

The Jewish Weekly

Change of Name, Change of Luck!

By Rabbi Menachem Eben-Yisrael
(Steinsaltz)

My current family name, Eben-Yisrael, is less familiar to most people than the name Steinsaltz, which appears on the many books written by my father, Rabbi Adin Eben-Yisrael. We changed our name following an unusual encounter between my father and the Rebbe.

One Sunday morning during Cheshvan 5750/1989, my father joined the usual line to receive a dollar (for its equivalent to be given away for tzedakah) from the Rebbe. The Rebbe gave him a dollar, and as my father was walking away he was called back.

"The name Steinsaltz, which means 'salt stone,' is not particularly appropriate," said the Rebbe. "It suggests bitterness, something from which we should distance ourselves."

Eight months went by. As my family did not understand what the Rebbe had intended by this advice, nothing was done about it. On 12 Tammuz 5750/1990, I underwent medical tests because I had been feeling incredibly weak.

The tests revealed something wrong with my circulation. I had to undergo further tests. To my horror, I was diagnosed with a virulent form of leukemia, which would spread rapidly throughout my entire body. Immediately we wrote to the Rebbe. The next day we received the following answer:

"A complete recovery. Tefillin and mezuzot should be checked. I will mention this at the Ohel (gravesite of the Rebbe Rayatz)." Around this time my doctors prescribed three sessions of chemotherapy. Powerful chemicals were used to destroy all of the affected cells, whether damaged or not, which left me extremely weak.

Suddenly we wondered if there was any connection between this terrible disease and the Rebbe's unusual request. Perhaps the Rebbe had foreseen that I would become so ill and had asked my father to change our name in order to bring about the cure before this blow would have a chance to occur.

My father wrote to the Rebbe, asking if we should change our name to Eben-Yisrael. The Rebbe replied, "Of course. May there be a complete recovery."

As a side-effect of the chemotherapy, my immune system became severely compromised and I developed a high fever. Feeling terrible, I was confined to bed for



Rabbis Adin and Menachem ("Meni") Eben-Yisrael (Steinsaltz)

three weeks until Tisha B'Av [9 Av]. The day before Tisha B'Av my family sent another letter to the Rebbe describing my situation.

On the holiday itself the Rebbe gave us the following answer: "On the tenth day, fasting will become rejoicing and happiness. You should have a complete recovery. I will mention this at the gravesite [of my father-in-law, the Previous Rebbe]."

The next morning the fever miraculously disappeared as if it had never existed. Later that week, I underwent a bone marrow exam to check the progress of the disease. To everyone's amazement, the tests showed that all the previous signs of disease had also gone away, as if I had never suffered in the first place! A few days later another test yielded a similar result, and I was sent home.

A week went by, however, and once again I came down with a raging fever. I was given antibiotics and told to stay in bed for three weeks. This time, neither the antibiotics nor any other form of medication could bring down my temperature.

One of my relatives, who happened to be staying in Crown Heights, asked the Rebbe for a blessing for me. The Rebbe gave a blessing for my "full and imminent recovery." Once again, the fever disappeared on the following day, along with all the other symptoms.

Unfortunately, I fell sick for a third time, and the possibility of a bone marrow transplant was discussed. My father, who has extensive connections around the world, consulted with a wide range of physicians. There was a clear divergence of opinions as far as the best course of action, on which even my own doctors here in Israel differed. My father and I wrote to the Rebbe describing all the available options, as well as the specialists' opinions.

The Rebbe replied, "It is usually better to follow the opinions of the doctors in the Holy

It Once Happened...

Land. However, in this case, [as themselves are divided as whether to do it or not,] it is better not to do it."

In reference to the question of whether I should be treated in Israel or abroad, the Rebbe wrote: "You should stay in the land upon which the eyes of Your G-d are focused from the beginning of the year until the end of the year."

Soon after I showed this answer to my doctors, they [gathered together and issued a statement that now they] unanimously agree that a bone marrow transplant should be performed. So now there was a problem.

On the one hand, the Rebbe had said that in general, it is better to follow the opinions of my physicians in Israel, but not in my case [since they are divided among themselves whether to operate. Therefore,] I should not do so]. On the other hand, these same physicians were now united in recommending a transplant, which clearly was not favored by the Rebbe.

