them or marry them off, make use of the book." And he did not know they were trying to tempt him, and thought that his own heart was advising him thus.

He then travelled to the grave of his ancestor, and asked him, "Seeing that you commanded in your will that we not use the book, and instead to have faith in the L-rd. But now my heart is drawing me to use it." The deceased wise man answered him, "Even though you have the power to use the book in holiness, better that you have faith in the L-rd and not use it, and the L-rd will help you." And so he did.

There came a time, when the king of the country (wherein lived the grandson), became ill. He went to doctors, but they could not heal him. For because of the intense heat of that country, medical treatments were not effective. So the king commanded that the Jews pray for him. Then our king said, "Seeing that the grandson has the power to use the book, and yet he chooses not to use it, we will do him a favor." So he commanded me to be a cloud there, so that the king would have healing from the medicines he already took, and from medicines he is still to

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take. And the grandson had no awareness of all this. It was because of this that I became a cloud here (All this was from the story that the cloud recounted to the messenger)."

Now the son from the beginning of the story (who did not have power in his legs to walk), had been following after these two and listening. Then they came to the king of the devils, and the king commanded that they return the power to the other king. So they did, and then the missing son of the devil couple came back. He was in a broken state, without strength, for they had tormented him exceedingly there. He was burning with resentment at the sorcerer who had tormented him so, and he commanded his sons and family that they should forever be haunting that sorcerer. But there were gossipers among them, and they went and told the sorcerer to beware, for they were waiting to harm him. So he devised a scheme, and called on other sorcerers who were familiar with the devil families, in order to be protected. And the the son and his family were enraged at these gossipers, that they had revealed his secret.

One time it happened, that the family of the son and some of the gossipers served together on a shift guarding the king. The family of the son went and spoke slander about the gossipers to the king. So the king executed the gossipers, and their remaining friends were enraged. So they went and created dissension between all the kings. And there developed among the devils famine, poverty, bloodshed and plague, and war broke out between all the kings. Through this was caused an earthquake, and the earth fell entirely, and the tree was totally watered. And there remained nothing from the devils, and it was as if they had never been. Amen.

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Notes:

The essence of this story is hinted at in the first chapter of Psalms: "Happy is the man who did not walk in the advice of evil ones, and in the path of the sinners did not stand". This is the aspect of the paths in the story, on which the dust was sprinkled. "He will be as a tree planted by streams of water, giving fruit in its season, and its leaves will not wither, and all that he does will prosper." This is the tree which the devils tried to damage, all of whose fruit and leaves were effective for all kinds of maladies. Examine further and see other hints: "Happy is the man who did not walk...", for at first he was not able to walk. "and in the path of sinners did not stand", for later on, he could not stand either. "and in the gathering of mockers did not sit", that is, the gathering of mockers in the story. And all these are only a faint indication of the story's depth, that we should have some conception of the deeper significance. Yet these matters are still very hidden to the utter extent of concealment. For all the stories he told are far beyond human comprehension, and hidden from the eyes of all the living.



The King who Decreed Annihilation

(A Story of Miracles)



Once there was a king who forced expulsion upon his country, through a decree of annihilation. Anyone who wanted to remain in the country would have to recant his faith, and if he did not, he would be expelled from the country. Some of them gave up all their belongings and wealth, and left in poverty, in order to retain their faith and remain Jewish. And some of them were not willing to sacrifice their belongings and wealth, so they stayed there in a state of persecution. In private, they practiced the Jewish faith, but in public they were not allowed to behave as Jews.

The first king passed away, and his son became king. And he began to rule the country with an iron fist. He conquered several states, and had great wisdom.

And because he ruled over his ministers with severity, they spoke against him, and conspired to overthrow him and to obliterate him and his descendants. And there was among the ministers one of the persecuted people. He reasoned to himself, "Why, after all, did I stay here under persecution? Because I valued my wealth and possessions. Now, if the country will be without a king, the people will

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swallow each other alive. For a state cannot exist without a king." Therefore, he decided to go and inform the king without their knowing. He went and told the king that they were conspiring against him as described. Then the king went and probed to see if the matter was true, and he saw that it was. So he stationed guards. On the night that the ministers made their attempt against the king, they were caught, and judged, each one according to his case.

The king asked the persecuted minister, "What honor can I bestow upon you, for having saved me and my descendants? If I thought to make you a minister - well, you already are one. If I were to give you riches, you are wealthy already. Tell me what honor you would like, and I will grant it to you." The minister asked, "But will you really fulfill my request?" The king answered yes. The minister said, "Swear to me." So he did. Then the minister said, "My main honor would be that I be permitted to be Jewish in public, to don a tallis and tefillin in public." At this the king was very annoyed, for in all his kingdom, no one was allowed to be Jewish. But he did not have any other choice because he had sworn. In the morning, the minister donned his tallis and tefillin publicly.

After this, the king passed away, and his son became king. He began to rule with gentleness, for he saw how they had wanted to wipe out his father. He conquered many nations, and he had very great wisdom. He gathered together all the astrologers to tell him by what thing his seed could be cut off, in order that he guard himself from it. They told him that his seed would not be cut off as long as he guarded himself from a bull and a sheep. They wrote this down in their book of annals. And he commanded his sons that they also rule in the same manner as he, with gentleness, and he passed away.

Then his son became king, and he began to rule with

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severity, as had his grandfather. He conquered many states, and came upon an idea: He commanded to be announced that there should not be found in his kingdom any bulls or sheep, in order that his seed not be cut off. Therefore, he had nothing to fear. He ruled the country with a strong hand, and became great in wisdom.

The king came up with an idea, how to conquer the world without war. For there are seven regions of the world, that is, the world is divided into seven parts. And there are seven shooting stars, each one shining on one of the seven regions. And there are seven varieties of metals, and every one of the seven stars shines on one of these metals. And he went and gathered all seven types of metals, and commanded to be brought the portraits of all the kings, which are made of gold and which hang in their palaces. And he made from all of these a man. His head was of gold, his torso of silver, and so all the other limbs were of other metals. All of the seven metals were included within him. They positioned him on top of a high mountain, and all the seven bright stars shined upon this man. When some person needed advice, or to know whether to commence some business or not, he would stand next to the limb made of the metal that was native to his region. And he would focus on the question of whether he should do this business or not. When it was appropriate for him to do it, the limb would light up and shine, and if not, it would remain darkened. Through this the king conquered the whole world, and gathered great wealth.

But this statue only had this ability with the condition that the king would cast down the haughty and raise up the lowly. So he sent out invitations to all the generals and other ministers with high-ranking posts and honors, and they all came. And he cast them down, and took away their posts. Even those who had had posts with his grandfather's grandfather, he took their posts away. And

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he raised up lowly ones and appointed them in their place. Among the ones that the king sought to cast down was the Jewish minister described before. The king asked him, "What is your position and appointment?" He answered, "My position is that I be allowed to be Jewish in public, in return for the favor that I did for your grandfather." And he took this away from him, and he returned to his persecuted position.

One time, the king went to sleep and dreamed that he saw a clear sky, and saw all the twelve signs of the Zodiac. And he saw that the bull and the sheep, which were among the signs, were laughing at him. He awoke in great anger, and was very frightened, and he commanded them to bring him the book of annals. He saw written there that through a bull and a sheep, his seed would be cut off. A great fear befell him. And he related this to the queen, and there fell also upon her and on their children a great fear. He became very distraught, and he called to all his dream interpreters, and each one interpreted differently, and none of their interpretations satisfied him. A terrible fear befell him. Then one wise man came to him, and told him he had a tradition from his father. That is, that there are three hundred and sixty five courses of the sun, and there is a place where all the three hundred sixty five courses shine there. And there grows a staff of iron, and someone who suffers from fear, if he comes to this staff, he is saved from the fear.

This found favor in the eyes of the king. So he went to that place with his wife, his children and all his family, and with the wise man who had informed him about it. Along the way, there stands an angel who is appointed over anger. For through anger, an angel of destruction is created, and this angel is appointed over all the destructive forces. And those who travel there ask him the way. For there is a straight path before a man, and one filled with

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mud, and one filled with imperfections and potholes, and other various roads. And there is one road, in which is a fire, four miles from which one is burned (and the king and his people asked him the way, and he directed them to the road with the fire), and so they went there. The wise man kept looking ahead to see whether they were coming to this fire, for he had a tradition from his father that there is such a fire there.

Presently, he saw the fire, and he saw that walking through it were kings and Jews wearing tallis and tefillin. This was because in the countries of those kings dwelled Jews. Therefore those kings were able to pass through the fire. The wise man said to the king, "Since I have a tradition from my father that four miles from the fire, one is burned up, I would rather not come any closer." But the king thought to himself, being that other kings were going through the fire, he would try it as well. The wise man answered him, "I have the tradition handed down from my father, etc. Therefore I do not want to go. If you want to go, go." So the king and his family went, and the fire consumed them, and he and his seed were entirely cut off.

When the wise man came back to his home, the ministers were dumbfounded. For the king had been protected from the bull and the sheep. So how could it be that he and his seed were destroyed? Then the persecuted minister spoke up and said, "It was through me that he was cut off. For the astrologers saw, and did not understand what they saw. For with the skin of a bull is made tefillin, and from the wool of a sheep are made the fringes of a talit, and it was through them that he and his seed were cut off. For those kings in whose countries Jews lived, who wore tallis and tefillin, went through the fire with no harm at all. And our king was cut off, because in his country Jews wearing tallis and tefillin were not allowed to live. And that is why the bull and the sheep within the Zodiac

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were laughing at him, for the seers of the Zodiac saw but did not know what they saw, and so he and his seed were cut off.

Notes:

"Why are you frenzied, O nations? (Psalms, Chap. 2)"
There are various allusions to the story in this Psalm. "Let us break their bonds." The bonds are of leather, the aspect of tefillin. "Their cords" - these are ropes, the aspect of tzitzit. For the nations desired to do away with the holy customs of Israel. "He who sits in the heavens laughs", for the bull and and sheep in the firmament laughed at the gentile king.



The Prince Who was Made of Precious Stones



There was once a king who had no children. He went and sought help from doctors, so that his kingdom would not fall into the hands of strangers, but it did not help. And he decreed upon the Jews to pray for him, that he would have children. And the Jews searched for a Tzaddik who would pray and cause him to have children. They searched and found a hidden tzaddik, and told him to pray that the king should have children. But he answered that he did not know anything. They informed the king, and he sent a summons to the tzaddik, and he was brought to the king. The king began to speak to him in a tone of good will: "You know that the Jews are in my hand, to do with them as I please. Therefore, I ask you peaceably to pray for me that I should have children." And he promised the king that he would have a child within a year. Then he returned to his place, and the queen gave birth to a daughter, who was of a very beautiful appearance. Already at the age of four, she already knew all the wisdoms, could play musical instruments, and knew all the languages. Kings from all the countries would travel to see her, and the king was very joyous.

The Prince Who was Made of Precious Stones

After a time, the king started to yearn greatly for a son, so that his kingdom would not pass on to a stranger. So he again decreed upon the Jews, that they should pray for him to have a son. And they began searching for the same tzaddik, and they could not find him, for he had already passed away. So they searched more, and found another hidden tzaddik, and told him to give the king a son. He also said that he did not know anything. So they informed the king, and the king said to him again as before: "You know that the Jews are in my hand", etc. The tzaddik said to him, "Will you do what I tell you?" The king said "Yes." The tzaddik said, "I need you to bring me all the varieties of precious stones. For each stone has a different power." For the kings have a book in which is written all the varieties of precious stones. The king said, "I will give you half my kingdom in order to have a son." He went and brought all kinds of precious stones, and the tzaddik took them and crushed them. Then he took a cup of wine, and put the crushed stones in it, and gave half the cup to the king to drink, and half to the queen. And he told them that they would have a son who would be made entirely of precious stones, and he would have all the powers of all the stones. And he went to his place. The queen gave birth to a son, and the king was filled with joy. But the son was not made of precious stones. When he was four years old, he was very beautiful, and very well-versed in all the wisdoms, and knew all the languages, and kings would travel to see him.

And the princess saw that she was no longer so important, and was jealous of him. She had one consolation: That the tzaddik had said he would be made entirely of precious stones. It was good that he was not made of precious stones.

One time the prince was cutting wood, and he cut his finger, and the princess wanted to bandage the finger.

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Then she saw there a precious stone, and became very jealous of him. She made as if she were sick, and several doctors came, but they could not heal her. So they called on sorcerers. And there was among them one sorcerer, to whom the truth was revealed – that she was pretending to be sick, and she asked him if he could cast a spell on a man to make him leprous. He said "yes". She continued, "But what if they find another sorcerer, who would annul the spell and heal him?" The sorcerer said, "If the spell will be cast into the sea, they will not be able to annul it anymore." So she did thus, and cast the spell into the sea, and the prince became very leprous. He had leprosy on his nose, on his face, and on the rest of his body. And the king went to doctors and sorcerers, but to no avail.

So the king decreed upon the Jews to pray, and they searched for the tzaddik and brought him to the king. And this tzaddik had been praying always to Blessed L-rd, in that he had promised to the king that the child would be entirely of precious stones, and it had not come to pass. He would argue with the L-rd, "Did I do this to glorify myself? I only did it to glorify You. And now, it has not come to pass as I said it would." And the tzaddik came to the king, and he prayed, but it did not help.

And this tzaddik was higher than all sorcery. And he informed the king that this was sorcery, and that they had thrown the spell into the sea, and the only hope for the prince would be for the sorcerer who had cast it to be thrown into the sea. The king said, "I will hand over all sorcerers, to be thrown into the sea, in order that my son be healed." And the princess became afraid, and ran to the sea to retrieve the spell from the water, for she knew where it was hidden. And she fell into the water. A great commotion arose due to the falling of the princess into the sea. Then the tzaddik told them that now the prince would be healed. So it was: He was healed, and the leprosy dried

The Prince Who was Made of Precious Stones

up, and all his skin peeled off and fell from him, and he was made totally of precious stones. He had all the benefits of all the stones. (That is to say, after his skin peeled off, it was revealed and apparent that the prince really was made of precious stones, just as the tzaddik had said.)



The Humble King



Once there was a king who had a wise advisor. Said the king to the advisor: "There is a king who publicizes himself as a mighty one, and a humble man of truth. That he is mighty, I can tell. Because his country is surrounded by the sea, and on the sea stand a fleet of ships with cannons, and they do not allow anyone to come close. And further in, there are swamps encircling the country, and there is only one narrow path crossing them, wide enough only for one to pass. And there cannons are also positioned, and when one comes in attack, they fire the cannons on him, so it is impossible to come close. However, his claim that he is a man of truth and humility, I do not know if this is true. Therefore, I would like you to bring me his portrait." For the king had the portraits of all the rulers, but the portrait of this one cannot be found with any king. For he is hidden from people, for he dwells behind a veil, and is distanced from the people of his country.

So the wise man went to the country. He thought to himself, that he would need to know the nature of the country. And how would he find out the nature of the country? By knowing its humor. For when one wants to

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know about a certain thing, one needs to know the humor of that thing. For there are several types of humor. There are cases in which a person truly wants to hurt another, and when the other accuses him, he claims, "I was only joking." Then there are cases in which a person truly only intends to joke, and even so, his friend is hurt by his words. And so there are various other types of humor. And there is among all the nations one nation that encompasses all the nations. And within that nation is a city which encompasses all the cities of the nation which encompasses all the nations. And within that city is a house which encompasses all the houses of that city which encompasses all the cities of the nation which encompasses all the nations, and there is found a man who encompasses all the men of that house, etc. And there is there one who expresses all the mockery and humor of the whole nation.

So the wise man took a great deal of money with him, and went there, and saw that they were expressing a variety of mockery and humor. And he understood from the humor of the country that the country was filled with falsehood, from beginning to end. For he saw that some of their humor centered around how to cheat and deceive people in business, and how one comes to be judged in court, where all is falsehood and bribery. And how one's case can go to the higher courts, where there also all is false. And they showed all these things through play-acting. The wise man understood from all these parodies that the country was full of falsehood and deception, and there was not there a bit of truth. He went and did business dealings in the country, and allowed himself to be swindled in business. And he took his case to the courts, and they were full of falsehood and bribery. One day he would bribe them, and the next day they would not even recognize him. Then he went to a higher court, and it was also full of falsehood. Until he came to the Supreme Court, and they also were full of falsehood and bribery, until he came to

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the king himself.

When he came to the king, he asked, "Over who are you King?! Your country is full of lies, from beginning to end, and there is not a shred of truth in it." And he began to recount all the falsehood of the country. When the king heard his words, he pressed his ear against the veil in order to hear better. For it was a wonder to the king to find a man who knew of all the falsehood of the country. And the ministers that heard his words were enraged, and he continued to recount all the falsehood of the country. Then the wise man added, "And it would be fitting to say that the king is also like them, liking falsehood along with all the others. But in fact, I see that you are a man of truth, and because of that, you are far from them, because you cannot bear the falsehood of the country." And he started to praise the king exceedingly. And the king, because he was very humble, and his humility was his greatness. For such is the way of the humble: The more he is praised and glorified, the smaller and more humble he becomes. So, because of the magnitude of the praise of the wise man, with which he praised and glorified the king, the king came to extreme humility and smallness, until he practically disappeared. And he could not restrain himself, and flung open the veil, to see the wise man, to see who is this who knows and understands all this. Thus he revealed his face, and the wise man saw him, and he brought his portrait to his king.



The Fly and the Spider

The Fly and the Spider

*He said: I will tell you of all the journey I
passed through.*



Once there was a king, who waged several heavy wars and won them, and took many hostages. (Within his words, as he started to tell this story, he said in this language, "Because you ask me to tell you everything, you will understand.") The king held a great banquet every year, on the anniversary of his victory, and there were present all the ministers of the kingdom, and all the nobles of the land, as is the custom of kings. And they performed comic plays, and in them they made light of all the nations. The Arabs, and all the other nations, and they mimicked and parodied the customs and behavior of every nation, and it can be assumed that they also parodied the Jews.

Then the King commanded to be brought the book wherein were written all the customs and behavior of each nation. And to whatever page one opened, one would see written there the customs and behavior of a nation, very similar to the plays of the comedians. For it can be assumed that those who performed the comedies also saw the book. And as the king looked at the book, he saw there a spider crawling on the tips of the pages, and on the other

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side of the book stood a fly. According to the simplest assumption, the spider was headed toward the fly. And as the spider crawled and came closer to the fly, a wind came and raised the page up from the book, and the spider could not reach the fly. So it turned back, and acted with deception, as if it was turning back entirely and no longer had interest in the fly. The page returned to its place, and the spider again began to edge toward the fly. Then the page rose, again preventing it from reaching the fly, and it turned back again. And so it went several times. After that, the spider again attempted to reach the fly, and it crawled and went on until it managed to get one foot on the page. Then the page rose again, but now the spider was partly on the page. Then the page came to rest entirely, until the spider was left under it, in the space between two pages. It crawled about there, and it remained far down, until nothing was left of it. (And as for the fly, I will not tell you what became of it.)

The king saw all this, and was awed by it, and understood that this was not an empty thing, but that it was meant to tell him something. (And all the ministers noticed that he was staring and awed by this.) He began to ruminate, What does this mean?, and he dozed off over the book.

Then he dreamed that he had in his hand a precious gem. As he looked at it, he saw tiny deformed people emerging from it, and he flung the stone out of his hand. Now it is the custom of kings that they display their portraits near them. And upon the portrait they fasten their crowns. And these people who were emerging from the gem were seizing the portrait and cutting off its head. After this, they grabbed the crown and cast it into a heap of garbage (all this was within the dream of the king). And these people were running toward the king to kill him. And he lifted up a page from the book on which he had been

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sleeping, and it protected him, and they could not do a thing to him. Then they left him, and afterwards, the page returned to its place. Again they came at him to kill him, and he lifted the page up again. And so it went several times.

And he longed to see which page was protecting him, which people's customs were written on it. He was afraid to look, and he began to shout, "What a shame! What a shame!" Then all the ministers that were sitting there heard, and they wanted to wake him. However it is not appropriate to wake the king. They banged on the surfaces in the area nearby him, but he did not hear.

In the midst of this, a high mountain came to him, and asked him, "Why are you shouting so? I have been sleeping such a long time, and nothing woke me, nothing at all. And now you woke me?" The king responded, "Should I not cry out, when they are coming to kill me? Only this page protected me." The mountain answered, "If that page is protecting you, you do not need to worry about anything. For also against me many enemies arise, only that this page protects me. Come and I will show you."

So he showed him that around the mountain stood myriads of enemies, feasting and making merry, making music with instruments and dancing. And their main happiness centered around the occasions one of their divisions came up with an idea how to ascend the mountain. And then they would have a big celebration and feast, with music etc. And so with each of the divisions. "Only that this page with the customs that protects you, also protects me."

Now, on the top of the mountain, there was a stone tablet, on which was written to whom belonged the customs on the page that protected him. However, because of the great height of the mountain, it was impossible to

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read the writing. Only at the bottom, there was a tablet on which was written, that he who has all his teeth intact may climb up the mountain. And the Holy One Blessed be He caused a certain grass to grow at the spot where one needed to pass to climb the mountain. Anyone who passed there, all his teeth would fall out. Whether he went on foot, or on horseback, or in a carriage, all his teeth would fall out. And there were piles and piles of teeth there, like mountains.

Afterwards, the people who had come out of the gem, came back and stood the portrait in its original position, and they took and washed off the crown, and then put it in its place. Then the king awoke, and immediately looked to see which page had protected him, which customs from which people were on it. And he saw written there the customs of Israel. He began to look at the page with an eye of truth, and perceived the essence of the truth. And he concluded to himself, that he would certainly convert to Judaism. The real question was, how would he bring everyone else to the good, to the truth?

He decided that he would set out and travel in search of a wise man who could interpret his dream. He took two people with him, and travelled through the world not in the fashion of a king, but rather as a simple man. He went from city to city, and country to country, and asked, "Where can be found a wise man who would interpret a dream according to its real meaning?" They told him, "In such and such a place there is such a man." So he went there, and came to the man, and told him the truth, how he was a king that had won many wars, and all the above story. And he asked him to interpret his dream. The man answered, "I myself cannot interpret it. However, there is a certain moment, on a certain day, in a certain month, and then I gather up all the spices of the incense and compound a specific blend, and I smoke a man in this incense, and

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that man chooses in his mind, what he would like to see and know. And then he will know it all."

The king thought to himself, "Seeing that I have already expended so much time on this, I will wait until that day in that month." And so when the day came, the wise man did as described, and smoked him with the incense. He began to see even what had been done with him before his birth, when his soul had been in the Upper World. He saw that they were leading his soul through all the worlds. And they announced, "Whoever has a charge against this soul, come forward." And no one there had a charge against him.

Just then, one came running, and cried out, "Master of the World, listen to my prayer. If this soul comes into the world, what more will there be for me to do? And if nothing, then why did You create me?" (The one who cried these words was the Evil One). The answer came, "This soul must come down to the world, without question. You will have to find your own solution." So he left.

And they continued to lead the soul through the worlds, until they brought him to the Upper Court, to make him swear that he would descend to the world. And the one mentioned before (the Evil One), still had not arrived. So they sent a messenger after him. Then he appeared with an elderly man, who was stooped over in the way of the elderly. The Evil One had already been acquainted with him. He laughed and said, "I have already found myself a solution. The soul may now descend to the world." And he saw all that he had been through, from beginning to end. How he was made a king, and the wars he had fought, etc.

(And he took captives, and among them was a beautiful woman, who had all of the graces of the world. Only that this grace was not hers. Rather, she wore a

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precious gem, and it had all types of grace, and because of this it appeared that she had all these types of grace. And on that mountain no one is able to ascend, except for wise or rich men, etc.) More than this he did not say, and there is much more to this. (From the words "And he took captives" until the end, it was not written clearly as it had been told.)

Notes:

"A song, for David, when he fled from Avshalom his son (Psalms, Chap.3). L-rd, how great are my torments, many rise against me... And you, L-rd, protect me, you are my honor, and raise up my head. My voice will cry out to L-rd, and He will answer me from His holy mountain." Referring to the mountain in the story. "I laid down and slept, and I was awoken." As in the story. "I will not fear from the multitudes of people", etc. "For You smacked all my enemies in the face, You broke the teeth of the wicked." For when they tried to ascend the mountain, their teeth would fall out. "Your blessing is upon Your people, selah."



The Rabbi and his Only Son



There once was a Rabbi, who did not have any children. After a time, he had one son, who he raised and married off. And the son would sit in his room and study, as was the custom for men. And he would constantly learn and pray. However, he felt in himself that he was lacking something, and did not know what. He did not feel enthusiasm in his learning and in his prayer. And he explained this to two friends, and they advised him to travel to a certain tzaddik. And this son had done a mitzva, from which he merited to the aspect of the "Small Light".

And this Only Son went and told his father, that seeing as he did not feel any taste in his learning, and he felt a lack, and did not know why. And therefore, he wanted to travel to the Tzaddik. His father answered him: "What?! You want to travel to *him*? You are certainly more learned than he, and of better lineage. It's not fitting for you to travel to him, give up the idea." Until he dissuaded him from going. So the son returned to his learning, and again felt a lack. So he conferred again with the above-mentioned friends, and they advised him as before to travel to the tzaddik. So he again approached his father, and his father dissuaded him from going as before.

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And so it went several times. And the son felt this lacking, and he longed powerfully to fill the lack, and did not know what it was. And he came again to his father, and pleaded with him, until his father was compelled to take him - for he did not want to let him travel alone, being that he was his only son.

And his father said, "Alright, I will go with you, and I'll show you that he is nothing special." So they prepared a carriage and set off. His father said, "I will set up a test: If things proceed normally, it is decreed from Heaven (that you should go). If not, then it is not from Heaven, and we will turn back."

And they travelled and came to a small bridge. One of the horses fell, and the carriage overturned, and they were nearly drowned. His father said, "You see, things are not proceeding normally, so the trip is not ordained from Heaven." So they returned.

And the son returned to his studies. And again, he saw the lacking that he could not explain. So again he pleaded with his father, and his father agreed to travel with him a second time. And when they went, the father again set up the test as he had the first time. And it was, as they were travelling, that both axles of the carriage broke. His father said, "You see, it isn't working out for us to make the trip. For could this be natural, that both axles should break?" For they had travelled many times in this carriage, and the likes of this had never happened.

So the son returned to his routine, and again felt the lack, and his friends again advised him to go. So he pleaded with his father again, and he was obliged to travel with him again. And the son asked that they not set up this test again, for it is natural that sometimes a horse falls, or an axle breaks. Barring only a truly unusual occurrence. So they set out and came to an inn, and found there a trader,

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and started to converse with him in the manner of traders. And they did not reveal to him their destination, for the Rabbi was embarrassed to reveal that they were visiting that tzaddik. And they spoke about worldly matters, until the conversation turned to stories of tzaddikim, and where they are located. And he began to recount, "In such and such a place is a tzaddik, and in another place, and another" and so on. And they started to speak about the tzaddik to whom they were travelling.

He answered them, "Him? He is a lightweight. For I just came from his place. I was there, and I saw him commit a sin." So the father said to his son, "You see? This trader told us this in his innocence, and he just came from there!" So they returned home.

And this son passed away. And he came in a dream to the Rabbi, his father. And his father saw that he was very angry, and he asked him: "Why are you so angry?" He answered that he should travel to that same tzaddik to whom they had tried to travel before, and that "he will tell you why I am so angry." He then awoke, and said to himself, "It was only a dream." Then he dreamed the dream again, and again he assumed it was an insignificant dream. He dreamed it yet a third time, and now he realized there was meaning in it. So he travelled there.

And along the way, he met the trader. He recognized him, and said, "Are you the same trader that I met in that inn?" And he answered, "Certainly you saw me." Then he opened his mouth and said, "If you like, I will swallow you!" The father asked, "What are you saying?!" He answered, "Do you remember, when you and your son travelled? And at the beginning, the horse fell on the bridge, and you turned back. The second time, the two axles broke, and the third time you met me. And I said that he (the tzaddik) is a lightweight. And now that I have

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ended your son's life, now you may travel there. For your son was the aspect of the Small Light, and that tzaddik was the aspect of the Great Light. And if they had come together, it would have brought the Messiah. And now that I have done away with your son, you may travel there." And as he was speaking, he disappeared, and the father was left alone. So he travelled to the tzaddik, and cried, "Alas, alas, alas to those who are lost and cannot be forgotten!" The L-rd should return our exiles speedily, Amen.



The Clever and the Simple One



Once there were two householders in one city, who were very wealthy. They had large houses, and each one of them had a son, both of whom studied in the same classroom. Now one of these sons was bright, and the other was simple-minded (He was not foolish, only that his intellect was simple and of a low level). These two sons loved each other very much. In spite of their great difference in personality, even so, they loved each other very much.

As time passed, the two householders began to lose their wealth. They sank further and further, until they became destitute, and were left with nothing except their houses. And the sons began to grow up. So the fathers said to their sons, "We do not have the ability to pay the expenses to support you. You will have to fend for yourselves." The simple one went and learned shoemaking.

And the clever one, who had a sharp mind, did not desire to do mundane work like this. So he decided to go out into the world and look for something to do. He went and wandered through the market. There he saw a large carriage with four horses and their harnesses, that was travelling along. He spoke up and said to the tradesmen,

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"Where are you from?" They answered that they were from Warsaw. "And where are you going?" "To Warsaw." He asked them, "Perhaps you need a helper?" They saw that he was intelligent and energetic, and he found favor with them, and they accepted him. So he travelled with them serving them very well along the way. When they came to Warsaw, since he was intelligent, he considered to himself, "Being that I am already in Warsaw, why should I be tied to these people? Maybe there is something better. I will go and ask and see." So he went to the market, and he began to investigate and ask about the people who had brought him, and if there are people better than them to work under. They answered that these people are upright, and it is good to be with them. However, it is difficult to work with them because their dealings are done over great distances.

He went and saw men from the clothing business, that were passing through the market in their fashionable style, with their various adornments - their hats and their sharp-pointed shoes, and their other refinements, in the way they walked and dressed. He had a sharp intellect, and this work appealed to him because it had grace, and also it was done in one's own home. He returned to the people he had come with, gave them his respects, and told them that he would not be continuing with them. And as for their having brought him here, he had served them along the way.

He went and started to work under one businessman. And it is the way of hired servants, that in the beginning they need to work for little pay, and do difficult work. Then afterwards they reach the level of established servants. His employer gave him hard work, and he would send him to customers bearing merchandise as is customary for servants. They need to hold their arms upraised, draping the garments along their arms' length for

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the customers to see. This work was very difficult for him to bear. Sometimes he would need to climb up many flights with his load, and the work was very hard for him. So he considered to himself - for he was a highly intelligent philosopher: "Why should I do work like this? For truly, the main point of working is to achieve the goal of getting married and supporting oneself. And I do not need to be concerned about this yet. I will have time to deal with it in the future, in the years to come. In the meantime, I am happy to wander the land, in different countries, and to have my fill of the world."

He went through the market, and saw a large trading carriage passing by. He asked them, "Where are you going?" "To Lagorna." "Would you take me there?" "Yes." So they took him there, and from there he sailed to Italy, and from there to Spain. In the course of this, several years passed, and thus he became even wiser, for he had been in many countries. Then he thought to himself, "Now it would be good to think about the goal."

He started to consider, with his philosophical analysis, what he should do. He found it fitting to learn to be a goldsmith. It is a major business, and attractive, it demands wisdom, and it is also very profitable. Because of his high intelligence and philosophical ability, he did not need to learn several years. In only a quarter of a year he completed his study and became a very major artisan. He was more expert in the work than the one who had taught him. Then he considered to himself, "Even though I now have this skill to depend on, it is not enough for me. Today this work is in demand, perhaps in the future something else will take its place." So he went and found work with a gem cutter, and because of his quick mind, he learned this also in a short time, a quarter of a year. Afterwards, he speculated philosophically, "Even though I have two trades, who knows if both of them might fall out of

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demand. Better that I learn a trade that will always be important." He concluded, with his understanding and philosophy, that he should learn to be a doctor, which is always needed and important. And it is customary that before learning medicine, one must learn Latin, and how to write, and the wisdoms of philosophy. And because of his understanding, he also learned this in a short time - a quarter year. He became a great doctor, and a philosopher learned in all the wisdoms.

Afterwards, the world began to seem insignificant in his eyes. For because of his wisdom, being so skilled and professional, a wise man and a doctor, all the people in the world seemed insignificant to him. He began to think about fulfilling his goal and getting married. He thought to himself, "If I marry here, who will know what became of me? I will go back to my family, that they will see what I have become. I was only a young man, and now I have come to such greatness!" So he went and travelled to his family's house, and suffered intensely along the way. For because of his wisdom, he had no one with whom to talk, and he could not find lodgings according to his taste, and he had much suffering.

Now, let us leave the story of the clever one for the time being, and we will start to tell the story of the simple one. The simple one learned the trade of shoemaking. Because he was simple, he learned a long time until he was able to accept work, and he was not fully expert even so. He married a woman, and he lived off of his work. But because he was simple, he was not so talented in the work, and so his earnings were meager and limited. He did not even have time to eat, because he had to work constantly, since he could not do the work skilfully. So while he worked, while he hit with his hammer, and inserted and drew out the thick thread in the way of shoemakers, he would snatch a bite of bread to eat.

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And he had the habit of being very happy all the time - he was filled with happiness always. He had all the kinds of food, all the drinks and all the clothing he wanted. He would say to his wife, "My wife, give me to eat!" She would give him a piece of bread and he would eat. After this, he would say, "Give me beans in sauce!" She would cut him another slice of bread, and he would eat. Then he would praise it: "How fine and tasty was that sauce!" And so he would command her to bring him meat and other fine foods, and in place of each item, she gave him a slice of bread, and he delighted very much from it. He would praise each food extravagantly, saying how well prepared and good it was, as if he was eating the actual food. In truth, he really tasted in the bread the taste of each food he wanted, because of his simplicity and great happiness.

Likewise he would command: "My wife, give me beer to drink!" She would give him water. And he would praise the quality of the beer. "Give me honey!" She gave him water, and he would praise it as before. "Give me wine!", and so on. Each time she would give him water, and he would enjoy and praise that beverage as if he were really drinking it.

And so with clothing: He and his wife together shared one fur coat. He would say, "My wife, give me the fur coat!" when he needed to wear a fur coat, for example, to go to the market. And she would give it to him. When he needed to wear a suit to go in formal settings, he would say, "My wife, give me the suit!" She would give him the fur coat, and he would delight in it and praise it: "How fine is this suit!" When he needed a caftan, for example, to go to the synagogue, he would command, saying "My wife, give me the caftan!" And she would give him the fur coat, and he would praise it, saying "How fine is this caftan!" Similarly, when he needed to wear a formal overcoat, she would also give him the fur coat, and he would praise and

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delight in it as well: "How fine and beautiful is this overcoat", and so on. And he was always filled only with joy and satisfaction.

