

# SICHA STORY

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



*Likkutei Sichos, Volume 15*

## Vayishlach, Sicha 5 (Second Sicha of the week)

- Rabbi Yossi Nemes, Metairie, Louisiana

*The sicha explains why Yaakov called Eisav "My Master," gave him gifts, and fully engaged with him, rather than relying on Hashem's promise "You will be a master over your brother!" Solely employing these gifted energies might overwhelm and even neutralize Eisav through גילוי אור, but Eisav himself would remain unchanged.*

*The ultimate purpose is to engage Eisav, where he is, בירור בדרך התלבשות until Eisav, as Eisav, recognizes the holiness and the superiority of Yaakov. Here are parallel stories connected to the Geulah of the Alter Rebbe, on Yud Tes Kislev.*

### Fiery Minyan

1) Reb Yoel, A"H, related in the name of Chasidim: The Alter Rebbe was worried that ten of his greatest Chasidim, including Reb Michal Apotzker, would gather in Petersburg, and through their holiness burn down the prison where the Alter Rebbe was confined. The purpose, however, was not to overwhelm Czarist Russia but to naturally work through this ordeal and elevate Petersburg, until the truth resonated with them.

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### The process is part of the result

2) Based on Rshimas Hayoman Amud 302 and 308: Before his departure to prison, the Alter Rebbe dispatched the Chossid Reb Yaakov Smilianer with a pidyon nefesh to Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev.

Reb Yaakov arrived in the morning and came to Reb Levi Yitzchak, who lit his pipe, saying "With this pipe, I could burn the entire Petersburg!"

"Berdichever Rav,' Reb Yaakov replied, "The Rebbe is a Russian (meaning different than the Polish Derech). The Rebbe is Chabad!." Implying that Chabad does not work through miracles.

Reb Levi Yitzchak gave him a piercing look. "What a Russian Chossid is?! He is fine with a Rebbe without a mother..."

This comment was about the Pan that Reb Yaakov brought. Arriving in Berdichev, Reb Yaakov had discovered that he had lost the pan of the Alter Rebbe, and although he remembered its contents, he did not know the Alter Rebbe's mother's name.

Reb LY went to the mikveh, and upon emerging, he said, "Yesh shever b'Mitzrayin" ("Shever" being roshei teivos Shneur ben Rivkah). After davening Shacharis, he said resolutely, "Yesh shever, there is hope!"

(Years later the Alter Rebbe discussed this Chabad approach with Reb Levi Yitzchak. Reb Levi Yitzchak reprimanded the Alter Rebbe for taking on so much responsibility, instead of making use of miraculous means.

The Alter Rebbe replied, "Hashem wants a dirah batachtonim, that His essence should be revealed in our natural world. This is accomplished through pnimiim, not through makifim - miracles.")

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### A Mitzvah supported by natural means

3) During his imprisonment, the Alter Rebbe was held in the Peter-Paul Fortress, situated on an island on the Neva River in Petersburg. The investigations into his 'crimes', conducted by the czar's intelligence organization, were housed in a building on the mainland. For these sessions Rabbi Schneur Zalman was frequently ferried across the river for questioning.

One night as the small boat was making its way across the Neva, the sky cleared, and a quarter moon illuminated the skies. Rabbi Schneur Zalman, wishing to avail himself of

the opportunity to 'sanctify the new moon' (Kiddush Levanah), asked the official in charge to stop the boat. The official refused.

Suddenly, the boat came to a complete halt. Nothing the ferryman could do would advance it a single oar-sweep. The Rebbe stood up in the boat and recited the first few verses of psalm 148, which prefaces the blessing on the moon.

But Rabbi Schneur Zalman refused to perform the mitzvah by availing himself of a supernatural occurrence. Instead, the Rebbe released the boat, to continue on its way. Later the Rebbe again requested of the official that he stop the boat. After his request was granted, and the boat came to a natural standstill, did the Rebbe proceed to perform the mitzvah of Kiddush Levanah.

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