

# SALUTE

The Beis Moshiach Supplement for Soldiers in Tzivos Hashem

**10 MAKOS & 6 WILD FACTS!**

**THE MYSTERY GUEST WHO  
COMES TO T'VARYA EVERY  
DAY!**

**ONE OF A KIND... OR TWO?**

**THE REBBE'S BIG IDEA: AN  
ARMY OF KIDS!**

Did You Ever Wonder Why The  
Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach Wants  
Kids To Go To The Army?

**ALEF BEIS CODES TO FIND  
THE CHAMETZ**



יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד



# ELIYAHU HA'NAVI

## A JOURNEY THROUGH THE GENERATIONS

IN THE FINAL MOMENTS OF THE PESACH SEDER, AS EYES GROW HEAVY, THE FATHER POURS WINE INTO THE BIG CUP OF ELIYAHU HA'NAVI – OR PERHAPS, ELIYAHU HA'TISHBI? OR HA'GILADI? • WHO IS THIS MYSTERIOUS FIGURE WHOM EVERYONE KNOWS, YET ABOUT WHOSE BIRTH THE TANACH TELLS US NOTHING? • AND WHY IS HE SO ASSOCIATED WITH THE NORTHERN CITY OF TIVERYA? • ON THIS AND MORE IN THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE:

## AVEL HA'SHITTIM, 2487

What a commotion there was in the camp. Loud sounds of singing and dancing burst forth from the central event hall of Shevet Shimon, and against them – sounds of outcry and protest: “A disgrace has been committed in Israel!” “Woe to this shame! Woe to this humiliation!”...

The bnei Shevet Shimon did not stay silent against the fierce protests, and responded in kind: “You should be ashamed!” they argued firmly. “Our distinguished prince, Zimri ben Salu, is about to put an end to the rampant plague in the camp!”

To an outside observer, there seemed to be some justification to their words. At the time, a terrible plague had spread among the people, following their sins with the daughters of Midyan. Zimri ben Salu, Nasi of Shevet Shimon, decided to act in order to “prove” that the punishment upon Israel was supposedly unjustified: he claimed that Moshe himself had married a gentile woman (he forgot to mention that Tziphora had converted before her marriage to Moshe), and invited everyone to his own princely wedding with Cozbi daughter of Tzur, king of Midyan...

The sounds of argument rose to the heavens. Some wept: “Zimri is intensifying G-d’s wrath and worsening the plague!” And others argued: “Finally

## THE SEVENTH LIVES FOREVER

Eliyahu is not the only one promised eternal life. It is also said of Moshe that “Moshe did not die,” and likewise of other tzaddikim such as Chanoch. Rabbeinu Bechayei points to a common denominator for all these figures: they are all “seventh” (Chanoch – seventh from Adam, Moshe – seventh from Avrohom, and Pinchas who is Eliyahu – seventh from Yaakov), and they symbolize the era of Geula, the “day that is entirely Shabbos,” in which all will live forever.

In several of his sichos, the Rebbe expressed that the leader of our generation, the seventh generation, would also merit eternal life. He would not need to depart from the world in order to complete his mission, but would continue his life in his body and redeem the entire Jewish people in the true and complete Geula.

someone is sacrificing himself for the Jewish people, and proving before all that marriage to a gentile is not such a grave sin!”...

Only one man was not confused by the empty words. That was Pinchas son of Elozor son of Aharon the Kohen, who had no time for clever arguments: he entered the tent and stabbed both Zimri and Cozbi together with his spear. Thus the forbidden intermarriage was ended at once, and the terrible plague – stopped.

As a reward for his brave act, Hashem promised Pinchas two rare gifts: the priesthood, which until then had belonged only to his grandfather Aharon and his father Elozor – was given also to him and his descendants.



## HA'NAVI, HA'TISHBI, HA'GILADI?

In the account of Achav's encounter with Eliyahu, he is described as "Eliyahu HaTishbi, of the inhabitants of Gilad." According to the commentators, Eliyahu resided in the city of Tishbi located in the region of Gilad, and thus he was given his three famous titles: Eliyahu HaNavi – for his famous prophecy and righteousness; Eliyahu HaTishbi – named after the city of Tishbi in which he resided; Eliyahu HaGiladi – named after the region from which he came.

Additionally, Hashem said: "Behold, I give him My covenant of peace." According to the Medrash, with these words Pinchas was granted eternal life, and in time he became Eliyahu HaNavi, who would herald the Geula and bring peace to the world.

## THE VALLEY OF YEZREEL, 2887 — 400 YEARS LATER

Achav son of Omri, husband of Izevel daughter of the king of Tzidon, ascends to the throne of the Kingdom of Yisrael. On the advice of the wicked Izevel, Achav spread idol worship throughout his kingdom, causing all to follow the idol Baal.

When Achav encountered Eliyahu HaNavi, he challenged him: "Moshe Rabbeinu promised that if Israel worshiped idols, G-d would stop the heavens and there would be no rain! And yet – his promise is not being fulfilled!"

In the face of Achav's mocking words, Eliyahu rose and said: "As the Lord G-d of Israel lives... there shall be neither dew nor rain these years – except by my word." From this day on, Eliyahu made clear, all would see who the true Ruler of the land was. Rain would not fall, crops would not grow, and no one would have anything to eat – until they repented. The key of rain was given into Eliyahu's

hands, and from now on Hashem had entrusted him with the right to determine where and when rain would fall.