When he would finish a shoe (and it can be assumed it had three ends, for he had not mastered the craft), he would take the shoe in his hand and praise it highly, and would take great delight in it. He would say, "My wife, how beautiful and wonderful is this shoe! How sweet it is! This shoe is as sweet as honey and sugar!" Then she would ask him, "If so, why do all the other shoemakers charge three gold pieces for a pair of shoes, and you take only a piece and a half?" He answered her, "What does it matter to me? That is his affair, this is mine!" And further: "Why must we talk about others? Why don't we make an estimate of how much direct profit I make from this shoe? The leather costs so much, the tar and the laces etc. cost such and such, and the other materials like those cost that much, the filler costs that amount. Now, I make a direct profit of ten gedolim. Why should I complain with a profit like that?!" And he was only joyful and satisfied all the time.

For the rest of the world, however he was an object of ridicule, and people satisfied their craving to mock through him, having found someone to deride according to their desire. For he appeared a madman in their eyes. People would come to him, and they would engage him in conversation with the intent of mocking him. Before speaking with them, he would stipulate, "Just without mockery!" Immediately when they responded to him without mocking, he would accept their words and begin talking with them. For he did not want to go any deeper into the matter and speculate about their intent, for that in itself would be a form of mockery, and he was a simple man. And when he saw that their intent was to mock, he would say, "If you were wiser than me, what would that

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make you? You would still be fools, for who am I anyway? So if you were wiser than me, on the contrary, you would be thought of as a fool!" (All this was a description of the simple one. Now let us return to our first subject.)

In the midst of this, a great commotion arose, that the clever one was on his way to visit here, with great honor and wisdom. The simple one ran like the others to greet him, with great joy, and he said to his wife, "Quick, give me the overcoat. I'm going to greet my beloved friend." She handed him the fur coat, and he ran to greet him. Now the clever one was travelling in a royal carriage in a high style. The simple one reached him and lovingly, joyously asked after his welfare. "Brother, my dear friend! What are you doing here? Blessed is the One who brought you, and granted me to see you!" Now for the wise one, to whom the whole world was insignificant, it was all the more so with a man like this, who seemed like a lunatic. Yet in spite of this, because of the great love of their earlier years, he drew him close, and they travelled together through the city.

The two householders mentioned at the beginning - the fathers of these two sons - died while the clever one was wandering through the world, and their houses remained. The simple one, who had remained in his hometown, had moved into his father's house and inherited it. But the clever one, who had been abroad, had no one to claim it on his behalf, and it became abandoned, and nothing was left of it at all. So the clever one did not have a place to stay upon coming to the town. He lodged in one inn, and suffered much there, because the inn was not according to his desire. And the simple one had found himself a new pastime - he would run back and forth from his house to the wise one, in love and joy. He saw the suffering the clever one was enduring in the inn, and he said to him, "My brother, why don't you come and stay in my house? I will gather everything of mine into one corner, and the rest

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of my house will be free for you to use." This pleased the clever one, so he came to his house and stayed by him.

Now the clever one was constantly filled with agony. For it became known that he was a magnificently intelligent man, a craftsman and a very great doctor. One nobleman came to him and asked him to make him a gold ring. He made the man a very wondrous ring, and engraved on it illustrations with incredible workmanship, and he engraved an image of a tree that was very impressive. The nobleman came, and was not at all pleased with the ring. He had much suffering from this, for he himself knew, that if this ring with the tree would be seen in Spain, it would be very honored and important. And so, another time, a highstanding noble came to him with an expensive precious stone, that came from far away, and he brought him another stone with an engraving. He asked the clever one to copy the image from the illustrated stone onto the other one. And he copied it exactly, barring one mistake that no one else would be able to discern aside from himself. The noble came to take the stone, and was very pleased with it. But the clever man suffered intensely from the mistake. "My wisdom is so great, and yet I made a mistake such as this!"

Also from his work as a doctor he suffered. When he came to a sick person, and gave him a treatment, and he knew with certainty that if the man would only survive, he would be healed entirely, because the treatment was an amazing one. Then afterwards, if the man died, everyone would say he was at fault, and he suffered intensely from this. And thus, there were times when he treated a man and cured him, and everyone said, "It is just by chance." And he was constantly filled with suffering.

One time he needed a garment, so he called upon a tailor, and toiled with him until he taught him to make the

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garment according to his desire, according to the style with which he was familiar. The tailor strived to make the garment according to his wishes, and succeeded with the exception of one lapel in which that he erred. The clever one suffered exceedingly from this, for he knew that although here it was attractive enough, for people here were not versed in fashion, if he were in Spain with that lapel, he would be the butt of jokes and he would be looked on as a clown. And so he was constantly filled with agony.

And the simple one would run and come to him joyfully, all the time. He always found him pained and full of suffering. He asked him, "Someone so wise and wealthy as you, why are you suffering all the time? You see, I am filled with joy all the time." However, he appeared in the eyes of the clever man as a joke, and as a lunatic. And the simple one said to him, "You see, the average man who mocks me is a fool. For if he is wiser than me, then to the contrary, he is a fool. So all the more so a clever man like you. What would you be if you were wiser than me?" Then the simple one said, "What would I not give for you to come to my level?" The clever one answered him, "That is possible, that I will come to your level, if I were to lose my intelligence, G-d forbid, or if I became sick, G-d forbid, and became insane. For what are you? A crazy man! But for you to come to my level, that is totally impossible - that you would become wise like me." The simple one answered him, "With the Holy One, Blessed be He, anything is possible. It could happen that within the wink of an eye I would come to your level." The clever one laughed at this a great deal.

Now these two sons were known in the world as "the Clever One" and "the Simple One". Even though there are many clever and simple men in the world, in this case it was especially recognized. For both of them were from the

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same place, and they had learned together, and one of them had become awesome in intellect, and the other was an extremely simple person. And in the census book, in which were written all the names of the people of the nation, these two were identified as the Clever One and the Simple One.

One time the King came upon the census book, and found written there the names of the two sons, one with the name "Clever One" and the other, "Simple One". And it was a wonder in his eyes, that these two were identified by these names, and he had a craving to meet them. He thought to himself, "If I send for them suddenly to come before me, they will be very frightened. The clever one will lose his clarity completely, and the simple one might possibly go crazy from fear." So he decided to send a clever messenger to the clever one, and a simple messenger to the simple one. The only problem was how to find a simpleton in the capital city. For most of the people in the capital are sophisticated. Excepting the Treasurer, who is by intention a simpleton. For they do not appoint a clever man as treasurer, lest through his wisdom and intelligence, he comes to waste away the treasury. Therefore they specifically appoint a simpleton to be Treasurer.

So the King called to a clever man and to the simpleton mentioned above, and sent them to the two sons of this story. And he gave to each messenger a letter. Also, he gave them letters addressed to the local governor of the province of the sons, and ordered the governor to send his own letters to them, so that they would not fear. He should explain to them that the matter is not urgent, and that the King is not commanding them to come, rather it is dependent on their own choice: If they want to come, they may. Only that the King desires to see them.

These two messengers set out and travelled to the

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governor, giving him the letter. The governor asked to know more about the two sons. They told him that the clever one is incredibly bright, and very wealthy. And the simple one is exceedingly simple, and his whole wardrobe consists of one coat. The governor judged that it would not be fitting for the simple one to appear before the King in his old coat. So he provided him with appropriate clothes, and placed them inside the royal carriage of the simple messenger. And he gave the messengers letters, and they set off for the town of the two sons. They gave them the letters - the clever messenger to the clever son, and the simple to the simple. As soon as the simple one received his letter, he said to the messenger that brought it, "I cannot read what is written there. Read it for me!" The messenger said, "I will tell you in brief what is written there: That the King wants you to come to him." The simple one said, "Just promise me that you're not joking!" He answered, "It is certainly the truth, and not a joke." And he immediately became filled with joy, and ran to his wife, saying, "My wife, the King has sent for me!" She asked, "Why, on what account?" But he did not have time to answer at all, and hurried joyfully and travelled with the messenger. He entered and sat inside the carriage and found the new clothes, and became more and more joyous.

Meanwhile, news was passed on about the governor, that he had behaved corruptly. So the King removed him from office. The King considered and decided that the governor ought to be a simple man, who would govern the state with truth and uprightness, not knowing wisdoms and innovations. The King came to choose the simple son, and he sent a letter to the simple messenger, that the simple son was to become governor. His route of travel passed through the governor's city, so the King posted men at the gates of the city. As soon as he arrived, they were to detain him and crown him with the title of governor. So they did: They waited there, and as soon as he came, they detained

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him and informed him that he had been made governor. He asked them, saying, "Just promise you're not joking!" They answered that it was certainly not a joke. And he immediately became governor, with authority and might.

Now that his fortune had turned, and a change of fortune brings wisdom, so he gained more understanding. Even so, he did not use his wisdom at all, but rather ruled with simplicity as at first, and led the country simply, with truth and uprightness, and had not a trace of corruption. And to rule a nation, one does not need a high intelligence and cleverness, only simplicity and uprightness. When two would come before him with a case to be judged, he would say, "You are innocent and you are guilty", according to his true simplicity, without any cleverness or deception. And so he ruled all with the quality of truth.

The people loved him very much. And he had advisors who were true friends, and due to his love, one of them advised him: "Seeing that you will certainly have to come before the King - first, because he sent for you, and second, because it is customary for the governors to appear before him. Thus even though you are very satisfactory, and you have no corruption in your ruling of the state, even so, it is the way of the King to speak in a sophisticated fashion, and to speak in other languages. Thus it would be appropriate and well-mannered for you to be able to respond. So, it would be good that I should teach you wisdoms and languages." The simple one found this agreeable, saying, "Why should I mind learning wisdoms and languages?!" Immediately he thought of the words of his friend the clever one, that it would be impossible for him to come to the clever one's level. And now he had already reached the other's wisdom (and even so, though he already knew much wisdom, he did not use it at all, rather ruled everything with simplicity as at first).

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After this, the King sent for the simple one (who was now governor), that he should come before him. So he travelled there. The King started off talking with him about the governing of the country, and the King was very pleased, for he saw that he was ruling with uprightness and great truth, without any corruption or deception. After this, the King began to speak about various disciplines of knowledge and languages, and the simple one answered him appropriately, and found more and more favor in the King's eyes. The King said, "I see that he is such a brilliant man, and yet he rules with such simplicity!" And it was very pleasing to the King. He appointed him to be a minister over all the ministers. He set aside a specific place, where would be his chair of office. He commanded to be built beautiful and extravagant buildings to house his administration. And he gave him a letter testifying to his position - that he should be a minister as described. And so it was: They built him the buildings, in the place where the King had commanded, and he went and accepted his honors with authority.

Now the clever one, when he received the letter from the King, answered to the messenger who brought it, "Wait and stay here the night, and we will talk and consider together." In the evening, he made him a festive meal. During the meal, he drew on his wisdom and philosophy, and said, "What is this, that a king such as this would send after me? After a lowly person such as I, and who am I, that the King would send for me?! Behold, he has such authority and power, and I am lowly and foul in comparison to such a great and awesome king as this. How could it be explained, that a king such as this would send after a lowly one such as I? If it is because of my wisdom, what am I compared to the King? And does he not have his own wise men? The King himself must be very wise, so how could it be that he is sending for me?" And he was very bewildered by this. Then he spoke up and said to the

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clever messenger, "Listen to what I say. In my opinion, and it is certainly clear and proveable, the King does not exist at all. The whole world is mistaken in this nonsense, believing that there is a king. Consider it, how could it be possible that all the people of the world would allow themselves to depend on one man, who is the king? Certainly there is no king at all."

The clever messenger responded, "But wait! I brought you the letter from the King!" The clever one asked him, "Did you receive the letter directly from the King?" He answered "No, someone else gave me the letter in the name of the King." So he said to the messenger, "There, you see with your own eyes, that my words are correct, that there is no king at all." Then he asked him further: "Tell me, you are from the capital city, and lived there all your life. Did you ever see the King?" He answered "No." (For in truth not everyone merits to see the King, for the King only appears in public very rarely). The clever one said to him, "You see that my words are clear and accurate, it is certain that there is no king at all. For even you have never seen the King in your life."

The clever messenger continued and asked, "If this is true, then who runs the country?" The clever one answered him, "I'll give you the explanation. You asked the right person, for I am an expert in this, because I wandered through various countries, and I was in Italy. The custom is that there are seventy advisory positions, and these offices are held for a limited time. All the citizens of the country have a turn as an advisor, one after the other." His words began to make an impression upon the messenger, until he agreed, and they decreed that there is no king in the world at all.

Then the clever one said, "Wait until the morning, and I will show you one proof after another, that there is no

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king in the world at all." The clever one rose in the morning, and woke up his friend the clever messenger, and said to him, "Come outside with me, and I will show you with total clarity, how the world is totally mistaken, and in truth there is no king, and they are all deeply mistaken." They went to the market, and saw a soldier there. They grabbed him and asked, "For whom do you work?" "The King," he answered. They asked, "Have you ever seen the King in your life?" "No." "You see what nonsense it is?" said the clever one. Again, they approached another soldier, and began speaking with him. "For whom do you work?" they asked. "The King." "Have you seen the King?" "No." "So you see with your own eyes, the matter is clear: They are all mistaken, and there is no king in the world." And they came to an agreement, that there is no king at all.

Then the clever one said, "Come with me and travel through the world, and I'll show you further how the whole world is seriously misled." So they went and travelled through the world, and every place they went, they found that the people were mistaken. The matter of the King became for them like a fairytale, and in every place where they found the world in error, they compared the King to a fairytale character. If one were to believe that the King really does exist, he ought to believe in fairytales as well. So they went and travelled until their money ran out, and they first sold one of their horses, and then the second, until they sold all of them, and they were obliged to go on foot. And they were constantly investigating people, and found that all of them were in error. They turned into beggars, wandering on foot, and their prestige faded, and they were not respected at all. For people did not give any notice to pathetic characters such as they.

It came to happen, in their wanderings, that they came to the town where the minister lived (that is, the simple one

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who had become a minister). And there, in that town, there was a true miracle worker. He was very respected, for he achieved amazing things, and even among the noblemen he was highly regarded and famed. Now these two clever ones came to the city, and wandered through it until they came to the house of the miracle worker. They saw forty or fifty carriages lined up there, bearing sick people. The clever one assumed that a doctor must live there, and he wanted to go inside, for he was also a great doctor. So he wanted to go in and meet the man. He asked "Who lives here?" They answered, "A miracle worker." Then he burst out laughing, and said to his friend, "This is the wildest falsehood and silliness. This is nonsense even greater than the fallacy of the King. My friend! Let me explain to you how false this is, and how seriously the world is mistaken in this falsehood."

Presently, they became hungry, and found that they still had a few coins left. So they went to a soup kitchen, where one could eat for even a pittance. They served them their meal. As they were eating, they ridiculed and joked about the falsehood and error of the miracle worker. The manager of the kitchen overheard their words, and was very angered, for the miracle worker was very esteemed there. He said to them, "Finish what's on your plates and get out of here!" After this, the miracle worker's son came in, and they continued ridiculing the miracle worker in front of his son. The manager became very offended that they were deriding him in front of his son, until he came to reign blows upon them and drove them out of his place. They were very offended by this, and they wanted to bring a lawsuit against the manager. So they decided to go back to the house where they were keeping their belongings, and ask their host how to go about filing a lawsuit. They came to him and described how he had beaten them severely. He asked them why, and they answered that they had spoken critically about the miracle worker. He responded, "It is

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certainly not right to beat people, but you also did not act properly at all, speaking against the miracle worker. For he is very highly respected here." They saw then, that this man was not one to take seriously, and he had also fallen into the same error. They left him, and went on to the town clerk (who was a gentile), and related the whole story of how they were beaten. He asked, "On what account?" They answered that they had spoken ill of the miracle worker. So the clerk beat them up, and drove them out of his house.

And they went from one bureaucrat to another, each one higher ranking than the last, until they came to the previously mentioned minister. And there, in front of the minister's house were stationed guards. They informed the minister that someone desired to see him, and he ordered that they be brought in. And the clever one came before the minister, and as soon as the minister saw him, he recognized his friend the clever one. But the clever one did not recognize him because of his refined appearance. Immediately the minister began speaking to him: "You see what my simplicity has brought me to, and what your cleverness has brought you to?"

The clever one answered, "As for the issue of your being my friend the simple one, we will talk about that later. For now, give me a judgment against the one who beat me." The simple minister asked "Why?" He answered, "Because I spoke against the Miracle Worker, that he is false and a great deception." The simple minister responded, "You are still holding onto your clever ideas? You see, you said that you could easily come to my level, but that I could not come to yours. See now, I have already reached your level, and you still haven't come to mine." Even so, being that he already knew him in the times of his greatness, he commanded that the clever one be given fine clothes, and asked him to dine with him.

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During the meal, they began to discuss together. The clever one began to prove his thesis that there is no king at all. The simple minister snapped at him, "What?! I myself have seen the King!" The clever one answered jokingly, "Do you know with certainty that the one you saw was really the King? Are you sure that he, his father and his grandfather were all kings? How do you know that he is the King? People told you he is the King, but they deceived you with falsehood." The simple one was very offended on the issue of the King, that this man denied the King's existence.

In the midst of this, someone came and announced, "The Azazel, that is to say, the Devil sent for you." The simple one was very shocked, and he ran and told his wife in great fear that the aforementioned one had sent for him. His wife suggested that he send for the Miracle Worker. So he did, and the Miracle Worker came and gave him amulets and safeguards and told him, "Now you do not need to worry at all", and he had great faith in this. The clever and the simple one continued sitting together, and the clever one asked, "Why were you so frightened?" The simple one answered, "Because of the Evil One, who sent after us." The clever one laughed at this, saying "You believe there is an Evil One?" The simple one answered, "If not, then who is it who sent after us?" The clever one answered, "Without doubt, it was my brother, who wanted to be seen with me. Therefore, he sent for me deceptively." The simple one asked, "If so, how did he pass by all the guards?" He answered, "Certainly, he must have bribed them, and they are reporting deceptively that they did not see him."

Presently, the one who had announced returned and repeated his message, that the Evil One had sent after them. This time the simple one was not shocked, and had no fear at all because of the Miracle Worker's protection.

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He said to the clever one, "Now what do you say?" He answered, "I tell you, I have a brother who is angry with me, and he created this deception in order to frighten me." Then he stood and asked the one who had come for them, "What is the appearance of the one who sent you after us? What kind of face does he have, and what does his hair look like?" etc. He answered, "Such and such..." The clever one said, "You see, that is exactly the appearance of my brother." "Will you go with them?" asked the simple one. He answered "Yes. Only give me several soldiers to act as escorts, so that they will not be able to harm me." So he gave him the escorts.

The clever one and the clever messenger mentioned before went with the man who had come for them, and the soldiers returned. The simple minister asked them, "Where are the clever ones?" The soldiers answered that they did not know at all how they had disappeared. And the Evil One snatched these two clever ones, and brought them to an expanse of sewage and mud. There the Evil One sat, on a throne within the sewage, and cast the clever ones into it. And the sewage was thick and sticky, literally like glue, and they could not move at all in it. They cried out, "You wicked ones, why are you tormenting us? There is no such thing as an Evil One anyway. You wicked ones are tormenting us for nothing!" (For the clever ones still did not believe in the existence of the Evil One, and held that some common wicked people were tormenting them.) And so they were immersed in the sewage, and they were investigating the meaning of it. They held that it was not real. It was simply some contentious people, that had had some dispute with them in the past, and now they were taking revenge on them. And so they were tormented there with intense suffering for several years.

One time the simple one passed by the house of the Miracle Worker, and he thought of his friend the clever

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one. He went in to see the Miracle Worker, and honored him according to the custom of the nobles, and then asked him if he could show him the clever one, and if he could extract him from that place. He asked the Miracle Worker, "Do you remember the clever one, who the Evil One sent for and took away, and from that day on he has not been seen?" The Miracle Worker answered yes. So he asked him to show him his place, and remove him from it. The Miracle Worker said, "Certainly I can show you the place and remove him. Only on the condition that no one will come except you and I." So they went together.

The Miracle Worker did what was in his power, and they went there, and saw the clever ones immersed in the mud and sewage. When the clever one saw the minister, he cried out, "Brother, see how these wicked people are beating and torturing me so for nothing!" The minister shouted at him, "You're still clinging to your cleverness, and don't believe in anything? And you believe that these characters are human beings? Now look, here is the Miracle Worker, in whom you did not believe. He specifically can free you (and he will show you the truth)." Then the simple minister requested the Miracle Worker to remove them, and show them that this was really the Evil One, and not human beings. The Miracle Worker did what he did, and they found themselves on dry land, and there was no sewage at all. And those evil characters vanished into thin air. Then the clever one saw, and he was forced without choice to admit everything - that the King exists, and so on.

Notes:

The teaching in Likutey Moharan, Part II, Chap. 19, which speaks of sophistication and simplicity, refers to this story. True wholeness is only through innocence and simplicity. In the matter of Amalek, who was sophisticated and denied the

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essence of faith: Agag, the King of Amalek, even though he saw his end when Samuel and Saul came to kill him, still did not believe in his downfall until he witnessed his death. Then he said, "The Angel of Death has come." For until then he did not believe.



The Merchant and the Poor Man



Once there was a merchant. He was extremely rich, and he had abundant merchandise and other property. His documents and letters reached all over the world, and he had all the good things in life. Below his apartment lived a poor man. He was extremely poor, and his circumstances were entirely opposite that of the merchant. Both of them lacked children.

One time the merchant dreamed that people came and packed all his belongings in cartons. He asked them, "What are you doing?" They answered that they were taking all his things to the poor man. It enraged him that they wanted to take all he owned from his house. But to lose his temper would not help, because they were great in number. So they packed up everything he had - all his merchandise, wealth and possessions - and took it all to the apartment of the poor man. Nothing remained in his house save the empty walls. And he was enraged, until he woke up and realized it was only a dream. And though he saw that it had been a dream, and thank G-d, all his belongings were still with him, even so his heart pounded. The dream aggravated him sorely, and he could not free his mind from it.

Now, the merchant, even before, had been accus-

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tomed to pay attention to the poor man and his wife, and to give them donations. Now, after the dream, he gave them more attention than before. But each time they arrived home, his expression would fall, and he would be shaken up at their sight, due to the dream. His face would contort, and he would be very distraught and disturbed. The poor man's wife asked, "Please forgive me for asking, but tell me, why is it that each time I come to your house, your expression changes so markedly?" He answered her, explaining the entire matter, that he had had the dream described above, and from that day his heart had been seized by fear. She asked him, "Did you dream this dream on such and such a night (she specified the date)?" He answered her, "Yes, and what of it?" She told him, "On that same night, I also dreamed that I was very rich. People came to my house and packed up everything. So I asked, "Where are you going?" They answered, "To that poor man" (that is, to the merchant, who they were now calling poor). So there, why should you ascribe so much significance to your dream, when I dreamed the same thing?" And upon hearing her dream, he became more and more shaken and disturbed. It seemed to him from the dreams, that all his wealth would be given to the poor couple, and all their poverty would be given to him. And he was very very distraught.

Then one day, the merchant's wife went travelling in her carriage on a day-trip. She took some friends with her, and among them the wife of the poor man. During the trip, a general passed by with his troops. They pulled to the side to let him pass. As he passed, he saw the women in the carriage, and commanded his men to take out one of the women. They went and took out the wife of the poor man, threw her into the general's carriage, and travelled on. And certainly, saving her now was not a likely possibility, for the general had travelled away. Aside from that, he was a military man, with troops guarding him.

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The general took her away to his country. And she had fear of Heaven, and did not want to submit to him at all. She cried excessively, and they would ask her and tempt her, but she had a firm fear of Heaven. Then the other women returned from their trip, and behold, the poor wife had been taken. The husband mourned and cried a great deal, and was very bitter about his wife constantly.

One time the merchant passed by the apartment of the poor man, and heard him crying. He came in and asked him, "Why are you crying so bitterly?" He answered, "And should I not cry? What is left to me? There are those whose wealth or children remain for them. I have nothing, and now my wife has been taken from me. What is left?" And the merchant's heart felt for the poor man, and his mercy welled up, seeing the bitterness he was enduring. So he went and did something wild - it was truly crazy - and went and asked in which city lived the above general. He travelled there, and did something very reckless: He went to the house of the general. There were troops stationed there. And he, in his state of upheaval and unrest, went forward recklessly, paying no attention to the soldiers. They were also shocked and dumbfounded, suddenly seeing a man in such tumult, and they also fell into upheaval. "How did he come to be here?" And in their disarray, they let him pass through. He went past all of them, until he entered the house and came to the place where she was sleeping. He woke her, and said "Come." She saw him and was stunned. He said to her, "Come with me now." She went with him, and again they passed by all the guards unobstructed, until they got away.

Presently, he realized in disbelief what he had done, and understood that very soon it would cause a great commotion. And so it was, that there was a great uproar at the general's house. The merchant and the poor man's wife went and hid themselves in a cistern filled with rainwater,

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waiting for the commotion to die down. He stayed two days with her in the cistern. She took note of all his self-sacrifice for her, and the suffering he underwent on her behalf. So she vowed to the L-rd that all the good fortune she would have - any fortune, greatness or success - that none of it should be withheld from him. And if he would want to take all the fortune and greatness for himself, leaving her as she was, he should be allowed to do so. But there was the problem of who would serve as witnesses. So he took the cistern as a witness.

After two days, he left that place with her and went onward. He went with her further and further, and he realized that also there they were looking for him. They went on, and then hid together in a ritual bath. And again she thought of the great self-sacrifice and suffering he was enduring for her, and again she swore as before, and she took the ritual bath for a witness. They stayed there also about two days, and then continued on. And so it went several times, that he hid himself with her in other places like the first ones, specifically seven watery locations. They were as follows: Cistern and ritual bath, lakes and spring and brooks and rivers and seas. In every place that they hid, she remembered his self-sacrifice and his suffering on her behalf. So she swore as before, and took the place where they were as witness. They continued on, and hid in these places, until they came to the sea. Being that he was a trader, and he was familiar with the sea routes, he navigated the route back to his own country, until he arrived at his home with the poor man's wife. He returned her to her husband, and there was great rejoicing.

In the merit of having done this good deed, and also resisting temptation when he had been alone with the poor man's wife, he sired a son that year. And she, in the merit of having guarded her purity with both the general and the merchant, also had a child, a girl. She was incredibly

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beautiful, beauty that was beyond the realm of human appearance, for such beauty could not be found among people. And people were saying, "She should be fortunate enough to survive to maturity (for a novelty remarkable as this has difficulty surviving). For her beauty and glory were very, very awesome, the likes of which could not be found in all the world. And many people would come to see her, and they were stunned by her great and very exalted beauty, and they would give her many gifts out of their affection. They kept giving, until the poor man became very rich. And the merchant came upon the idea of making a match between their children, because she was so beautiful, and such a novelty. And he thought to himself, that perhaps this was the intent of the dream, that they took from the poor man to him, and from him to the poor man. It was implying that their children would marry, and through this their estates would be merged together.

One time, the poor man's wife visited him, and he told her his idea, that he wanted their children to marry, and through this the dream he had had would be realized. She answered, "I also had thought of this, but I did not have the boldness to speak of it, that my family would marry into yours. However, if you are willing, I am as well, and I would not withhold it. For I already swore that all the good fortune I should have would not be withheld from you.

Now, the daughter and the son learned together under one teacher, learning languages and other traditional disciplines. And many would come to see the daughter, and gave presents, until the poor man became wealthy. And nobles came to see her, and were very impressed. Her beauty was a great novelty among them, for it was not mortal beauty at all. From the awesomeness of her beauty, the nobles desired to arrange a match with the poor man. Any noble who had a son desired to arrange a match between them. However, it was not befitting them to marry

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into the family of a poor man such as this. So they were obliged to see to it that his status would rise. They arranged for him to serve with the Kaiser. At first he was made a sergeant, and from there he rose higher and higher. For they were attempting to raise his status quickly. So he rose increasingly, until he became a general, and the nobles wanted their families to become wedded to his. However, many were vying for this, since a good number of nobles had been involved in raising him. Besides which, he was not free to arrange a match with anyone, for the news had already spread that he would make a match with the merchant.

And the poor man, who had become a general, had more and more success. The Kaiser would send him to war, and he succeeded every time. And he raised him to an increasingly higher status, and he continued to be very successful. Until the time came when the Kaiser passed away, and all the people of the country concurred that he should become Kaiser. Then all the ministers convened and ruled that he be appointed Kaiser. So he became the Kaiser, and he waged wars, and was very successful. He conquered countries. He would wage wars with success, conquer, and move on, until the remaining countries agreed to give themselves up to him willingly. For they saw his formidable success - that all the beauty and fortune of the world was with him. Thus, all the kings convened and agreed that he should be made Kaiser over the whole world. They gave him a letter written in gold. Now, this Kaiser resisted a marriage arranged with the merchant - for it is not fitting for a Kaiser to marry into the family of a merchant. But his wife the Kaiseress would not budge at all from supporting the merchant. And the Kaiser saw that it would be impossible to make another match in the face of the one with the merchant, especially seeing that his wife held the merchant in very high esteem. Thus he began to conceive plans against the merchant. At first he thought to

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bring him to poverty, and he tried with covert plans, as if it was not he who was causing the loss. And a Kaiser can certainly arrange such a thing. They caused him much loss, until he declined and became destitute. Yet she, the Kaiseress, still stood by him the whole time. Eventually the Kaiser saw that as long as the merchant's son was still living, it would be impossible to make any other match. So he attempted to bring down this son of the merchant. He thought of ways to bring his downfall. He caused charges to come up against him, and brought judges against him, and the judges understood that it was the Kaiser's will to eradicate him. They judged to stuff him in a sack and cast him into the sea.

The Kaiseress was very downhearted from this. Yet even the Kaiseress cannot oppose the will of the Kaiser. So this is what she did. She went to the ones appointed to throw him into the sea, and fell before their feet, and pleaded with them exceedingly, that they should spare him for her sake. For why should he be sentenced to death? And she pleaded with them a great deal, that they should take someone else charged with the death penalty, and throw him into the sea in place of this young man. Her entreaties swayed them, and they vowed to her to spare him. And so they did: They threw someone else into the sea in his place, and spared him, saying "Go on your way." So he went his way. He was already a mature man, and he went his way.

And before this, the Kaiseress went and called to her daughter, saying: "My daughter, know that this son of the merchant, he is your groom." And she told her the whole story of what she had been through, and how the merchant had sacrificed himself for her, and had been with her in seven locations, and how she had vowed in Hashem's name that all her good fortune would not be withheld from him. And how she had taken the seven places as witnesses

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– the cistern, the ritual bath and so on. "And behold, you are all my good fortune and success. So certainly you are his, and his son is your groom. And your father, in his crudeness, wants to murder him for nothing. I already struggled to save him, and I effected that he be spared. Therefore, know that he is your groom, and do not desire anyone else in the world at all."

Her mother's words found favor in the daughter's eyes, for she also had fear of Heaven, and she answered that she would certainly fulfill accordingly. She went and sent a letter to the son of the merchant, conveying the message that she considered herself to be his, and that he was her groom. And she included a map, in which she drew all the places that her mother had hidden with his father. And she drew the likeness of a cistern, a ritual bath, etc. And she warned him direly that he guard this map very, very carefully, and she signed her name at the bottom.

Afterwards, as described before, the appointed officers seized another man in place of the merchant's son, and spared him. He went his way, and he travelled on until he came to the sea. He went in a ship and crossed the sea. Then a fierce storm came and carried the ship to another shore, where there was a desert. And the power of the storm broke apart the ship. However, the passengers were saved and reached the land.

The land to which they came was a desert. Each one struck out in search of food. For ships did not ordinarily come there, being as it was a desert. Therefore, they did not expect that any ship would come to rescue them. So they went in the desert looking for food, and they all became dispersed, each one in a different direction.

And this young man went through the desert, going on and on. Eventually he wandered so far from the shore that he could not return. The more he wanted to return,

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the farther away he strayed, until he saw it was impossible to go back. So he went wherever destiny would lead him. He went on through the desert, and he had with him a bow, which he used to protect him from the wild animals in the desert, and he found there things he could eat. He continued on and on, until he came out of the desert and reached a settlement. There was water there, and fruit trees surrounding it. So he would eat from the trees and drink the water.

He came to the conclusion that he should stay there the rest of his life. For it would be hard for him to return to civilization. And who could tell if he would reach another place like this, if he left this one, and travelled on? Therefore he thought he would stay there and live out the rest of his days. For he had it well there, with the fruit to eat and the water to drink. And sometimes he would go out with his bow and shoot down a gull or a deer, giving him meat to eat. He also caught fish, for there were very good fish in the water. And it pleased him to spend the rest of his life there.

Now, after the Kaiser carried out his decree on the merchant's son, and was free of him (for the Kaiser thought that the sentence had been carried out on the merchant's son, and that he was no longer alive), he believed he was free to arrange another match for his daughter. So they began to speak to her of matches with this king or that one. They made her a fine courtyard, and she sat there. She chose daughters of noblemen to be companions, and she passed the time there. She would play instruments and other such diversions, as was the custom. And whenever they spoke to her of matches, she would answer that she did not want to talk, but rather that the prospective match should come there himself. She was an expert in music, and she skilfully fashioned a place where a suiter could come before her and sing a song of desire, in

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the manner that one in love speaks words of affection to the one he desires.

And kings came to suit her, and they stood in that place, and each one sang his song. To some of them, she sent an answer in the form of a song of affection, by way of her companions. And to those to whom she was more attracted, she answered herself, raising her voice in song, also with words of affection. And to some, for whom she felt even more attraction, she showed herself to them face to face. She would reveal her face, and sing words of affection. But to all of them she concluded, "But the waters did not cover you." No one could understand her intent. And when she revealed her face, they would collapse from the intensity of her beauty. Some of them remained weakened, and some lost their minds from lovesickness, from the greatness of her beauty, beyond imagining. And even though they went insane or became permanently weak, more kings came to suit her, and to all of them she answered as before.

And the merchant's son sat in that place. He fashioned for himself a dwelling-place, and stayed there. He also knew to play, and knew the art of music. He chose wood that was suitable for making instruments, and made some for himself. And from the sinews of the wild animals, he made strings, and he would sing and play to himself. He would take the letter that the daughter of the Kaiser had sent him, and would sing and play, and he would recall all that he had been through, and how his father had been a wealthy merchant, and now he had ended up here. He went and took the letter, and made a mark in a tree, and carved a hole in it, and hid the letter there. And he dwelled there some time.

One time, a great storm wind came and broke apart all the trees that had stood there. And he could not recognize

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the tree in which the letter was hidden. For while they were still standing, he had had a sign marking its place. But now that they had fallen, the tree with the letter had been jumbled with the other trees, for there had been many trees there. So he could not recognize the tree. And it was not realistic to split open all the trees to find the letter, for there were too many of them. He cried and was tormented by this a great deal. He saw that if he continued to dwell here, he would go insane from the overwhelming pain, which he felt deeply. He decided that he must go on, come what may, for if not, he would be in great danger from the pain. So he filled his pack with meat and fruits, and went where destiny would lead him. And he left signs for himself in the place he was leaving.

