

HE IS ALIVE!

The Rebbe opens with the Zohar's description of Rebbi Shimon bar Yochai's final moments:

Rebbi Abba and Rebbi Elazar came to Rebbi Shimon and kissed his hand. Rebbi Abba began weeping and crying, "Oy! When you [Rebbi Shimon] depart from this world and the world will be orphaned from you, there will be no one left to illuminate our eyes with words of Torah!"

TWO KINDS OF CONNECTION

In his notes to the Zohar, the Rebbe's father challenges the redundancy here. Why did he have to repeat, "And the world will be orphaned from you?"

His answer draws upon the letter of the Alter Rebbe about the *histalkus* of *tzaddikim*, that two kinds of connection form when the *tzaddik* passes, and this lies at the core of Rebbi Abba's complaint.

One kind of connection is that the *tzaddik's* essence is felt within the souls of his students. It is as if his essence transfers into the personalities of the students.

The second, is that the students get a glimmer of something so much higher that it is unpalatable and the students can't really appreciate it. It is as if concealed within them.

This second level is what Rebbi Abba is talking about when he says "the world will be orphaned from you," because while the students will receive this higher revelation in at least a concealed manner, the world



**A LOOK AT THE TORAH OF
HARAV LEVI YITZCHOK
THROUGH THE REBBE'S SICHOS**

at large, on the other hand, will be left out completely.

Rebbi Abba tells us something interesting, that it is only the higher revelation and concerning the rest of the world where *histalkus* is real. However, in the reality of the *talmidim*, *histalkus* is a superficial episode, because the Rebbe's essence lives on within his *talmidim*.

LET'S GET REAL

From a reality where souls are real and physical bodies are a distant dream, this all makes a lot of sense. That is probably why all the above sources are rooted in Kabbalah and Chassidus. But what does *nigleh*, where cold corporeal facts establish order, have to say about all this?

The Gemara says that Yaakov Avinu did not die, and the Gemara explains: Just as Yaakov's children are alive so too he is alive. The deeper meaning of this is that a Jew's ability to perform Torah and mitzvos comes from Yaakov. When Jews perform Torah and mitzvos they are living examples of a life order that Yaakov taught them

and they represent the continuity of his life.

However, this is still a far cry from the essence of the *tzaddik* being transferred into the soul of the *talmid*.

Nevertheless, while still within the limits of the revealed part of Torah, we discover a whole new depth to the concept of *hu bachaim* based on the Rogatchover Gaon's interpretation of a *yoresh*—an heir.

He says that an heir cannot be classified as a purchaser of the inheritance or even as a recipient. There was no transfer of property, it did not change hands from a seller to a buyer or from a giver to a taker; it has the very same statues of ownership, it's just that it now goes by a different name.

"The heir," he says, "takes the place of the ancestor."

This means that when we say that "just as his children are alive so is he alive," we don't just mean that Yaakov is their driving force to this day. Rather it is even more so, it is Yaakov himself!

"When we see today thousands of Jews—grandchildren of Yaakov—practicing Torah and mitzvos, what we are seeing is in fact Yaakov himself walking around alive."

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

But if Yaakov is alive why does the Torah say that they buried him. Can this really be taken literally?

Rashi says the answer is that he only *appeared* to have died, but in reality he was alive.

This leads us to another amazing conclusion:

When it comes to a *tzaddik* like Yaakov, the whole concept of *histalkus* is only in appearance. This appearance still warrants the halachic requirement to say *kaddish*, to have a proper burial, etc., but the reality is, the *tzaddik* never died.

He only moved locations, from *hu bachaim* to *zaro bachaim*¹. **T**

1. Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Va'eira 5741.

לע"נ
אבינו הרה"ח הרה"ת
ר' יוסף מנחם מענדל
ב"ר יצחק ע"ה
ולע"נ אמנו מרת זיסל דבורה
בת ר' אלי הכהן ע"ה
טענענבוים
תנ"צ'בה