So my father and I again wrote to the Rebbe, this time to ask his opinion. The Rebbe replied, "Since you are staying in the Holy Land, a land upon which the eyes of Your G-d are focused from the beginning of the year until the end of the year, it is better not to do it. You should have a complete recovery. I will mention this at the gravesite."

Thank G-d, eight years later I am alive and well. All the symptoms of this terrible disease have completely vanished. Two years later, the very same doctors who had recommended a bone marrow transplant told me: "You should know that your Rebbe is a genius! Your Rebbe must have known what was going to happen in the future."

They explained that exactly two years after the Rebbe had told me not to have the transplant, a medical conference in London decided that in a case like mine, carrying out a bone marrow transplant would be absolutely forbidden!

Let me add a word. If the Rebbe was able to know the future in my case, and in thousands of other similar situations, it is clear that when the Rebbe says that Mashiach is on his way, it must be just as true.

May we see the fulfillment of this prophecy very soon!

Reprinted from Here's My Story, www.myncounterblog.com.

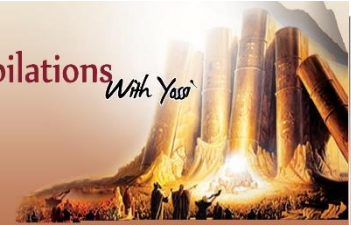
Editor's Note: Rabbi Menachem ("Meni") Eben-Yisrael, is the executive director of the Steinsaltz Center in Jerusalem, the umbrella organization for all the institutions, activities and initiatives of his father, Rabbi Adin Eben-Yisrael (Steinsaltz) of blessed memory who died 17th of Menachem-AV 5780 / 2020.



Y-GRAPHICS

Shabbat Times – Parshat Re'eh

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	6:55	8:09	8:47
Tel Aviv	7:11	8:12	8:45
Haifa	7:03	8:12	8:48
Be'er Sheva	7:12	8:11	8:46



The Real Hatzalah Man

By Rabbi Moshe Hirschberg

It was late at night, and the large room was wrapped in silence. Dozens of men had gathered in the local shul for Maariv after a long day of work.

Suddenly, as everyone began the Amidah prayer, the screech of tires pierced the stillness. The noise sent a wave of alarm through the shul. Something serious had happened outside. Being that it was a large shul and there were many people coming and going, one man, at least, was sure that his attention was not needed outside.

That man standing in prayer was Yoel*. As soon as he'd decided not to join those running out to the action, in an instant, a memory from decades earlier flashed through his mind.

When he had entered ninth grade and begun mesivta (religious college), his Rabbi had shared a powerful lesson with the class. "Imagine," the Rabbi had said, "that you're learning with a friend when you hear a terrible car accident outside. Your friend immediately runs out, bandages the injured driver, rushes him to the hospital, and helps save his life.

"But you don't. You stay where you are, learning as if nothing had happened. You should know, it is entirely possible that you who remained seated and continued learning Torah were he who truly saved the victim."

The Rabbi explained that Torah learning brings immeasurable blessing and protection into the world. The spiritual assistance generated through Torah accomplishes far more than we can ever see with our eyes.

Now, years later, standing in the middle of The Amidah prayer, Yoel found himself facing that very test. The sound from outside grew louder. Every instinct urged him to look.

Yet, Yoel held himself firmly in place. He reminded himself of his Rabbi's words and resolved not to break his concentration. Perhaps, he thought, the greatest help he could provide at that moment was to continue davening with complete focus.

With tremendous effort, he pushed aside his curiosity and poured himself back into his prayers. He didn't glance through the window. He simply continued speaking to Hashem.

When Maariv ended, Yoel walked outside to see what had happened. The scene was startling.

Two vehicles had been involved in what could easily have become a devastating head-on collision. By all accounts, it had come within a hairbreadth of causing serious injury.

Yet, thank G-d, the damage amounted to little more than a fender bender. Everyone had emerged essentially unharmed. As Yoel moved closer, he learned the identity of one of the drivers.

He stood frozen.

The person involved in the accident was none other than the grandson of the very Rabbi who had taught him that lesson so many years earlier.

Later, Yoel reflected on the remarkable chain of events. His Rabbi had likely thought he was merely sharing an inspiring thought with a group of teenage boys. He could never have imagined that decades later, one of those students would remember those words at precisely the right moment.

After a full day of work, after learning Daf Yomi (the daily Talmud lessons) and while standing in Maariv, that student would draw strength from that lesson and continue davening through a real-life emergency.