And he continued, until he came to a settlement. He asked, "Which country is this?" They answered him. He asked if the Kaiser was known in that country. They answered "Yes." He asked if his beautiful daughter was known there. They answered "Yes, however, it is impossible to be matched with her." He concluded to himself, seeing that it was forbidden for him to go there, that he should approach the king of the country in which he was now. He told the King his entire story - how he was her true groom, and it was on his account that she did not want to be matched with anyone else. And because it was impossible for him to enter her country, he was hereby giving over the signs in his keeping - that is, the seven watery locations. He advised this king to go over there and be betrothed to her, and to pay him money in exchange. The King sensed the truth in his words, for it is impossible to invent something such as this. So the King looked upon the idea favorably.

However, the King considered, "If I bring the woman here, and that man is here, it would be awkward." Yet to murder him would be difficult as well, for why should he

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be murdered for the favor he had done?! Thus, he decided to banish him to a distance of two hundred miles. The son was very resentful at this, that he was being banished in recompense for the favor he had done. So in the place to which he was sent, he went to another king, and told him the same story, and gave over the signs. And to the second king, he added a sign. And he urged the king to travel immediately - perhaps he could get there before the other. And even if he did not beat him to it, he nevertheless had one sign beyond the other king. And this king also decided as the other, and he sent the son two hundred miles away. The son was also very resentful at this. So he went to a third king, and to this third he added signs even more impressive.

The first king immediately set out and came there, to the place of the Kaiser's daughter, and sang his song. And with wisdom, he inserted in the song all the seven places - that is, the seven witnesses. However, according to the needs of the song, he had to change the order of the places. For thus the sense of poetry of the song demanded. So he came to the spot where the suiters stood, and sang the song. When the Kaiser's daughter heard the seven places, it was a wonder to her. Only she found it hard to understand why the order was wrong. But she assumed that perhaps it was because of the poetic needs of the song, that he had used this order. And she concluded to herself that this must be the man, and she signed that she was betrothed to him. Much happiness and commotion ensued, upon hearing that she had found her soulmate, and they prepared for the wedding.

In the midst of this, the second one arrived, and they informed him that she was already betrothed. He paid no heed to this, and said that even so, he had something to tell that would certainly sway her. He went and sang his song, and arranged all the places in the proper order. Further, he

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gave an additional sign. She asked him, "How did the first one know?" To tell the truth did not seem a wise idea, so he said he did not know. And it was amazing to her, and she stood astonished. For the first one also told the signs, and how could another man find this out? In any case, it appeared to her that this second was her true soulmate, for he told all the signs, and in order as well. And as for the first, perhaps it was just the craft of the songwriting that had brought him to mention the places. However, she withheld a final decision.

Now, the son, who had sent the second king, had felt offended, as described earlier, and had gone to the third king, telling him the same story, and adding more impressive signs. And in front of the third, he poured out his heart, explaining that he had had a letter, on which was drawn all the seven places. Thus, the king should also draw for himself a map with all the places, and bring it to her. And the third also concluded, that it would not be appropriate to bring her here if this young man was in the area. So he also banished him two hundred miles away.

And this third king also ran there, and upon arriving, they told him that there are already two who came before him. He said, "Even so, I have something to tell, that will certainly sway her." And the people had no idea why she had favored these two men more than all the others. And now this third one arrived, and sang his song with signs more impressive than the other two. And he showed the map with the signs drawn on it, and she was dumbfounded. However, she could not take any action, for the first one had also seemed like the right man, and then the second. Thus, she said she would not believe anyone until one would bring her the letter with her own handwriting.

Presently, the son thought to himself, "How much longer will they keep kicking me farther and farther

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away?" Thus, he decided that he himself should go there - perhaps he could accomplish something. So he wandered about, until he reached the place, and said that he had something to tell, etc. He went and sang his song, and gave increasingly accurate signs, and he reminded her that they had learned together in the same schoolroom and the like. And he told her everything - how he had sent kings to her, how he had hid the letter in the tree, and everything he had been through. But she did not take him seriously at all. (And certainly the kings who came before all had explanations for why they did not bring the letter.) And she certainly did not recognize him, for a long time had already passed, and she no longer wanted to depend on signs, being satisfied with nothing less than the letter. For she had been sure that the first one was her groom, and likewise the second, and so she did not want to depend on anything save the letter.

The son concluded that he should not delay here at all, and decided to return to his place in the desert, where he had been, and there he would spend the rest of his days. He wandered about attempting to reach that desert, and then he arrived there. Several years passed, and he decided to dwell there in the desert, and pass the rest of his days. For according to the value he ascribed to the life of a man in this world, he judged it to be good to pass his days there, and he sat there and ate, etc.

And upon the sea, there went a murderer. And he heard that there was in the world a very beautiful woman, and he thought to kidnap her. He himself did not need her, for he was a eunich. Still, he wanted to kidnap her in order to sell her to some king, and receive great wealth in exchange. So he started to plan to do it. And a murderer abandons himself. And so this one abandoned himself, saying, If it succeeds, it succeeds, and if not, not. And what could he lose? For he was given to abandon, as is the way

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of murderers. So he went and bought a tremendous amount of very impressive merchandise. He also fashioned birds out of gold, with great artistry, and they appeared to be truly alive. He also made wheat stalks of gold, and he positioned the birds on the stalks. And this in itself seemed a great novelty - how the birds sat on the stalks, without the stalks' breaking. For the birds were large. He also added innovations, fashioning the birds so that they appeared to play music. One of them would hammer and knock with its tongue, another chimed a bell in its mouth, and another sang. It was all done with sleight of hand, for there were people hidden in a room on the ship near the birds, and they produced all these sounds, and it seemed as if the birds themselves were playing. For they were manipulated by metal rods, with artistry, until it seemed as if they themselves did all the above.

Now, the murderer travelled with all this to the country wherein was the Kaiser's daughter. He came to her city, and positioned his ship on the sea, letting down the anchors, and mooring it, and presented himself as a major merchant. Many people came there to buy expensive and abundant merchandise. He stayed there some time, approximately a quarter of a year, and people bought quality products from him. The Kaiser's daughter also desired to buy from him, and sent for him that he should bring his wares to her. He sent her a reply saying it was not his practice to bring his wares to the home of the buyer, not even to the daughter of the Kaiser. Rather, whoever wanted to buy had to come to him. And as he was a merchant, no one had the authority to make him do differently.

So the Kaiser's daughter decided to go to him. It was her custom, that when she went in the market, she wore a veil on her face so that men would not look at her. For they could collapse just from seeing her beauty. She went

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out, and covered her face. She also took several friends with her, and a guard followed behind. She came to the merchant (that is, the murderer who appeared a merchant). And she bought merchandise from him, and left. The merchant said to her, "If you come again, I will show you products even more beautiful than these, real wonders. She returned home, and another time she came, bought from the merchant, and left again. The murderer continued there more time, and presently she became a regular customer, coming and going freely.

One time she visited him, and he opened up the room with the golden birds. She saw that it was an amazing novelty. The others, including the guard, also wanted to go in. But the merchant said, "No, no! I will not show this to any man, only to you, because you are the Kaiser's daughter, but to others I don't want to show it at all." So she went in alone. Then he also went into the room, and locked the door. Then he acted simply, pushing her into a sack, and stripped her clothes from her. With these clothes he dressed one of the sailors, veiled his face, pushed him out and said "Go!" And this sailor had no idea what was being done with him. As soon as he exited the room with his face covered, being that the guard and the companions did not realize, they began to walk with him immediately. For they thought he was the Kaiser's daughter. And he (the sailor) went with them, not knowing where he was at all. Until they arrived back at the room where the Kaiser's daughter had been accustomed to sit. Then they unveiled his face and saw that he was a sailor. A great uproar followed (and they slapped the sailor's face and kicked him out, for he was not guilty, not having known at all).

Now, the murderer took the Kaiser's daughter, and he knew they would pursue him. He left the ship with her, and hid with her in a cistern filled with rainwater, until the commotion died down. And to the sailors on the ship, he

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commanded that they immediately cut the anchors and flee. For certainly, the pursuers would chase them, but they would not fire on the ship, assuming that the Kaiser's daughter was on it. But pursue they would, so he told them to flee immediately. "And if they catch you, they catch you, what of it?" For it is the way of murderers, that they do not care what happens to them. And so it was, a great commotion arose, and they chased after the ship, but did not find her on it.

The murderer hid with her in the rainwater cistern. And he threatened her not to scream, so no one should hear her, and he said to her, "I struggled hard to catch you. And if I lose you, my life is worth nothing to me, since you are already in my hands. If I should lose you and you are taken from me, my life would be worth nothing at all to me. So, if you let out a scream, I'll strangle you immediately, and I don't care what will become of me, because I'm worth nothing in my eyes." And she was mortally frightened of him, and did not dare to scream. Afterwards, they left there, and came to a city. They went on and on, until they reached another place, and realized that there too, they were searching for her. So he hid with her again, in a ritual bath. After a time, they left, and he hid with her in another place, until he hid with her in all the seven locations that the original merchant had hid with her mother, that is, the seven witnesses, the seven types of water: cistern, ritual bath, spring, etc. Until they came to the sea. And he searched to find at least a small fishing boat, in order to cross over with her. He found a ship, and took the Kaiser's daughter with him in it. He himself did not need her, for he was a eunuch. But he wanted to sell her to some king, and he feared that she would be snatched from him. So he dressed her in sailor's clothing, and she appeared as a male. And he crossed the sea with him (From this point we will refer to the Kaiser's daughter in the masculine. For that was the language Rabbi Nachman

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used to refer to her, because the murderer had dressed her as a male). A storm came and drove the ship to the shore, smashing it. They found themselves on the same shore with the desert, where the young man had been.

When they arrived there, being that the murderer knew the geography well, and knew that this was a desolate place, where ships did not come. Thus, he had no need to fear from anyone. So he let her go freely, and they split up to search for food. And she gained distance from him. He started to call out to her, but she stayed quiet and did not answer. For she reasoned, "If in the end he will sell me, why should I return to him? And if he should return and find me, I will tell him that I did not hear him. Especially considering that it is not in his interest to kill me, for he wants to sell me." So she did not answer him, and went onward. And he looked here and there, and could not find her. So he continued on, and still could not find her, and it is safe to assume that wild animals ate him.

Meanwhile, she continued on, and she found some food. And she went on, until she reached the place where the young man had sat. Her hair had grown long, and she was also dressed as a man, in a sailor's uniform, and they did not recognize each other. But as soon as she arrived, he was filled with joy at seeing another person. He asked, "How did you come to be here?" She answered, "I was travelling at sea with some merchant," etc. She asked him, "How did you come to be here?" He answered, "Also through travelling with a merchant." So they sat there together.

After the Kaiser's daughter was kidnapped, the Kaiseress had mourned, beating her head against the wall at the loss of her daughter. She tormented the Kaiser with harsh words, accusing that it was through his baseness that the young man had been lost, and now her daughter was

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lost. "Behold, she was all our fortune and success," she said. "Now we have lost her, and what do I have left?" And she beared down hard on him with her words. Certainly he had his own deep sorrow at the loss of his daughter, and she only intensified it. And they came to strife and anger between them. She would say accusing words, until he became very angry, to the point that he ordered her to be sent away. He set up judges, and they ruled to send her, and so it was done.

After this, the Kaiser entered into war, and was not successful. He blamed it on a particular general, saying "Because you did such and such, you lost the war." So he sent him away. He continued the war campaigns, again unsuccessfully, and sent away more generals. And so he sent away a good number of them. The citizens of the country saw that he was acting strangely: First he sent away his wife, and then the generals. So they concluded, "Why not do the opposite: Let's bring the Kaiseress back, and send him away, and the Kaiseress will rule the country." And so they did - they sent him away, brought back the Kaiseress, and she ruled the country.

Then the Kaiseress immediately sent for the merchant and his wife, and brought them to live in the palace. And the Kaiser, who had been banished, pleaded with those escorting him to let him free. "For in spite of everything, I was your ruler, and I certainly did good for you. So now, be compassionate and let me go. For I surely will not try to return to the kingdom, and you do not need to fear from me. Let me go, and I will at least be free the rest of my days." So they let him free, and he continued on and on. Several years passed, and he kept going, until he came to the sea. Also in his case, a storm wind drove his ship to the same desert shore mentioned above. Until he came to the same place where the other two were sitting (that is, the son of the merchant and his beautiful daughter, who was

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dressed as a male). And they did not recognize each other, for the Kaiser's hair had grown, and some years had passed. And their hair had also grown. They asked him, "How did you come to be here?" He answered that he had travelled with a merchant, etc. They answered likewise. So they sat together, and ate and drank. And they played instruments, for all of them knew how to play.

Now the young man was the most competent among them, for he had already been there a long time before the others. He would bring them meat, and they ate, and they used the trees for firewood, this being more valuable here than gold in a settled place. And the young man convinced them that this was a fine place to spend one's life, and even by the standards of prosperity in civilized places, it was good to live here. They asked him, "What good did you have in your life, that you found it preferable to live here?" He answered them, and related his entire story - how he was the son of a merchant, and how he had come to be here. And all the abundant good he had had as the son of a wealthy merchant - here, too he had abundant good. So he proved to them that it was a good place to spend one's life.

The Kaiser asked him, "Did you hear of a certain Kaiser?" He answered yes. Then he asked him if he had heard of a certain beautiful woman. He also answered yes to this. Then the young man began to feel rage. "That murderer!" he said (that is, the Kaiser that they had spoken of. For he did not know that he was speaking to the Kaiser himself. He spoke with anger and gnashed his teeth, saying "That murderer!"). The Kaiser then asked, "What makes him a murderer?" He answered, "It is due to his cruelty and baseness that I came to be here." "How?" The young man appraised that here, he did not have anything to fear, and he told him the whole story he had been through (it appears, according to the text, that previously, he did not relate the whole story, only that he

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was a merchant's son). The Kaiser asked him, "If that Kaiser were to come into your hands now, would you take revenge on him?" He answered, "No (for he was merciful). To the contrary, I would provide for him as I am providing for you."

Again, the Kaiser began to sigh and groan, "How bitter and unfortunate for that Kaiser." For he heard that his daughter had been lost, and he banished! Then the young man added, "Because of his cruelty and his pride, he lost himself and his daughter, and I was sent here - it was all through him! Again the Kaiser asked him, "If he came into your hands now, would you take revenge?" The young man answered, "No! To the contrary, I would provide for him as I am providing for you." Then the Kaiser revealed himself and admitted that he was that Kaiser, and told what he had been through. The young man fell upon him, hugging and kissing him. And she (the Kaiser's daughter, who was also there, only that she appeared as a man), heard all that they had said to each other.

And the young man had a daily routine: Each day he would search in three trees, looking for the letter, and he would make a mark on them. For there were thousands upon thousands of trees there, so he marked those he had checked, so that the next day he would not check them again. He held onto the hope that he just might find the letter. And when he would return from looking, he would come with tear-stained eyes. For he had cried from searching and not finding. The others asked him, "What are you looking for in those trees, and why do you come back with tears in your eyes?" He answered them, telling the whole story - that the daughter of a kaiser had sent him a letter, and he had hid it in these trees, and a storm wind had come, etc., and now he was searching, for who knows, perhaps he would find it. They said to him, "Tomorrow, when you go, we will go with you - maybe we can find the

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letter." And so it happened, they went with him, and the Kaiser's daughter found the letter in a tree, opened the letter, and saw that it was her handwriting exactly.

Then, the young man said, "What use is this letter to me now? How can I find her?" For he thought, Surely by now she is with some king, so why do I need the letter? I'll spend the rest of my life here! He returned the letter to her, and said, "Take this letter, go and marry her (for she appeared to be a male)." She wanted to go, and she asked him to go with her as well, saying she would certainly marry the beautiful woman, "and the good that comes to me, I will share with you." (That is, the Kaiser's daughter said all this to the young man, pretending as she was to be a man). And the young man saw that this was a wise man (that is, the Kaiser's daughter, who was disguised as a man), and he would surely win the beautiful woman. So he agreed to go along. Now there remained only the problem of the Kaiser, for he feared to go back to the kingdom. But the Kaiser's daughter asked him to come back with them, saying that if she were to marry his daughter, he would no longer need fear, for if he were to marry his daughter, he would no longer need fear from the kingdom, for his good fortune would return, and he could go home again.

The three went together, and hired a ship, and came to the kingdom where the Kaisress ruled. They came to the city where she lived, and stationed the ship there. The Kaiser's daughter thought to herself, "If I reveal myself immediately to my mother, she could expire." So she sent a letter, saying there is someone who has information about her daughter. After this, she went there herself, and described everything that had come upon her daughter, the whole story. After that, she said, "and she is here, as well." After that, she told the truth, "I, I am your daughter." Then she informed her that her groom, the merchant's son, was also there. However, she stipulated that she did not

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want to marry unless her father the Kaiser was brought back to his place. Her mother was not at all pleased with this, for she was very wroth with him for having created all this trouble. Nonetheless, she was obliged to fulfill her daughter's request. They ran to return him, but behold, he could not be found at all. Then her daughter told her that he was also there. So the marriage took place. The happiness was complete, and the kingdom and the Kaiseress accepted the couple, and they ruled over the nation.

Notes:

Israel had codes in Egypt (Exodus 3): "I will surely remember them." He who would speak using that language, it would be understood that he is the Redeemer. Also for the final Redeemer, there are certainly signs. The Messiah will tell to the People of Israel, all that they passed through all their days. To each individual Jew his personal story.

In relation to the section of the story in which the suitors come and sing their Song of Desire to the maiden, the deeper meaning is understood. For in this way, various sages do their service, each one singing his song, with the ambition of reaching the ultimate goal. However, not one of them reaches the true goal in completeness, aside from the one who is entirely fit for it. So to some, the maiden answers them through a messenger, or speaks to them from behind a wall, or reveals a bit of her face, as described in the story. Yet in the end, that is when they pass away, she reveals to them that they did not achieve anything, as is described in the story, when she rejects each one. Until the rightful ruler will come.



The Son of the King and the Son of the Maid

The Son of the King and the Son of
the Maid who were Switched



Once there was a King, who had a maid in his house, who worked for the queen. (And though it can be assumed that a typical employee would not have been allowed to come into the presence of the King, this was a maid of a low enough stature that people did not take notice). The time came for the Queen to give birth, and the maid's birthing-time coincided. The midwife went and switched the babies, in order to see what would come of it and how the affair would turn out. She switched them, and placed the child of the King next to the maid, and the child of the maid next to the Queen.

The two children began to grow. The son of the King (that is, the one who grew up as the King's child, for all thought he was the son of the King) ascended higher and higher, until he became a great success. Also the child of the maid (that is, the true son of the King, who was being raised by the maid) grew up in the same house, and they learned together in one classroom. And the true son of the King, who was called the son of the maid, was drawn to the graces of royalty, although he grew up in the care of

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the maid. Also the opposite: The maid's son, who was known as the son of the King, was drawn to other manners, distinct from the manners of kingship. However, since he was being raised in the King's palace, he was obliged to behave in a kingly fashion, according to the way they were raising him.

Then, the midwife, being that women are lightheaded, went and revealed the secret to a friend, and that one to her friends, until the secret was passed on from one to another, as is the habit of people. Until the whole world was murmuring about how the King's son had been switched. However, no one would talk about it openly, lest the King find out. For certainly the King could not be allowed to know, for what could he do? There was no way to repair the damage, for the rumor could not be believed with certainty - perhaps it was a lie. So how could they be switched back again? So it was clearly forbidden for them to reveal this to the King. But the people gossiped with each other about it.

The day came, when someone revealed the secret to the purported son of the King - how people were saying that he had been switched. "However," he continued, "it is not for you to investigate this, for it would not be in accord with your honor. You must not investigate it at all. All the same, I informed you of this, because if a conspiracy were to develop against the monarchy, this would strengthen their position. For they could say, they are adopting the maid's son as their king - those who hold that he is the real son of the King. Therefore, you need to think of how to get rid of him (all these are the words of the one who revealed the secret to the son of the maid, who was known as the son of the King).

And the son of the King (note: As a rule, in every place where the "son of the King" is mentioned, it is referring to the one who is really the son of the maid, only that he grew up with the

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King, and appeared to be his son. And so with the other: In every place the "son of the maid" is mentioned, the intent is the son of the King, being raised by the maid. Excepting the instances where the terms "true son of the King" or "true son of the maid" are used - in these cases, the meaning is to be taken on the simple level) started to make life very difficult for the father of the servant son (who was really his own father), and went out of his way to cause him pain all the time. He continually caused him trouble after trouble, in order to force him and his son to leave. All the while that the King was still alive, the son was limited in his power, but nevertheless he caused much suffering for the other son's father. But after the King grew old and died, the King's son took the throne. And then he caused more harm to the father of the other son, trouble after trouble. He did it stealthily, so that the world would not know he was doing it. For this would not be respected by the public, so he hid the matter. And he caused him trouble all the time.

And the father understood that he was persecuting him because of the issue of the substitution. So he told his son (who was not really his son) the whole story, and said that he had great mercy on him. "For either way: If you are truly my son, then I certainly have much compassion for you. And if you are the true son of the King, then I certainly have even more compassion upon you. For he wants to wipe you out completely, G-d forbid. Therefore, you must distance yourself from here." And it was very upsetting to him.

However, the son of the King continued to shoot his arrows of malevolence at him, one after another, until the servant son decided to leave. His father gave him a large sum of money, and he went his way. And he was very resentful that he had been exiled for no reason. He said to himself, "How is it that I deserve to be banished? If I am really the King's son, I surely do not deserve it. And if I am only the servant's son, I still should not have to flee for no

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reason – what is my crime?" He was very bitter, and thus he took to drinking, and went to houses of prostitution. And he wanted to pass all his days drunkenly pursuing his desires because of having been banished without justification.

Meanwhile, the King ruled the nation with a strong hand, and when he heard people murmuring and gossiping about the substitution, he would deal with them cruelly, and he ruled with intimidating might.

One day, the King and his ministers went hunting. They came to an attractive place beside a river. They made a camp there, and rested and went walking. The King laid down to rest, and this affair came to his mind, how he had banished the son of the servant without justification. Either way one considered, it seemed wrong. If he was really the son of the King, was it not enough that he was switched? Should he have to suffer banishment as well? And if he was not the son of the King, he certainly did not deserve to be banished. For what was his sin? The King thought about it, and regretted the great sin and evil he had done. But he did not have any idea what to do about it. And he could not talk about it with anyone else to take advice. He thus became very depressed and told his ministers they would return home now. For since he was weighed down by worry, there was no point in continuing the excursion. So they returned home. And when the King went back to his routine, he had a number of important issues to attend to. He became immersed in his affairs and forgot about the above mentioned problem.

And the son that had been banished, and who had done what he had done and wasted all his money - one time he went alone on a trip. At one point he laid down to rest, and began thinking of all that had befallen him. He thought, "What is this that G-d has done to me? If I am the son of

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the King, I certainly don't deserve this. And if I am not, I also don't deserve it, to be a banished fugitive." Then he came to the conclusion, "To the contrary, if the Holy One, blessed be He decided to do such a thing, to have the King's son replaced, and that he should endure all of this, am I justified in behaving the way I did? Was that appropriate behavior on my part?" And he began to feel sorry and regret his deeds, but after that he returned to his place and went back to the drinking. Still, since he had started to regret, the thoughts of regret and repentance began to confuse him all the time.

One time, he went to sleep, and dreamed that in a certain place, on a certain day, there would be a fair. He should go there, and the first hired labor he would happen to find, he should accept, even if it were beneath his dignity. Then he awoke, but the dream entered deep into his thoughts. For sometimes a thought passes immediately from one's mind, but this dream stayed on his mind. However, it was difficult for him to accept doing this. So he drank even more heavily. Yet he dreamed the dream several times more, and it confused him thoroughly.

Once, they said to him during the dream, "If you want to have pity on yourself, do this!" So he was obliged to obey the dream. He left the remainder of his money in his lodgings, and also his expensive clothes he left there. And he took the simple working clothes, and travelled to the fair.

When he got there, he met one merchant who asked him, "Would you like to do some work?" He answered yes. He said, "I need someone to lead my animals. Can I hire you for that?" And he did not have a chance to think twice about it, because of the dream. So he answered immediately, "Yes!" So the merchant hired him immediately. Right away, he began to use him domineeringly, as is the

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way of employers with their workers. And he began to ask himself, "What have I done?!" For it certainly was not appropriate work for him, for he was a tender person, and now he would have to lead animals, going on foot among them. However, it was too late to change his mind. The merchant commanded him in the way of a master. He asked the merchant, "How can I go alone with these animals?" He answered, "There are other shepherds working for me, go with them." He gave him several animals to lead, and he brought them outside of the city. There, the other shepherds who were leading animals gathered, and they began moving together, leading the animals. The merchant sat on a horse and went with them. He treated them cruelly, and the son of our story was treated with particular cruelty. The son was very frightened by the merchant, for he saw the great cruelty that was directed specifically at him. He feared that the merchant would give him one mighty whack with his stick, and kill him (for being that he was frail, this appeared possible). So he went with the animals, with the merchant accompanying. They came to a resting place, and they took the sack with the bread for the shepherds, and the merchant gave them to eat. They also gave the son bread, and he ate.

After this, they went into a very thick forest, where the trees were practically adjacent to each other. Two cows that had been in the son's charge became lost. The merchant shouted at him, so he went to try to catch the animals. But they only escaped farther away. So he continued chasing. And because the forest was so thick, as soon as they entered it, they lost sight of one another. And he immediately disappeared from the view of his companions. He went chasing after the cows, and they escaped ever farther. He chased a long time, until he found himself deep in the forest. He thought to himself, "Either way I will die. For if I return without the cows, the

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merchant will kill me." For so it seemed to him, due to his great fear of the merchant. "And if I stay here, I will die from the wild beasts of the forest." But he concluded, "Why should I go back to the merchant? How can I go back without the cows?" For he had a great fear of the merchant. So he continued chasing the cows, and they eluded him. Presently night fell. He had never before been in such a situation, sleeping alone in the night, in a thick forest such as this. And he heard the animals howling, as was their nature. He decided to climb into a tree and sleep there. And he continued to hear the roaring of the animals.

In the morning, he looked, and behold! the cows were standing next to him. He came down from the tree and went to catch them, and they escaped again. He followed them further, and they escaped further. Then the cows found some grass, and stood still to graze and eat. He tried to catch them there, and they escaped again. And so he would chase, and they would escape, repeatedly. Until he went very deep into the forest, where there were wild animals that had no fear of humans, for it was far from civilization. Night came again, and he heard the howling of the animals, and he was terrified. He looked and saw a very great tree, and climbed into it. When he ascended the tree, he saw a man sleeping there, and it frightened him. Nonetheless, it was comforting to him to have found another man. They asked each other, "Who are you, man? How did you come to be here?" But he did not want to tell the whole story. So he simply answered, "Because of the cows. I was shepherding cows, and two of them strayed here. That is how I came here." Then he asked the other man, "How did you come to be here?" He answered, "I came here riding on a horse. I stopped to rest, and the horse went and strayed into the forest. I went chasing after him, and he escaped further. Until I came here." So they joined together, to be a team. And they agreed that even if they were to reach a settlement, they would stay together

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as a team. They slept there next to each other, and heard the fearsome roaring of the animals.

Towards morning, they heard a very mighty voice of laughter, through the whole forest. It spread throughout the forest, because it was so powerful, until the tree shook and swayed from the voice. The son was extremely frightened from this. And the second man said to him, "I already do not fear from this at all. For I have already slept here several nights, and every night near daybreak, I hear the sound of this laughter, until all the trees shake and tremble." The son was shocked, and said to his companion, "It seems to me like a place of demons." For in settled places, one does not here a voice of laughter like this. For who has ever heard a voice of laughter that fills an entire region?

After that, it immediately became day. They looked, and saw, and behold, this one's cows were there, and also the other one's horse. They descended and began to chase them, this one after the cows, and the other after the horse. The cows escaped farther, and the son chased them as before. And so the horse also escaped, and the other man ran after it. Until they were separated and lost each other.

In the midst of this, the son found a sack with bread. And that is surely very important in a wilderness. He took the sack on his shoulder, and went after the cows.

In the course of this, he came upon a man, and was stunned by what he saw. Nevertheless, he was comforted at having met another man. The man asked him, "How did you come to be here?" He responded by asking the same question: "How did you come to be here?" The man responded, "I, my fathers and my grandfathers grew up here. But you, how did you come here? For to this place people from the settlement never come." He was shocked at hearing this, for he understood that this was not a man

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at all. For he said that his descendants had been raised here, and yet no man from the settlement ever comes here. Therefore, he understood that this was not a man at all. Nevertheless, the man did not do him any harm, and was friendly toward him. Then the man asked him, "What are you doing here?" He answered that he was chasing after the cows. The man then said, "Give up chasing after sins! For those are not animals at all, only your own sins that are leading you on. Enough! You have already suffered your punishment. Now, cease from chasing them anymore. Come with me, and come to something that will give you satisfaction." So he went with him. He was frightened of speaking or asking him questions. For such a man could open his mouth and swallow one! For he understood that this was not a man at all. And he went after him.

In the course of this, he met his friend who had been chasing after the horse. As soon as he saw him, he signed to him, pointing at the other man, "Know, that that is not a man at all. Don't be involved with him, for he is not a man at all!" He went to his friend, and whispered all this in his ear. Then his friend looked at him, and noticed the sack of bread he was carrying on his back. He started to beg him, "Brother, I haven't eaten for several days. Give me bread!" He answered him, "Here in the wilderness, nothing has currency. My life comes first, and I need the bread for myself." But he started to beg and plead with him, saying "I'll give you all that I have." But no gift or favor is worth bread in the wilderness. The other said, "What can you give me? For what could you give in place of bread in the wilderness?" The man with the horse answered, "I'll give you myself - I'll sell myself to you for the bread." The man with the cows considered to himself, "If I can buy a man, it is worth giving him the bread." He thus bought him as a permanent slave. And he had him swear that he would remain a slave, even after they came to a settlement. And so he gave him bread - that is, they would eat together

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from the sack until it was finished.

Together, they followed the Man of the Forest. And the slave went behind the man with the cows. Having a slave made things a bit easier for him. When he needed to lift something heavy, or needed some other type of help, he would command the slave to lift it, and do his will. And they went together after the Man of the Forest. Then they came to a place of spiders and snakes, and he was very afraid. Out of his fear, he asked the Man of the Forest, "How will we pass through this?!" He answered him, "I have an even harder question: How will you reach my house?" And he showed him his house, which was suspended in air. "How will you come into my house?!" They went on with the Man of the Forest, and he brought them over safely. And he brought them into his house and gave them to eat and drink. Then he left them there.

Now this man (the true son of the King, who was also the man with the cows) used his slave for everything he needed. And the slave was very resentful, that for an hour when he had needed some bread to eat, he had become a slave. Because now, they had all they needed to eat. But for the sake of one hour, he had become a permanent slave. He sighed and groaned, "How did I come to such a state, to be a slave?" The King's son, who was now his master, asked him, "What status did you have before, that you sigh so at being a slave now?" So he told him, how he had been a king, and they had murmured about him that he was exchanged, etc. (For this man with the horse, he was in fact the son of the maid, who had acted as King, and banished his friend.) And once it had occurred to him that he had not acted justly, and he regretted it, etc. And he was constantly plagued by regret at what he had done, the great evil he had committed against his friend.

One time, he dreamed that his rectification would be

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to give up the kingdom, and go where his whim would lead him, and through this his sin would be atoned for. He did not want to do it, but the dreams kept haunting him, pushing him to do it, until he decided he would. He abandoned the kingdom and went where the road took him, until he came here, and now he had become a slave. The other listened to all this, and remained quiet. He said to himself, "I'll wait and see how I should deal with this one."

In the evening, the Man of the Forest came, and gave them to eat and drink. They slept there. In the morning, they heard the sound of the great laughter, that shook and rocked all the trees. The slave tempted his master to ask the Man of the Forest to explain this. So he asked him, "What is this roaring sound of laughter that comes just before dawn?" He answered, "That is the sound of the day laughing at the night. The night asks the dawn, "Why is it that when you come, I have no name?" Then the day laughs and lets out an enormous bellow, and then it becomes day. And that is the sound of laughter you hear." And it was amazing in his eyes. For it is a wonder that the day laughs at the night.

In the morning, the Man of the Forest returned and then left again. And they ate and drank there. In the night they heard the voice of the wild beasts, all roaring and howling with their various voices, each one with its unique character: The lion roared, the panther howled in a different voice, and the birds all chirped and twittered with their voices. And so all of them called out with a different voice. At first the men were shocked, and did not listen attentively due to their fear. But afterwards, they turned their ears and heard, that it was a very wondrous voice of song and melody, which was a sublime delight to hear. All of the delights of the world were as nothing, insignificant and annulled, in comparison with the awesome delight of

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this melody. And they agreed to stay there, for they had enough to eat and drink, and they could enjoy this sublime delight, next to which all other delights were as nothing.

The slave again tempted his master, this time to ask the Man of the Forest to explain this melody. He answered, "This is the matter of the garment the sun made for the moon. And all the beasts of the forest concurred: Being that the moon does them a great favor - for their main rule is at night, and the moon shines for them. Thus they agreed to sing a new song in honor of the moon, who accepted the garment from the sun, and that is the melody you hear."

When they heard that it was a melody, they paid attention more closely, and perceived that it was a very awesome and sweet melody. Then the Man of the Forest said to them, "This is such a novelty to you? I have in my possession an instrument that was passed down to me from my fathers, that they received from their fathers' fathers. It is made from leaves and colors, such that when one lays the instrument upon some beast or bird, it immediately starts to sing this melody.

After this, the laughing sound was heard again, and it became day. The Man of the Forest left, and the man who was the true son of the King started searching for the instrument. He searched the whole room without finding it, and further than that he feared to go. And both of them (that is, the master, who was the true son of the King, and the slave, who was really the son of the maid, and who had held the throne for a time) were afraid to ask the Man of the Forest to take them to civilization. The Man of the Forest returned, took the instrument, and gave it to the true son of the King, saying, "I give this instrument to you, and as for your slave, know how to deal with him."

Then they asked him, "Where are we to go?" He

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answered, that they should inquire after the country known as "The Foolish Country with the Wise King." They asked, "Where should we begin asking after a country such as this?" The Man of the Forest pointed with his finger, "In that direction." Then he said to the true son of the King, "Go there, to that state, and there you will come to your greatness."

So they went on their way. And they longed to find some animal or beast on which to try the instrument, to see if it would play. However, as yet they did not see any animal. Later, they came to a settlement and found a farm animal, placed the instrument on it, and it began to play. They went on until they came to the above-mentioned country. The country was surrounded by a wall, and one could only enter through one gate. And one needed to follow the wall a long way until one came to the gate. So they followed the wall until they arrived at the gate. Those at the gate did not want to let them enter. For the king of the country had died, and his son had taken his place. And the king had left a will, stating "Being that until now the country had been named The Foolish Country with the Wise King, and now they will be calling it The Wise Country with the Foolish King. And he who girds his loins to return it to the first name - that people will again call it by the first name, that is, The Foolish Country with the Wise King - he will be King." Therefore, they would not let anyone enter, save one who could accomplish this. And so, they did not want to let him enter, and they asked him, "Can you gird your loins for this, to return the country to its former name?" And certainly he was not prepared to take on such a thing, so they were not able to enter. The slave tempted him to return home, but he did not want to consent, for the Man of the Forest had told him to go to this country, and that here he would find his greatness.