Achav and Izevel were very angry at Eliyahu for daring to stand against the idol worship they had established. They wanted to kill him, but Hashem sent Eliyahu to hide by the Nachal Kris, where he received his food through a special airmail service: each day, morning and evening, a number of ravens sneaked into the royal kitchen of Achav's palace, snatched a loaf of bread and a portion of meat, and delivered them to him by direct delivery to his hiding place. Eliyahu thus ate from the king's kitchen and drank from the brook's water – until even the brook dried up...

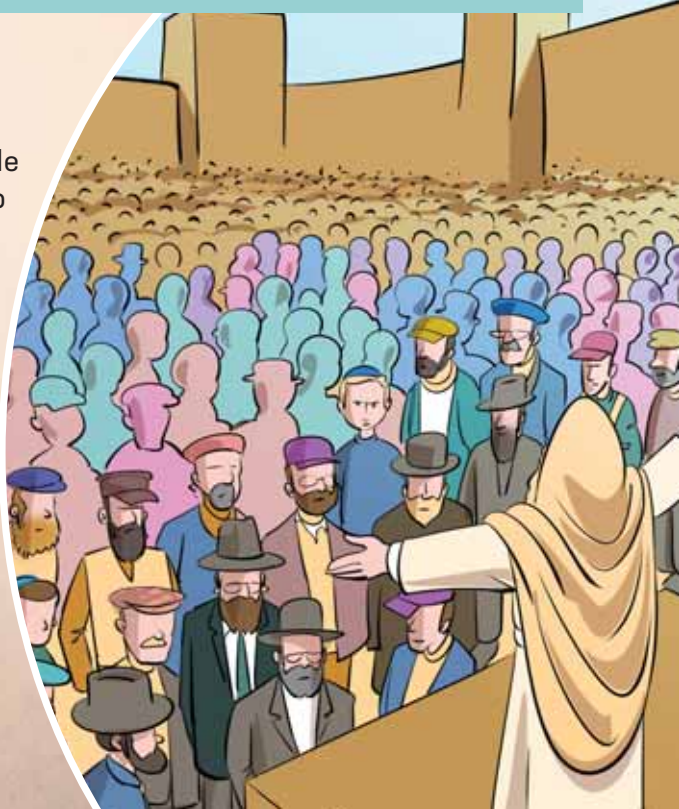
The drought was now unbearable and even Eliyahu had no water to drink. Hashem did not want to take the key of rain from Eliyahu, and so arranged for him to return it on his own. Eliyahu was sent to the home of a widowed woman in Tzorfatiss of Tzidon, and blessed her that the flour and oil in her home would not run out until the drought ended.

Eliyahu's blessing was fulfilled miraculously, but the widow had complaints: her beloved son fell ill and died, and she blamed Eliyahu:

## THREE KEYS TOGETHER?

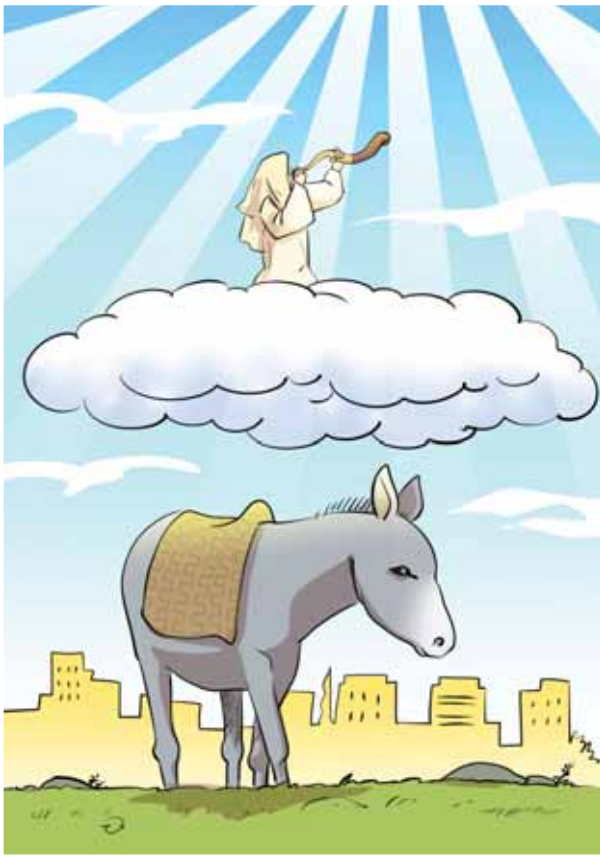
At the farbrengen marking the acceptance of leadership by the Rebbe on Yud Shevat 5711, the Rebbe said: In the Rayatz one could see all three keys together – he blessed Jews with children, parnassa (rain), and saving of lives – at the same time. The Rebbe's words became widely known and stirred controversy: how could it be said of a particular tzaddik that he is greater than Eliyahu HaNavi?...

