



How Was I to Know?

THE FOLLOWING STORY IS TOLD BY THE REBBE AT THE FARBRENGEN OF BEIS IYAR, 5710.

When one sets out to bring a fellow Jew close to the Rebbe and to the spiritual lifestyle of *Chassidus*, one can begin in many ways, including the recounting of miracles, and the like. The ultimate aim, however, should be to bring him close to the study of the teachings of *Chassidus*, for this is the *essential* aspect — the *Chayah-Yechidah* — of the Rebbe, whereas miracle-working is merely an outward reflection of the Rebbe.

Hiskashrus, one's bond with the Rebbe, is basically unconnected to miracles and the like. Indeed, *hiskashrus* neither needs miracles nor is benefited by them — in both directions: seeing miracles adds nothing to one's *hiskashrus*, and not seeing a miracle (for a day, or a week, or a month) detracts nothing from one's *hiskashrus*. The fact is, that if one were so to desire, he could see that my father-in-law, the Rebbe, related to him even in his natural affairs in a manner that involved miracles day-by-day — but

there is no need for this [awareness] at all, nor should one be overawed by it.

By way of illustration: An *agunah*, a deserted wife, accompanied by her son, who was dumb, once set out to request the blessing of the *Tzemach Tzedek*. Try as she might, however, she was unable to gain admission to his study, even after having pleaded with the *rebbitzin* (as was the custom of the women visitors of the time). An enterprising chassid advised her to write out her request and give the note to her son. Then, when no one was in the room, he would hide under the table in the room where *yechidus* took place, and when the *Tzemach Tzedek* entered, he would hand it to him. And that is exactly what happened.

When the *Tzemach Tzedek* received the note, he said: "Go and tell your mother that your father is in such-and-such a place." So both of them were helped — the boy began to talk, and his mother found her husband.

When chassidim came and excitedly told the *Tzemach Tzedek* that by relaying this message the boy had spoken for the first time, he replied: "But how was I to know that the boy was dumb?..."

When his *rebbitzin* heard this story — and she, like all the daughters of the Mittlerer Rebbe, was a woman of mellow understanding — she showed no signs of amazement. She simply quoted the words of her grandfather, the Alter Rebbe: "In Mezritch [at the court of the Maggid], miracles used to roll about under the table, but no one found the time to bend down and pick them up...."

Nevertheless, if there is a need, then as far as others are concerned, one may begin to bring them near by this means too — by recounting miracles. The ultimate aim, however, as explained above, should be to introduce them to the study of the teachings of *Chassidus*. **D**

(Toras Menachem vol. 1 p. 42 – translation from Proceeding Together by Sichos In English)