



MOSHE RABBEINU IN TASMANIA

As told by
Rabbi Chaim Gutnick

Drs. Michael and Atarah Hasofer were a couple from Israel—he a statistician, she a psychologist—who moved to Tasmania, a small island south of the Australian mainland, where they settled in Hobart. They decided that their children would be raised with absolutely no knowledge of Judaism.

The kids, once they got older, discovered that their friends celebrated non-Jewish holidays, and they were jealous. They asked their parents, “Why don’t we celebrate holidays?” The parents, however, did not even want to tell their children what they *didn’t* believe. But the children persisted, and eventually their parents were compelled to tell them, “We are Jews, but we don’t believe in or practice Judaism.”

The children complained: “It’s not fair! Why shouldn’t we celebrate our holidays?”

So the parents gave in and put up a menorah. But

only a menorah, they told the kids. But one thing led to another, and the children were thirsty for Judaism.

Eventually, they met other Jews in Tasmania, and they created a community—not by any means a religious community, but a Jewish community, which would get together from time to time. Michael was one of the only people in that small Tasmanian Jewish community

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who could read Hebrew so he became the de-facto lay-leader. The others said, “You have to read for us,” “But I’m an atheist,” he countered. “We don’t care what you believe, we need you to read!” was the reply.

לזכות
יהודית יפה תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה התשע עשרה כ"ט טבת ה'תשפ"ב
ולזכות אחותה מגוחה תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה השתים עשרה ר"ח שבט ה'תשפ"ב

לע"נ
ר' יהודה מרדכי בן ר' ברוך ע"ה
נלב"ע כ"ט טבת ה'תש"י
תנ"צ'בה'

ולע"נ
הרה"ת ר' אריאל ע"ה
בן יבלחט"א ר' שאלתיאל זאב שליט"א
נלב"ע ח' שבט ה'תשע"ה
תנ"צ'בה'

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' דובער וזוגתו מרת רחל ומשפחתם שיחיו
מאטשניק

In time, the Hasofers' interest grew. They bought Jewish books and their cultural Judaism slowly began to become sincere Judaism. They got to the point where the parents had exhausted whatever Jewish knowledge they had from their secular upbringing and from the books they had purchased. The children had more and more questions but their parents simply didn't know the answers.

One Shabbos, the Hasofers' oldest child discussed with his father: "I read in the Chumash that Moshe communicated with G-d, and G-d spoke to him." The father replied, "If this is true, there should be a Moshe in our generation as well." And the two of them sat down and prayed, asking that G-d should send them the present-day Moshe, because they have questions and they have no answers.

The next day, Michael was walking down the street, and who should he see but a rabbi, dressed in the complete *Chassidische* getup! It was Rabbi Chaim Gutnick from Melbourne, Australia. Michael ran over to him, hugged him, and said, "You must come to our house! We have so many questions!"

And so he did, and eventually the Hasofers became completely *frum*, moving to Sydney, where they lived as Lubavitchers and where Michael became

the founding president of the Australian chapter of the Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists.

Years later, one of the Hasofer daughters was chatting with Mrs. Pnina Feldman, a daughter of Rabbi Chaim Gutnick, when she found out the rest of the story. "It was right after Shabbos," Mrs. Feldman recalled, "and my father got a telegram from the Rebbe to go to Tasmania—no other details, just that he should go there. So he went to Tasmania.

**"IF THIS IS TRUE, THERE
SHOULD BE A MOSHE IN OUR
GENERATION AS WELL."**

"He was walking down the street in Hobart, Tasmania, unsure of what he was meant to do there, when suddenly a man approached him, gave him a bear hug, and begged him to come to his house!"

And the rest is history.

The Hasofers asked for the Moshe of the generation, and the Moshe of the generation sent his shliach right to them. **T**