In the course of this, another man came riding on a

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horse, who also wanted to enter. They also did not let him enter, for the same reason. Meanwhile, the son of the King noticed the man's horse standing there, and he took the instrument and laid it on the horse, and it started to play the wondrous melody described before. The owner of the horse pressed him to sell him the instrument, but he was not willing. He asked him, "What can you give me in exchange for such a marvellous instrument?" The other asked him in return, "What can you accomplish with the instrument? You can only perform a concert, and earn a dinar. But I know something, that is better than your instrument. I know something that I inherited from my ancestors, that can enable one to understand one thing from another. So that when someone makes a statement, it is possible through this tradition I have, to understand one thing from another. Until now I had not revealed this to any other man. But I will teach this to you, if you give me the instrument." The son of the King considered it, and saw that it was truly a remarkable thing, to understand one thing from another. So he gave the man his instrument, and the man taught him how to understand one thing from another.

Then the son of the King, after having learned to understand one thing from another, went back to the gate of the country, and he saw that he really could accept the challenge to return the country to its first name, for he had become able to understand one thing from another. Thus he saw that it was possible. Though he still did not know, how he would do this, even so, since he had become able to understand one thing from another, he saw that it was possible. He decided to demand that they let him enter, and he would take this on. What could he lose? And he told the guards who had not let anyone enter, to let him in, and he would accept the challenge. So they let him in.

And they informed the ministers of the country, that

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there was now a man willing to try to return the country to its original name. They brought him to the ministers, and the ministers said to him, "Know that we are not foolish, Heaven forbid. It is only that the former king had been amazingly wise, and compared to him we were all as fools. That is why it was called The Foolish Country with the Wise King. Then the King died, leaving his son in his place. He is also wise, but compared to the previous King, he is not wise at all. Therefore the country now has the opposite name: The Wise Country with the Foolish King. And the King left a will, saying that he who was wise enough to return the country to its former name, he would be King. He commanded his son, saying that when such a man would be found, he should abdicate the throne, and that man would become King. That is, when such a wise man would be found, that would be truly tremendous in wisdom, until in comparison to him everyone else would be as a fool, he would become King. For such a man could return the country to its first name, for people would again start calling it The Foolish Country with the Wise King. For they would all be as fools compared to him. Thus, know what it is you are taking upon yourself (all this the ministers said to him)."

The ministers continued, "This will be the test, to see if you are such a wise man: There is a garden, remaining from the days of the previous king, who had been very great in wisdom. The garden is very impressive. There grow instruments of metal, of silver and gold, and it is very wondrous and awesome. However, it is impossible to enter. For when one enters, they immediately start chasing him. They chase him until he screams, and he does not know what is happening or who is chasing him. And so they chase him all the way out of the garden. Therefore, we will see if you are truly wise, if you can enter this garden." He asked them if one would be beaten physically there. They said, "The main thing is the chasing - the person does

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not know who is pursuing, and he flees in great terror." For thus people who had entered had described it to them.

So he went to the garden (that is, the true son of the King), and he saw that there was a wall surrounding it, but the gate was open, and no one was guarding it. For certainly, this garden needed no guards. He went along the edge of the garden. He looked and saw a man standing there by the wall, or more correctly, a statue of a man. He saw that above the man was a placard, and on it was written, that this man had been king several hundred years ago, and in his time, there had been peace. For before him there had been wars, and so after him. But in his time there had been peace.

He perceived, for he was able to understand one thing from another, that everything was dependent on this man. And that when one entered the garden and they began chasing him, one did not need to flee at all, only to stand by this man, and by this he would be saved. More than this, that if they took this man and placed him inside the garden, all people would be able to enter it in peace (the true son of the King understood all this because of his ability to know one thing from another). Then he went and entered the garden. As soon as they started chasing him, he went and stood by the man, that stood just outside the garden, and through this left in peace, without any harm. For others who had entered the garden, and had been chased, would flee in very great terror, and they emerged beaten and hurt as well. But he emerged in peace and serenity, through having stood by the statue. The ministers saw in disbelief that he had come out in peace. Then the true son of the King commanded that the statue be placed inside the garden. Thus they did, and then all the ministers were able to go through the garden, entering and leaving in peace, without any harm.

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The ministers said to him, "Even though you accomplished this, even so, it is not fitting to give you the kingdom on the basis of one feat. We will give you one more test: There is here the throne of the former king, and it is very high. And by the throne are wood carvings of all sorts of birds and beasts. And before the throne stands a bed, and by the bed stands a table, and on the table stands a lamp. And from the throne extend roads, and the roads are lined by walls. These roads extend from the throne in every direction. And no man understands the meaning of the throne and the roads. And on one of the roads, after having stretched out some distance, stands a lion of gold. If a man comes near it, it swallows him. And beyond this lion, the road stretches farther. And so with the other roads extending from the throne. On the second road, after it has extended from the throne some distance, stands another type of animal, for example, a metal tiger. And it is also impossible to come close to it. And so with the other roads. These roads extend and spread out across the whole country. And no man understands the matter of the throne with all these items near it, and the roads leading from it. Therefore, you will be tested in this, if you can understand the matter of the throne and the other elements surrounding it.

And they showed him the chair, and he saw that it was very high, etc. He went and looked at the chair, and realized that this chair was made from the wood of the instrument (the one that the Man of the Forest had given him). He looked carefully and saw that at the top of the chair, a rose was missing, and that if the missing rose were returned to its place, the chair would have the power of the instrument (that had the power to play when it was laid upon some animal). He looked further and saw, that this rose that was missing from the top of the chair, was lying at the bottom of the chair. It was needed only to lift up the flower and place it above, and then the chair would have

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the power of the instrument. For the former king had done everything cleverly, in such a way that no one would understand the matter, until a master of wisdom would come, who would understand, and would be able to switch and arrange everything in its proper order.

And so, he saw that the position of the bed needed to be shifted slightly, and so the table needed to be fixed slightly, and its position changed slightly, and so the lamp's position needed to be slightly shifted. And thus the birds and the beasts needed their position shifted slightly. To take a bird from that place and to put it in this place. And so with everything. For the King had done everything with cleverness and wisdom, such that no other would understand, until the wise man would come, and discover the correct arrangement. And so with the lion that stood on the road – it needed to be put in another place, and so with all of them. He commanded that everything be put in its proper place, and then they all began to play the wonderful melody, and they all fulfilled their appropriate functions, and then they gave him the kingdom.

Then the true son of the King, who now himself had become King, said to the son of the maid, "Now I understand, that I am truly the son of the King, and you are truly the son of the maid."

Notes:

(After Rabbi Nachman told this story, he said the following:)

In the first generations, when they discussed the Kabbalah, they would speak in this language. For until Shimon bar Yochai, they did not discuss the Kabbalah openly. Only Rabbi Shimon revealed the Kabbalah openly. Before that, when the students discussed the Kabbalah, they would speak in this language. "When they laid the ark on the cows, they began to sing." Understand this.

The Son of the King and the Son of the Maid

For the renewal of the moon, when it accepts new ideas from the sun, this is the aspect of bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Beit Shemesh (Samuel I: 6). Then, all the creatures carrying the throne sing out a new song, in the aspect of "Sing to the L-rd a new song, (Psalms 96)", and that is the song that the cows of Bashan sang. And that is the aspect of Bed and Table and Chair and Lamp, they are the Repair of the Divine Presence. And the aspect of the Garden - for Adam was banished from the Garden, but Shabbat protects him, as it is brought (see Zohar, Exodus 138). And Shabbat is the aspect of the King that Peace is His (a reference to King Solomon, hinted at by the statue next to the garden), the King, in whose days there was peace. Therefore, he, son of the King stood next to Shabbat. And the rest was not explained.



The Master of Prayer



nce there was a Master of Prayer, who always devoted himself to prayer, songs and praises to the Holy One, Blessed be He. He dwelled outside of the settlement, but he often entered into the settlement. He would engage someone in discussion, typically people of low standing, such as destitute people and the like. He would speak to them heart to heart, about the purpose of life. That in essence, the only true purpose is to serve the L-rd all the days of one's life, to spend one's days praying to the L-rd, and in songs and praises. He would expound in such words of arousal, until they made an impression upon the person, until he wanted to join forces with him. As soon as the person showed readiness to join with him, he would seize him and spirit him away to his camp located outside the settlement. For the Master of Prayer had chosen a place outside of the settlement. And in that place, a river flowed, and there were also fruit trees. They would eat the fruits, and he was not strict about clothing at all.

And so, he was accustomed to enter into the settled areas all the time, to tempt and draw people to service of the Holy One, Blessed be He, to go in his way, and be involved only in prayer, etc. And all those who were

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attracted to him, he would take them away to his place outside the settlement. And they would deal there only with prayers, songs and praises to the Holy One, Blessed be He, and confessions and fasts and mortifications and repentance, and the like. And he would give them compilations that he had, dealing with prayer, songs and praises and the like. And they would be involved with this all the time. Until there were found also among these people, ones who were fitting to draw people to serving the L-rd. Until he would give one permission to enter into the settled areas, to do the work mentioned above - this is, to draw people to the L-rd, as described above.

And so the Master of Prayer would be involved with this all the time, and he would continually draw people near, and take them outside of the settled areas, until it made an impression on the world. And the thing became well-known. For suddenly several people would be snatched out of the settlement, and no one knew their whereabouts. And so it would happen, that suddenly someone would lose a son, and they would not know where he was, until it would become known. So the Prayer Leader went and tempted people to service of the Holy One, Blessed be He. Yet it was not possible to recognize or catch him. For the Prayer Leader would act with cleverness, and would change and transform himself with each individual with whom he spoke. With one person he would appear a poor man, and with another a businessman, and with another, another identity, and so on. Also, when he spoke with people and saw that he could not influence them, he would deceive them until they did not at all perceive his good aim. As if his intention was not at all the one described above, that is, to draw people to the L-rd. And it was not at all possible to perceive that this was his intention. Whereas in truth, this was the only reason he spoke to people, to draw them to the L-rd. For his entire intention was only this. However, when he saw that he was

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not able to influence someone, he would entangle him and confuse him and deceive him, until the person could not at all understand his good intention. And the Prayer Leader would be constantly involved in this work, until it made an impression in the world. And they desired to catch him, but it was not possible.

And the Prayer Leader and his people lived outside of the settled areas, and were involved only with these things - prayer, songs, and praises to the L-rd, Blessed be He, and confessions and fasts and mortifications and repentance, etc. Also, the Prayer Leader had an ability to give every individual what he specifically needed. If he understood that one of his people, according to his level in serving the L-rd, needed to be dressed in clothing of gold, he would give it to him. And also the opposite - sometimes a rich man would join with him, and he would take him out of the settlement, and he would see that this person needs to go about in torn and ragged clothing, and he would have him go accordingly. Each one according to his need, he would provide him. And for these people, who he drew close to the L-rd, a great fast or mortification was more precious than all the delights in the world.

Now there was a country which was very wealthy - everybody there was well to do. However, their behavior was very strange and bizarre. For everything was determined by a person's wealth, so that each one's value as a person was according to his wealth. One who had so many thousands or millions had one status, while someone with a different amount had a different status, and so on. The entire hierarchy was based on the wealth of each individual. And one who had so many thousands or millions, if it reached the amount determined by them, he would be King.

And they had flags, being that someone with a certain

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amount of money would have a corresponding flag, and he would have a status according to his flag. And someone with a different amount of money would have a different flag, and he would have the status matching that flag, corresponding to how much money he had. And they had it standardized, how much money a person needed to have in order to be given a certain flag, and the status that went with it. And so the status of each person was determined by his wealth, according to the standards they had set.

And they had standards, specifying that if one had such and such an amount of money, he was a man. And if he had less than this, he was an animal or a bird or the like. So there were among them wild animals and birds - for example, a man with only such and such wealth, would be called a human lion. And so with the other varieties of animals and birds - according to the person's financial limitations, he would be considered only an animal or bird. For the priority for them was money, and the level and standing of each person was determined only by money.

Stories circulated in the world about this country, and the Master of Prayer would sigh about this, and say, "Who knows how far they can fall into error through this way?" There were people with the Master of Prayer, that did not ask his advice, and went on their own to this country, to bring the people back in repentance. For they had great mercy on them, seeing that they had fallen so far in their lust for money. Especially since the Master of Prayer said that they could potentially fall much further. Therefore they went to these people in that country, hoping maybe they could bring them back to the good.

Upon coming there, they began speaking with one of them, assumedly some animal (that is, a person of low stature, for he was poor, and had been labelled as an animal). They began to talk to him in their usual fashion,

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saying that this was not the real purpose at all, and that the real purpose was only serving the L-rd, etc. He did not listen to them at all, for it was already rooted in their minds that the main point was only money. They tried talking to someone else, and he also did not listen. One of the Master of Prayer's followers persisted in talking to him, and he responded, "I do not have any more time to talk to you." They asked him why, and he said, "Because we are all now preparing to leave the country and go to another. Because we have come to see that the main purpose is only money. Therefore we have agreed to go to a country where a lot of money can be made. That is, there is much dust there, that can be made into gold and silver. Therefore we all need to go to that country."

The people of this country also agreed that they wanted to have stars and angels as well. That is, when a person gathered enough money according to the standards they set, he would become a star. For since he had so much money, he had the power of that star. For the stars cause the gold to grow. For this dust that is made into gold, it is due to the star that makes gold grow in dust-ridden places. Thus, the gold is drawn out of the stars, and if a person has a great deal of gold, it must be that he has the power of that star, so he himself is a star. Thus they also said that there would be angels among them. Such that, when a person acquired enough money according to their standards, he would become an angel. And so they anointed kings - all according to degree of wealth. Until they concluded that also among them would be g-ds, and one who had thousands and millions, according to their standards, he would be a g-d. For if the g-ds were granting him so much money, he himself must be one. So they did all these things as described.

They also decided that it was not befitting them to dwell in the midst of this coarse world, and not in accord

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with their honor to have contact with common human beings, that they should not become impure. For the other people of the world were defiled compared with them. So, they searched out the highest mountains in the world to dwell there, that they should be elevated above the air of this world. They sent out people to search out such mountains, and they went and found mountains that were extremely high. Then all the citizens of the country went to live there. That is, on each mountain a gathering of them settled. And around the mountains they built strong fortifications, and deep moats, so that it was impossible for any man to approach them. For they would leave only one hidden path ascending each mountain, so that an outsider could not penetrate. Further, they posted guards around each mountain, so that no one could come near. And they dwelled there on these mountains, and lived according to the customs described above. And they had many g-ds, all according to wealth.

And since the main point with them was wealth, until through wealth many of them became g-ds, therefore there was a threat of murder and robbery. For each one was ready to murder and rob in order to amass more money and become a g-d. However, they said that since they became g-ds, they would protect the people from these crimes. And they established services that would be prayed and sacrifices to be offered to these g-ds. They would even sacrifice people, and sometimes themselves, in order to merge with their g-ds, and then be reincarnated as wealthy people. For their entire faith was based on money. They had services, sacrifices and incense, with which they served their g-ds (that is, the wealthy people who had gained this stature), and nevertheless, the country was filled with murder and robbery. For those who did not believe in the gods, murdered and robbed freely, in order to amass money, for the main point with them was money. For with money it is possible to buy everything - food, clothing, etc.,

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and a person's main life-force is through money (for in their confused thinking, they believed this). Thus, money was their faith.

And they would see to it that they did not lack money at all. For money was their primary faith and spirituality. To the contrary, they were always attempting to add and bring more money into the country from other places. They sent out merchants to other countries in order to make profits for their country. And according to their outlook, charity was certainly forbidden. For one who gave charity took away from the bounty that the g-d had given him. Since that was the key point - that a person have money - and one who gave made a blemish in his money and lessened it, therefore it was clearly forbidden for them to give charity.

They also had supervisors, who were assigned to oversee if each one really had as much money as he claimed. For everyone had to display their wealth regularly, in order to remain on the same level. And sometimes, an animal would become a man, and a man an animal. That is, when one lost his money, he would fall from man to animal. And so the opposite: When one gained more money, he could rise from animal to man. And so with the other levels that were determined by wealth. And they had portraits of those g-ds (wealthy people), and everyone had a copy of the portraits. They would hug and kiss them, for money was what they served, and their faith.

And the righteous people of the Master of Prayer returned to their place, and told him about the great error and nonsense of that country - how they were very tangled in the lust for money. That they were ready to leave their homeland, and make stars and angels for themselves. The Master of Prayer answered that he was afraid they would

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go deeper and deeper into error. After that, he heard that they had made gods for themselves. He answered that this was what he had been worried about from the start.

The Master of Prayer had great mercy on them, and he decided to go there himself - perhaps he could return them from their folly. He went there, and approached the guards posted around the mountain. And the guards, it could be assumed, were people of low rank, because they were allowed to stand in the atmosphere of the lower world. For the wealthy ones who had high standing because of their money, they could not mix at all with the people of this world, nor stand in the atmosphere of this world, lest they be contaminated. And they could not speak at all with the people of this world, lest they impurify them through their words (thus, it was clear that the guards who stood at the foot of the mountain were of low rank). However, even the guards had the portraits, and they would hug and kiss them all the time. For even with them, the main faith was based on money.

And the Master of Prayer approached one guard, and began speaking with him about the Purpose: Being that the main point is only serving the Lord, Torah, prayer and good deeds, etc. And money is nonsense, and not the purpose at all. But the guard did not listen to him at all, for they had already been sunken for a long time in their belief that the purpose was money. So he went to a second guard and also said this to him, and he also did not listen to him. Thus he went to all the guards, and none of them listened. Then the Master of Prayer decided to enter the city on the mountaintop. When the people saw him, it was a wonder to them, and they asked, "How did you get in?" For it was not possible for anyone to enter. He answered them, "Being that I have already entered, what does it matter how I did it?" He started to speak with someone about the Purpose, and he did not listen at all. And so the second,

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and so all of them. For they had already become immersed in their error. And it was a wonder to them, that someone would come to them and say such things, that totally contradicted their faith. They thought to themselves, "Perhaps this is the Master of Prayer." For they had already heard that there was such a Master of Prayer in the world, for the affair had already become publicized in the world. And they would call him the Pious Master of Prayer. However, they were not able to recognize or catch him, for he would change himself with each different person. With one, he would appear a businessman, with another, a pauper. And he would invariably slip away.

One day, there was a Warrior, and several other strong men gathered around him. And he went with his followers conquering cities. He wanted only their submission. When the people of the country would submit themselves to him, he would leave them alone. If not, he would destroy them. So he went and conquered, and he did not want money at all, only their submission. His approach was to send from his strong men to a country. While they were still far away - fifty miles - the country would already submit to him. Thus, he conquered the countries.

And the merchants of the country of wealth, returned to their country, and told about the strong Warrior described above, and a great fear fell on the country. Even though they were willing to submit to him, they heard that he despised money, and did not want it at all. Since this was opposite to their belief, they could not bring themselves to submit to him. For to them, this would be like suicide, because he did not believe in their faith, that is, in money.

So they were very frightened of him. They started to do services and offer sacrifices to their g-ds, and they

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would take animals (people with little money, who were labelled animals), and offer them to their gods, and similar services.

And the Warrior was drawing closer to them all the time, and he started to send his strong men, to give them the choices, as was his custom. They became very afraid, not knowing what to do. So the merchants among them advised them: Being that they had been in a country, where everyone was a g-d, and travelled in carriages drawn by angels. That is, all of the citizens, from small to great, were all tremendously rich, until even the smallest among them was considered a g-d, according to their flawed thinking (for even the smallest among them had enough money, according to the standards, to be classified as a g-d). And their carriages were drawn by angels - for their horses were adorned with abundant wealth, with gold and the like, until the raiment of one horse was worth the value of one of their angels. Thus, it could be said that they travelled with angels. They would harness three pairs of angels to a carriage and ride with them. Thus, it would be well to send for help from that country, and they would certainly receive help, since all the citizens of that country were g-ds. (All this was the advice of the merchants to their fellow citizens.) And it was very pleasing in their eyes, for they believed that certainly they would have salvation from that country, for everyone there was a g-d.

Then the Master of Prayer decided to go back to that country - perhaps he could still bring them back from their crooked ways. So he went there, and came to a guard, and began speaking with him in his usual fashion. The guard told him about the above-mentioned Warrior, and that they were all very frightened of him. The Master of Prayer asked him, "What do your people intend to do about it?" The guard then told him of their intent to send for help from the country where everyone was a g-d. The Master of

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Prayer laughed heartily, saying, "It's all a lot of nonsense. For also the people of that country are only human beings like us. Also you and all your g-ds are really only humans and not g-ds. There is One in the world, however, and the Blessed Creator is His name, and He is the only One whom it is appropriate to serve, and only to Him is it appropriate to pray, and this is the main Purpose." He spoke words along these lines to the guard. But the guard did not listen to him, for they had already been sunken in their mistaken beliefs for a long time. Nonetheless, the Master of Prayer continued speaking to him for a long time, until in the end the guard answered him, "But what can I do? I'm only one individual, and opposing me is the entire population of the country." This answer was somewhat of a comfort to the Master of Prayer, for he saw that his words had had at least some influence on the guard. For the words he had spoken the first time to the guard, and the words he had said this time, had gathered together, until they had started to make an impression in his heart. Until he began to doubt slightly, and became a bit more willing to listen, apparently due to the above words that the Master of Prayer had spoken to him.

And so the Master of Prayer went and spoke to the second guard, and spoke with him in the same way. And at first he did not listen, and in the end he answered, "But I am only one against the whole country," as the other one had. And so all the guards gave this answer in the end.

After this, the Master of Prayer entered the city, and began to talk with people in his usual manner, saying that they were all gravely mistaken, and that this was not the Purpose at all. Rather the Purpose was only to be involved in Torah and prayer, etc. But they did not listen to him at all, for they had all been sunken in their crookedness for a long time. And they told him about the Warrior, and how they wanted to send for help from the country where

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everyone was a g-d. He laughed at them as well. He said to them that it was nonsense, that they were only human beings, etc. "They cannot help you at all, for you are people, and they are people, and not g-ds at all. Yet there is One, Blessed be His Name," etc. As for the Warrior, he said wonderingly "Could this be the Warrior (the one that he knew)?" They did not understand the meaning of these last words. And so, he went from one individual to another, talking to each one as above. And as for the Warrior, he said to each one as before, "Could this be the Warrior?" And they did not understand his intent.

And there was a great commotion in the city, being that there was someone who was speaking such things, making a mockery of their faith, and saying that there was only one G-d, etc. And in the matter of the Warrior, he spoke as described above. They saw that this was undoubtedly the Master of Prayer, for he was already a famous figure for them. And they commanded to follow him and catch him, even though he changed himself all the time (that is, at times he would appear to be a merchant, at times a pauper, etc.). However, they were well aware of this tactic of his. And they commanded to track him and capture him. They followed him, caught him, and brought him to the ministers, who started to speak with him. So he said the same thing to them - how all of them were gravely mistaken, and money is not the purpose at all. However, there is One, who is the Blessed Creator, etc. And the people of that country, whom you believe are all g-ds - they cannot help you at all, for they are only people, etc. And they thought he was mad, for they were all so immersed in mistaken beliefs about money, to the point that someone who spoke contrary to their mistaken beliefs was thought to be insane.

They asked him, "What is this that you keep saying about the Warrior, in a tone of wonderment: "Could this

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be the Warrior?" " He answered them, "I was once with a certain King, and he lost one of his warriors. If this Warrior is the same one, then I am acquainted with him, and what is more: What you hold about the country where they are all g-ds - this is nonsense, for they cannot help you. In my opinion, if you depend on them, that will be your downfall." They asked him, "How do you know this?" He answered them, "The King with whom I was, had a hand - that is, he had a picture of a hand, with five fingers, and all the lines that are normally on a hand. And this hand was in fact a map of the world, of all the worlds, and everything that had been from the beginning of the world to the end, and what will be after that - it was all inscribed on the hand. For written on the hand was the map of every world with all their details, as would appear on a geographic map. And there were in the drawings names - just as on a map, next to every item, there is an identifying name, in order that one can know what each thing is - that here is a certain city, and there is a certain river, etc. Just so, within the drawing on the hand there appeared names next to every item, in order to identify the essence of each item.

"Also the details of all the countries, cities, rivers, bridges, mountains and other distinct entities, were all inscribed on the hand, and next to every item was a title, that this is such and such, and that is such and such. Also, every person in the country, and all their experiences, were all written in the map. And there were inscribed all the travel routes from one country to another and from place to place, and because of that I knew how to enter this city. Which as a rule, is impossible for anyone to enter. And so, if you want to send me to another city, I would know how to get there, all with the help of the hand.

"And thus, it was written there how to travel from one world to another. For there is a path and route, by which

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one can ascend from earth to heaven (for normally, it is impossible to ascend to the heavens, because the route is not known. But on the hand was written the route from earth to heaven). And there were inscribed there all the paths from one world to another. For Elijah ascended to heaven using one route, and that route was written there. Similarly, Hanoch ascended to heaven by another route, and that was also written there. And so the routes between all the worlds were inscribed on the hand. Also written on the hand were all the details of what had been at the Creation of the World, and what was there now, and what it would be in the future. For example, in the case of Sodom, it appeared as it had been when it was settled, before its overturning, also the overturning itself was illustrated, and also there appeared the image of Sodom after the overturning. For there was inscribed on the hand what was, what is, and what will be. And there, on that same hand, I saw that that country, of which you claim all the citizens are g-ds, and all those who come to it for help - all of them will be disgraced and lost (all this the Master of Prayer said to them)."

This was all wondrous in their eyes, for they could sense words of truth. For it is known that on a map everything is displayed accurately. And they saw that his words were words of truth. For it is known, that one can gather together two creases of the hand, and make from them a letter. (Thus they understood that it would be impossible for him to have invented these words from his imagination, and it was awesome to them.) Then they asked him, "Where is this king? Perhaps he can show us a way to find money?" He answered them, "You still only want money (in a tone of disbelief)? Do not talk about money at all." They asked him, "Even so, where is this king?" He said, "I also do not know about the King, but I will tell you a story.

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"There once was a King and a Queen, and they had an only daughter. When she began to come of age, they found advisors to help decide who would be fitting to marry her. I was also among the advisors, for the King had a liking for me. I recommended that they give her the Warrior, being that he had done us several favors, conquering several countries, thus it was fitting to give him the princess for a bride. My advice was well-received, and everyone agreed. And there was great rejoicing, that a match had been found for the princess. They married her to the Warrior, and she gave birth to a child. This child was very, very beautiful, entirely beyond mortal beauty. Its hair was of gold, with all the colors of the spectrum, and its face was like the sun, and the eyes had their own radiance. And this child was born with complete wisdom. For they saw at the moment of his birth that he was completely wise. When people were talking, at a point where it was appropriate to laugh, he would laugh, and so on. For they perceived that he was extremely wise, only that he did not yet have the physical capabilities of an adult, such as speech and the like.

"And there was with the King an orator, that is, a speaker and master of language, who could speak and recite very pristine and wondrous words, songs and praises to the King. He was a skilled and pleasing speaker from the beginning. However, the King showed him how to acquire the wisdom of oration, and through this he became a very awesome speaker.

"The King also had a Wise Man. He also was wise to begin with. But the King showed him how to acquire wisdom, and through this he became exceptionally wise. And so the Warrior had been a warrior to begin with, but the King showed him how to acquire might, and through this he became a wondrous and awesome Warrior. For there is a sword that is suspended in the air of the world,

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and it has three powers. When one raises it, all the officers of the armies flee, and this causes an immediate defeat. For when the officers leave, there is no one to lead the battle, and thus they cannot succeed in it. However, even so, it is still possible for the others to continue the fight. And this sword has two edges, and they have two powers. Through one edge, everyone falls, and through the second, they become infected with cancer, and it melts their flesh, as is known with this sickness. So that, simply by the inflection with which the sword is swung, the according result comes to the enemies - each edge according to its unique power. The King showed the Warrior the way to this sword, and from that he received his great might. And I as well: The King showed me the way to my affair, and I received from there what I needed.

"And the King had a faithful friend who loved him with a very passionate and awesome love, until it was unbearable for them to be apart even a short time. Nonetheless, there are times when it is necessary to be separated slightly. And they had portraits of each other, and they would take delight in the portraits in the times when they were apart. And the portraits illustrated how much the King and the Friend loved each other, showing how they hugged and kissed each other with great love. And the portraits had the power, such that one who looked at them would be filled with an intense love (that is, the quality of love would come to one who looked at the portraits). And also, the Friend received his love from the place that the King showed him. The time came for each one to ascend to the place where he would receive his power - the Orator, the Warrior, and all the other of the King's people - each one ascended to the place where he renewed his strength.

"One day, there was a violent storm in the world. The storm scrambled the whole world. Ocean became dry land,

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and land became ocean. Wilderness became civilization, and civilization became wilderness. The whole world was overturned. The storm came into the palace of the King, and did not do any damage. It only entered and snatched away the child of the princess. In the midst of the upheaval ensuing after the stealing of the child, the princess ran after him. And so the Queen and then the King followed, until everyone was dispersed, and no one knew where they were. And we were not there during all this, for we had all ascended, each one to his place, to renew his power. When we returned, we could not find them. And also the Hand was missing, and since then, all of us have become dispersed. Since then, none of us have been able to ascend to our place to renew our strength. For since the whole world had been jumbled, and all the places of the world had been switched - sea to dry land, etc. - it is certainly impossible to ascend through the first routes. Now one needs a new route, according to the exchanges and shifting of places. Thus, none of us were able to ascend to his place to renew his strength. Nevertheless, the impression that remains with each of us is also very strong, and if this Warrior you have described is the Warrior of the King, he is certainly very powerful. (All this the Master of Prayer said to the people of the country of wealth.)" When they heard his words, they were awestruck. They held onto the Master of Prayer, not letting him leave them (for perhaps the Warrior who was coming toward them was the abovementioned Warrior, with whom the Master of Prayer was acquainted).

The Warrior went on and drew nearer, and periodically sent messengers, until he reached the country himself. He stood outside the city and sent in messengers. The people were very frightened, and asked the Master of Prayer for advice. He said that they would need to scrutinize the way and behavior of the Warrior, in order to recognize through this whether he was that same Warrior

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(the Warrior of the King). The Master of Prayer went out to meet the Warrior. He came to the Warrior's camp. He began to speak with one of the Warrior's strong men (that is, one of the guards), to determine if he was the Warrior of the King. He asked the guard, "What is your occupation, and how did you join with this Warrior?"

The guard answered him, "Here is the story. There is in our historical records, an account of a violent storm that came to the world, and it overturned the whole world. It transformed sea to dry land, and dry land to sea, and wilderness to civilization, etc. It scrambled the whole world. After the commotion and noise died down, the people of the world began to consider who should be the King. They investigated to know who would be fitting to become their king. They said, 'Being that the main thing is the Purpose, therefore the one who strives the most to fulfill the purpose should be the King.' Then they began to investigate what was the Purpose, and they divided into many groups.

"One group said that the main purpose was honor. For they observed that honor was the most valued thing in the world. For when a man is not given his honor, for example, when they say something against his honor, it is as if they spilled his blood. For with all people, honor is the main thing. Even after a man's death, they are strict to give the deceased honor, to bury him respectfully and so on. (And they say to him, that all of what they are doing, they are doing it for his honor.) Even though after death, money and desires are not at all relevant to the deceased. Even so they are very careful to honor the dead. Therefore, honor is the main Purpose. And so on with similar foolish reasoning. (And so all the groups had much reasoning backing their flawed and misguided beliefs. Some of them are described below, however Rabbi Nachman did not want to detail all the flawed reasoning of these beliefs. For

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some of them are so twisted, that it is possible, G-d forbid, to truly be led astray by these false beliefs, may G-d have mercy.) Until they agreed that the Purpose was honor. Thus, they needed to search for an honored man, and one who chases after honor, that is, one who pursues it and reaches it, so that he is honored. For since he is an honored man, who has honor, and pursues honor, and gives support to the worldwide will to honor. Therefore, such a man strives toward the Purpose and achieves it. For the Purpose is honor. (All this was their foolish and confused reasoning.) Thus, such a man is fit to be King. So they went looking for such a man, and found people carrying an old beggar, and approximately 500 were following him, all gypsies, and he also was a gypsy. This beggar was blind, stooped over and dumb, and the people went after him, for all of them were of his family. For he had many brothers and sisters and children from his friends, until they became a congregation, and they carried him along.

"And he was very strict about his honor, for he was ill-tempered and became wroth with them all the time, with all kinds of complaints. And he commanded all the time that different bearers carry him, and was angered all the time. Thus, this beggar is a very honored man, they thought, that he has achieved such honor. And he also pursues honor, for he is so strict about his honor. Thus, the beggar found favor with this group, and they accepted him as King. Being that also the land has influence, meaning that some lands are more favorable to honor, and other lands are supportive of other traits. Thus, this group, that decided that honor was the Purpose, looked for a land supportive of honor, and found a suitable land and dwelled there.

"Another group held that honor was not the Purpose, believing instead that the Purpose was murder. For we see that all things in the world eventually wither and pass

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away, and all that is in the world - grasses, plants, people, and all that is in the world - it all must come to an end and pass on. Therefore, the purpose of everything is its termination. Thus, the murderer, who kills and terminates people, he is very active in bringing the world to its purpose. Thus, they agreed among themselves that the purpose is murder. And they looked for the most murderous, evil-tempered and jealous man they could find, for such a man is closer to the Purpose (according to their warped understanding), and he is fitting to be King. So they went searching, and heard the sound of a scream. They asked, "What is that screaming sound?" They answered them, "That sound came from a man having slaughtered his father and mother." They then reflected, "Can there be a more ruthless and ill-tempered murderer than one who would kill his father and mother? This man has reached the Purpose." He found favor in their eyes, and they accepted him as King. They searched for a land that was supportive of murder, and chose a place of mountains and hills - the kind of place where murderers tend to live - and went there and dwelled there with their king.

"Another group said, that someone with an abundance of food was most fit to be King. Also, one who ate food more refined than other people - milk, for example - in order that his intellect not become coarse. He would be fitting to rule. However, since they did not immediately find someone whose diet transcended the norm, they temporarily chose a wealthy man who had an abundance of food, until they could find someone more ideally fitting their qualifications. At that time, the wealthy man would abdicate the throne. So they accepted this wealthy man as King, and chose a land supportive of their Purpose, and settled there.

"Another group said that someone beautiful was most

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fitting to rule. For the main Purpose is to settle the world, because for this the world was created. And since a beautiful woman arouses the desire to settle the world, it follows that she brings it to its Purpose. Thus a beautiful woman was fitting to rule. They chose a beautiful woman and annointed her as their Queen. And they looked for a land supportive of this, and settled there.

