



## A Devotee from the Higher Worlds

### Rosh Hashanah Special

Leilui Neshmas Meira Chaya Nechama Bracha A"H

Bat David Mordechai V'Zelda Shaindel Sheychu

My father, Rabbi Yisroel Grossman, was about 14 years-old when the Karliner Rebbe made a visit to Israel in 1937. My father followed him, watched and listened attentively and internalized every word the Rebbe said.

My father remembered his entire life the Shabbos evening event that the Rebbe held during that visit. The story he told is unforgettable.

It was during the Rosh Hashanah days when thousands of Hassidim came to stay with their Rebbe. A lofty sense of holiness engulfed the entire community.

The custom was that during the Fast of Gedalia, which occurs right after Rosh Hashanah, each Hassid was admitted into the Rebbe's room, there he took leave from the Rebbe and received his blessings.

That year the Rebbe did not open his door to accept his followers. Everyone waited expectantly, but the door remained closed; no one entered or exited. They could not understand what had changed this year.

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Only towards the end of the day did the door open, and the Hassidim were admitted. One Hassid gathered courage and asked the Rebbe and his son what had happened that year.

The Rebbe's son, Rabbi Asher, answered that in past years a rich merchant would come for Rosh Hashanah and every year he would repent and return to G-d, but when he would go back home he would regress and do what he wished.

This man died over the past year. His soul ascended to the Heavenly court where he received his judgment. The judgment was harsh and his soul was shattered after the ruling. His many sins were stacked against him.

A few months passed and Rosh Hashanah came near. The merchant came with an unusual request for the Heavenly court: since it was his custom to go to the Rebbe every year he asked permission to go this year as well. He was told they

would check and see – if he was consistent with his traveling he would receive permission. If he missed even one year he would not be allowed to go.

They checked and found that he had not skipped a year, nothing stopped him, even if he incurred financial loss because of the trip. Therefore, he was granted permission to visit the Rebbe, even after his death.



"You can only imagine. He had come to us from the world above, and so we did not leave him for a moment, we spent the entire time trying to rectify his soul."

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During one of the occasions I was at a *Tisch* with my Rebbe, the Lelover Rebbe, he became animated all of the sudden and shouted: "What is he doing here?" all present understood that the Rebbe was conversing with a soul not from this world.

The Rebbe explained: "What does he need here when he has everything in the world to come? However, one hour of repentance and good deeds in this world is better than an entire life in the world to come."

From this I understood that the reason the merchant's soul came to the Rebbe specifically on Rosh Hashanah, because Rosh Hashana is a day of repentance, and repentance is possible only in this world.

This is what our Sages have taught us – that on Rosh Hashanah the books of the living and the dead are open – the dead from the higher worlds can repent by cleaving to the righteous in this world.