Later, at the farbrengen of Yud-Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe explained: Eliyahu HaNavi received the key of rain as a shliach, who is ultimately considered a separate entity from the one who sent him. Therefore it was not possible to give him an additional key at that time. However, the Rebbe's role is to serve as a "memutza ha'mechaber" between the Chassid and Hashem, and the blessings he grants the Chassid are given directly from G-d's word. Therefore he can use all the keys together – for even when he uses them, they remain in Hashem's hands...



## FOLLOWING THE BAAL?

On one occasion, the Rebbe asked: how did Eliyahu allow the Jewish people the option of following the Baal? Is it not preferable to waver between two opinions than to abandon faith in Hashem entirely? The Rebbe explained that deep in the soul of every Jew is embedded an eternal faith in Hashem, which he cannot resist. Eliyahu knew that if he forced the Jewish people to choose between two paths – there is no doubt they would choose the path of Hashem, and not the opposite...



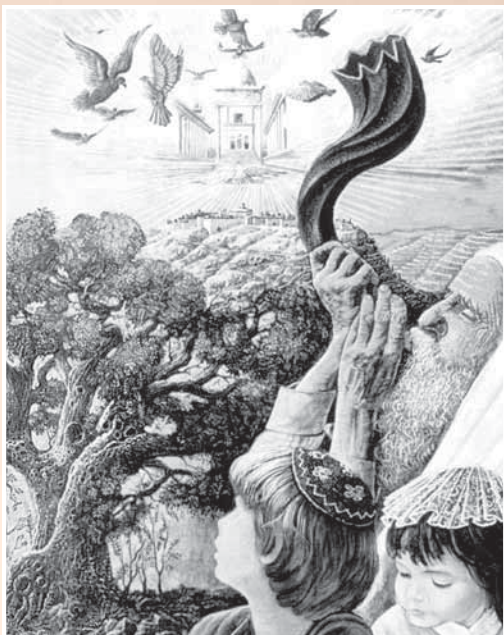
revive the son of the woman who had hosted him so graciously. But Hashem set a condition before him: “I have three keys in My possession, which I do not hand over to any angel or messenger... The key of rain I gave to you, but the key of birth and the key of resurrection – remained with Me. If I give you the key of resurrection as well – people will say you have more keys than I do!”...

“If you wish to receive the key of resurrection,” Hashem said to Eliyahu, “return to Me the key of rain, and in due time – you will need to pray to Me and ask Me to send rain upon the earth.” Eliyahu accepted the condition, revived the widow’s son, and after three years of drought – returned to Achav’s palace...

“Before you came to live in my attic, I was considered righteous before the Creator. But compared to a righteous man like you, I am full of sins... therefore G-d caused my son to die.”...

Eliyahu prayed to Hashem and asked for the key of resurrection – in order to

At the sight of Eliyahu, Achav turned to him with sharp words: “Is it you, the one who brings troubles upon Israel?”... Achav accused Eliyahu of bringing famine upon the people of Israel, but Eliyahu was unmoved: “It is not I who have brought troubles upon Israel,” he replied calmly, “but you and



your father's house, by forsaking the commandments of G-d."...

He asked Achav to gather all prophets of Baal to Mount Carmel, and to build there two altars: one for Hashem, and one for Baal. Each group would pray for fire to ignite on its own upon the altar, and whoever's prayer was answered – would prove that his G-d is the true G-d.

The people gathered before the fascinating spectacle, and Eliyahu addressed them: "How long will you waver between two opinions?!"... he

rebuked the crowd. "If G-d is the Lord – follow Him, and if Baal – follow him!"... The Jewish people looked at him in bewilderment and could not find words to answer. Their yetzer pulled them to worship idols again and again, but deep in their hearts they knew that Hashem is the one G-d. They could not detach from either side, and always leaped between the side of holiness and the opposing side...

The prophets of Baal, as expected, failed to bring fire down upon their altar. They called out hoarsely from morning until noon, but there was no answer. At the time of the afternoon offering, Eliyahu built an altar to Hashem, and filled it and the trench surrounding it with enormous quantities of water (to magnify the miracle). "Answer me, Lord, answer me," Eliyahu called, "that this people may know that You are the Lord G-d."...

At the end of Eliyahu's prayer, the people witnessed a magnificent sight: fire descended from heaven and, despite the abundant water, seized the altar of Hashem and consumed everything – the sacrifice, the wood, and even the stones, the dust, and the great quantities

## THE FIRE WILL DESCEND AGAIN, BUT ON THE OTHER SIDE...

The great Chassidic masters of earlier generations warned that before the coming of Moshiach there would be difficult and bitter trials that would make emuna challenging. In Eliyahu's time, the people saw fire descend upon the altar of Hashem – but on the eve of Geula, said those tzaddikim, the fire would appear as if it were descending on the other side – the side opposing faith in Hashem and His Moshiach... Therefore, we are called upon to fortify ourselves with firm and strong faith, and not be swayed by what appears before our eyes.



## “THE TISHBI WILL RESOLVE QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS”

Throughout the generations, the image of Eliyahu as Ha’Navi who resolves all doubts and dilemmas became deeply rooted among the Jewish people. One who finds a lost object and does not know to whom to return it – may set it aside “until Eliyahu comes.” A sugya in Gemara that reaches no resolution is concluded with the expression “Teiku” – an acronym for: “Tishbi Yetaretz Kushyos Ve’ibayos” – “Tishbi will resolve questions and problems.”