"Another group said that the primary Purpose was speech. For what distinguishes man from the animals is that he can speak. Since that is the primary advantage man possesses, that must be the main Purpose. So, they chose for themselves an orator, a master of languages who knew several, and constantly babbled with speech. For such a person is reaching the Purpose. They went and found a crazy Frenchman, who went about talking to himself. They asked him if he knew languages, and he replied that he knew several. A person like this was certainly close to the Purpose (according to their confused thinking), for he was a master of language, and spoke many tongues, and talked so very much (for he talked even to himself). Thus, he found favor in their eyes, and they accepted him as King. They chose a land supportive of their idea, and settled there with their King. And he certainly ruled them with uprightness.

"Another group said that the main Purpose was happiness. For when a son is born, people are happy, when there is a wedding they are happy, and when they conquer a country they are happy. Thus, the Purpose of everything is happiness. So, they searched for a man who was always happy, thus being close to the Purpose, and he would be their King. They went and found a shabby-looking person in a tattered garment, carrying a bottle of liquor, with several other low-lives following him. This man was very happy (for he was very drunk). They saw his great happiness, and that he had no worries. And he found favor

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in their eyes, for he had reached the Purpose, which was happiness. They accepted him as their King, and he certainly ruled them uprightly. They chose a land suitable to their way, that is, vineyards and the like, where wine was made, and the dross was made into liquor. They would not let anything go to waste, for this was the main Purpose for them - to drink, become drunk, and be constantly happy. Even though there was no reason or sense in their happiness, for they did not have anything to be happy about. Even so, this was their main Purpose: To be constantly happy for no reason. They chose a land supportive of this and settled there.

"Another group said the main Purpose was wisdom. They looked for a master of wisdom and made him King over them. They searched out a land supportive of wisdom, and settled there.

"Another group said the main Purpose was to give attention to one's eating and drinking, in order to strengthen the body. They looked for a muscular man, with large limbs that he worked to strengthen. For one with larger limbs has a greater portion in the world (for he takes up more space), and he is closer to the Purpose. For enlarging the limbs is the Purpose. So, such a man is fitting to rule. So they went and found a very tall man, a giant. He found favor in their eyes, for he was so large, and thus close to the purpose. And they made him their King. They looked for a land supportive of this, and settled there.

"Finally, there was a group that said that none of these was the Purpose. The true purpose was only to be involved with praying to the Holy One, Blessed be He, and to be humble and lowly in one's bearing. They looked for a master of prayer, and made him their King. (And the reader can understand for himself, that all the groups erred severely, in deeply entangled structures of thought. Only

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this last group approximated the Truth, happy are they.)" All this, was related to the Master of Prayer by one of the mighty warriors.

Then he told him that they (the warriors who banded with the above Warrior), were from the group of the bodybuilders, who accepted upon themselves the giant man as their King. Now, one day, a band of them set out with wagons following them, carrying food and other supplies. And these warriors cast fear upon everyone, for they were of giant proportions, and mighty. Anyone who passed them swerved to the other side of the road. During their journey, they came across a particular warrior (the one who was now their leader). When this warrior came toward their caravan, he did not swerve to the side. Instead, he rode straight into the caravan and scattered them to all sides. So the members of the band were frightened by him. He entered the wagons following the group, and ate everything inside them. And it was very awesome in their eyes (his great might, and that he was not intimidated by the caravan at all, entering it and eating everything in the caravans). They immediately prostrated themselves before him, saying "Long live the King!" For they knew that a warrior such as this was surely fitting to rule, according to their opinion that the main Purpose was to have large limbs. Certainly the former King would give over the kingdom to a warrior of such massive proportions, for he was most fitting to rule. Thus it was, that this mighty one was accepted by them as King. "And he, he is the same one who is leading us now, in a campaign to conquer the world. He says (that is, the Warrior who had now become their King) that he has another intention in conquering the world. He is not really interested in the world being subjugated to him, for he has a different intention altogether (all these are the words of one of the warriors, who told all this to the Master of Prayer, who had asked him how they had banded with the Warrior, and

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he answered all this)."

Then the Master of Prayer asked, "What is the greatness of this Warrior, who is your King?" The other answered, "There was one country which did not want to submit themselves to him. So this Warrior took his sword. Now, his sword has three powers. When it is raised, all the military officers flee, etc. (these are the three powers mentioned above)." When the Master of Prayer heard this, he knew that this must certainly be the Warrior from the Court of the King. So he asked if it would be possible to meet in person with their leader. They answered that they would relay the request to the Warrior and ask his permission. They went and asked, and he gave permission. When the Master of Prayer came to the Warrior, and they recognized each other, they were tremendously happy that they had merited to come together. They rejoiced and wept - for they remembered the King and his company, and cried about that - thus there was weeping as well as rejoicing.

Then they spoke together, saying how events had unfolded to bring them to this place. The Warrior recounted, that after the storm had dispersed the Court of the King, and the Warrior returned from the place he had ascended to renew his strength. When he found that the King and all his company were missing, he wandered off to wherever the road would take him. Along the way, he came across all the company. That is, he understood that he had been in the place where each one was. For example, he came to a place, and understood that the King was definitely there. However, he could not search for or find him. And so he came to another place, and understood that the Queen was there, but again could not find her. Likewise he came to the places of all the company. "Only your place I did not come to."

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The Master of Prayer said, "I passed by all the places, including yours. For I came to one place and saw the crown of the King, and understood that the King is definitely there, only that I could not find him. Likewise, I continued and came to a sea of blood, and understood that this sea was certainly created from the tears of the Queen, which she cried because of all that had come upon us. I knew the Queen was there, only I could not search for or find her. I went on and came to a sea of milk, and understood that that sea was made from the milk of the Princess. For she had lost her son, and the overflow of milk had burdened her, and from this was created the sea of milk. The princess was definitely here, only it was impossible to find her. I went further, and saw the golden hairs of the baby scattered, but I did not take any of them. I understood that the baby was definitely here, but could not find him. And so I went further, and came to a sea of wine, and I knew that this sea had surely been made from the words of the orator, who had stood and said consoling words before the King and Queen, and then turned to say more consolations to the Princess. From these words was made the sea of wine (as it is written in Song of Songs 7: "Your mouth is like good wine"). However, I could not find him. "Thus, I continued on, and saw a stone on which was carved a picture of the hand with all the elements mapped on it. I understood that the King's Wise Man was certainly here, and he had carved this likeness of the hand. However, it was impossible to find him. So I went farther, and saw arranged on a mountain, the golden tables and treasure-pieces and other valuables of the King, and I understood that the Treasurer must certainly be here, but I was unable to find him."

The Warrior replied, "I also passed all these places, and I took from the golden hair of the Child. For I took seven hairs that included the full range of colors, and they are very precious to me. And I sat in the place where I sat,

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and sustained myself to what extent I could, eating grasses and the like, until there remained nothing to eat, and then I went onward. And when I left that place, I forgot my bow there. The Master of Prayer answered, "I saw your bow, and I knew it was certainly yours, but I could not find you." Then the Warrior continued his story: "When I left there, I went on until I came to a caravan, and entered it. I was extremely hungry, and wanted to eat. Immediately after entering, they accepted me as their King. And now I am campaigning to conquer the world, with the intention that perhaps I will find the King and his Court.

The Master of Prayer asked the Warrior, "What can we do with these people?" - that is, the people of the country that had fallen so deeply into the lust for money. Until they arrived at this nonsense, to say that wealthy people are g-ds for them, and the rest of the foolishness of these people. The Warrior answered that he had heard from the King, that from all the passions, it was possible to retrieve someone who had fallen into them. However, one who fell into this passion for money, it was impossible by any means to save him. So they certainly could not have an effect on the people of that country, for it would be impossible to bring them out of this condition. With one exception: He had heard from the King, that along the way to the sword that had granted him his might - through that, one could be retrieved from the passion for money into which he had sunk. So the Master of Prayer and the Warrior sat together some time. As for the request of these people, who had asked the Master of Prayer to go to the Warrior on their behalf, he gave them more time. That is, the Master of Prayer convinced the Warrior to give them more time, so he extended the time for them. And the Warrior and the Master of Prayer gave signs to one another, so that they would know of each other, and the Master of Prayer went his way.

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On his way, the Master of Prayer saw people going along and praying, and carrying compilations of prayers. He was frightened by them, and they were frightened by him. He stood to pray, and they also prayed. Then he asked them, "Who are you?" They answered, "At the time of the storm, when all the peoples were scattered, and each type chose which goal to pursue (as was detailed above in the account of the groups of mankind), we chose to be involved constantly with prayer to the Holy One, Blessed be He, and we looked for and found a Master of Prayer, and made him our King." When the Master of Prayer heard this, he was very pleased, for this was also his desire. He started speaking to them, and revealed the order of his prayers, his compilations, and other matters. When they heard his words, their eyes were opened, and they saw the greatness of his level, and immediately anointed him King over them. For their present King acceded the kingdom to him, for he saw the awesome level which he had achieved. So the Master of Prayer studied with them, enlightening them, and turned them into completely righteous and great men. For even before, they had been righteous (for they dealt only with prayer). However, the Master of Prayer enlightened them, until they became very awesomely righteous. Then the Master of Prayer sent a letter to the Warrior, to inform him how he had merited to find such people, and that he had become their King.

Meanwhile, the people of the Country of Wealth continued in their ways and religious service, as described above. And the deadline that the Warrior had set drew increasingly nearer, and they became very afraid. They did their services, making offerings and incense, and reciting their prayers directed to their g-ds. They agreed that it was mandatory to follow the first plan, to send to the country which was so immensely wealthy, that everyone was a g-d. They would certainly save them, since they were all g-ds. So they sent messengers there.

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Along the way, they came across a man who walked with a cane, and this cane was more valuable than all their g-ds together. The cane was made of precious stones, and it was more valuable than all the other g-ds, either those of their own country, or even those to whom they were travelling, for the cane surpassed all the wealth of all of them. He also wore a hat, in which were embedded precious stones, which was very valuable. Immediately they bowed and prostrated themselves before him. For according to their understanding he was a g-d above all their g-ds, being that he had such extravagant wealth. (This man they had met was in fact the Treasurer of the King). This man said to them, "This is such a novelty for you? Come with me and I will show you wealth!" He led them to the mountain where lay all the treasures of the King, and he showed them the cache. Immediately they fell prostrate before him, for this was certainly a g-d beyond all others, according to their foolish and mistaken conceptions. However, they did not make offerings there, even though according to their view, that he was a g-d beyond all others, they would surely have been ready to offer themselves to him. However, when they had been sent on their mission, they had been warned not to make any offerings. For those who sent them feared that if they made too many offerings, they would be left empty-handed. For perhaps they would find some treasure along the way. For example, if one went to an outhouse, and found there a treasure, and believed it to be a g-d, they might all begin to offer themselves to it, and none would be left. Therefore, those sending them warned them not to make any offerings on the way. Therefore the messengers did not offer any sacrifices to the Treasurer. Yet it was clear to them, that he was a g-d above all others, being that he possessed such incredible wealth.

Then the messengers considered to themselves, "Why should we go all the way to the country where everyone is a

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g-d? For with this man we can certainly be saved, for he is a g-d greater than all the others, since he has such immense incredible wealth, far exceeding all the others." Thus, they asked the man to return with them to their country, and he agreed to go with them. They reached their country, and all the citizens were ecstatically happy that they had found a g-d such as this. For they were certain that with his help, they would be fully redeemed, being that he was such a g-d, with such great wealth. Now this man (the Treasurer of the King, who this country had accepted as King), commanded that until a new order was established, they should not offer sacrifices at all. (For in truth, the Treasurer was a very saintly man, for he was from the Court of the King, and all of them were great spiritual masters. And certainly he was disgusted with all the perverse customs and nonsense of these people. However, he could not as yet bring them back from their evil ways. So he commanded them to temporarily suspend the offerings).

The people of the country began to inquire about the Warrior who was threatening them. The Treasurer also asked them, "Could this be the Warrior?" Then he went and travelled to the Warrior, and asked the guards if he could be permitted to see him. They said they would go and ask him. They asked, and he gave permission, and the Treasurer was brought in to see him. They recognized one another, and there was much joy and weeping, as before. The Warrior said to the Treasurer, "Know, that I also met with our fine Master of Prayer. He has already become a king (and they related to each other how they came to be here)." The Treasurer said that he had passed the place of the King and the others of his company, however the places of two he had not passed - that of the Master of Prayer and of the Warrior. Then they spoke together about that country, how they had erred and become so confused, until they had come to believe such nonsense. The Warrior gave the same answer to the Treasurer as he

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had to the Master of Prayer: That he had heard from the King, that someone who had fallen into the lust for money, he could only be saved by the path that led to the Sword (in which place the Warrior had received his might). Through that, one could be saved. They extended the deadline further - that is, the Treasurer convinced the Warrior to give the people more time once again. So he extended the deadline once again. Then the Treasurer and the Warrior gave signs to each other, as before.

The Treasurer departed from the Warrior and returned to the Country of Wealth. (The Treasurer certainly reproached them for their evil way, that they had become so immersed in the lust for money, but it did no help, for they were already far sunken in it. However, since they had already heard much reproach, both from the Master of Prayer and the Treasurer, it confused them, and they began to say, "Please, retrieve us from our mistaken way!" Even though they were holding onto their beliefs stubbornly, and had no desire to rectify them, still, they said to the ones reprimanding them, "If you are really sure that we are in such great confusion and error, then take us out of our mistake!") And the Treasurer, being that he knew the power of the Warrior, and from where he received his power. He gave them this advice: He explained to them the matter of the Sword from whence the Warrior receives his strength. "Let us go together to the place of the sword," he said to them, "and through that you will be able to stand up to the Warrior." His real intention in sending them was that through going there, they would be able to overcome their lust for money. They accepted the advice, to go with him to the place of the sword. The Treasurer set out, and the people sent the officials of the state, who were as g-ds to them. And the officials went bedecked in expensive jewelry of silver and gold, for that was the main priority for them. And they went together.

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The Treasurer informed the Warrior, that he was going with people from the country to the place of the Sword, and his intention was that perhaps along the way, he would find the King and his Court. The Warrior answered him, "I will also go with you." And the Warrior disguised himself, so the people of the country would not recognize him. Then they decided that they should tell the Master of Prayer, and thus they did. He said that he would come as well, and he came to meet them. He told his followers to pray for him, that the L-rd should grant them success in the undertaking, that they should find the King and his Court. For the Master of Prayer would always pray for this. But now, as he went to join the Treasurer and the Warrior to search for the King, he warned them especially, to pray all the time to find them. The Master of Prayer came to the Treasurer and the Warrior, and there was much joy and happiness between them. The three of them went together, along with the g-ds (that is, the wealthy and prominent figures of the country, who were regarded by the citizens as g-ds).

They went on their way, and came to one country. There were guards circling the whole country. They asked the guards about the matters of this country, and who was their king. The guards answered that at the time of the storm, when the people of the world were divided into the groups, these people had chosen wisdom as their goal. They accepted a great wise man as their king, and shortly after, they found a very exceptionally wise man, and the first king abdicated the kingdom to this one. So he became King, for the priority for them was wisdom, and since this man was so amazingly wise, they made him King.

Then the three mentioned above - the Treasurer, the Warrior and the Master of Prayer - said, "It appears that this is our Wise Man (the Wise Man of the King)." They asked if it would be possible to meet him in person, and the

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guards replied that they would relay the request and find out. They went and asked, and he gave permission. So they came to the Wise Man, who was the King of that country, and they recognized each other. For this Wise Man was the same Wise Man of the King. There was surely much joy then - joy and weeping, as before. For they weeped about how they would manage to find the King and his Court. They asked the Wise Man, if he knew the whereabouts of the Hand of the King. He answered that the Hand was with him. However, since the storm that had dispersed everyone, and the King had disappeared - since then, he did not want to look at the Hand, for it was appropriate only for the King to see. However, he carved a likeness of the Hand on a stone, in order to use it minimally for his objective, but he did not look upon the Hand itself at all. And they asked the Wise Man how he had come to be there. He related, that since the time of the storm, he had wandered (and during his wandering, he had passed the place of them all, excepting the place of these three - the Treasurer, the Warrior, and the Master of Prayer). Until the people of this country had found him and crowned him King. And at this time, he needs to govern them according to their condition, according to the way of their wisdom. Until in the course of time he would draw them to the Truth.

Then they spoke with the Wise Man about the people of the Country of Wealth, who had erred and fallen so deeply in the nonsense and idol worship of money. They said, "Even if we had only been (separated) and dispersed for the sake of this one country, to bring them to the good, it would have been enough." For they had strayed and sunken so very far. In truth, all the groups had erred and and strayed, and were in need of repair - to bring them out of their folly, and to bring them to the true Purpose. For even the group that had chosen wisdom as the purpose, even they had not reached the true Purpose, and they

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needed repair and repentance. For they had chosen superficial wisdom and heretical thought. From all these varied errors of the different groups, it was easier to bring them back from their mistaken ways and lead them to the Truth. But those that had sunken into the idol worship of money, had fallen so far that it was impossible to bring them back. (Also the Wise Man recounted to his companions, that he had heard from the King that the only way to save those who had fallen into the lust for money was by the Path to the Sword). The Wise Man also agreed to go with them, so the four of them went together. Also those foolish g-ds continued following them as well.

They went along, and came to a country, and also asked the guards about the nature of the country, and who was their king. They answered that since the time of the storm, they had together decided that the Purpose was Speech. They chose for themselves an orator, a master of language, for their king. Later, they found a man who was a master of language and eloquence, a very awesome speaker, and they accepted him as King. For the first king gave over the kingdom to him, being that he was such an accomplished speaker. The four realized that this was their Orator (the Orator of the King). So they requested to see him in person as well. The guards said they would relay the message and find out. They went and asked, and he gave them permission. The four were brought into the presence of this king, and he was the Orator of the King mentioned earlier. They recognized each other, and they had great joy and weeping, as before. So the Orator also joined with them, and they continued on, in the hope of finding the King and his Court. For they saw that the L-rd was granting them success, in that every time, they found another of their friends. They attributed this to the merit of their upright Master of Prayer, who was constantly praying for this, and through his prayers they merited to find their friends. So they continued, hoping perhaps they

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would merit to find the rest as well.

They went on, and came to a country. Also there, they asked about the nature of the country, and who was their king. They answered that they were of the group that had chosen joy and drink as the purpose. They accepted as their king, a drunken man who was always joyful. Later, they found a man who sat in a sea of wine, and this suited them better. For he was certainly an unparalleled drunkard, so they accepted him as king. The companions requested also to meet in person with him, so the messengers went and secured permission, and they were brought to this king. And he was the Loyal Friend of the King, who had been sitting in the sea of wine created by the consoling words of the Orator, as described above (and the citizens of that country assumed he was a great drunkard, as he was sitting in a sea of wine, and thus they made him king). They recognized each other, and also this time there was great rejoicing and weeping. And the Loyal Friend went with the others as well.

They continued, and came to another country, and asked the guards, "Who is your King?" They answered that their monarch was a beautiful woman, for such a one leads to the Purpose. For the Purpose is the settling of the world, as was explained above. At first they had a moderately beautiful woman for a queen. Then they found one with amazing and unsurpassed beauty, and they accepted her as Queen. And the band of friends understood that this was undoubtedly the Princess mentioned earlier, so they requested to see her in person as well. Permission was secured, and they entered her presence, and they recognized her as the Princess. The intensity of the joy that was there is impossible to imagine. They asked her how she had come to be there. She recounted to them, that since the storm which had snatched away the precious child, she had gone out in the midst of the upheaval,

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looking for the child, without finding him. Meanwhile, the oversupply of milk was pressuring her, and from that was made the sea of milk. Afterwards, the citizens of this country had found her and made her their King. There was great rejoicing among them, and they also wept about the precious Child that had been lost, and about his father and mother, whose whereabouts were not known. And behold, now the husband of this Queen had come (that is, the Princess who had here become a queen). For the Warrior was her husband. So now the country had a King. Then the Princess asked the Master of Prayer to come into her country and purify it from its deep defilement. For since in that country, the main Purpose was physical beauty, they were certainly very defiled in this passion. Thus, she asked the Master of Prayer that he go and purify them a bit for the time being, so that they should not become too far immersed in this passion. For in addition to the power of the passion itself, they also believed that this was the Purpose (for each group that had chosen some evil quality as the Purpose, in each case they created a religion out of that quality). Thus, they were sunken deeply in this. Thus, the Princess asked that he go and purify them somewhat in the meantime.

After this, they went looking for the rest, that is the King, etc. They came to one country, and also asked, "Who is your King?" They answered that their king was one year old. For they were of the group that had decided that someone with an abundance of food, whose diet was not comparable to that of ordinary people, would be fitting to be king. And temporarily they had accepted some wealthy man as king. Later, they had found a man who was sitting in a sea of milk, and this pleased them very much. For this man had lived all his life on milk, and his diet was not like that of ordinary people. So they accepted him as king. Thus, they called him "one year old", for his diet was that of a one year old. They realized that this was

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the Child, and they asked to meet him in person. The request was sent and granted. They were brought into his presence, and they recognized each other. For also the Child recognized them, even though he had been very young when he had been separated from them. Nevertheless, because he was a complete genius from birth, for he was born with complete wisdom, because of this he recognized them. And they recognized him easily. And there was very awesome rejoicing. And they also wept, at still not knowing the whereabouts of the King and Queen. They asked him, "How did you come to be here?" He answered, that when the storm had come, and taken him away to where it took him. There he lived on whatever he could find, until he came to a sea of milk. And he understood that this sea was undoubtedly made from the milk of his mother, and that the milk must have pressured her, and from that this sea was formed. So he sat upon that sea, and was sustained by the milk, until the people of this country had come and made him their king.

After this, they continued and came to a country, and asked, "Who is your king?" They answered, that they had determined that murder was the Purpose, and they accepted some murderer as their king. After that, they found a woman sitting in a sea of blood. They accepted her as King, since they assumed that she was certainly a major murderer, being that she was sitting in a sea of blood. They requested to see her as well. Permission was granted, and they were brought into her presence. And this was the Queen mentioned before, who had been crying constantly, and from whose tears were made the sea of blood. They recognized each other, and there was great rejoicing. Yet they also cried, for they still did not know the whereabouts of the King.

They went further, and came to a country, and asked, "Who is your King?" They answered that they had chosen

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an honorable man. For by them the main Purpose was honor. After this, they found an old man wearing a crown, sitting in a field. He found favor in their eyes, for he was a very honored man, being that he sat in a field wearing a crown. So they accepted him as king. The band of friends understood right away that this was certainly the King (their King, that is). They asked once again if they could meet with him in person, and permission was granted. They were brought in before him, and they recognized that this was the King himself. And the joy they experienced there, was beyond the capacity of the mind to comprehend. And the foolish g-ds (the wealthy, important people of the Country of Wealth, who were considered g-ds in their country), went along with them, but had no idea what was the basis of all this joy.

And behold, now all the holy Court was gathered together again, and they sent the Master of Prayer to the various countries (the countries of the groups that had chosen bad traits as the Purpose) to repair and purify them, to bring them back from their foolishness - each country according to its foolishness and mistaken way. For all of them had erred and strayed, and now the Master of Prayer certainly had the power to bring them back, for he had received the permission of the kings of all the countries. (For the holy gathering of the King who had now been reunited, all of them were kings over the countries of the groups.) And the Master of Prayer went empowered by them to purify and bring all the countries back in repentance.

Then the Warrior spoke with the King about the people of the country that had fallen into the idol worship of money. He said to the King: "I heard you quoted, that through the path that I take to reach the Sword, through it one can bring back those who are sunken in the idol worship of money." The King answered that it was so.

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Then he informed the Warrior, that along the path to the Sword, there is a path to the side, and one comes by that path to a mountain of fire. On this mountain crouches a lion. When he needs to eat, he goes and attacks the flocks, and eats sheep and other animals. And the shepherds know about him, so they guard their flocks very carefully against him. But the lion pays no heed to them, and when he wants to eat, he falls on the flocks. The shepherds swing their clubs at him and make a great din, but the lion does not hear them at all, and helps himself to the sheep and the other beasts, and roars and eats them. And that aforementioned mountain of fire cannot be seen at all.

And also along the way there is another path, and it leads to a kitchen, and in that kitchen are many varieties of food. And there is no fire in the kitchen at all, rather, all the foods are cooked by the fire on the mountain. And the mountain of fire is far from there, but there are conduits running from the mountain to the kitchen, and through this all the foods are cooked. Also, the kitchen is not visible at all, there is only an indication - birds gathered at the location, and only through that is it possible to identify the kitchen. And those birds flap with their wings, and so they heat up or cool off the foods. That is to say, through their flapping, they either increase or diminish the fire, so that it will burn at the needed intensity. And they feed the fire according to the food being cooked: For one food, they fuel the fire to one extent, and for another food, another extent - all depending upon the food being cooked (all these were the words of the King to the Warrior). "Thus, take them (the g-ds of the Country of Wealth, who had accompanied them) in the face of the wind, in order that the odors of the foods of the Kitchen reach them. After that, when you give them to eat from the foods, they will certainly abandon their lust for money." Thus the King advised the Warrior.

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Thus the Warrior did. He took the high-standing people of the Country of Wealth, who were g-ds in their country. For those same g-ds had been here before, for they had come here with the Treasurer, as was described above. When they had left their country with the Treasurer, the people of the country had empowered them, that all they would do would be accepted by all. And all the citizens would be obligated to agree with all that they did (for they were considered as g-ds by the country). And there would be no possibility of change. The Warrior took these people, who were called g-ds in their country by virtue of their wealth, and lead them along the path, bringing them all the way to the Kitchen. At first, he led them against the wind, so that the odors of the foods reached them, and they began to beg the Warrior to give them from these foods to eat. Then he led them against the wind again, and this time they cried out that there was a terrible stench. Then he started again, leading them against the wind, and again the odor of the foods reached them, and once again they begged him that he give them from those foods. Then they began to smell the stench again, and cried out in response to it. The Warrior said to them, "This stench you smell - you can see that there is nothing in the area to cause such a smell. It must be coming from you, for there is nothing else here to cause such smell."

Then, the Warrior gave them to eat from the foods. As soon as they ate from them, they immediately began to cast away all their silver and gold. Each one dug a pit for himself, and buried himself in it out of his great shame. For they felt terribly embarrassed, having sensed the disgusting quality of their money (for it truly smelled like feces). For they had tasted of the foods from the Kitchen. They tore at their faces, and buried themselves, and could not raise their heads at all. They were embarrassed before each other. For there, having money was the greatest embarrassment. Someone who wanted to insult his friend,

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would say that he had a lot of money. For money was a great source of shame there, and everyone who had more money, was more ashamed. Thus, they buried themselves out of their extreme shame, and no one could raise their head, even before his friend, all the more so before the Warrior. And anyone who still found in his possession some coin, he would rid himself of it, casting it far away with great haste.

Then the Warrior came to them, and extracted them from their pits, saying "Come with me! For now you do not need to be afraid of the Warrior (for all the people of the country had been afraid of him, as recounted before). For I am that Warrior." Then they asked the Warrior to give them more of the food, to take it back to their country. For they themselves already abhorred money, but they wanted to save the rest of their people from it as well. He gave them of the foods, and they took it to their country. And immediately upon being given the foods, the people cast away their silver and gold, and buried themselves in pits of dirt out of their intense shame. And the very wealthy ones and the g-ds were the most ashamed. Even the poorer ones, who were referred to as "wild animals", were also embarrassed, at having considered themselves lowly because of their poverty. For now it had been revealed that money was the greatest embarrassment. For those foods had the quality, that one who ate from them abhorred money. For he would sense the full stench of it, truly like feces and waste material. Thus they cast away their idols of silver and gold. After that, the Master of Prayer was sent to them, and he gave them repentances and repairs, and he purified them. And the King who had been discovered by his friends ruled with authority. And the whole world returned to the L-rd, and involved themselves only with Torah, prayer, repentance and good deeds. Amen may it be His will.

Blessed is Hashem forever, Amen and Amen.

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Notes:

This story has its basis in the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 31. It is described there, that the Holy One, Blessed be He, has an oven in one place. And the fire is in another place, far from the oven. As it is written, "Thus says the L-rd, whose fire is in Zion, and whose oven is in Jerusalem."

From the same chapter: "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, and on their horses depend. Egypt is a man, and not a g-d, and their horses are flesh, and not spirit." This is the aspect of the country that depended on the country where all were g-ds, believing they would save them. For the belief that they were all g-ds, and their horses were angels, was all delusion, as is recounted in the story.

"For in that day every man will be repulsed by his idols of silver and gold (ibid.)" Referring to the point when the people sunken in lust for money were brought to the oven, and smelled the foods, and became disgusted by their money.

Look and perceive that the entire story is discussed in this chapter of the Book of Isaiah. Rabbi Nachman said explicitly that the whole story from beginning to end is hinted at in that chapter. And there are other passages from other places in scripture that also relate to the story. But the story is primarily based on the above-mentioned chapter.

And these things are still very hidden. For the inner depth of the story, he did not reveal at all. He only brought our attention to these scriptural passages, that we should know that there are very deep and awesome secrets embedded in the stories. Happy is he who merits to understand a little from these secrets in these stories.



The Seven Beggars

Let me tell you how happy they were.



Once there was a King, who had an only son. The King wanted to give the kingdom to his son in his lifetime. He threw a grand party, a ball. Certainly, every time a king throws such a party, it is a great joy. Especially now, since he was giving the kingdom to his son in his lifetime, it was certainly a joyous occasion. All the nobles of the kingdom were there, and all the dukes, and they were all very joyful there. Also, the whole nation was happy to see the King granting the kingdom to his son in his lifetime, for it was a great honor to the King. And there was a very great happiness there. There were all types of entertainment: Musical bands, dramatic plays and the like. All sorts of joys were found at this ball.

When they had become very lighthearted, the King stood and said to his son, "Being that I can read the stars, and I can see that in the future, you will lose the kingdom, see to it that you do not become saddened at your fall from the kingship. Be only happy. And when you will be happy, I will also be happy. Even if you will be sad, I will still be happy that you are not King. For you are not worthy to be King if you cannot maintain your happiness when you fall

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from the kingdom. But when you will be happy, I will have particularly great happiness."

So the Prince accepted the kingdom with a mighty hand. He appointed nobles, dukes, governors and soldiers. This Prince was wise, and loved wisdom very much, and had very wise advisors. And he highly valued anyone who came to him with a matter of wisdom. He would grant them honor and importance for their wisdom, each one what he desired. To someone who wanted money, he gave them money. Someone who wanted honor, he gave them honor, all in reward for their wisdom. And because wisdom was so important to him, everyone began to be occupied with wisdom - the whole nation took to it. For some wanted to receive money in exchange for their wisdom, and others importance and honor. And because all of them dealt only with wisdom, they all forgot the strategies of war, for they were involved only with wisdom. Until all the citizens became masters of wisdom. Until even the most minor among them would in another country be considered wiser than all. The masters of wisdom in that country were wondrously great in wisdom. And because of their wisdom, these masters became heretics. They drew the King's son to their thinking as well, and he also became a heretic. But the rest of the people did not fall into heresy. For there was great depth and subtlety in the wisdom of the masters, so that the common people could not understand it, so it did not harm them. But the masters of wisdom and the Prince became heretics.

Now, the Prince, because he had a good character, for he was born with good, and had good and upright qualities, would occasionally reflect, "Where am I in the world, and what am I doing?" He would sigh and moan that he had fallen to such depths and had strayed so far. He would sigh deeply. But as soon as he began to use his mind, the heretical thinking returned to him and became

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strong again. And so it was several times, that he would remember as described above, and would sigh and groan, but as soon as he started to use his intellect, the heretical wisdom returned and gained strength again.

There came a time, when an entire nation was expelled from its land. Everyone fled. In the course of their escape, they passed through a forest, and a boy and a girl were lost: One parent lost a boy, and one a girl. They were still young children - four or five years old. They did not have what to eat. And they screamed and cried from the lack of food. After a time, a beggar approached them, carrying sacks of bread. The children started to draw close to him, and became attached to him. He gave them bread, and they ate. He asked them, "How did you get here?" They answered that they did not know, for they were young children. He began to walk away, and they begged him to take them with him. He answered them, "That is one thing I do not want, for you to come with me." In the midst of this, they noticed that he was blind. It was a wonder to them: If he is blind, how does he know where he is going? (In truth, it was a novelty that such a question should occur to them, for they were still young children. But they were intelligent for their age, and it was a wonder to them as was said above). Then he blessed them, that they should be like him - old like him - and he left them some more bread, and went on his way. And the children understood that the L-rd was watching over them, and that He had arranged this blind beggar to come to them here, to give them food.

After that, they finished the bread, and again began to cry for the lack of food. Night fell, and they slept there. In the morning, there was also nothing to eat, and they wailed and cried. Then a beggar came to them, who was deaf. They began to speak to him, and he motioned with his hands that he could not hear. But he also gave them bread

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to eat, and left them. They asked him also to take them with him, and he refused. And he also blessed them that they should be like him, and he also left them bread, and went his way.

Once again, they finished the bread, and began wailing again. Then a beggar came to them, who had poor speech. They began speaking to him, and he stuttered in his speech, so that they could not understand what he was saying. He could understand them, but they could not understand him, because of his stuttering. He also gave them bread, and left them. And he also blessed them that they should be like him, and went his way - all as before.

Then came a beggar whose neck was crooked, and it went as before. Then came a beggar with a hunched back. Then came a beggar without hands, and after that a beggar without feet. All of them gave them bread, and blessed the children that they should be like them - all as before.

After that, they finished the bread, and started to head toward a settlement, until they came to a path. They followed it until they came to a village. They entered a house, and the people there had pity on them, and gave them bread. They then went to another house, and they also gave them bread, and they went thus from house to house. They saw that it went well for them, and they agreed that they would always stay together. They made large sacks for themselves, and went from house to house, and went to all the celebrations as well: To circumcisions and weddings, and eventually they went to another town. They went to many cities, going door to door. And they went to fairs, and sat with the beggars, sitting on crates with collection bowls in their hands. Until these children became famous among the beggars. For they all knew them, and knew that these were the children who had been lost in the forest.

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One time there was a big fair in a major city. All the beggars went there, and the two children went there as well. It occurred to the beggars that they should match the two children to be married to each other. As soon as a few of the beggars suggested this, it found favor in everyone's eyes, and the match was settled. But how would they make the wedding?! They discussed the matter, and decided that they would wait until the celebration of the King's birthday. All the beggars would go to the feast, and from whatever food would be granted to them, from that they would make the wedding feast. And so it was. All the beggars went to the King's feast, and asked for bread and meat, and also gathered the bread and meat remaining after the feast. Then they went and dug a great pit, large enough for a hundred people, and covered it with reeds, dirt and refuse. Everyone gathered inside, and held the wedding for the two children. And they brought them under the wedding canopy. And they were all very, very joyful. The bride and groom were also very happy.

