



# Lasting Effect

By: Rabbi Mottel Slonim

Reb Meir Blizinsky had many shiurim with Yidden in Chassidus, both publicly in the Chabad shul in Ramat Gan, and in private sessions.

Once, in the middle of a shiur, a Jew who did not seem religious walked into the shul, sat down at the table, and listened. The class interested him, and before leaving he asked when the next shiur would be. Sure enough, he showed up to that one as well.

After a while, he asked Reb Meir if it would be possible to learn with him more than twice a week. To which Reb Meir replied, “Of course, with pleasure, but the best time would be on Shabbos, for during the week I am quite busy.”

And so, every Shabbos, this Yid would come before 6:00 am to learn with Reb Meir. They would learn till 9. At 9 o'clock, Reb Meir would make his way to shul for Shacharis, escorted by his *chavrusa*, but the Yid only walked till the shul, he never entered to daven.

Now, when Reb Meir was *mekarev* Yidden to Yiddishkeit, the *seder* was that after a while of learning Chassidus, they would be awakened to Yiddishkeit and gradually start keeping Torah and Mitzvos.

But in this case, a while passed, and they learned together for many hours, but nothing seemed to change with the man. Not only that, but once, during their study session on Shabbos, Reb Meir went out for a few moments. When he returned to the room where they were learning, he saw his friend quickly put out a cigarette.

At one point, Reb Meir brought up the subject of keeping Torah and mitzvos, but the man didn't want to hear of it.

Reb Meir wrote to the Rebbe about the episode and asked the Rebbe if he should continue to learn with the Yid, or perhaps stop since he sees that, unfortunately, the learning

is not affecting him.

The Rebbe answered that he should continue learning with him every Shabbos, and added not to speak with him at all about Yiddishkeit, keeping Mitzvos, etc.

The learning continued every Shabbos for a year and a half. It seemed though that the man was still not changed in his observance of Yiddishkeit. At this point, the Yid asked Reb Meir to assist him in writing a letter to the Rebbe. He wanted to write to the Rebbe.

And this is what he told Reb Meir, “When I began learning Chassidus, it interested me very much, and I wanted to learn more. So I kept coming back. Then we started learning every Shabbos. I realized that Chassidus was the truth, but I was not ready to turn my life around. However, on the other hand, I knew it was the truth, and I was still interested in learning more. I was very torn on what to do, and at one point, I was thinking of stopping to learn Chassidus.

On the other hand, I thought to myself, is that a reason that I should stop learning Chassidus? So I decided to continue learning, but not let it affect me. I would completely disconnect my intellect from my emotions.

These thoughts came to me exactly when you mentioned keeping Torah and Mitzvos, and if you had continued speaking to me about it, I would probably have stopped coming to learn.

However, despite my resolution, something is calling from the depths of my heart. I feel that it's impossible not to act according to the truth I am learning, so I want to write to the Rebbe for advice on what to do.

Eventually, this man became a complete shomer Torah and Mitzvos. ①