Why will specifically Eliyahu resolve the questions and doubts, and not Moshe himself? The Zohar explains that Moshe will be resurrected in a state of being “heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue,” and Eliyahu will serve as his “interpreter” – just as Aharon the Kohen of whom it was said “he shall be your mouth.”

of water surrounding the altar. At this wondrous miracle, all cried out together: “Hashem Hu HaElokim, Hashem Hu HaElokim!”

The prophets of Baal fled for their lives, but the people chased them and killed them at Eliyahu’s command. Now, when idol worship had ended and the Jewish people did teshuva – rain began to fall and soak the land, and the great famine gradually disappeared. Once again, Pinchas-Eliyahu had turned Hashem’s wrath away from the Jewish people and saved their lives.

## THE HOLY CITY OF TIVERYA, 5785

Throughout the generations, Eliyahu has been assigned many important roles: he converses with

tzaddikim, performs miracles, and serves to this day as the “Malach HaBris” who sits in his honored chair at every bris mila, bearing witness that the people of Israel observe the bris with mesirus nefesh.

But the most distinguished and important task assigned to Eliyahu HaNavi is the role of heralding the Geula: “Behold, I will send you Eliyahu HaNavi before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord... and he shall turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the hearts of children to their fathers.”...

Eliyahu is tasked with preparing the hearts of Am Yisrael for the Geula, returning them in teshuva, and announcing that Moshiach Tzidkeinu is coming. The official announcement of Moshiach’s arrival must be delivered to the Beis Din HaGadol – the Sanhedrin – whose original seat was in the Lishkas HaGazis in Yerushalayim, but after the churban ha’bayis the Sanhedrin wandered from place to place, until coming to Teverya, where it is destined to be renewed, and where Eliyahu is expected to come and herald the coming of Moshiach.

In a yechidus with the Chief Rabbis of Israel (11 Iyar 5749), the Rebbe stated that “no one would mind even if Eliyahu HaNavi came outside of Israel, even in Brooklyn, and the next day Moshiach

## ZACHUR LA’TOV - REMEMBERED FOR GOOD

A common addition to Eliyahu’s name is the phrase “remembered for good.” Thus we daven in Birkas HaMazon: “May the Merciful One send us Eliyahu HaNavi, remembered for good, and may he bring us good tidings of salvation and consolation.”

Generally, expressions like “may his memory be a blessing” or “remembered for good” are said of tzaddikim who have passed away. Eliyahu HaNavi, as is known, ascended to heaven in his body, and he continues to act in the world on certain occasions. Therefore the intention of the phrase “remembered for good” as applied to him is the reverse of the usual – not referring to the past, but to the future, in which he will herald for us the tidings of the Geula (Siddur “Iyun Tefilla”).

came to Teverya.”... On another occasion (a private audience for wealthy donors, 7 Tishrei 5751), the Rebbe revealed: “Since Moshiach can come any day... Eliyahu HaNavi literally comes to Teverya every day and heralds the coming of Moshiach (particularly) to those who stand in the state and position of ‘I await him every day that he will come’ – even those who do not say this in speech (as is the Chabad custom), but think about it.”...

Eliyahu has already come, the Rebbe has already heralded, and all that remains for us is to believe and accept his malchus with the proclamation: Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V’Rabeinu Melech HaMoshiach L’Olam Va’ed!

# THE REBBE'S BIG IDEA: AN ARMY OF KIDS!

DID YOU EVER WONDER WHY  
THE REBBE MELECH  
HAMOSHIACH WANTS KIDS  
TO GO TO THE ARMY?



## AN ARMY? WHAT FOR?

In 5741, the Rebbe MH'M announced something new; the forming of an organization for boys and girls called "Tzivos Hashem."

The truth is that even before 5741, everyone saw that there was something special in how the Rebbe treated and related to children, something not seen before by the earlier Rebbeim.

As soon as the Rebbe arrived in the United States, he was appointed by his father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz, as director of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, whose role it was to provide a Torah chinuch for Jewish boys and girls.

Upon becoming Rebbe, the Rebbe began developing the Jewish school system in Eretz Yisrael and Morocco called "Reshet Oholei Yosef Yitzchok, and worked on founding schools in the US, Canada and Australia.

## USING PRECIOUS HOURS OF HIS TIME

The Rebbe encouraged the founding of summer camps in the US in order to attract as many children as possible who did not grow up in religious homes to learn in proper Jewish institutions. The Rebbe visited the boys' camp and the girls' camp in New York

and reviewed maamarei Chassidus there, even though the Rebbe rarely left Brooklyn.

The Rebbe is the first Jewish leader in the world who spent his precious time writing letters to individual children and to classes who sent him pictures and brachos. Several times, the Rebbe publicized a special “General Letter” addressed to all boys and girls in which he wrote special instructions for them.

The Rebbe’s time was completely taken up with learning Torah, davening, responding to letters, receiving people for yechidus, sichos, farbrengens, etc. but he took the time to attend children’s rallies held in 770 on special days for the children attending schools in New York and the area. The Rebbe devoted dozens, even hundreds of hours, even before 5741, to saying sichos for boys and girls and giving out coins for tzedaka to each of them.

Then what did the Rebbe innovate when he started Tzivos Hashem in 5741?