Then they began to remember the kindnesses the L-rd had done for them in the forest. They cried and longed intensely, saying "How can we bring the first, blind beggar here, who brought us bread in the forest?" Then, immediately after they began longing for the blind beggar, he appeared, saying, "Here I am. See, I have come to the wedding. And I am giving you a wedding gift, that you should be old like me. For at first I blessed you so, and now I am giving it to you as a complete gift - that you should live a long life like me. And you think that I am blind? I am not blind at all. It is only that all the time in the world does not count for me more than the blink of an eye (and thus he appeared blind, for he did not look upon the world at all, because all the time of the world was for him only the blink of an eye. Therefore, looking upon this world was not relevant to him at all). And I am very old, yet I am still a young child, and I have not started to live at

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all. Even so, I am very old. I do not say all this in my own name - for I have the approval of the Great Eagle. Now I will tell you a story (all these were the words of the blind beggar).

One time a large number of people set out in ships on the sea. A storm wind came and broke apart the ships, but the people were saved. They came to a tower, and climbed to the top of it. There they found an abundance of food, drink and clothing - everything they needed. There they had everything good, all the delights in the world. They agreed that each one should tell an ancient story, that he remembers from his earliest memory. That is to say, what he remembers from when his memory first started to function. There were both young and old ones there, and they honored the oldest one to speak first. He said to them, "What can I say? I remember when they cut the apple from the branch." No one understood what he meant. However, there were wise ones among them, and they said, "This is surely a very ancient story." Then they honored the second one to speak.

The second, who was younger than the first, said "That is an ancient story?! I also remember that story. But I also remember when the light was burning." The others responded, saying, "This story is even older than the first." It was a wonder to them, that this second one, who was younger than the first, remembered a story older than the first. Then they invited the third to speak.

The third, who was younger, said, "I remember when the fruit started to be built. That is, when the fruit began to be formed." They responded, "This is an even older story." The fourth one, who was still younger, said, "I remember when they planted the seed from which the fruit grew." The fifth, who was yet younger, said, "I remember the sages, who designed and produced the seed." The sixth

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said that he remembered the taste of the fruit before it entered the fruit. The seventh said that he remembered the odor of the fruit before it entered the fruit. The eighth said that he remembered the appearance of the fruit before it was drawn upon the fruit. And I, (that is, the blind beggar who was telling all this), I was then a tiny infant, and I was also there. I said to all of them, "I remember all of those stories. And I also remember "nothing at all"." They answered, saying "This is a truly ancient story, older than all the others!" And it was a great novelty to them, that an infant would remember more than all of them.

In the course of this, a great eagle came and knocked upon the tower, saying to them, "Give up being poor, return to your treasures, and use them." He told them to exit the tower according to their age - the oldest ones should come out first. He brought everyone out of the tower. First he brought out the infant, for in truth he was older than all of them. Thus, all who were younger, he brought out first. And the extremely old man came out last. For all who were younger, were older, as was explained before. And the oldest among them was the youngest of all.

The eagle said to them, "I will explain the stories that each one told. The one who said he remembers when they cut the apple from the tree, he meant he remembers when they cut his umbilical cord. (That is to say, he also remembered this story that happened at the moment of his birth, at the time when they cut his cord). The second who said he remembers when the light was burning. He meant he remembers when he was still in the womb, and a light was shining above his head. The one who said he remembers the time when the fruit started forming, he was referring to when the body started to be formed, the creation of the fetus. The one who remembered when they were bringing the seed to be planted, he meant the moment

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when the seed passed through during the intercourse of the parents. The one who said he remembers the sages who produced the seed, he meant the time when the drop of seed was still in the mind (for the mind produces the seed). The one who remembers the taste, that is referring to the vital life-force. The odor refers to the spirit. And the image, the soul. And the infant who said he remembers nothing - that is higher than all else. For he remembers what came before the life-force, the spirit and the soul - the aspect of "nothing".

The eagle said to them, "Return to your ships, which are really your bodies which were broken, that they be renewed and rebuilt. Now, return to them and bless them." And to me (the blind beggar, that had been a child then, who was telling all this), the great eagle said, "You come with me, for you are like me. For you are 'very old and yet still very young'. I am also so, for I am very old, and yet I am still young." This shows that I have the testimony of the Great Eagle, that I live a long life. And now I am giving you my long life, as a wedding gift." And there was overwhelming, immense happiness and gladness.

On the second of the seven days of celebration (According to Jewish custom, the six days following a wedding are considered a continuation of the wedding, and on each day, the couple and their friends participate in a festive meal), the couple thought about the second beggar. That is, the deaf one, who had also given them bread in the forest. They cried and bemoaned, "How can we bring here the deaf beggar who sustained us?" As they were longing for him, he appeared, saying "Here I am!" He fell upon them and kissed them, and said, "Now I am bestowing on you as a gift, that you should be like me, that you should live a good life like me. For at first I blessed you with this. But now I am giving you my good life as a full wedding gift. And you think that I am deaf? I am not deaf at all! Only

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that the whole world is not worth anything to me, that I should listen to their lackings. For all the voices come from lacking - each one cries about what he lacks. And even all the celebrations in the world are due to lackings - the person is joyful about a lack that has been fulfilled. And for me, the whole world amounts to nothing, that I should listen to their lackings. For I live a good life that has nothing lacking. And I have testimony to this, that I live a good life, from the Country of Wealth. And its good life, is that they eat bread and drink water." Then he recounted:

For there is a country with great wealth, and they have massive treasuries. One time they gathered together, and each one boasted about his good life, and each one described the quality of his good life. I spoke up and said, "I live a good life, that is better than your good life. Here is the proof: If you really live a good life, let us see if you can save a particular country. There was a country with a garden. In this garden were fruits with every kind of taste in the world. Also, there were all the varieties of scent in the world. And all the varieties of images, all the colors, and all the species of flowers in the world, all in this one garden.

And tending the garden was a gardener. And the people of the country lived a good life due to that garden. Then the gardener was lost. And all that had been in the garden, inevitably withered and was lost, since the overseer, that is the gardener, was not present. Even so, the people were able to survive from the weeds in the garden. Then a cruel king came to this country, but he could not do them any harm. So he went and ruined the good life that the country had had from the garden. Not that he ruined the garden. He only left three groups of servants in the country, and ordered them to follow the instructions he would give. And through this he despoiled the taste. So that through what they did there, whatever taste a person

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wanted to taste, he would only taste a rotten carcass. In the same way, they despoiled the scents. So that all the varieties of scents smelled like galbanum (a foul smelling plant). And so they corrupted the sense of vision - they darkened the eyes of all, as if there were dark clouds (it was all through what the servants did, following the commands of the cruel king). So now, if you really live a good life, let us see if you can save them. And I warn you, that if you do not save them, the corruptions of that country could harm you as well."

So these wealthy people went to that country, and I also went with them. Also along the way, each one of them lived his good life, for each one had his own treasury. But as they neared the country, their sense of taste and their other senses also began to fail, and they sensed the corruption of their senses. I said to them, "If even now, before you have entered the country, your senses are already failing, what will be when you enter? And furthermore, how do you expect to be able to save them?" Then I took my bread and water, and gave it to them. And they sensed in my bread and water all the tastes (and even all the smells, etc.) And so their damaged senses were restored.

Meanwhile, the people of the country wherein was the garden, began to reflect on how to repair the corruption of the senses that had befallen them. And they concluded, "Being that there is a country of wealth. And it appears that our lost gardener (who helped us have a good life), is from the same root as these citizens of the wealthy country, who also have a good life. Let us send for help to this country, and they certainly will save us." And so they did. They sent messengers to that country of wealth, and the messengers came upon the group from the wealthy country that was headed toward them. The wealthy travellers asked the messengers, "Where are you going?"

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The messengers replied, "We are travelling to the Country of Wealth, that they should save us." The wealthy ones answered, "We ourselves are from that country, and we were headed toward you." Then I said to them (the deaf beggar said to the wealthy travellers): "Look, you need me. For you cannot save them on your own. Stay here, and I will go with the messengers, to save their country."

So I went with them. Once in the country, I came to a certain city. I saw there that people would come and say various words of mockery. Then other people would join up with them, until it became a large gathering. And all of them chattered words of ridicule, and smiled and laughed. I focused my attention more closely, and heard they were speaking profanities. One would say a profanity, another would say the same in more refined language, one would laugh and another would derive some gain from it, and so on. Then I went onward to another city. I saw two people arguing over some business dealing. They went to court for a judgment, and the court ruled that one was guilty and the other innocent. Then they left the court, and began arguing again. They said they did not want to accept that court, and wanted to go to another. So they chose another court. So they brought their case to the new court. This court gave them a ruling, and afterwards one of the defendants began arguing with someone else, and they chose yet another court. And so they went on bickering and squabbling one with another, and continually chose new courts, until the whole city was brimming with courts. And I saw that all this was because there was no truth there. First a judge would pervert the judgment and favor one over another, and then the one he had favored would favor him. For everything here was based on bribery, and there was no truth among them.

After that, I saw that they were full of sexual immorality. There was illicit sexuality among them to the

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point that it became acceptable to them. I told them it was because of this that their taste, scent and vision had been corrupted. For that cruel king had left behind three groups of servants, as mentioned above, and they went and sabotaged the state. For they spoke foul language among the people, and through this the sense of taste was corrupted. So that all the tastes were that of a carcass. And so also, they brought bribery into the country, and through this, the peoples' eyes were darkened and vision was corrupted, for "Bribery blinds the eyes of sages." Further, they brought sexual immorality into the country, and through this the sense of smell was corrupted (look at other sources from Rabbi Nachman, which explain that through sexual immorality, the sense of smell is damaged). Thus, work to rid these three sins from the country, and to search after these evil ones and expel them. Then, when you have cleared the country from these three sins, not only will the taste, vision and scent be repaired, but also the lost gardener will be found again.

So they did accordingly, and began to purify the country of these three sins. They searched for the servants of the evil king. They would seize some man and ask him, "How did you come here?" Until they identified all the servants, and banished them. And they cleared the country of the three sins. Presently, a commotion arose. People started asking, "Could it be that in spite of everything, this madman who goes about saying he is the gardener, and everyone thinks he is mad, and throws stones at him and throws him out - could it be that nevertheless, perhaps he is the true gardener?" They sent for him and brought him before them (that is, before those who had overseen the fixing of the country. Also the deaf beggar, who was telling the whole story, was there). And upon seeing him, I said, "That is undoubtedly the true Gardener" (Thus, the country was repaired through him.)

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Thus, I have the testimony from that Country of Wealth, that I live a good life, for I repaired that country. Now, I give you my good life as a wedding present!" Then there was very great joy and gladness there. (Thus, all the beggars came to the wedding, and gave their wedding gift. Each one, with what he had at first blessed them, now gave it to them as a gift.) The first one gave them long life, and the second gave them good life.

On the third day, the couple remembered, and began crying and longing, "How can we bring the third beggar here, the one with the impaired speech?" In the midst of this, he appeared, saying "Here I am!" He fell upon them and kissed them. He also said to them, "At first I blessed you that you should be like me, now I am giving it to you as a wedding gift. And you think that I have a defect in speech? Not at all. It is only that the words of this world, which are not praises to the Holy One, Blessed be He, are not perfected. (Therefore he seemed to be speech-impaired. For he had difficulty speaking the words of this world, which did not have perfection.) But in truth, my speech is not impaired at all. On the contrary, I am a wondrous orator and speaker. And I can recite wonderful riddles and songs, to the point that there is no one in the world who would not want to listen to me. And in these riddles and songs that I know are contained all the wisdoms. And I have a testimony for this from the great man called the True Man of Kindness. And there is an entire story to this.

"For one time, all the sages sat together, and each one gloried in his wisdom. One of them boasted that with his wisdom, he had invented iron, and another boasted of another type of metal. Another boasted at having invented silver, which is more valuable. Another one boasted about inventing gold, and another about weapons of war. Another claimed he knew how to make those metals, through means of alchemy. Another boasted of another

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wisdom. For there are a number of inventions that came to the world through wisdom, such as metal forging and gunpowder, and so on. And each one boasted of his wisdom.

Then one of them spoke up and said, "I am wiser than you, for I am wise like the day." They did not understand what he meant by "wise like the day". He explained, "All your wisdoms can be gathered together, and they will not amount to more than an hour. Even though each wisdom is taken from a different day, according to the creation that was on that day. For all the wisdoms are assemblies (thus, a wisdom is taken from the day on which the thing from which the wisdom is assembled was created). Even so, it is possible through wisdom, to gather all the wisdoms into one hour. But I am wise as an entire day (all these were the words of the last sage who spoke)." Then I spoke up, and said to him (that is, the one with the speech defect said to the last sage): Like which day?" The last sage answered, "This one is wiser than me, because he asks which day. All the same, I am as wise as any day you choose. Now it may seem difficult: How could the one who asked the question be wiser, if the last sage was as wise as any day you could choose? For this, there is an entire story.

For this True Man of Kindness was in fact a very great man. And the one with the heavy speech goes and gathers all the kindnesses of truth, and brings them to this True Man of Kindness. And time is principally created by kindnesses of truth (for time itself is a creation). And the one with the heavy speech goes and collects all the kindnesses of truth and brings them to the True Man of Kindness.

And there is a mountain, and on it stands a stone, and from the stone flows a spring. Now, every thing has a

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heart. The world itself in its entirety has a heart. And this heart of the world is a complete body, with a face and hands and feet, etc. But the toenail of the foot of this Heart of the World, it has more heart than the heart of any other. And this mountain with the stone and the spring stands at one end of the world, and the Heart of the World stands at the other end. And this Heart stands facing the Spring, and continually yearns, very intensely, to come to the Spring. With an overwhelming yearning. It cries out passionately, to come to the Spring. Also, the Spring yearns to come to the Heart. And this heart has two weaknesses: One, because the sun pursues it and burns it (for it longs and desires to go and be by the Spring). The second weakness is from the intensity of its yearning and longing, with which it constantly desires and longs, with expiration of the soul, for the Spring, and cries out. For it stands always opposite the Spring, and moans, and craves for it constantly. And when it needs to rest a bit, so that it will regain its breath, a great bird comes and flaps its wings upon it, and protects it from the sun. Then it has some relief. Even then, in its moments of relief, it gazes at the Spring and longs for it. So, if it longs so passionately for the Spring, the question can be asked, Why does it not go there? The answer is, that when it wants to go and approach the mountain, it loses sight of the slope, and cannot look at the Spring. And if it ceases looking at the Spring, it will die, for its primary life comes from the Spring. And when it stands opposite the mountain, then it sees the face of the mountain, in which lies the Spring. But as soon as it would try to approach the mountain, it would lose sight of the mountain face (this can be understood from simple experience), and then it would not see the Spring, and then its soul would expire, Heaven forbid. And if this Heart were to die, the entire world would cease to be. For the Heart is the life of all things. And certainly, there is no existence possible without the Heart. Thus, it cannot go to the Spring. So

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it stands opposite it, and yearns and cries.

Now, this Spring has no time, for it is not within time at all. The only time that the Spring has, is the one day that the heart gives it as a free gift. When the day draws to a close (and when the day ends, the Spring will run out of time and expire, G-d forbid, and then the heart will die, G-d forbid, and then the whole world will be annulled, G-d forbid). Then, near the day's end, the Spring and the Heart bid each other farewell, and start to recite beautiful riddles and songs to each other, with great love and very powerful yearning. And the True Man of Kindness oversees this. And when the day comes very near to its end, the True Man of Kindness gives one day as a free gift to the Heart. Then the Heart gives the day to the Spring. So then the Spring has time again. And when the day goes back to the place from which it came, it also goes with magnificent riddles and songs, containing within them all the wisdoms. And there are differences between the days: There are the distinct days of the week, and then there are the days of the new moon, and the festival days.

And all the time of the True Man of Kindness, it is all through me (the beggar with the impaired speech, who was telling all this). For I go and gather all the Kindnesses of Truth, from which are created Time (therefore, he was wiser than the previous sage, who was wise as any day one would choose. For all time and days are created by him, the one with the impaired speech, who gathers all the Kindnesses of Truth from which comes Time, and brings them to the True Man of Kindness. And the True Man of Kindness gives a day to the Heart, and the Heart gives it to the Spring, and through this the world is sustained. Thus, the main creation of Time, with the riddles and songs containing all the wisdoms, it is all through the one with the heavy speech.

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Thus, I have the testimony from the True Man of Kindness that I can recite riddles and songs containing all the wisdoms (for all the time, with the riddles and songs, comes to be through me). And now, I give to you as a complete wedding gift, that you will be like me." And there was very great joy and gladness there.

When the celebration of that day ended, they slept the night, and in the morning, they began yearning again, this time for the beggar with the crooked neck. In the midst of this, he suddenly appeared, saying "Here I am! At first, I blessed you that you should be like me. Now I give it to you as a wedding gift, that you should be like me. And you think my neck is crooked? It is not crooked at all. To the contrary, I have a very straight and beautiful neck. It is only that there are vapors of this world. And I do not want to exhale any breath into the vapors of the world (and thus his neck seemed crooked, for he twisted it away from the vapors of this world, and did not want to exhale any breath into them). Yet in truth, I have a very beautiful and wondrous neck. For I have a wonderful voice. And all the voices of the world which are voices without words - I can produce all of them with my voice. For I have a remarkable neck and voice. And I have testimony to this from "that country".

"For there is a country where they are experts in the discipline of music. Everyone there is involved with it, even young children. There is no child there who cannot play an instrument. The youngest child there would in another country be considered a great master of music. The sages and the king of that country, and the members of the musical bands, are all great masters of this discipline.

One time all the sages of the country gathered together, and each one boasted of his musical talent. One said he knew how to play on such and such an

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instrument, and another boasted about his ability to play another, and so on. One claimed he knew how to play several instruments. Another claimed he knew to play all the instruments. One said he could create the sound of a certain instrument with his voice, and another that he could create that of a different instrument with his. Yet another boasted he could create the sounds of several instruments with his voice. One claimed that he could create with his voice the sound of a drum. Another said he could create the sound of a harp. I was also there, and I said to them: "My voice is better than yours. Here is the proof: If you are such masters of music, see if you can save these two countries.

These two countries are a thousand miles apart from each other. In both of these countries, when night falls, it is impossible to sleep. For when night comes, they all begin to wail - men, women and children. The sound could melt a stone. For in the night, the voice of the wailing is very intense, and because of this, everyone wails - the men, women and children (and so it is in both the countries). And the two countries are a thousand miles apart from each other. Now, if you are all such great masters of music, let us see if you can save these two states, or if at least you can produce their voices (that is, if they would be able to imitate the wailing sound heard there)." They asked the one with the crooked neck, "Would you take us there?" He answered that he would. So they all became inspired to go.

They went there (to one of the two above-mentioned countries). And when they arrived, and night fell, everyone began wailing, as recounted above. They sages also joined in the wailing (and they saw from this that they could not save the countries). Then the one with the crooked neck said, "At the least, tell me from where does this wailing voice come?" They asked him, "So you know?" He said, "Certainly I know."

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"For there are two birds, a male and a female, and they are the only ones of their species in the whole world. The female was lost, and the male went looking for her. And she searched for him. They searched for a long time, until they lost their way, and saw that they would not be able to find each other. So they stayed where they were, and made nests. One of them made his nest close to one of the countries. Not actually adjacent, only close enough so that the voice of the bird could be heard in the country. There he made his nest. And so the female made her nest adjacent to the second country. When the night falls, the two birds start wailing with an intense cry, each one wailing for its mate. That is the wailing sound that is heard in these two countries (and because of that sound, everyone wails, and no one can sleep)." However, they did not want to believe him, and asked, "Will you take us there?" He answered that he could lead them there. "However, you cannot go there. For when you come near, you will not be able to bear the wailing sound. For even here, you cannot bear it, and you all join in with the wailing. So when you get there, you will not be able to bear it at all.

And in the day (for it is only possible to go there in the day), it is impossible to bear the joy that is there. For in the day, many birds gather around each of the two birds who are mates, and they console and cheer both of the two, with very great encouragement and joy, and tell them consoling words that there is still hope for finding the other. Until it is impossible to bear the intensity of the joy there during the day. And the voice of the birds who encourage them cannot be heard from a distance, only when one comes near. But the wailing of the couple in the night can be heard from afar. And it is impossible to go there because of this." Then the sages said to the one with the crooked neck: "Can you repair this?" He answered, "I can, for I can produce all the voices in the world. I can also

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throw voices. That is to say, I can utter the voice in such a way, that in the place where I am, it will not be heard at all. Only in the far distance it will be heard. Thus, I could throw the voice of the female bird, so that it would reach close to the place where the male is. Likewise, I can throw the voice of the male, so that it will reach close to the place of the female. And I would lead them to each other through this (and through this all the rest would be repaired)."

However, who would believe this? So he led them to a forest. There they heard the sound of one opening a door, closing it again and locking it with a bolt. And they heard the bolt slam shut. Then they heard him shooting something from a rifle, and sending a dog to fetch what he had shot. And the dog thrashed about and scrambled ahead through the snow. The sages of music heard all this, and looked around, not seeing anything. Neither did they hear a sound coming from the one with the crooked neck. (For he threw all these voices, and thus they heard the sounds, without perceiving their source. So they saw clearly that he could create all these voices, and also to throw them. Thus, he would be able to repair the situation described before). Thus, I have testimony from that country, that I have a very wondrous voice. And I can create all the sounds of the world. And now, I am giving this to you as a wedding present, that you should be like me." And there was very great joy and gladness there.

On the fifth day, they were also very happy. And they remembered the beggar with the hump. And they longed passionately, saying "How can we bring that hunchback beggar here, for if he were here, the joy would be very great!" In the midst of this, he appeared, saying "Here I am! I have come to the wedding." He fell upon them, hugging and kissing them. He said to them, "At first, I blessed you that you should be like me. Now I am giving

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this to you as a wedding present. And I am not a hunchback at all. To the contrary, I have such shoulders, that they have the aspect of "the small which holds within it the great". And I have a testimony upon this.

"For once there was a discussion, in which people were boasting of their ability in this quality. Each one of them claimed that he had the aspect of the "small which holds within it the great". There was one that they ridiculed and laughed at, and the others boasted of their possession of this quality of the small that holds within it the great, and their words were accepted. However, I possess this quality to a degree greater than all of them. For one of them claimed that his mind had the aspect of the small containing the great. For he carries in his mind thousands upon thousands of people, with all their needs and customs, and all their being and movements - he carries it all in his mind. And thus he is the small that contains within it the great, for his mind carries so many people, as described above. And they laughed at him, saying that his people were nothing and he was nothing. Then another spoke and said, "I saw an example of the 'small that holds in it the great'.

"For once I saw a mountain, upon which was heaped much garbage and waste. It was a wonder to me - how so much garbage came to be on this mountain. There was a man standing near the mountain, and he said, 'All that waste came from me.' For that man dwelled next to the mountain, and continually threw upon it his garbage and filth from his eating and drinking, and despoiled the place. Until due to him, the waste and refuse piled up on the mountain. Thus, this man is the small that holds within it the great, for it was from him that the garbage grew to such a degree."

Another one boasted he had the quality of the small

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which holds the great. For he owns a small country, that produces a great deal of fruit. Later, when they calculate the amount of fruit that came from there, they see that the country is not as large as the quantity of the fruit. For there is not enough room in that country to contain all the fruit. Thus, it is the aspect of the small which holds the great. This found favor in the eyes of the others. For this was truly an example of the small which holds the great.

Another one said he had a very amazing orchard, in which there are fruits, etc. Many people and noblemen travel there, for it is a very beautiful orchard. Especially in the summer, many people go on leisure trips there. And in truth, the orchard does not have that much space to hold so many people. Thus it is an example of the small which holds the great. This also found favor in their eyes.

There was one who said that his speech is the aspect of the small which holds the great. For he is the secretary of a great king. Many people come to him - one with praises for the King, another with requests, and so on. And clearly, it is impossible for the King to listen to all of them. But he is able to gather all their words into brief summaries, and to tell these summaries to the King. All the praises and requests of the people are included in his words. And all the multitude of their words are alluded to within the few words of the secretary. Thus his speech is the small which holds the great.

One said that his silence was the aspect of the small which holds the great. For there are many accusers and gossipers who are maligning him very seriously. And all that they denounce and accuse him with their slanderous speech, he answers them all through his being silent alone. Thus, his silence is the small which holds the great.

Another one said he is the aspect of the small which holds the great. For there is a poor man who is blind. And

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he is a very large man. And the one who was speaking was very small, and he leads the larger man. Accordingly, he is the small which holds the great. For if the large blind man were to walk alone, he could slip and fall. And this small man holds him, through leading him. Thus he is the small which holds the great. For he is small, and he supports the large blind man. And I (that is, the hunchback who was relating all this) was also there. I said, "In truth, you all have an aspect of the small which holds the great, and I understand all the import of your words. And the last one, who boasted of leading the large blind man, he is greater than all of you. But I am completely beyond all of you. For the one who said he leads the large blind man, his intent was that he leads the moon, which has the aspect of blindness. For it does not generate its own light at all, and it does not have anything of its own. And he (the last one who spoke), leads the moon even though he is small, and the moon is very large. And he sustains the entire world, for the world needs the moon. Thus, he is truly the aspect of the small which holds the great. However, the aspect of the small which holds the great that I possess transcends all of you, entirely.

"Here is the proof. Once there was a group which was investigating: Being that every animal has a particular shaded area, that specifically within that place it prefers to rest. So there is a specific shaded place for every animal. For every animal chooses for itself a particular shaded spot, in which it prefers to lie. And so for each bird, there is a particular branch, on which branch specifically it prefers to dwell. And so the investigators searched to find such a tree, under which all the animals would find a place to rest. One which all the animals would choose, and desire to dwell within its shade, and on its branches all the birds would dwell. They discovered that there was such a tree, and they wanted to travel to that tree. For the magnificent delight that one would have beside that tree is impossible

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to imagine. For all the birds and all the animals are there, and no animal would cause one any harm. All the animals there mingle and play together, and surely it is a very great delight to be by that tree. Then they investigated which direction to follow in order to reach the tree, and they fell into disagreement about it. There was no concluding answer. For one said they needed to go East, and other said West, one said this way and one said that way. Until they could not come to a conclusion about which direction to take to reach the tree.

Then one sage came, and asked, "Why are you searching for which direction to go to reach the tree? First of all, determine who is worthy of going there. For not everyone is able to go to that tree. Only those who have the qualities of the tree can go. For this tree has three roots: One of them is Faith, another is Awe, and the third is Poverty. And the trunk of the tree is Truth. And from there extend the branches. Thus, only one who has the qualities of the tree can go there." Now this band of investigators were very closeknit, and they were not prepared to separate from each other, so that some would make the journey and some would stay. For not all of them were fit to go there, for there were only a small minority among them who possessed these qualities. Thus they were delayed there, waiting while the lacking ones strived and struggled to achieve the qualities needed for the journey. So that everyone would be fit to go to the tree. Then, when everyone had achieved the needed qualities, everyone simultaneously came to a shared awareness, and they all agreed on one route to follow to reach the tree, and they all went.

And I (the hunchback), was also there with them. I said to them, "I can bring you to the tree. For that tree has no place at all, for it is entirely beyond place, whereas the aspect of the small which holds the great still has some

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connection to place. For in any case, it takes up some space, only that it is a very small space which contains much within it. But it is a space nevertheless. However, the aspect of the small which holds the great which I possess, is at the complete end of space, beyond which there is no space at all. Therefore, I can take you all to the tree, which is beyond place entirely (for this hunchback was like the connection-point between "place" and "beyond place". For he possessed the uttermost extent of the "small which holds the great", the aspect of the absolute end of place, beyond which there is not an iota of place at all. For from this point and beyond is the aspect of "beyond place" entirely. Thus, he could take them out of the realm of place, to the realm of "beyond place".) So I took them, and brought them there, to the tree.

Thus, I have the testimony from that band of people, that I have the uttermost quality of the "small which holds the great". (This is why he appeared a hunchback, for he carried a great weight, for he was the aspect of the "small which holds the great".) And now I give this to you as a gift, that you will be like me." And there was great joy and abounding gladness there.

On the sixth day they were also joyful. And they longed, "How can we bring the beggar without hands here?" And behold, he appeared, saying "Here I am! Look, I have come to the wedding." He continued as the others had spoken, and kissed them, saying, "You think that I am blemished in my hands? I am not blemished at all. In truth, I have the full use of my hands, it is only that I do not use the power in my hands in this world. For I need that power for another matter. And I have testimony to this from the Castle of Water.

"For one time, several people sat together. Each one gloried in the power of his hands. One said that he had

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such and such might in his hands, and another said he had another specific might in his hands. And so each one boasted of the might in his hands. For one boasted that he had this power: That when he shoots an arrow, he can cause it to return to him. For he has the power in his hands, that even after he has already shot the arrow, he can still bring it back to him. I was also there, and I asked him, "What kind of arrow can you bring back?" For there are ten types of arrows, and ten types of poison. For when one wants to shoot an arrow, he dips the tip in a certain poison. And there are ten types of poison. When one dips the arrow in one poison, it damages thus, and when one dips it in another poison, it damages more severely. Thus there are ten poisons, each more deadly than the one before, and that is what is meant by "ten types of arrows". For the arrows themselves are all the same. However, because of the various poisons applied to them, which are ten in number, they are referred to as the "ten types of arrows". Thus, I asked him which kind of arrow he could retrieve. I also asked him, if he could only bring back the arrow before it reached its target, or also after? He answered, "Even after the arrow reaches its mark, I can retrieve it." As to which type of arrow he could retrieve, he answered, "I can retrieve such and such an arrow." I said to him, "If so, you cannot heal the Princess, for you can only retrieve one type of arrow. Therefore, you cannot heal the Princess."

Another one boasted of having this power in his hands: Everyone from whom he takes and receives, he gives to him. (That is to say, in his taking and receiving, in that itself he gives. For his receiving is giving.) So he is inevitably a great giver of charity. I asked him, "What type of charity do you give (for there are ten types of charity)?" He answered that he gives tithes. I answered, "If that is so, you cannot heal the Princess. For you cannot come to her place at all. For you can only penetrate one of the walls

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that surround her. Thus, you cannot reach her place."

One boasted of having this power in his hands. For there are appointed ones in the world, and each one needs wisdom. And this one who spoke said that with his hands, he can bestow wisdom on them, by laying his hands on them. I asked him, "Which wisdom can you bestow with your hands?" He answered, "Such and such a wisdom." I said to him, "If so, then you cannot heal the Princess. For you cannot know her pulse. For you can only know one pulse. For there are ten varieties of pulse (and you can only know one pulse, for you can only bestow one wisdom with your hands)."

One boasted that he had such a power in his hands, that when a storm wind arises, he can block it with his hands, and adjust the force of the wind, so that it will blow to the appropriate degree. I asked him, "Which wind can you grasp with your hands?" For there are ten types of winds. He answered, "Such and such a wind." I answered, "If so, you cannot heal the Princess. For you can only play one melody before her. For there are ten types of melody, and melody is what will heal her. But you can only play one of the ten melodies." Then everyone asked me, "What is your ability?" I answered, "I can do what the rest of you cannot. That is, the remaining nine parts that you cannot achieve (from each of the previous examples), I can achieve."

For there is a story: Once there was a king who desired a princess, and tried various schemes to capture her. Until he succeeded in capturing her.

One time the King dreamed that she came upon him and murdered him. He awoke, and the dream embedded itself in his heart. He called to all his dream interpreters, and they interpreted the dream according to the simple meaning. They told him that the dream would come to

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pass, and she would murder him. The King could not find a solution what to do with her. To kill her he could not bear. To send her away would vex him, for another man would take her. That would madden him, for he had sought after her with such effort, and now she would go to another man. Also, if he sent her away and she joined with another, the dream of her killing him could certainly come to pass, for she would be with another. To hold her in his charge he feared to do, because of the dream. So he did not know what to do with her. In the meantime, his love for her slowly crumbled, because of the dream, and all the time it withered more. And also her love for him soured more and more, until she came to hate him, and fled from him.

The King sent servants to search for her. They returned to him, saying that she was near a Castle of Water. For there is a Castle of Water, and it has ten walls, one inside the other, all of them of water. Even the floor one treads on inside the castle is made of water. There are trees bearing fruits there, all made of water. And the beauty and novelty of the castle does not need to be told. For it is undoubtedly a very awesome novelty, being that it is made out of water. And it is impossible to enter this castle. For one who attempted to enter would drown, for it is entirely of water.

Now, after fleeing, the Princess came to this Castle. She began circling its perimeter. It was told to the King that she was circling the castle. So the King and his soldiers went to capture her. When she saw them approaching, she decided to run into the castle. For she preferred drowning in the water over being caught by the King, and having to be with him. Besides, perhaps she would survive, and manage to enter the castle. When the King saw that she was escaping into the water, he decided, considering the situation, to tell his men to shoot at her. And if she died,

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she died. They shot at her, and she was struck by all the ten types of arrows with the ten varieties of poison. She escaped thus into the castle, and passed through the gates of the ten walls of water. For there are gates within those walls. And she passed through all the ten walls of the Castle of Water. Until she reached the innermost chamber and collapsed, remaining in a state of great weakness. And I heal her (that is, the one without hands).

For one who does not have the ten types of charity cannot enter the ten walls of the castle, for he would drown in the water. Thus, the King and his soldiers chased after her, and drowned in the water. And I can enter all the ten walls of water. Now, these ten walls of water are the waters of the sea that stood as a wall. And the winds are those that piled up the waters of the sea and held them upright. And these waves which are the ten walls, they stand there at all times. Yet it is the winds that stand them upright. And I can enter all ten walls, and I can retrieve from her all the ten types of arrows. And I know all the ten varieties of pulse through my ten fingers. For with each of my ten fingers, I can trace a specific pulse from among the ten pulses, and I can heal her through the ten varieties of melody. So I heal her. Therefore, you see that I have this power in my hands. Now I am giving it to you as a wedding gift." And there was overwhelming joy and gladness there.

This story is very hard for me to tell. However, since I have started to tell it, I must finish it.

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Notes:

This story has not one letter in it without intention. One who is learned can perceive some of the hints. For example, the one who could shoot arrows and bring them back as well, has its basis in a passage from Deuteronomy 32, "My hand grasps in judgment." Rashi comments, "Flesh and blood shoots an arrow, and cannot return it. But the Holy One Blessed be He, shoots and returns."

The one who could grasp winds in his hands, this is hinted at in Proverbs 30: "Who gathered the winds in the palm of His hand."

The ten types of melody and the ten pulses, are discussed in Likutey Tinyana, Chapter 24. Note the relation to the Tikkun Klalli, the set of ten Psalms Rabbi Nachman proscribed for repairing seminal emissions. Each of the ten is related to one of the ten types of melody from which the Book of Psalms is composed.

We did not merit to hear the end of the story, what happened on the seventh day, with the beggar without feet. He said he would not reveal it, and this is a great loss, for we will not merit to hear it until the coming of the Messiah, speedily in our days, Amen.

He also said, "Even if I knew nothing else aside from this story, it would also be a very great novelty."

The story also speaks about several ancient holy sages, among them King David. The "Heart of the World" in the story of the Heart and the Spring, refers to him. For he stood at the edge of the world, and cried out to the Spring that flows out of the Rock on the Temple Mount. As it is said in Psalms, Chap. 61, "From the ends of the earth I call, with a pining heart. To a mountain beyond my reach, lead me."