And perhaps, in ways known only to Hashem, those prayers and that perseverance helped protect the Rabbi's own grandson.

We often underestimate the power of learning Torah and davening, especially when it is difficult. The moments when our attention is being pulled elsewhere, when distractions are strongest, and when concentration requires real effort are often the moments of our greatest accomplishment.

We may never know what our Torah, prayers, and perseverance accomplish. They possess the power to help not only ourselves, but our children, our grandchildren, and countless others as well. They bring blessing into the world in ways far beyond our understanding.

So don't give up. Keep learning. Keep praying. Keep going. Every word matters, and every effort bears fruit, even if we do not see it until many years later.

Reprinted from an email from Zichru Torat Moshe.



We begin to recite **אורי לידוד ה'** on the 2nd day Rosh Chodesh until Shmini Atzeret, some hold until Simchat Torah and some hold Hoshanah Rabbah inclusive. Some begin on the first day of Rosh Chodesh.

We begin to blow Shofar every week day at the conclusion of Shacharit until the day before Erev Rosh Hashanah where we don't blow at all.

This week's Parasha commences with the words "ראה אנכי נתן" – "לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה", "See, (singular) I am giving you (plural), today a blessing and a curse".

So, who is Hashem speaking to? Is He speaking to me, to each single, individual Jewish person or is He speaking to the whole nation?

Actually, the answer is both. And we have the very same phenomenon at the beginning of next week's Parasha of Shofim: "שופטים ושוטרים תתן לך בכל שעריך", "Judges and bailiffs, you shall place for you, (singular), in all of your (plural) gates...".

Actually, what we find here is a theme that runs right through the Book of Devarim. We all live with dual responsibility – I live by myself for myself and at the same time, I am an important cog within the wheel of Am Yisrael. When Hashem delivers His commandments, they are addressed to me personally, for my life, for the enhancement of my existence, and at the same time, what I do has a direct impact on the fate of the nation as a whole.

And we find this in Sefer Devarim, so beautifully put, through the two paragraphs of the Shema. They contain a lot of the same material. The Mitzvot, 'To Love Hashem', 'To Study the Torah', 'Tefillin' and 'Mezuzah', however there is a major difference: The first paragraph of the Shema is in the singular, addressed to the individual Jew, while the second paragraph of the Shema is in the plural, addressed to us all.

So, therefore I have that dual responsibility. For example, when it comes to Talmud Torah, I must learn and I must teach, but I also have a communal responsibility – I must guarantee that there are schools in my area, I must support all teaching initiatives for the sake of the nation.

And so too, when it comes to 'Tefillin' and to 'Mezuzah'. I've come across some wonderful Gemachs, to provide Mezuzot for people's homes. Mezuzot cost a lot of money – they're not cheap. And so, there are some wonderfully generous people who contribute towards Mezuzot for everybody's homes, recognizing that we have a responsibility for ourselves but also for all of the homes in our area.

And this very message is presented to us so beautifully by the Prophet Hoshea, who declared: "יהיה מספר בני ישראל כחול הים", "And the number of the Children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea". Of course, Hoshea was speaking about the remarkable fact that over the years, through the generations, against the odds, we will have great numbers. But why didn't he just talk about 'חול', 'sand' – why 'כחול הים', 'the sand of the sea'?

And the reason I believe is, because 'the sand of the sea' is tightly packed together when it's wet, but at the same time, it's made up of single grains of sand. And so too, we, each one of us, is responsible to ourselves, and at the same time, we must never forget our connection to our people and the responsibility that we have towards our society. So join me and let's pray with all our hearts, for our soldiers and healthcare professionals, and Chevra Kadisha members worldwide, and for those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual, loving and sweet Shabbat.

The Jewish Weekly's Yossi

PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 55
MITZVOT ASEH: 17
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 38

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 126
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1932
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 7442

HAFTORA:
Yeshayahu 54:11-55:5 (עניי סוּעֶרָה). (this is the third of seven Haftorot, [the Seven Haftorot of Consolation] that precede Rosh Hashanah). Some including Chabad, have the custom to add the first and last Pesukim of the Haftora "Machar Chodesh".

Shabbat Mevarchim Chodesh Elul
Rosh Chodesh - Thursday & Friday - August 13 & 14.

This week we study Chapter 6 of Pirkei Avot

ראה

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