## **THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ARMY AND A NATION**

In order to understand this, we need to understand what an army is and what the difference is between an army and a nation.

A nation is a large group of people who live in the same country and have things in common. A nation has leadership and the leadership runs the lives of the nation. The nation listens to the leadership, to the king, prime minister and ministers, or mayor.

Every nation has its laws and every citizen has to behave according to the law. However, sometimes there could be a situation in which someone wants to behave differently than the law. He has high self confidence and is confident in his wisdom. Therefore, he tries to “work” on the king or the government or mayor. He finds all sorts of way to get out of fulfilling his obligations.

An army is also a system with many people in it, soldiers, but these are people who “put themselves aside” (meaning, they are willing to forgo their desires) and all of them submit to authority, the commander, who submits to his commander, and so on, up the line until, at the top, the entire army submits to the supreme commander.

An army isn’t built on the self-confidence and wisdom of the soldiers. It is built on kabbolas ol and that’s all. The army is an entity of discipline and the soldiers fulfill the orders given to them without involving their own ideas.

It’s very hard running an ordinary nation during wartime. A plain citizen who is used to doing what he wants won’t manage in battle. He’s not used to obeying orders, he’s not used to accepting authority. Therefore, he might lose in battle and cause his friends to lose too.

Likewise, people who are born with a nature that loves to fight - uh oh if they remain ordinary citizens. They’ll fight with whoever they find. But if they enlist in the army as soldiers, they will be very

successful because their nature will be used positively.

## **WITH KABBOLAS OL, LOVE AND RATZON**

How is all this connected to our topic, the founding of Tzivos Hashem by the Rebbe?

We are constantly in an unending war, until the Geula comes. Every Jewish child wakes up every day to a war with the yetzer hara. This war is constant; it doesn't stop for a single day. And it's an inner struggle. It takes place in our mind and heart.

What should be done to be victorious in battle?

Right. To be a soldier. And not just any soldier but a soldier who is completely devoted to the goal and yearns to win the yetzer hara every day, without compromising. That's the only way to vanquish the yetzer hara!

This is why the Rebbe founded Tzivos Hashem. The Rebbe wrote that he wants every Jewish child to have a system of discipline, acceptance of orders, that a Jewish child should know that he is a soldier in Hashem's army and he must do Hashem's will with kabbolas ol.

The Rebbe said he wants Jewish children to do things not because of fear of punishment etc. but out of love and ratzon. When a child is a soldier in Tzivos Hashem, he accepts Hashem's yoke and

always wants to do Hashem's will, with love and, mainly, with joy.

There are also instances, writes the Rebbe, when a child is born with a fighting nature. If, until now, he was likely to fight good things or good people because of his nature, now, since the founding of Tzivos Hashem, he can direct his nature to the right place and fight the yetzer hara with everything he naturally has.

## **A SPIRITUAL AND POSITIVE ARMY**

After the Rebbe started Tzivos Hashem, there were rabbanim and educators in the US, not Chassidim, who did not understand what the Rebbe wanted. They expressed their opposition to a frum children's organization being run like an army. They thought that an army means just bad things like fighting and that this is not suitable for children.

One of them wrote to the Rebbe and asked why the Rebbe chose to start an organization for children that expresses not-positive things. The Rebbe wrote him back a long letter which said that Tzivos Hashem is not something the Rebbe invented. It is mentioned in Sefer Shemos when the Jewish people became free of servitude in Mitzrayim so they could serve only Hashem.

If so, Tzivos Hashem means an army that fought a spiritual war in order to serve Hashem and be closer to learning Torah

and doing mitzvos. This is not about a physical war which, indeed, is something negative and not for children.

The Rebbe also wrote that Torah does not praise things like battles and waging war. On the contrary, "It's ways are ways of pleasantness and all its paths are peaceful." Chazal say that the Torah was given to make peace in the world. Another statement of Chazal is that peace is the vessel to contain blessing. Obviously, we are not looking to do things in a way that goes counter to the Chachamim!

Rather, there is no choice. The only way to succeed in the constant, inner war with the yetzer hara is, as we learned, through discipline and kabbolas ol in fulfilling orders. Only a soldier can be successful during wartime.

The Rebbe clarified that he chose to use military terminology only when they are in the spirit of Torah. Therefore, "spying" for example, is not part of Tzivos Hashem.

The Rebbe writes that when he founded Tzivos Hashem, he did so with great thought, for his goal was to help Jewish boys and girls be educated in the way of Torah and mitzvos in the best possible way so as to bring the true and complete Geula.

Starting from Tishrei 5741, when the Rebbe founded Tzivos Hashem, the Rebbe began devoting many extra hours of his precious time to children, through letters, giving out coins for tzedaka, and mainly through sichos at Tzivos Hashem rallies in 770 that took place often, with special expressions about the role of children and special orders for the soldiers of Tzivos Hashem.





## CHAPTER 06

### DIPLOMATIC PLATES

**Recap:** Leibele has seen that his new friend's brother, Sholi, has phenomenal powers of observation. Sholi helped the police commander thwart an attack and catch terrorists. The children discover that their fathers are good friends from yeshiva. As the children go shopping for mishloach manos for special needs children, they don't realize that a white car is following them and someone is photographing them.