Examine Psalms Chap. 61 carefully, and you will find in it many references to the story of the Heart and the Spring. "Add days onto the days of the King." For the Spring continually needs another day to be added to its days. "Thus I will sing to Your Name forever, to fulfill my vows every day." For every

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day he gives it, he comes with songs and melodies. "I will take shelter under the cover of Your wings." For when the Heart needs to rest, a great bird comes and spreads its wings over it.

Who can describe or relate, who can estimate the smallest part of the tremendous revelations that flow out of the awesome secrets contained in this story. It is brimming with hidden meaning from beginning to end. Those with clear perception will find good revelations from the hints, each according to his capacity.



The Story of Trust

*He spoke thus: "I told one other story,
about trust, and this is it."*



Once there was a king, who thought to himself, "Who is there in the world with less worries than I? For I have all the good things, and I am a king and a ruler." He went to investigate this. He went in the night, and stood by peoples' houses, to eavesdrop and listen to the words of the world. He listened to the worries of each one - this one had troubles with his shop, and another had a problem for which he needed to see the King, and so with the worries of each one.

After this, he went and saw one house, partially submerged underground, its windows almost touching the ground, and the roof broken and collapsed. He saw a man sitting inside, playing a harp to which one had to listen very carefully to hear. He was very happy, and had a jug of wine sitting on the table before him. There were also foods placed before him, and he was very happy, filled with joy, and without worries at all. The King entered the house, and greeted him, and he answered. He saw the jug of wine and the foods, and how the man was filled with joy. The man invited him to drink, and he drank to the King, and

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the King also drank, out of affection for the man. Then he lay down to sleep, and the King saw that he was only joyful, without any worry. In the morning, the King rose, and also the man rose, and escorted him. Then the King asked him, "How did you obtain all this?" The man answered, "I can fix all sorts of things that are broken. I go out in the morning and fix things, and when I have gathered enough money - five or six gold pieces - I buy all these foods and drinks for myself."

When the King heard this, he thought to himself, "I will sabotage this." So the King went and made a declaration, that anyone who had something needing repair, must not give it to any other man to repair. Either he must fix it himself, or buy a new one. In the morning the man went looking for things to fix, and they told him about the ruling of the King. It was very difficult for him to accept, yet he trusted in the L-rd. He went and saw a nobleman chopping wood, and asked him, "Is this in accord with your honor?" The man answered, "I searched for someone to chop it for me, but could not find anyone. So I had to do it myself." He said, "Allow me, and I will chop for you." So he chopped the wood, and the nobleman gave him a gold piece. He saw that this went well, so he looked for more wood to chop, until he gathered six gold pieces, and again bought his usual meal, and was happy. The King again went near his house, peering through the window. He saw the man sitting there, with the drink and the foods before him, appearing very happy. The King then entered the house, and they had an exchange similar to the first time, and the King slept there as on the first night. In the morning, the King rose, and the man escorted him out. The King asked again, "Where did you get all this? For this requires a good deal of money."

The man answered, "It was my custom to fix things needing repair. Then the King decreed not to give any item

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to any man to fix. So I cut wood until I gathered enough money for all this." The King then left, and passed a decree not to let any man chop wood. When the man came to someone and asked if he had wood to be chopped, the man told him of the decree of the King. It was difficult in his eyes, for he had no money. Nevertheless, he trusted in the L-rd, and he went and saw a man cleaning a stable. He asked him, "Why would someone such as you be cleaning a stable?" He replied, "I looked for someone to clean it, but could not find anyone, so I had to do it myself." He said to him, "Let me clean it." He cleaned it completely, and the man gave him two gold pieces. Then he went and cleaned other stables, gathered six gold pieces, and again bought his customary meal, and went home, and was very happy.

The King came again to his house to see how he had fared, and he saw again everything as before. He entered the house as before, and in the morning the man again escorted the King, and the King asked him and he answered, all as before. So the King went and decreed that no man should be allowed to clean a stable. In the morning, the man went looking for stables to clean, and they told him of the King's newest decree. So the man went and enlisted as a soldier with the minister who recruited soldiers for the King. For there are soldiers who are enlisted mandatorily by the government, and there are other soldiers who are hired for a salary. He had himself hired, and he set conditions with the Minister that he would not be enlisted permanently, rather on a daily basis. Every day in the morning, he would be paid for a day's work. The Minister outfitted him immediately in a soldier's uniform, allotted him a sword, and sent him to where he was needed. Afterwards, in the evening, after having finished all his work, he stripped off the uniform, bought his usual meal, went home, and was very happy.

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The King came to see him again, and saw that all was prepared before him, and that he was very happy. He entered and slept, as before. And he asked him as before, and the other answered as before. So the King went and summoned the Minister, and commanded him not to draw any money from the Treasury to pay any of his men that day. In the morning, the man went to the Minister to receive his daily pay, and the Minister would not pay him. He asked him, "But did we not agree that you would pay me each day?" He answered that the King had decreed not to pay any man that day. And all that he argued with him was to no avail. The Minister said, "It is better that I pay you for two days tomorrow, but today it is impossible to pay you." What did he do? He went and broke off a piece of his sword, and affixed a piece of wood in its place, and the difference could not be discerned from a distance. Then he went and polished that piece of metal, and bought with it his usual meal.

The King came again, and saw that his happiness was even more complete than before. He again entered the house and slept there, and asked him as before, and he explained that he had been obliged to break off a piece of the sword, and had polished it and bought with it his meal. "Later, when I get paid for that day, I will use the money to repair the sword, and the damage will not be noticed at all. For I can fix all sorts of broken things, and there will be no damage to the property of the King."

The King then went to his house, and called the Minister, saying that there was someone sentenced to the death penalty. "So call for that man who you hired as a soldier, and command that he specifically should be the one to decapitate him." The Minister did accordingly. He called him, and he came before the King. And the King commanded to gather all the noblemen, to come and see this farce: Being that there was a man who had inserted a

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piece of wood in place of the blade of his sword. Then the man came before the King, and fell on his knees, asking, "My lord the King, why was I called?" The King answered, "To cut off the head of the man sentenced to death." He answered him pleadingly, saying that he had never shed blood in his life, and so the King should choose someone else. But the King answered him that specifically he must shed the man's blood. Then he asked the King if the man's guilt was certain. "I have never shed blood in my life, all the more difficult it would be for me to execute someone whose guilt was not assured." The King answered that it was without question that the man was guilty, for there was certainly an accurate sentencing. "And now, it is specifically you that must spill his blood." Upon seeing that it would be impossible to sway the King's decision, the man turned to the Holy One, Blessed be He and said, "G-d Almighty, I have never shed blood in my life. If this man is not guilty, may the metal of my sword turn to wood." He unsheathed his sword, and everyone saw that it was wood, and it was an object of great hilarity. And the King saw that he was a charming man, and he let him go.



From the Letters of Rabbi Israel Ber Odesser

I. Relating to Story XI:

Third Day of Chanuka 5721

...Chanuka is an aspect of drawing down the light of the Truth, to subdue the poison of falsehood, which is the aspect of the kingdom of the slave, and to strengthen the Truth, which is an aspect of the Kingdom of Holiness of the King's true son. Through the light of the candle of Chanuka we merit to draw down the illumination of the Truth also into the darkness of night, to nullify the exchange of the slave, who was exchanged with the King's son. That we shall merit to clarify the Truth of G-d, to know who is fit to be called in truth with the name son of the Slave, and who is fit to be called in truth with the name Son of the King, until will be revealed and publicized the name of the True Tzaddik, who shines to every member of Israel through all types of darkness and gloom, rescuing him from a flood of great waters, that are the aspect of the waters of the Flood, that gather strength each time to destroy the world, G-d forbid.

The whole aspect of the falsehood and exchange of the son of the King, who was exchanged with the slave, is only in the name, that people lie and exchange the name from this one to that one, as related in the awesome Story [The Exchanged Children], when the midwife exchanged the

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babies, and placed the son of the King next to the maidservant, and the son of the maidservant next to the Queen. And through this the world erred and thought that the son of the maid was the King's son, and the King's true son was the son of the maid. Behold, the main exchange is only in the name, for certainly the bodies of the babies cannot be exchanged, for the King's son wherever he is really is the King's son. And so too the opposite: the maid's son, wherever he is, is the son of the maid. Just that the main falsehood and exchange is in the name, that because of the exchange they called the son of the maid a name of falsehood, for they called him with the name of the King's son. And also the opposite: the King's son they called with the name son of the maid. And so too with all the exchanges and lies in the world. All the changes and exchanges that are in the world - in the world in general, and in each and every country in particular, and in each and every city, those exchanges and changes are only in regard to the name....

 *8 Elul 5723*


...You must always remember the great level of your lofty soul, refined and very high in her upper root. To have mercy on her, to decorate and beautify her and to polish her with the supreme and awesome brightness of the Tzaddik, to save her from the snare of exploitation and the hall of exchanges that switch and damage greatly, and to behave in the manner of the holy kingdom of the King's true son, who was exchanged...

 *No date*

...Happy is the one who merits to come close, still in his lifetime, to the True Tzaddik. Happy is he, happy is his

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portion. For the Satan has put his heart on this greatly now, to confuse the world. For Israel now are very close to the end, and they now have great yearnings and great longings for G-d, that never was before in all the days of history. And everyone longs powerfully for G-d. Therefore the Satan has awakened and has planted dispute between the Tzaddikim. And has established in the world many famous false figures, until no one knows where the truth is. Therefore we greatly need to multiply our prayers and petitions, to merit to come close to the True Tzaddik. Truth and falsehood are the aspect of a king and a slave. Know that there are two types of Palaces. In one lives a king and in the second a slave. And both of them are completely similar to each other. And it is very difficult to distinguish between them. For there are many souls that come together, until they are made into a house and a palace. For they join together one to the other. One to the other. Until they are made into a foundation. And afterwards is made a tent. And then is built from them a house and a dwelling, in which dwells Truth. And whoever wants to find Truth, it is found in this house and palace of the souls from whom was made the dwelling of Truth. And opposed to this many souls connect together and from them is made a house, and there is the dwelling of falsehood, which is the aspect of a slave. And behold, between the two houses mentioned above it is possible to err, meaning between the truth and the falsehood. For the falsehood makes itself resemble the Truth, for also there is a connection of many souls. Until it is very difficult to distinguish between the Truth and the falsehood, and it is possible for a person to err, and he does not know where is the Truth, and to what he should bring himself near....

 *Festival of Succoth 5721*

...When the Tzaddik is made known in the world, this

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causes melodies to be renewed in the world.

My dear Mr. Z. Shazar, master of a sharp eye, to test and to grasp who is the true king over Israel, who has a wondrous instrument which when it is placed on any type of wild or domestic animal in the world, then immediately it begins to sing the very very wonderful and pleasant melody, which is a wondrous and very awesome delight to hear. Against which all the pleasures in the world are like nothing and are insignificant, and are completely negated to the wondrous pleasure of this melody. May G-d give you life and show you the good path on which to go...

II. Relating to Story XII:

 *Erev Rosh Chodesh Iyar 5721*

...The story of the Master of Prayer is an amazing and awesome story, truly amazing. And according to its simple meaning it describes every type of sensible moral teaching and straight path. And it arouses amazing desire to serve G-d in all who read it. And it tells in general about all sorts of mistakes and false reasoning of lies and errors that are found in the world. And about their discernment and rectification. And behold the Master of Prayer, who always was involved with prayers and songs and praises to G-d, was dwelling outside of civilization. Except that he was accustomed to enter the settlement in order to entice and to induce people to serve G-d, to go in His way.

And whoever agreed with him, they immediately brought him outside the settlement. For most settlements of the world are very far from the true purpose of life, and all the behavior of the Master of Prayer and his men was to turn away from the custom of the settled world, the majority of which is drawn after the vanity of the world

From the Letters of Rabbi Israel

and its pleasures and lusts. And therefore the Master of Prayer, with his men, was forced to dwell outside of civilization. And in this place where the Master of Prayer was dwelling, there was a river before him and trees and fruit, and they ate from the fruit, and about their clothing he was not strict at all!

The True Tzaddik, who works at drawing people near to serving G-d, dwells with his men outside of civilization. Meaning that all his dwelling and behavior certainly is literally the opposite of the ways of civilization, whose actions are vain, and who pursue luxuries and are preoccupied with the vanities of time. But the Tzaddik with his men are completely far from all this and are satisfied with what they have [Chapters of the Fathers 1:4]. And especially about clothes and garments they are not particular at all.

And they dwell completely outside of civilization, literally, in all their ideas and customs. And they toil only in prayer, and songs and praises to G-d, and repentance, and confession, and fasting, etc. And for these men any service of G-d that appeared to the majority of the world very difficult to accept on themselves; yet for these men all this is more precious than all the pleasures in the world. For they have more pleasure from a great mortification or fast or the like, than all the pleasures of the world. But even though they dwell outside of civilization, they still would enter the settlement all the time in order to draw more people near to the service of G-d. And they conducted themselves in this with great wisdom, for the people of the settlement were waiting for the Master of Prayer to capture him. And this was because the world had become so confused and erring in their fallacious ideas that someone who was close to the true purpose of existence and spoke against their fallacious ideas, and who worked to draw people near to serving G-d, they rose up against

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him with hatred and a great war, and waited for him to trap him and to capture him. Therefore one must engage in this [entering the settlement to talk to people about serving G-d] with great wisdom!

The True Tzaddik, who is the Master of Prayer, has such foods that when people merit to eat and taste from those foods, they immediately throw away their lust for money, and they feel the great vileness of money, that stinks literally like excrement, until they are very embarrassed with the money, and the money is the greatest source of shame of all shames. And whoever has more money is more ashamed. And also low-status people, who lack money, are also embarrassed with themselves that they were so insignificant in their own eyes because of their lack of money. For now it is revealed to them just the opposite: money is the main source of shame. And therefore the rich are even more embarrassed. And they bury themselves in pits of dirt, due to the great shame that they have one from the other, until they cannot raise their faces at all from the shame. For those foods of the Master of Prayer contain this remedy, that through them people despise money, with the essence of disgust, and throw away the gods of silver and the gods of gold, as it will be in the future! [Isaiah 31]

One who truly wants to think about the purpose of life and is forced to live amongst people who are totally far from this purpose, must then also be careful that in his mind, at the very least, he will be outside of civilization. And to distance his thoughts and mind and all his behavior from every aspect of alien mannerisms, and alien traits, and evil ideas, and thoughts of falsehood that exist and are very common amongst most people of the settled world.

The author, who seeks your peace and prays for your salvation and success. Yisroel Odesser

From the Letters of Rabbi Israel

📖 12 Iyar 5721

...The awesome Story of the Master of Prayer is a wondrous and awesome tale, exceptionally wondrous. And apart from the roots of the words and the great inner meaning in all these Stories, which is wondrous and very hidden from the human mind, also in its simple sense it explains every type of intellectual rebuke, with very amazing and powerful guidance. And it awakens the heart greatly to draw near to G-d. And it tells in general about all sorts of mistakes and confusions and distorted ideas of falsehood and errors that exist in the world. And about their identification and rectification.

Everyone agrees that the main thing is the purpose [of existence], and all are forced to admit that whoever makes a greater effort, and is closer to the purpose, he is fit to be head and king of everyone. But from the time that the great storm wind confused and overturned the world completely, from water to land, and from land to water. And from wilderness to settlement, etc. And the King and the Queen and the Princess and the Infant and the whole holy gathering of the King and his men were separated and scattered. Then all the worlds became confused and were transformed from their true arrangement. And all the peoples of the world were confused and separated and divided into group after group regarding how to discover what is the purpose. And each and every group erred and became very very confused. Through their evil desires. With their alien ideas and fictitious and false conceptions. Until they became very confused and errant and turned over the truth to its opposite extreme.

One group said that the main goal is honor. To pursue honor, G-d forbid, excessively. For there are people who burn excessively for honor. And they pursue honor greatly. And they forfeit their eternal world and also this world for

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a little honor that they want to gain. This one wants to be honored for his wealth. And this one wants to be honored and esteemed for his Torah learning and his service of G-d, and he endeavors all his life to be accepted as a Rabbi and Leader. And whereas the truth is the opposite. The matter is completely opposite. For the main goal of the whole Creation is only honor of G-d and His Torah and His True Tzaddikim. And it is impossible to merit this except if one minimizes his own personal honor completely and flees from honor completely in truth. And knows his unworthiness and lowliness and tries and toils all his days to magnify G-d's honor, which is the honor of the Torah and the True Tzaddikim. And truly nullifies his own honor completely. And they reversed the truth completely, to its opposite extreme. And erred from opinion to opinion and from idea to idea, until they said that the main goal is honor. And they had great proofs and explanations for this, that the main goal is honor, to pursue honor excessively and to attain it, G-d forbid. And similarly another group erred in their evil ideas, and went from idea to idea until they became crazy and said that murder is the goal. And they had many ideas and proofs about this. And really even though apparently it is hard to believe that people like this exist, that they would have rationalizations that murder is a worthy goal. But in truth there are errors like these in the world, until it is possible to err through them to say that murder is a worthy goal, until they came to anger and murder literally. And similarly with the other groups. And each one had many rationalizations for their mistakes, until it really was possible to err about them, G-d forbid.

The author, who sacrifices his soul for the good and salvation of your precious soul. And may your peace grow for length of good and healthy days.

Yisroel Odesser

From the Letters of Rabbi Israel

📖 26 Iyar 5721

...In the Story of the Master of Prayer, concerning the group that said that rhetoric and speech is the goal, meaning that one should know many languages and be a graceful speaker, etc. This error is slightly understandable. For we know all the evil that is done today by the sinful speakers, as our Teacher, may his memory be for a blessing, said jokingly, when he highly praised the power of speech. And he said afterwards, that there are speakers who are sinners of Israel, as it is written "and your speakers sinned against Me". For all the intellectuals and philosophers and heretics, virtually all of them are great speakers. And in truth, in its root in holiness, speech is very good. As our Teacher, may his memory be for a blessing, himself praised speech greatly, and he said that speech has great power to arouse the man.

And behold this matter of the value of speech is very necessary for every person who desires true and eternal life, who wants to go in the ways of G-d, to return to the Blessed One. And the general advice, which is the foundation of all the types of advice, is isolating oneself and talking between oneself and G-d, as we have explained many times. Meaning to accustom oneself every day to go to a special place to isolate himself and to speak before the Blessed One, the way one would speak to his friend, and to intensify in complaints, entreaties, requests, and supplications in the language that he normally speaks, that G-d should help him and merit him to return from his evil deeds and to draw near to the Blessed One. And for this the idea of speech is a great thing. Meaning to accustom oneself to expand his speech and to express many complaints and to request to find for himself each time new words of repentance and appeasement and eloquent complaints and words of arousal for great mercies. For in the matter of speaking between himself

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and his Maker, which is the main activity through which we can merit eternal life, and to be saved from the pit of destruction and from the muddy depths, etc; for this matter we need all the types of speech in the world, petitions and requests and appeasements and supplication and entreaties and mercy and grace and complaints and the like, to the greatest degree. And all the matters of these words are included in rhetoric. For all this comes at its root from the aspect of the highest rhetoric, from which King David, may peace be upon him, arranged the Book of Psalms with his holy spirit, which contains all the expressions of holy rhetoric.

But the group mentioned above chose rhetoric for their own evil, to consume all their days in the ways of rhetoric, in order to draw the Israeli heart, G-d forbid, to the ways of the skeptics and the philosophers, through which they uproot themselves and their children and their students who go in their footsteps from both worlds, as we literally see in their evil ways and where they arrive through their evil rhetoric.

And it is impossible to expand upon this here, for a multitude of parchments would be insufficient to tell the greatness of the bitter affliction that has spread out today so widely. And about those sinful rhetoricians is said: "And what advantage is there to the master of the tongue" and "Remove from me the multitude of your songs", etc.

Who prays always for your peace and salvation, who yearns to be seen with you in joy.

Yisroel Dov Odesser

III. Relating to Story XIII:

 *10 Nissan 5726*

...The King's son was wise. And he loved wisdom

From the Letters of Rabbi Israel

greatly. And there were great Sages with him. And whoever would come to him with some sort of wisdom, he regarded with very great importance. And he would give them honor and wealth for the wisdom. To each one according to his desire. Whoever wanted money, he would give him money. And whoever wanted honor, he would give him honor. Everything for wisdom. And because the wisdom was so important to him all of them involved themselves with wisdom. And the whole country was involved with varieties of wisdom. For this one wanted money, in order that he would get money through this [wisdom], and this one wanted prominence and honor. And since all of them were involved only in the varieties of wisdom, therefore they forgot there, in that country, the strategies of war.

For all of them were involved with types of wisdom, until all the citizens of the country became very wise, until the least one in that country would be, in another country, a greater sage than all. And the sages in that country were very great and exceptionally wise. And there was great profundity and exactitude in the wisdom of the sages; and because of the varieties of wisdom, the sages of that country became heretics. And they also drew the King's son mentioned above to their ideas, and he also became a heretic.

And the King's son, since he was a good son, for he had been born with good, and he had good and straight character traits, occasionally would recall where he was in the world and what he was doing. And he would groan and sigh over this, that he had fallen to such confusions and had strayed so much. And he would sigh greatly. But as soon as he started using his intellect, the above mentioned wisdoms of heresy returned to him and grew stronger. And so it happened many times that he would recall where he was in the world, and he would groan and sigh. But as

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soon as he started to use his intellect, the atheism mentioned above returned to him and grew stronger!

There are people who spend much time engaging in wisdoms, and in most cases their intent in this is only for the vanities of this world, meaning for prominence and honor, or money and similarly. And because they are involved only in wisdoms, through this they forget the strategies of war entirely. Meaning how to fight the great war that the person needs to fight in this world, which is the war against the evil inclination. And sometimes they come to total atheism because of their wisdoms.

The Author, Yisroel Ber Odesser

 7 Shevat 5721

...The story of the Beggars includes virtually the entire figure of man. For the first was blind, the second deaf, the third speech-impaired, the fourth had a crooked neck. And the fifth was a hunchback, and the sixth was without hands, and the seventh was without feet. And really they were complete in all the above mentioned limbs, with a great perfection, beyond which there is no greater perfection. Just the opposite: Because of the greatly outstanding perfection of their status and level, very high and mighty and awesome, and also because of the great force of the concealment of this world; therefore, in the eyes of the world, they appeared blind and deaf and so on.

 No date

...There is a True Tzaddik, who merits to live a good life that lacks nothing. And he precisely looks as though he is deaf, since he does not hear any sound of this world. For all the sounds of this world are only from deficiencies. For each one shouts about what he lacks. And even all the joys


From the Letters of Rabbi Israel

in the world are only because of a deficiency that was lacking and now is filled up. And therefore he is called deaf, because to him this world does not count at all that he should listen to its deficiencies. And his good life is bread and water. But in his bread and water you can sense all the tastes and all the scents and all the sights of the world, and all types of pleasure in the world. Until you can live through them a good life in truth, without any deficiency!

There is a garden in which grow fruit and wondrous plants, that have all the tastes and all the smells and all the sights of the world. And the whole world could live a truly good life through this garden. And over this garden is a gardener, whom they call "agradnick", that is a holy and supreme Tzaddik, who is appointed over it and tries always to fix the garden. And sometimes because of the sin of the generation the gardener is lost, meaning that the light of this Tzaddik is hidden and concealed and the world cannot merit to know about him, that he is the gardener through whom they could all live a truly good life in the garden. And even though this gardener goes and says that he is the gardener, the world considers him insane, G-d forbid, and throws stones at him and banishes him; and therefore obviously he cannot work at repairing the garden. And because of this everything that is in that garden certainly must come to an end and cease, since there is no one in charge there, meaning the gardener. And behold, even though certainly there are remarkable Tzaddikim who have great wealth and great treasures of spirituality, and they also boast that they live the good life; even so the ruination of the blemished ones of the world can damage even for them the taste and the smell and the other things mentioned above. And all the more so, they do not have the strength to fix the world and to return to them the good life that they could live through the holy

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garden mentioned above. And therefore when also their good life is ruined, then their whole rectification is through the Tzaddik of the greatest level, who is the aspect of deaf, who lives a good life that has no deficiency at all. And he gives to them to taste from his bread and water, and they sense in them all the tastes, etc. And also through this that which was damaged for them is repaired. And this Tzaddik can repair also the good life of the whole world. And he informs them that the main damage of their good life came to them from the bad traits that the Satan put into them. Meaning that since they do not have truth, and they corrupt judgement, and they turn their faces and take bribes, through this their vision is damaged; and through obscene [literally, dead and rotten] language their taste is damaged, so that all tastes have the taste of dead flesh; and through sexual immorality literally, G-d forbid, their smell is ruined. And he warns them greatly to purify themselves from these sins. And then not only are their taste and vision and smell repaired, but also they merit through this to find the lost gardener. And then the Tzaddikim mentioned above admit the Truth and tell the world that the whole rectification of the above mentioned Tzaddikim themselves, and also the rectification of the whole world, depends only on the deaf Tzaddik.

 *No date*

...There are two birds, one male and one female. And they are just one pair in the world. And the two birds mentioned above became lost and separated from each other, until they could not find each other. And when the night comes, then they cry with a very great voice of wailing. For each one wails over its mate. And these two birds allude at their root to the unification of The Holy One Blessed Be He and the Congregation of Israel. And there is one Tzaddik, who has a very beautiful and

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wondrous neck. And a very amazing voice. And all the types of voices in the world he can produce with his voice. Meaning that he can direct his voice to produce all the types of sound in the world, of all types of animals and birds and of all types of musical instruments, and similarly. And also he can throw voices, meaning that in the place where he produces the voice no sound is heard at all. Rather, far away there will be heard the voice. And through this he can draw together the two distanced birds that lost each other and reunite them and silence their wailing and finish the rectification in perfection. For the main Redemption depends on joining together the two birds mentioned above.

But since there are mists in the world, and the above mentioned Tzaddik does not want to add any air or wind or breath to the mists of the world. Therefore he looks in the eyes of the world precisely as though his neck is twisted, for he truly twists his neck completely away from the mists of the world. And he does not want to produce any air or wind with the mists of the world. But in truth his neck is not twisted at all. Just the opposite: he has a very smooth and beautiful neck, as mentioned above.



From The Recordings of Rabbi Israel Ber Odesser

".....Rabbi Nachman revealed the Tales for us. From the Creation of the World, there had not been Tales Without the 'Tales', the whole world is as nothing. Every word of the Tales is all our vitality, all our life, everything. Children, money, everything, everything is Hashem's Rabbi Nachman revealed these Tales, every word is important, every word is priceless, beyond grasp, beyond acquisition...."

"....Just one (wonder) from the Tales, rises above everything all the Torah, all the wisdoms, one word, until this, there had not been such a wonder in the world..."

"....The bride and the groom, they were longing intensely, longing to hear a word from Rabbi Nachman. The children said, "If he were here, it would be very joyful" What Rabbeinu revealed the children were longing for the Beggar, he was the blind beggar, and if he were here, it would be very joyful. He cheers us, strengthens us, heals us, what, what would he not do for us? There are already Tales like these ... until Rabbeinu, there were not Tales, there was not Likutey Moharan, there was nothing, no life at all, but now, the children were very happy, and received great gifts - the Tales, and Likutey Moharan, they were very happy, If only the Beggar were here, it would be very happy. And thank G-d, today he is here in this world,

From The Recordings of Rabbi Israe

tales like these, every word is the life of the whole world".....

"...At the end of the story of the Seven Beggars, the sixth Beggar tells a story. He says, "The Princess was struck by all the bullets, with all the poisons, and she collapsed in weakness. And I," thus says the Beggar, "and I heal her." This applies to all the Jewish People - each and every one. "And I heal her" - everyone. She already fell, she was struck by all the bullets and fell, "And I heal her." Only "I heal her." Nobody else can. But Rabbi Nachman, the Beggar, said "And I heal her." Thus Rabbi Nachman revealed about himself that he is that Beggar, he heals her, "And I heal her." He said it about himself, yes, "I". We are blessed, we already have all the repairs, all the healings and all the salvations we need, each and every one, through Rabbi Nachman...."

"...With most people, as long as they live, they know that money is nothing. Yet as long as a man lives, he wants money, yes, money and prestige, these two things. And it is only possible to escape this through the Master of Prayer. He extracts one from money, and all the desires and all the sins. That is the main repair, yes, the Master of Prayer....."



Tales of Rabbi Nachman



Rabbi Israel Ber Odesser:

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- . The Letter from Heaven
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- . Letter from Rav Moshe Feinstein
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Tales of Rabbi Nachman

Story of my Initiation to Breslov Chassidus

Story of my Initiation to Breslov Chassidus

In this section [says Rabbi Yisroel Ber Odesser] I want to relate just a few stories that demonstrate the greatness of Rebbe Nachman, as seen through my teacher, Rabbi Yisroel Karduner, of blessed memory, one of the giants of Breslov Chassidus in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.



I have longed all my life to relate the story of how I drew close to my teacher, the holy and pious Rabbi Yisroel Karduner, through whom I merited to know of our Master, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, may his merit protect us. In the merit of my teacher's awesome devotion and faith, may it be the will of the Almighty to make known the teachings of Rebbe Nachman, transforming to light and goodness a world currently immersed in darkness, thus fulfilling the words of the Prophet Isaiah, The world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d, as waters cover the sea. [Isaiah 11:9]

From my earliest days, G-d blessed me with a soul that longed to come close to Him. My ancestors for generations were Karlin Chassidim, and I myself, being a G-d-fearing person, was very connected to Karlin. However, since I had great struggles in serving G-d, like all beginners who are starting out, especially those who are

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more particular in their service of G-d and who endure wars and obstacles and ups and downs; therefore I required techniques, advice, and encouragement in order to succeed in the war against the evil inclination. And I searched for a cure for my soul to the point where I would disgrace myself in front of the leaders of Chassidus, the Elders of the Generation, and the Masters of Kabbalah. I always would bow down to them and would complain to them about my spiritual afflictions. For I feared the L-rd and I was in a situation of suffering both from the demands of the evil inclination to sin and the demands of my Creator to battle and overcome the evil part of my nature. And therefore I had no sense of spiritual contentment. I would explain to these leaders all my spiritual problems and afflictions, but they had no cure for me. Occasionally I would receive some arousal to G-d, but a complete cure I did not find. And from this experience I saw with my own eyes that the Blessed L-rd does not withhold reward from any of His creatures. For I had sacrificed myself greatly in revealing all the afflictions of my heart to these great leaders, and in reward for my embarrassment and struggle to find a spiritual cure I merited to draw near to our Teacher [Rebbe Nachman of Breslov], "The flowing stream, the source of wisdom. "[Proverbs 18:4]

The first event that introduced me to the teachings of Rebbe Nachman occurred when I found a book without a cover in the Yeshiva garbage. Since it is forbidden to disgrace a holy book in this fashion, I removed it in order to bury it in an honorable way. I picked up the book and looked at it, for I had always loved all Torah books and constantly was looking through them to comfort my soul. As I read through it, I noticed the title, Hishtopchus HaNefesh [Outpouring of the Soul]. As its name testified, so it was. I wondered if the Almighty had arranged this incident for my personal salvation? Instead of burying the book, I kept it and began reading it day and night. It became precious to me, and, in truth, it started to heal me.

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After my Bar Mitzvah I was learning at the Yeshiva of Rabbi Meir Baal HaNess, which is located in the mountains at the edge of Tiberias. I read in Hishtopchus HaNefesh that, through prayer and conversation with G-d, one can attain all that one needs in life, both spiritually and materially. The book shows that the main way to come close to the Blessed G-d is specifically through personal prayer and meditation.

And because my Yeshiva was in the desert, I would go outdoors with the book "Outpouring of the Soul". I still did not know who authored the book, for I still had not heard of Breslov Chassidus at all - though I had heard about various paths in Chassidus in general. However, since I wanted to save my soul, and to fulfill the word of the book, I would engage in prayer and hisbodedus, and dwelled upon the book in pure truthfulness. And I saw that this was saving me, and simply this power of simplicity and truth worked upon me more than miracles and wonders. For that is the greatest miracle of all - that a man can change his will. This is a great and wondrous thing. From the overwhelming desire that the book inspired in me, it seemed to me always new. And I would finish it and open it again, and learn from it constantly. And it saved me from all evil, and revealed to me a truly new light. I felt within myself that I had changed like the distance from heaven to earth. And even though I did not know who was the author of the book, its effect upon me was good and wonderful.

One day a certain Chassid came into my room. When he saw this book in my hand he said, "Are you actually looking at a book like that? Isn't that a Breslov book?" (This was the first time that I had heard the name Breslov). So I told him, "If you don't like it, don't look at it; but I will continue to read it". However, he forced the book out of my hand and ran off with it.

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Since I already knew the book by heart, I continued with its teachings unhampered. Now that I had heard the name Breslov, I pleaded with the Blessed L-rd to draw me near to Him by sending me someone to teach and guide me in Breslov Chassidus. I deduced, from the strong opposition that I had witnessed, a sign of the greatness of the books teachings. My prayers were heard, for shortly after this incident I came to meet Rabbi Yisroel Karduner, of blessed memory, who introduced me to the teachings of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov.

Rabbi Yisroel Karduner was a truly remarkable figure. Had he been alive even in the time of Rebbe Nachman himself he still would have been unique. Ordinary words are not adequate to describe what I observed from him. He lived with such an attachment to G-d that anyone who saw him immediately sensed his holiness. To this day I have not heard or seen such devotion in fulfilling G-ds commandments. When he would stand to pray it was as though he was not in this world at all. All his actions, both towards his Creator and towards his fellow man, were to sanctify G-ds Name, and his face shone constantly with the light of holiness.

Rabbi Yisroel* [asterisk indicates Rabbi Yisroel Karduner] served G-d with awesome and wondrous fervor and vitality. Everyone who ever met him, or even heard his voice, including those most opposed to Breslov, felt so overwhelmed in his presence that their objections completely faded and they came to respect him and view him with awe. Even his family did not distract him from the service of G-d. They lived in Tzefat, while he himself spent most of the week in Meron, returning home only for Shabbos. (Meron, unpopulated at the time, was like the Garden of Eden.) There in Meron he would stand near the Tomb of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai (Rashbi), immersed in prayer and introspection, following the advice of Rebbe

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Nachman. Having asked the Almighty to introduce me to Breslov Chassidus, I never could have dreamed that such a man, constantly immersed in prayer, would soon travel to my own home in Tiberias!

During this same period, Rabbi Yisroel Karduner began to suffer from terrible pains. With the increasing agony he could no longer perform his devotions. He felt as if his every limb was being cut by knives. Rabbi Karduner thought that this might be a sign to travel to Tiberias to soak in the hot springs. However, without being absolutely sure that this was the Almighty's will, he did not want to leave Meron and the holy tomb of the Rashbi. He thought that perhaps this was a test from the Blessed L-rd that he could overcome through prayer. For a long time he struggled with his doubts. Finally, when the pain became unbearable, he concluded that this indeed must be G-d's will. He prepared to travel to Tiberias, rising early to depart without doubts or further delay, like the Patriarch Abraham, who set out promptly when G-d asked him to bring his son Isaac as a sacrifice. The Almighty then arranged events so that Rabbi Yisroel* would enter my life.

