



# Retroactively Disappeared

*Rabbi Ephraim Rosenblum a"h from Pittsburgh shared the following story:*

In 5714\*, I was learning in 770. During the summer of that year, I went with a few *bochurim* on Merkos Shlichus to disseminate books from Merkos and to talk to people about Yiddishkeit, etc. There were four of us: Reb Gershon Ber Jacobson, Reb Sholom Feldman, Reb Azriel Chaikin, and myself. We first traveled to Washington and then to Virginia.

On the I-95 North on our way back from Virginia, near Elkton, Maryland, we got into an accident. It seems that everyone in the car had fallen asleep, and the car rear-ended a truck and was totaled. Unfortunately, we all had injuries; Gershon Ber broke his nose and a few teeth, Azriel Chaikin had a fractured thigh, and I was unconscious for a while. We were taken to the Elkton hospital.

This happened on a Thursday night. On Friday, we received a telegram from the Rebbe wishing us a *refuah shleimah*. The next day was Shabbos Mevarchim Av, Parshas Matos, and the Rebbe held a farbrengen. At the farbrengen the Rebbe spoke about two levels of *teshuva*; one level does not entirely remove the effect of the sin, while the second level, *teshuva me'ahava*, eradicates the sin entirely and retroactively, to the point that *zedonos naasos lo k'zochios* (willful transgressions are transformed into merits).

The Gemara says, the Rebbe continued, that *teshuva* brings *refuah* to the world. Thus, it is understood that *refuah* contains two stages as well: one level of healing cures the ailment, and a higher level removes it entirely, just like *teshuva* retroactively erases the *aveirah*.

Then the Rebbe said, "Since there are a few *bochurim* in

need of a *refuah*, may they have their *refuah*, not only by being completely healed of their injuries, but also to the extent that their health and strength should be even stronger than before." The Rebbe instructed everyone to bless them and wish them a speedy recovery and increased strength.

I went home to Montreal. Unfortunately because of the accident I was off my legs for six weeks. When I returned to 770, Rabbi Sholom Mendel Simpson came over to me and said, "The Rebbe wants you to come into *yechidus*." I was stunned.

I went into the Rebbe's room. When I came into *yechidus* the Rebbe said, "*Ich vill dir poshut freggen vos du machst...*" (I just want to ask you how you are faring). To me it seemed that the Rebbe was asking this out of concern, since I had been on his shlichus when the accident happened. So I told the Rebbe how I was doing, and the situation with my health.

When my mother went into *yechidus*, the Rebbe told her, referring to me, "I want to take part in his simcha." She understood this to mean that the Rebbe would participate in my wedding. When the time of my wedding came, the Rebbe was no longer being *mesader kiddushin*. My mother asked the Rebbe, "The Rebbe said he would participate in the wedding..."

The Rebbe said, "I will participate; when they are going to the *chuppah* someone should call 770 to notify [the Rebbe] that they are going to the *chuppah*." This was the Rebbe's way of participating in the wedding.<sup>1</sup> **T**

1. Based on Reb Ephraim's My Encounter interview, Living Torah disc 197, program 785. It should be noted that the Rebbe gave similar instructions to other *chassanim* as well.