The school corridors were bustling as always but for me and Mendy, the days after Purim were like landing in a different world. During recess we stood near the classroom window, trying to digest everything we had experienced.

"Leibele, what went on there was unreal," Mendy said, his eyes sparkling. "I close my eyes and still see the piles of trays from my mother's kitchen disappearing, as families get to enjoy them. It was fabulous!"

"Absolutely," I responded with a smile, "but what really got to me was not the

food but the faces. As we distributed the mishloach manos for the siblings of children with special needs, did you see how they reacted? They were so surprised that someone thought of them too. I felt that this was more necessary than anything else, that we fulfilled an important shlichus."

Mendy nodded vigorously.

"And the part with your father and my father at the police station? That was epic. When they began reading the Megilla and the policemen stood around. Even the toughest among

them suddenly... looked different. And remember the people who were detained? Did you see one of them wipe away a tear when your father read the words, 'LaYehudim hayesa orah v'simcha.' They are still behind bars ..."

"It was incredible moving," I said. "The difference between the detainees and the inmates is still not clear to me; the main thing is the Geula should come and nobody will be behind bars! There won't be a need for police to jail criminals ..."

"Did someone here mention the police?"

The familiar voice was like an alarm and it made me jump. I turned around and there was Big Yonatan, of course, standing behind us. His big eyes bulged with his usual curiosity. All he was missing was a paper and pen with which to write down every word we uttered.

I exchanged glances with Mendy and rolled my eyes as Mendy took a deep breath and smiled, as he usually does.

"Yonatan, what's up?" said Mendy in his kind way. "It's important to do the Chitas and Rambam shiurim as early as possible on Purim, right? You know, it's easy to forget when you're busy with so many mitzvos ..."

Yonatan narrowed his eyes; he didn't fall into the trap.

"You were talking about detainees! I heard the word 'bars!' What happened? Tell me now!"

I decided to help Mendy out and said, "How amazing it was after Purim, wasn't it? The hashgacha pratit is incredible. Did you consider that? In honor of Purim, Hashem saved us again from evil people

who want to harm us and not just any evildoers! It's just like back then, the evildoers from Shushan HaBirah! It's just that today, Shushan is the area of Iran, and the miracles continue to happen."

Yonatan looked thoughtful.

"Iran, yes ... I didn't know it's the area of Shushan HaBirah. That needs some research. I'm going to check it out during recess."

He turned around and walked away, leaving us holding in sighs of relief lest he remember the words we decided not to say in school.

"We're saved," Mendy whispered when Yonatan finally disappeared from view, and we burst out laughing.

When school was finished for the day, we went home together. Yonatan went with us part of the way, loudly analyzing the security situation in the Middle East, until we reached a turn that led to his house and he waved goodbye to us. We breathed another sigh of relief and continued walking along a quiet alleyway that led to the junction closest to our homes.

"Are you coming to help me with the final boxes today?" I asked.

"Sure, I'm just ..."

He didn't finish his sentence. There was a screech of brakes. A white, shiny car stopped centimeters from us and my heart skipped a beat. Before we realized what happened, the doors opened and two brawny guys got out. They were wearing black tailored suits and sunglasses hid their eyes. Their expressions were cold as ice. They stood facing us, blocking the way.

We instinctively recoiled but when we turned to run, we found another two men dressed the same way behind us. We were surrounded.

Silence. None of them spoke. They just stood there, looking at us through their dark lenses. I felt my knees begin to shake. 'My father was in the storage shed ... the commander wasn't here ... what do we do?' A scream got stuck in my throat. Mendy suddenly grabbed me by the arm. He wasn't looking at the men but upwards. He tried to get me to look there too and hissed between his teeth, "L-o-o-k."

I looked up and saw the window of Sholi and Mendy's room where the curtain was slightly moved aside. I saw Sholi's face. He didn't look distressed. He was just staring at us with his usual concentration for a few seconds that seemed like forever, as though he was counting the buttons on the men's suits. For a second, he caught my eye and then, in a quick movement, he disappeared behind the curtain.

"He went ..." I mumbled in despair, and looked at Mendy. To my surprise, he was calmly smiling at me and shaking his head no. Just then, the door to the house opened wide and out came Mr. Kitov, my father, and the commander. They didn't look at all frightened. On the contrary, they walked toward us with big smiles, waving their hands as though we were returning from some enjoyable trip.

"Welcome!" called my father loudly. "How was yeshiva today?"

Mr. Kitov held his hands out invitingly. "Come, come home. We have hot chocolate and Ima made cookies!"

The moment the fathers and the commander appeared, the atmosphere instantly changed. The four men in suits exchanged quick glances between them. Without a word, they left, getting into the white car and closing the doors. The engine hummed and the car sped away, disappearing behind a curve in the street.

We ran toward the house and into our fathers' hugs. I'm not a little boy anymore but it was so good to suddenly feel so secure.

"Abba," huffed Mendy, trying to get his breathing under control, "Sholi told you, right? He saw them from the window and called you, right Abba?"

Mr. Kitov smiled, patted him on the shoulder but didn't react. The commander, who was standing slightly off to the side, didn't take his eyes off the point where the white car had disappeared. I didn't see his expression until he removed his sunglasses. It was a tough, focused look, completely different than the smile he just had.