It happened like this. My parents were desperately poor, coffee grinders by trade. They earned barely enough to buy bread. During the First World War the coffee supply was cut off and we were left destitute, with no income at all. One of my cousins, Chayim Binyamin Barzel, lived with us. He was the son of my mother's brother and an orphan from youth. My mother treated him like her own son. When she told him that we now were left without a livelihood, he suggested that she bake and sell bread. When my mother asked, incredulously, how she could afford to buy flour, my cousin convinced the miller to advance her some on credit. My mother began to bake on a Sunday, and a few days later, on Thursday

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night, Rabbi Yisroel*, who had just arrived in Tiberias from Meron, met Binyamin. They greeted each other, and when Rabbi Yisroel* asked where he could buy some bread, Binyamin, thrilled that he had found a buyer, immediately sent him to my mother's house. It was the end of the business day, and our home was filled with young children, who ate a lot of bread, so I considered it a miracle that we still had one loaf remaining when Rabbi Yisroel came to our house.

From his appearance I had the distinct feeling that he was one of the Thirty-Six Hidden Tzaddikim, as many great Jewish leaders had said of him in his own lifetime. I already knew that through him I could find complete healing for my soul. I wondered, however, how I could start a conversation with someone who was so great that he surely could transcend time and space at will? And furthermore, even if I could start a conversation, how could I pour out my heart to someone so holy and dignified?

As I was thinking these thoughts, Rabbi Yisroel* paid me for the bread and asked whether he could wash his hands and eat in our house. I felt drawn to him like a magnet, and I sensed that he was aware of my thoughts. It was already nighttime, and our house was filled with mattresses for the children to sleep on; there was not even room to sit down. I was sure that my father would never agree to have a guest in such circumstances. However, I asked my father anyway, and he not only agreed, but he also offered our guest the last remaining morsel of food that we had. I was even more astounded that my father had agreed, because we had to rise early the next morning to bake bread.

Rabbi Yisroel* sat down and washed his hands. I offered him the last remaining onion to eat with his bread,

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but he refused, saying, "My custom is to eat only bread and tea". I prepared him some tea, and then, being aware that everyone was still awake, I whispered to him, "Do you know that the Almighty sent you to rescue my soul?" Rabbi Yisroel* was very moved by my question, since it finally was becoming clear to him exactly why he had been forced to leave Meron. At that moment a special bond started to form between us.

When Rabbi Yisroel* washed his hands, he said the blessing quietly, with the sweetness of one thanking a friend for a favor. I was very moved by this, and Rabbi Yisroel* sensed my feelings. He now saw very clearly how Divine Providence had directed him to my house immediately upon his arrival in Tiberias, and from that moment on he gave himself over to me with all his heart and soul. And even though he loved every Jew, the bond that formed between us was extremely unique. It is impossible to imagine the love and closeness that existed between us.

After Rabbi Yisroel* finished reciting Bircas HaMazon, I asked him where he would sleep. He said that he would spend the night in a nearby synagogue. I escorted him out of the house, and as soon as we were outside I broke into tears. I wanted to evoke this great man's compassion towards me and make sure that I would not lose this precious relationship and be left alone again. I told him everything that had happened to me, my discovery of the book, Hishtopchus HaNefesh, and how I'd beseeched the Almighty to introduce me to Breslov Chassidus. In Rabbi Yisroel*, I saw a Divine messenger to answer my prayers, so I said to him, "Now that the Almighty has arranged these wondrous events so we could meet, I beg you to have mercy on me and to teach me things that will heal my soul!"

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When he heard these words he was very moved. As I continued to tell him about all the pains of my soul, he listened attentively. Finally he began to speak; every word that flowed from his mouth was a healing and renewal of my very life-force, the nature of which I had never experienced since the day I came into the world. He spoke of our Master, Rebbe Nachman, of his teachings and his great light that were made to heal my broken heart.

We walked until we reached the Karliner synagogue, which was locked, as was another shul. Nearby was a third synagogue, formerly used by the great Sages and Disciples of the Baal Shem Tov, such as Rabbi Avraham Kalisker and Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk. The shul stood at the edge of the Sea of Galilee, and in the winter, during the rainy season, water would actually overflow into it. The tables inside were half-immersed in water. All the books had been removed, leaving the shul abandoned and open.

We entered the shul together and sat down on a table. Rabbi Yisroel* put down his books, Tallis and Tefillin, and took out from his pocket a candle and matches. (They always were with him wherever he went, even though they were very expensive at the time.) Then Rabbi Yisroel opened up the book, Rebbe Nachman's Likutay Mohoran, and began teaching me the lesson entitled, "The one who has mercy will lead them [II:7]". We were so absorbed in the lesson that we did not notice the dampness and water in the shul.

We sat and learned together until early morning, when, suddenly, I heard my mother cry, "Where is my son?" I realized then the great trouble that I had caused by my absence. The dough that my mother was to have baked that day had spoiled, since I wasn't there to help her knead it. The entire household was upset and yelled at me,

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demanding to know why Id left the house at that time. I had not intended to cause trouble, but simply had become so absorbed in our learning that I completely lost track of time. I now was certain that Rabbi Yisroel* was one of the Thirty-Six Hidden Tzaddikim, for the Torah he had taught me was truly awesome. Rabbi Yisroel* remained in the shul until morning, when he went to pray with a minyan. Afterwards I found him in the Karliner synagogue.

Tiberias was a small town in those days, and when people heard my mother's cry the whole town became alarmed. They thought that I had died, G-d forbid. They began to inquire, and my mother told them of a certain Jew who had come into town at night to buy bread. I went off with him but did not return, and in the morning my mother had found me with this Jew in the flooded shul. My mother did not know that Rabbi Yisroel* was a Breslover Chassid but the townspeople did, and when I came home the next morning everyone said, Last night Yisroel Ber was forcibly converted to Breslov Chassidus. This was when I first knew with certainty that Rabbi Yisroel* was a Breslover Chassid.

From then on Rabbi Yisroel* and I were never apart. I had witnessed the fulfillment of my prayers and hisbodedus, testifying to the greatness of Rebbe Nachman's teachings, in G-d's sending my teacher right into my house. I saw as miraculous that Rabbi Yisroel*, having been forced by Divine Providence to leave Meron in order to help me, was so strongly drawn to me. Such a bond formed between us that much water could not extinguish the love between us [Song of Songs 8:7]. I knew that even if the whole world tried to separate us they would not succeed.

However, the world remained very opposed to Breslov. People began to express their opposition to me

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with words of bitter contempt. "It is true that Rabbi Yisroel* is a great man", they would tell me, "but he is a Breslover and that is his shortcoming" (They did not realize that all his greatness was due to Breslov, through which he merited to attain all of his righteousness, holiness, and love of G-d). When they saw that their words had no effect on me, they went to my father, who was already blind at the time, and said, "Your son has become a Breslover Chassid, one who wanders in the mountains speaking to G-d. All the Rabbis are against this way; it could cause your son to lose his mind. Now there still is time to save him. But later on he will be in the category of all those that enter will never return. [Proverbs 2:19]" They asked my father to persuade me to leave Breslov Chassidus.

When my parents heard these menacing words from the other Chassidim, they were very frightened. My father still thought, however, that I would listen to him and leave Breslov, since until now there had always existed tremendous love and closeness between us. One day he sat down with me and said, "I am a Karliner Chassid. You may choose for yourself any Chassidus you want with the exception of Breslov". However, I had already seen the Almighty's Hand in arranging events for me to meet a giant like Rabbi Yisroel*; the light I saw and the healing I received cannot be imagined. So I replied to my father, "I cannot reveal to you everything in my heart, but you should know that in this matter you cannot influence me at all". My response completely bewildered him. In my entire life I never had rebelled against even his smallest request. I always had shown him great respect, especially after he became blind, but in this matter I told him that I could not obey him.

My determined reaction convinced my father that his fears were justified, and he became even more adamantly

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opposed to me. He worried that his power to influence me no longer existed, so he decided to wage war with me over this matter and he relinquished responsibility for my upcoming wedding. (I already was engaged at the time). But my mother opposed him, saying that I still was their son and that they should suffer through the situation until I got married. She worried that news of this dispute would reach my bride's family, who lived in Tzefat. Tiberias and Tzefat were so close together that they were bound to find out.

Eventually, however, a big argument broke out in our family, and finally, on Shabbos, my father expelled me from the house. I went to the shul next to the house of Rabbi Yisroel*. My father, who was blind, stayed at home, while my mother went out to consult with different Torah authorities. First she went to Rabbi Mordechai of Slonim, who had loved me like a son all his life and had taught me Mishnah and Zohar. When my mother asked him what to do, he replied, "Your husband is correct. You must do everything in your power to get your son away from Breslov". He added that Breslov Chassidus is extremely powerful and, once influenced by it, a person is unable to escape from its doctrines.

When my mother heard these words, she became terrified. Rabbi Mordechai advised her to approach Rabbi Yisroel* directly to tell him how she and her husband were broken and crushed from the situation and to ask him to send me away. When my mother entered Rabbi Yisroel's* house, she was so upset that she prostrated herself in front of him and pleaded with him with outstretched hands. She was crying bitterly, as if over the death of a son. She told him everything in her heart, saying, "You are a good Jew. Have mercy on my husband and me. For us this is a matter of life and death. Send my son away and don't let him learn with you". Rabbi Yisroel* listened to her with great

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patience. Yet he knew that such a bond existed between us that even all the kings of the world could not separate us. Finally he replied, "I cannot ask any Jew to leave my house. But if you want to listen to some good advice from a friend, leave your son alone and don't interfere with him."

When my mother heard this, she feared that the prediction of Rabbi Mordechai already had come true. In her great sorrow, her soul left her. I was sitting in the shul next door when, suddenly, I heard people shouting, "Rivka [my mother] has died!" They tried to revive her with various remedies, and I heard them saying, "You see what her son has done to her!" I was broken and crushed and started to wonder if, really, I had erred in causing my parents so much sorrow. Certainly, I thought, I could have left the matter alone and become a Breslover Chassid later.

You can imagine my relief when, after two hours of virtual lifelessness, signs of life began to reappear in her. A terrible desecration of the Almighty's Name was avoided, for people would have blamed my involvement with Breslov for my mother's death. Her resuscitation in the home of Rabbi Yisroel* was, I felt, literally a case of revival of the dead, which no one could explain in a rational way. Since she had been unconscious for so long, after her revival she continued to suffer for a long time with unimaginable pain. For my part, when I saw that I still had a mother, I was so relieved that I even thought about acceding to my parents' demands that I leave Breslov, fearing the recurrence of such a tragedy.

The Almighty had arranged yet another kindness for me in that I already was engaged before I became involved in Breslov. Had this not been the case I would have had no chance of finding a mate on account of the tremendous opposition that existed to Breslov. When the townspeople

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visited my prospective father-in-law and spoke to him of my attachment to Breslov, he replied, "Don't worry. After his marriage his wife certainly will prevent him from continuing with this".

I had become involved with Breslov in the winter; the date for my wedding had been set for the following Hebrew month of Elul [late summer]. In the meantime there was a famine, and my father-in-law to be, who was an upright and G-d-fearing man, wrote to us that he could not maintain his wedding commitments, as he now had no money for clothing or a dowry. Rabbi Yisroel*, however, was determined that I should marry, making me a complete person and better able to integrate the teachings of Rebbe Nachman. He thought deeply on the matter and finally decided to travel from place to place to collect money on my behalf. He gave this money to my parents for them to clothe me and to marry me off on schedule. Rabbi Yisroel* went to Tzefat, and about that time I sent a letter to my future father-in-law, authorized by my parents, stating that they wanted the wedding to take place as scheduled and that I was relinquishing my claim to a dowry.

In order to ensure that my wedding would proceed as planned, Rabbi Yisroel* remained in Tiberias. He clearly saw G-d's hand in our relationship, and he felt a personal responsibility to stay with me and to help me in every possible way. I also did not want to separate from him. When Elul came and it was time to travel to Tzefat for my wedding, I worried that I would have no further opportunity to be together with Rabbi Yisroel*. Having seen all the obstacles between us and worried that our relationship was about to end, I asked Rabbi Yisroel to make a formal agreement with me, like the pact between Ruth and Naomi, that we would meet regularly every day, learning together and serving the Almighty as one. The

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agreement was made and kept secret. We made the pact near the Tomb of Rabbi Akiva, where we had been praying with tears and great fervor at the time. The pact that we made was so binding that on the very day my family traveled to Tzefat for my wedding, when my mother was sure that my relationship with Rabbi Yisroel* was ending, in the middle of the journey we saw Rabbi Yisroel* also on his way to Tzefat.

A confrontation began, after my wedding, between Rabbi Yisroel* and myself on the one hand and my father-in-law and the elders of Tzefat on the other. I was in such a degraded state that when I would leave the city children would throw stones and peels at me and call names to the point where I almost lost my mind. When my father-in-law saw this he began to pressure my wife, Esther, to ask me for a divorce. She refused, saying, This is my portion in life and so it will be. I recognized in her loyalty the great kindness the Blessed L-rd had bestowed on me.

Once the question of divorce had been put aside, we needed a place where we could live undisturbed. Near Rabbi Yisroel's* house was a small room that Rabbi Yisroel* rented for us. He acted as a father and mother to both of us, worrying about all our needs. Even if he was eating only crumbs, for us he wanted only the best. Those years of our pact were years of true life, not of this world at all.

My relationship with Rabbi Yisroel* lasted until, eventually, Rabbi Yisroel* told me that his time to depart from this world was drawing near. He foresaw that in the future a great darkness of disbelief would descend upon the world, a darkness impossible to describe, and he spoke of the pain and suffering he felt because of it. At the time, I couldn't conceive of our relationship ending at the very

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height of our partnership. However, I saw that Rabbi Yisroel* was correct, and every time he felt unwell I worried that his end had come and that he would leave the world.

During the five years of our pact, Rabbi Yisroel* and I endured many hardships, including war and a famine, which made it very hard to learn together. However, simply being with him was the greatest learning of all. His faith, trust in G-d, and exemplary character were an inspiration that has sustained me all my life. From him my soul has derived life and strength to continue to probe deeper into the ways and teachings of Rebbe Nachman. When the British entered Tiberias at the end of World War One, a plague broke out (G-d spare us), during which most of Rabbi Yisroel's* children died. He was left with only one son, twelve years old. But Rabbi Yisroel* accepted the decree with fortitude and certainty. In the end, this son also died. Rabbi Yisroel* himself became very ill and weak. He said that, with his death, he would take the plague with him and thus stop its expansion. And so it was that after he died the plague stopped. For my part, I felt as though I had been abandoned in the wilderness. After a while I traveled to Jerusalem, to hear the Breslov teachings from the Elders there, who were very precious men.

Now I would like to relate more about the attainments of Rabbi Yisroel*. He would be in a state of holiness and sanctity the entire week, and on Shabbos he was exceptionally holy. He actually could see and experience the light of Shabbos. His singing and dancing were phenomenal. We would dance together most of the night of Shabbos. This truly amazed the people of the town, since no other Chassidus demonstrated such happiness and joy.

I also witnessed in Rabbi Yisroel* faith and trust in

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G-d that is impossible to imagine or describe. Once I saw him at the Tomb of Rashbi in Meron, on a winter's day. He stood there the entire day reciting Psalms. His words were like coals of fire, resounding with awe, devotion, and sweetness, the likes of which I have never heard before or since. Rabbi Yisroel's* crying continued until the Tomb literally was soaked. I saw this with my own eyes.

On another occasion we were walking to a certain moshav. On the way there was a terrible storm. All around us was flooding and mud, and we had to devote all our energy to saving ourselves. Hours passed before we saw any light. Finally, we noticed a lit house and were invited inside. When the owner saw our drenched condition, he gave us clothing to change into and tea to drink. Rabbi Yisroel* stood to pray the evening prayer. I was sure that this night, after everything that had happened to us, he would not be able to rise for the Midnight Lament. I was so exhausted that I couldnt even move my limbs. The family arranged beds for us and we went to sleep.

Before I knew it, Rabbi Yisroel* arose from his bed like a lion. I had never before heard a Midnight Prayer like this, all the days of my life. Afterwards he went to his table and lit a candle. I was turning restlessly on my bed, unable to relax. Finally I also got up and approached the door quietly. I saw Rabbi Yisroel's* table shaking and trembling like a great machine. I felt tremendously ashamed and was afraid to approach him, but I wanted to fulfill our agreement to meet every night. Finally I gathered courage and walked towards him, and I saw his face glowing. When I saw this I withdrew, ashamed.

In the morning, Rabbi Yisroel* prayed at sunrise as usual. The prayer was so sweet sounding that all of the people of the town stopped at the window to listen on their way to work. I was with Rabbi Yisroel* when he said the

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Shema with such concentration that I thought his soul would leave him. His yearning to be close to G-d was so intense that he cried like a baby during his prayers. Afterwards, the owner of the house stood in front of Rabbi Yisroel* as if in the presence of a king. He prepared a banquet for him. The lady of the house, sensing his holiness, went to cover herself in modest attire. Rabbi Yisroel* declined the banquet and asked the owner to forgive him, since it was his custom only to eat bread and tea.

In his youth Rabbi Yisroel* was loved by everyone in his town in Poland. His father was a prominent businessman, and Rabbi Yisroel* managed all his merchandise. He told me that his heart was always burning and yearning for the fear of Heaven. He would hide behind the barrels in the storeroom, where he would do hisbodedus and meditate and scream out silently from the depths of his heart to merit to be a truly righteous Jew. He started doing all of this even before he became attached to our Teacher, Rebbe Nachman. Due to his great piety, the local people all were interested in him as a match for their daughters.

Once he was looking through some disposed manuscripts and he came upon something from Rebbe Nachman, but, at the time, he didn't know who the author was. So great was its effect on him that Rabbi Yisroel soon became known as a Breslover Chassid. His father tried to stop his involvement with Breslov, but to no avail. Finally he vowed to take away his inheritance, so Rabbi Yisroel* left his hometown for Uman, in Russia, where he stayed for many years and got married. His father later retracted his opposition.

Rabbi Yisroel* had many names. His family name was Halperin, but they called him Karduner after the name of his town of birth. In Jerusalem, Tzefat, and Tiberias

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they called him Rabbi Yisroel Breslover, and on his tombstone in Tiberias is written, "Here is buried Rabbi Yisroel Breslover, the son of Rabbi Yehuda Leib."

There is another important story to tell concerning a certain proselyte who was attracted to Breslov. He lived in Tiberias and came from Russia. A very pious man, he would recite the entire prayerbook from cover to cover. His face glowed with the fear of Heaven and resembled that of a lion. In addition he was an enormous man, who would eat an entire loaf of bread per meal. Since there was a famine in those days, no one could afford to show him hospitality and he was forced to spend most of his time in the wayfarers house. Rabbi Yisroel's* kindness towards his fellow man was so great that he arranged a place for this man in his own house. Since the man had no change of clothes, he had terrible body odor. His shirt had become encrusted with sweat and thick as leather. No one could stand being near him.

When Passover drew near, Rabbi Yisroel* ordered new clothing for him. The man washed, put on his new clothing, and was Rabbi Yisroel's personal guest for the entire Passover. During the Passover Seder, I quickly finished the Haggadah and went to see Rabbi Yisroel*. I found a crowd of people there, and inside the house there was tremendous light, dancing, and joy. The convert was overwhelmed with happiness in becoming Jewish and in meeting Rabbi Yisroel*. He saw so much sweetness and love of the commandments that he began to dance from sheer joy. He was so big that the entire house was shaking. As I approached the door I was embarrassed to enter, for I saw that the Divine Presence was upon the house. Afterwards I went in and joined in the dancing, which carried on until the morning.

After Rabbi Yisroel* passed away, I would awaken at

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midnight and go to the mikveh. Once I fell asleep with my book and dreamed that I was in the ocean with the waves raging around me. I had already given up, sure that I would drown. Suddenly I saw a building in the middle of the sea, and I felt some relief. Desperately wanting to enter the building, I climbed up the steps using all of my strength and was overjoyed that I was saved from the water. I went into a hall where I saw several rooms. I passed by every room until the last one. There I opened the door and saw an old man whose white beard was as long as his body. He had a beauty and a grace not seen in this world. His face was young and pleasant. When I entered, the old man was sitting in a chair and another was walking around him in circles. The old man grasped my hand and greeted me with such tremendous love that I awoke. I pondered the significance of the dream, but I couldn't find any interpretation. So I asked for mercy from the Almighty, and then I took a book from the table. The book was called Chayay Mohoran. I opened it up and read that Rebbe Nachman sometimes appears to a person in the guise of an Elder.

I would now like to relate another important story. In Tiberias there was a certain Talmid Chocham, very distinguished in Torah learning and fear of G-d. He was one of the students of the Chofetz Chaim, of blessed memory, and every month he completed the entire book, Reishis Chochma. This book is very long and difficult to understand, and he would lock himself in a room and roar like a lion from his effort to master it. Before I met Rabbi Yisroel*, I also was searching for a new approach to ease the pains in my soul, so we became friends. I would come and learn with him. His name was Tzvi Rosental.

When he saw the tremendous opposition and suffering I had to endure after I became involved with Breslov, he grew fascinated with Breslov. He also wanted to be

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introduced to the teachings and yearned to come close to a True Tzaddik like Rabbi Yisroel*. I would say to him, "Do you want to experience the true light of Chassidus? I'll show you a light that has no comparison anywhere". I greatly praised Rabbi Yisroel* and encouraged Reb Tzvi to meet him.

Reb Tzvi normally joined a group of Chassidim every Shabbos evening to listen to Chassidic stories. I would go openly to Rabbi Yisroel's* house; soon Reb Tzvi started to go there in secret. He told his family that he was going to the other Chassidim, but he really went to Rabbi Yisroel*. When he didn't show up for several weeks, the other Chassidim began to inquire after him. They followed him to see where he was going. When they finally realized what he was doing, they became worried that all the young people would follow him and get involved with Breslov. (Reb Tzvi was a very popular schoolteacher). So they used all of their power to pull Reb Tzvi away from Rabbi Yisroel*. They watched him carefully so he wouldn't be able to visit him.

But Reb Tzvi's heart was burning with the fire of holiness, so he decided to walk to Jerusalem to join the Breslov Chassidim there. He told me of his plans privately; no one else knew. Even though he was bitterly poor, he was very determined. He set out on foot to Jerusalem, since he had no money for the journey. When his family realized Reb Tzvi was missing, his father-in-law went straight to the authorities to issue complaints against him. He stated that Reb Tzvi had abandoned his wife and children and that Rabbi Yisroel* and I should be put in jail since we surely knew of Reb Tzvi's whereabouts. Rabbi Yisroel* was an Austrian citizen, which protected him from being arrested as long as he remained in his house. However I was a Turkish citizen, enabling them to arrest me anywhere, which they did.

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Soon afterwards crowds of people gathered at Rabbi Yisroel's* house, where they picked up stones and broke windows, literally wrecking his house. Rabbi Yisroel* was inside praying with a voice that split the Heavens, as if nothing was happening at all. Everyone who heard him had thoughts of repentance. The authorities who accompanied the police planned to wait until he finished praying, call him outside, and arrest him. When the people in the nearby shul finished praying, they came out, saw the whole disturbance, and asked what was going on. A pharmacist and two householders were so moved by Rabbi Yisroel's* prayers that they told the authorities to leave him alone. They entered Rabbi Yisroel's* house to speak with him, and from that time on they became close friends.

However, I remained in custody. An officer came in and tied me up, and the police stood by my side and asked where Reb Tzvi was. I told them that he had gone to Jerusalem. They went to search for him and found him near Afula. They told him that Rabbi Yisroel* and I were under arrest and that he must come home. They returned with him on Motzaey Shabbos, and then they freed me from jail.

The next morning, there was a convention of the Chief Rabbinical Council, the head of which was Rabbi Moshe Kleerse. They drafted a document that forbade Reb Tzvi to come within six feet of Rabbi Yisroel* or me. Reb Tzvi was forced to sign this. Afterwards, he came to the Yeshiva, and said that he had something important to tell me. Speaking in a whisper, he told me what had happened. I was very upset that he had not shown more pride and determination in resisting their pressure. I went into town and told everything to Rabbi Yisroel*. When he heard the story, he sighed from the depths of his heart.

Before long people were saying that Reb Tzvi

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suddenly had become very weak with a lung ailment. The doctors said that his life was endangered. All the children of the town congregated at the tomb of the Rambam to pray for his recovery. Rabbi Yisroel* and I also were there, along with Reb Tzvi's wife. When I told Rabbi Yisroel* that Reb Tzvi was mortally ill, he told me to run to Reb Tzvi's house and insist that the document be torn up immediately. I ran to carry out his instructions, and in his house I found his entire family, including a very distinguished elder by the name of Rabbi Kahet, who was from the other Chassidim. When he heard Rabbi Yisroel's* instructions, he told Reb Tzvi's father-in-law, "Listen to him and tear up the document immediately!" But his father-in-law refused to listen.

That night I dreamed I was in the market and Reb Tzvi also was there. He spoke to me, and I said to him, "What are you doing here? Wont they take you away?" He replied that he had decided to ignore the document and that no person or thing would separate us. Suddenly I woke up and heard voices calling out that Reb Tzvi had passed away. And so it was.

I ask mercy from the Almighty that I shall merit to see the light of G-d and to come close and perceive something of the great spiritual light that shines in the world, and that we all shall merit to see our righteous Messiah speedily in our days. As it says in Sefer HaMiddos (Tzaddik 151): The Coming of the Messiah is dependent on drawing near to the Tzaddik. And (Tzaddik 152): The final perfection of the soul depends on drawing near to the Tzaddikim.

Blessed be the L-rd forever and ever.



The Letter from Heaven Miracle of the Petek



In Shabbos Chanukah, Rebbe Nachman told a story that was partially forgotten. It involved the son of a king, who wandered far away from his father, and yearned very much. He received a letter from his father, and was very happy because of it. He yearned very much at least to reach out a hand [to his father], and if [his father's] hand were extended to him, he would grasp it and kiss it. He then realized that the letter was in the handwriting of the king himself. Therefore he realized that the letter was in essence the hand of the king [From the Conversations after the Tales].

In the year 5682 (1922), on the Seventeenth of Tammuz*, I felt a terrible weakness [relates Rabbi Israel Ber Odesser]. The evil urge overcame me in the morning and said, Behold, you are very weak! You need to eat! And I had not drunk or eaten from midnight until that morning. But I ate, for the sake of precaution, as though eating damaging substances, but without hands and without feet [i.e., without any enthusiasm]. After eating I recited the Grace after Meals and walked to the Mikveh.

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You can imagine how my prayers went and how I felt after such a thing. For when I was with Rabbi Yisroel Karduner, he had been careful about every fast in the Shulchan Aruch, especially the Seventeenth of Tammuz, the most serious of the four major fast days. Already as a child, from the age of six, I had been accustomed to fasting every Monday and Thursday; yet now, today, I stumbled and ate before praying. I did not want to live, and I fell into such dejection that I could not speak or be seen with people.

I walked to the Yeshiva and lay down in the synagogue in the Yeshiva, like a dead man. I did not speak nor eat for the next six days. Whoever entered the synagogue, including the Yeshiva students, and saw Reb Yisroel Ber lying in such dejection, was afraid. For they were used to my always being happy and dancing and had always been amazed at how Yisroel Ber could be happy. Why is he happy? He has no livelihood or bread for his children. Now, they said that this Yisroel Ber was not the Yisroel Ber they knew. This Reb Yisroel Ber had gone out of his mind, and such is the fate of all the Breslovers, that in the end they go out of their minds. For they walk at midnight to the fields and forests, and sometimes they are frightened by a dog or wild animal or a gentile, and therefore in the end they go crazy. I felt terribly dejected, and what they were saying now caused me even greater dejection. For I felt that I was the cause of everything they were saying.

In any event, I felt great pain and distress and did not want to live. I saw that my great sadness was causing a desecration of G-d's Name and a disgrace to Breslov Chassidus. Then I did hisbodedus and prayed to the Blessed G-d: Master of the Universe. Look at my situation. It's true that I ate and did what I did. But I want to return to You. Heal me and remove me from this

The Letter from Heaven

situation, this sadness, for I am causing a desecration of Your Name and blemishing Breslov Chassidus. Then I cried before the Blessed G-d and said in the synagogue: Master of the Universe. Heal me so that I can escape from this sadness.

A powerful thought came to me, as though someone had entered my head and my mind. The thought said to me: "Go into your room! (I was in the synagogue and my room was next to the synagogue). Go into your room, and open the bookcase, and put your hand on any book, and remove it and open it, and there you will find a cure for your soul". I wanted a cure, and I had prayed. So I said in my heart, This thought of mine, is it a serious thing? Then I said, Ill try and see what happens.

So I did this: I went from the synagogue into my room, and opened the bookcase, as the thought had said to me, and put my hand on a certain book, and removed it and opened it. And there was this letter. At first I saw just a piece of paper and I did not know what it was doing in the book. Possibly it was a bookmark to indicate where I was learning. I did not pay attention to this piece of paper. In any event, afterwards I noticed that there were lines of writing on it. I started to read and I saw what was written: "My precious student, I benefited greatly from your service". And the sign, at the end of the whole letter: "On the Seventeenth of Tammuz they will say that you are not fasting". On the Seventeenth of Tammuz they will say. This implied that the letter was written before the Seventeenth of Tammuz. It was telling me a sign: On the Seventeenth of Tammuz they will say that you are not fasting.

In any event I read this, and just as before I had been so sad, now I received so much joy from this letter, joy not of this world, that the sadness had no value compared to

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the joy. Amidst such joy I started to dance in my room in the Yeshiva. The Yeshiva students said: The crazy man is happy now. Hes dancing! They all came into my room and watched me dancing. But I paid no attention to them. I danced and rejoiced until they gave in and took me outside. They stood in a circle with me in the middle. I danced for many hours that night, until they became tired. They stood for a long time and said: "He won't tire out. He will tire us out. We have no more strength". They left and I danced alone the whole night. Anyway it is impossible to describe and to relate adequately what had happened to me: such sadness, such healing, such joy that I experienced.



Quotes from Rabbi Israel Concerning the Petek, "Na Nach" and Himself

(Taken from cassette recordings)

"**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**" is the new Song through which all of Israel will be redeemed.

"**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**" is the root of the whole creation, root of the whole Torah, root of all the Tzaddikim.

"**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**" is the Song that is simple, doubled, tripled and quadrupled which is referred to in Tikuney Zohar, and in Likutey Moharan.

This Petek is the greatest wonder and miracle since the Creation of the World.

"**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**" is a Segula (object or saying with saving powers) for every problem and situation.

Through the saying of this Song "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**", all the judgments are sweetened, and everything is transformed to good!

One who merits to say and to sing this Song "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**" with perfect faith, sees great wonders and salvations.

This is a novelty and wonder, the likes of which have never before been seen in this world. The Song "**Na Nach**

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Nachma Nachman Meuman" fixes everything and heals everything.

This Song is the matter of the redemption.

One who argues against this Song is as if he denies the giving of the Torah.

Just as the Torah is true, the Petek is true.

"Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman" lifts man from absolute descent to absolute ascent.

In spite of all that is revealed from this Petek, and all that will be revealed, it remains a secret and so do I.

The Rabbi of all Israel is Rebbe **Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**.

But the revelation that I am he, is only in this Petek.

The main thing is Uman. Rabbeinu told me that they would come to me - that is Uman!.

I have understandings of Rosh Hashana greater than all the world.

This piece of paper (the Petek) will conquer the world!. For all the Redemption, and the Tikkun of all the people of Israel and all the world, depends on Rabbeinu, Rebbe Nachman.

This was written to each one of the people of Israel: "Very hard was it to descend to you, my precious student". This is for each of us.

First of all, I was the messenger to inform you of this holy name: **"Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman"**.

Just to say this name, **"Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman"**, sweetens all the sufferings and all judgments, all the sins and all the blasphemy - everything! It

Quotes from Rabbi Israel

transforms everything, happy is the one who believes.

"**Na Nach**".then everything is good. Just "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**" - that is everything: all the Torah, all Israel, all the healings and all the salvations, all in one word. This is a international melody!

For everyone there is a repair. There is already "Likutey Moharan" in the world. I? I am Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman. Well? I am the initials "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**". That already, already encompasses the whole world, with all the sinners, with everything. There is a repair, a repair, a repair! I am Rabbi Nachman, that is "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**". Yes.

It sustains, fixes and renews all of Israel, and when the Messiah arrives, it will be a new world, not the world of today - a new world.

A miracle like this has never before been. This is only from Rabbeinu, only a miracle. A signature such as this, no Tzaddik ever signed a signature like this: the "simple, doubled, tripled, quadrupled". And Rabbeinu in his lifetime also never signed this way. Only in this Petek - we didn't know - this is found in Likutey Moharan, that the holy Rabbeinu talks about this Song. He is this Song. But here, he reveals to all the world "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**".What is now in the world, was never known, we know nothing.

The essence of the Torah and the Mitzvot is Rabbeinu, Rebbe Nachman, **Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**. He is all our vitality, the Torah and the Mitzvot.

Within this name is hinted all that has come upon each person of Israel, and it transforms everything to good.

If you are suffering? Say "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**" immediately and it transforms everything!

We need to believe that this is effective, for it is the root of

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the Redemption, and it is the root all the souls of Israel, and it is the summation of all the Torah, and the Tzaddikim that were from the beginning of Creation, (it is) the Crown of the Creation.

According to the letter, we see noveltes: a new revelation in the world. "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**" it is simple, doubled, tripled and quadrupled. Aside from that, there is in it ten letters. They are the ten forms of melody that were revealed to fix, to fix the spoiling of the Covenant. These ten letters, the ten forms of melody, and the song simple, doubled, tripled and quadrupled, all together. Yes, so here he reveals in simplicity, that this is the essence of the Redemption.

The main thing is "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**". It is an easy thing to say. And when one says "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**", one takes hold of the root of the entire Creation, and of all the Torah, and all the Tzaddikim, yes, one enters into a different world, just by mentioning the name of Rabbeinu, as it is signed in this Petek: "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**".

"**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**"? Transforms everything to good.

We have no conception what it is, that we merited, in these generations, to know from this, from a secret like this "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**". There is a great deal to speak about, but I cannot speak!

Such a wonder, that never was before - completely new! If it had already been, it would not be new. This is completely new!

Fortunate is one who believes in Hashem and his Torah. We don't understand, but we believe, believe in Hashem and in our Torah. First of all, just believing and reciting this holy name, sweetens the bitterness of all the sins, all the blasphemy and all the descents, yes, and renews, it makes us completely new.

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We are very soaked! We are sunken in impurity! Yes, one word of Rabbeinu transforms everything. Just to say "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**", this is enough to heal us, to sustain us, to renew us. If there is, G-d forbid, some suffering, say "**Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**" immediately, it transforms everything, all the blasphemy, all the sins, everything. Fortunate are we, that we believe in the Torah, and in the Tzaddikim.

If I were to reveal just two words about the Petek, I would annul the free will of the whole world.

Just to see my face is a great thing.

I? **I am Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**. Shall I reveal to you here and now who I am? **I am Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman!** That is everything! You still don't know who I am ?!



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