"Chevra," he said, almost to himself, "they had diplomatic plates."

The fathers stopped smiling and they exchanged a meaningful look, a look that made me feel weak in the knees again.

"Diplomatic plates?" Mendy and I asked simultaneously. "What does that mean?"

The commander turned to us and his sunglasses glinted in the pale light of that wintry day.

"What does it mean?" he repeated in a somber voice. "It can only be interpreted one way: trouble."

to be continued

# STORY Time



BY SHAINA GLICK ,FROM THE TZADDIKSTORY.ORG COLLECTION

## THE NIGHT I WALKED TO THE REBBE

It was 1:00 in the morning. It was Yom Tov, so I couldn't use a car, taxi or a subway. But I had two feet, a yarmulke, tzitzis, and somewhere deep inside me - something pulling me forward.

I was standing outside my aunt and uncle's house in New Jersey, still dressed from the seder, looking down the dark road toward Route 4.

"That's it," I whispered to myself. "I'm going to 770."

Now, if you know anything about Crown Heights, you know it's not exactly around the corner from New Jersey. It's across the George Washington Bridge, through all of Manhattan, past Brooklyn - a walk that would take most of the night.

And it was Pesach. The first night of Yom Tov, going straight into the second.

I didn't have a car. I couldn't take a taxi or a subway. But I had two feet, a yarmulke, tzitzis,





and somewhere deep inside me - something pulling me forward.

So I started walking.

You might be wondering: how does a Jewish kid from Teaneck, New Jersey end up in the middle of the night, walking alone toward 770 Eastern Parkway on Pesach?

That's exactly what I want to tell you.

But to tell you that story, I have to start at the beginning.

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My name is Rabbi Immanuel Storfer, and I grew up in Teaneck, New Jersey.

Nothing dramatic. Just a regular kid in public school, doing regular kid things.

We were Jewish, sure. But not the kind of Jewish that filled up your whole day. It was

more like... a label. Something you knew about yourself, but didn't really live.

No one sat me down and explained Yiddishkeit. No one taught me how to daven. If you asked me back then what a siddur looked like, I probably would've guessed it was some kind of history book.

Life was school, friends, sports, homework, weekend plans. That was it.

And then came college.

I went to New York University - NYU - right in the middle of Manhattan, where everybody is everything. You could walk one block and hear five languages. You could pass a musician on the corner, a businessman rushing by, and someone handing out flyers for a club you'd never go to. The city didn't slow down for anyone.

And me? I was just like any other college student. Going to class, figuring things out, living a regular life.

One afternoon, I was walking through the crowded streets of Manhattan when I noticed something I'd never seen before.

A truck. Actually, more an RV than a truck. This one was colorful, almost like a rolling billboard. It had pictures on the side, big Hebrew letters, and words I couldn't read.

I slowed down. I wasn't even sure why. I just felt myself drifting closer, staring at the Hebrew and wondering what it meant. My brain was trying to guess. Was it an advertisement? A museum thing? Some kind of festival?

Just then, the door opened.

A man stepped out.

"Excuse me," he said kindly.

I froze for a second, because in New York you don't usually stop for strangers. Not like that.

Then he asked, "Are you Jewish?"

I blinked. "Maybe... uh... no," I said.

The man smiled. "I think you're Jewish."

"I'm not really interested," I muttered, trying to walk away.

But he didn't give up. "You are interested," he said lightly, like he was sure. He reached into the truck and held out a small box. "Here - take a menorah."

"A menorah?" I stared at it. "Why?"

"Because you're Jewish," he said. "And I need to tell you something. I'm a shliach of the Rebbe."

"The Rebbe?" I repeated, confused. "Who's that?"

Instead of answering right away, the man began to tell a story.

"My name is Psachya Korf," he said, "and I'm from Crown Heights."

I listened politely. I didn't even know why I was still standing there... but something about how Psachya told his story made me want to hear more.

"When I was younger," Psachya said, "I was caught in a terrible fire. The firefighters rushed me to the hospital with very serious smoke inhalation. It was so bad, they put me on a helicopter and flew me to Westchester Children's Hospital."

Psachya's face turned serious.

"The doctors told my parents... they said I had brain damage that wouldn't go away, and that I only had a few hours left to live."

My eyes widened. "How could that be?" I thought. "He's standing here right now!"

Psachya nodded, like he understood the question without it even being asked.

"My father ran to the Lubavitcher Rebbe for a bracha," he said. "The Rebbe gave him a dollar and a blessing. And from that moment, everything began to change."

Psachya paused.

"I opened my eyes for the first time since the fire," he said quietly. "The doctors were shocked. I got better and better... until I was healed. It was a miracle."

I stood very still. I looked at Psachya - alive, talking, smiling - and felt something shift inside me.

Who is this Rebbe? I wondered. I want to know more.

Psachya took my phone number so we could stay in touch and invited me to visit 770, the Rebbe's shul. He also made sure I met Rabbi Eli Cohen, who ran the Chabad House at NYU. I began learning a little bit, very slowly - asking questions, listening carefully, taking one small step at a time.

And that was the beginning.

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A few months later, Rosh Hashana arrived. I met a frum student at NYU who was taking Jewish education classes. When I told him I was looking for a meaningful place to spend Yom Kippur, his face lit up.

"You want inspiration? You want truth? You need to go to 770!"

What do I have to lose? I thought. "Sounds great," I said. "I'll go."

I felt excited and nervous at the same time. I'm going to the world's biggest Chabad House - even though I wasn't exactly sure what that meant or what it looked like.

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The moment I walked into 770, my eyes widened.

The place was packed with thousands of people from all over the world - Israelis, French Jews, and many others - each one getting ready to daven for Yom Kippur. There was no space to move.

I squeezed myself into a tiny spot. People pressed in from every direction, elbows and backs and knees touching me all at once. I felt like a sardine squished inside a can.

As I stood there trying to breathe, I noticed something strange. The bachurim were wearing beautiful suits and hats - but instead of regular shoes, many of them had slippers on their feet.

Confused, I leaned toward one of them. "Why are you wearing slippers?" I asked. "They don't match your nice clothes."

"It's Yom Kippur," the bachur explained.

"I know it's Yom Kippur," I replied. "That's why I came here!"

"You can't wear leather shoes on Yom Kippur!"

I had no idea. I thought when you dress up for shul, you wear a suit and leather shoes. No one had ever told me there were special rules.

The bachur brought me over to Rabbi Yehuda Kalman Marlow a'h, one of the rabbis of Crown Heights. Rabbi Marlow looked at me kindly and gave me my very first psak halacha. "You have to take off your shoes," he said.

My heart dropped. "This is crazy," I thought. "I'm standing in a room with thousands of people, and I have to take off my shoes?"

But the Chassidim around me leaned in encouragingly. "Do a mitzva! Come on. You can do it!"

I hesitated - then slowly bent down, and with shaking hands, slipped off my leather shoes. I stood there in my socks.

That was when things suddenly grew louder. People began calling out as the Sefer Torah was taken out.

And not just any Sefer Torah. It was the Rebbe's own Sefer Torah.

The Torah was brought closer and closer, and all at once people from every side pushed forward. I tried to stay on my feet, tiptoeing carefully. Suddenly, a very large man stepped right on my foot and I gasped in pain. Before I could recover, someone's elbow slammed into my stomach. I lost my balance - and fell to the floor.

The big man stepped on my stomach, and for a moment I couldn't breathe.

"I'm stuck down here!" I called out, grabbing onto someone's foot.

"There's a kid on the floor!" someone shouted.

"I'm not a kid!" I cried back. "I'm eighteen years old. I'm just trying to do Yom Kippur!"

I felt overwhelmed and upset. For a moment, I wanted to leave and never come back.

But the bachurim around me wouldn't let me go. "Just try a little more," they said. "We'll help you."

I took a deep breath. I decided to stay.

At the end of davening, I saw something that completely shocked me. Everyone around me started spitting.

Spitting? In shul?

They were up to Aleinu - where Chabad has a minhag to spit after mentioning avoda zara - but I had no idea. All I knew was that the floor suddenly felt like a minefield. And I was still in my socks.

I tiptoed carefully, trying not to look too startled, but inside I was completely grossed out.

Finally, after davening ended, I turned to the person next to me and blurted out, half-joking and half-serious, "Can I at least have some shoes now?"

One bachur, Gershon Avtzon, nodded. "I have an extra pair of slippers at my house."

"Great," I said. "Bring them here and I'll wear them."

Gershon shook his head. "I can't do that."

"Why not?"

"It's Yom Kippur. You can't carry."

I had never heard of a "no carrying" rule before! Gershon explained that if I wanted the shoes, I'd have to walk to his house to get them.

"This is crazy!" I thought. But somehow, Gershon convinced me.

So I walked out onto Kingston Avenue in Crown Heights - in my socks. When I reached President Street, I discovered something very unpleasant. The night before, people had done kaparos with chickens, and the street was filthy. My socks got completely ruined, covered in feathers from every direction.

When I finally got back to 770, I peeled off my socks and thought: This is the craziest experience of my life. I don't think this is for me.

But Gershon looked at me kindly. "Just come back tomorrow."

The next day, I came back in proper slippers - more prepared, standing my ground, making sure no one pushed me around.

I still wasn't sure I was happy to be there. But then, as Yom Kippur drew to a close, everything changed.

Thousands of people burst into song, dancing and jumping to a powerful tune called Napoleon's March.

The room shook with energy and joy. I felt like Moshiach might come at any moment.

That niggun, sung by thousands of voices together, went straight into my heart. It touched my neshama in a way I had never felt before.

The year before, I had broken my Yom Kippur fast at a pizza shop, eating non-kosher food. Here in 770 it was completely different.

"This is a powerful place," I thought. "This is the Rebbe's shul. This is the holiest time of the year, in the holiest place I've ever been."

Just hours before, I had been sure I would never return. Now, Baruch Hashem, my heart felt completely changed.

I wanted to come back.

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And that brings us back to that Pesach night.

That year, Shabbos went straight into Pesach. I had asked my rabbi whether I should go home to New Jersey or spend Yom Tov in Crown Heights. "My parents aren't frum," I told him. "But I really want to have a proper Seder."

"You belong with your parents," he said.

Even though it was hard, I listened and went home.

The family gathered at my aunt and uncle's house. People came late, some had been shopping on Shabbos, and the Seder felt more like a regular meal than anything else. I tried to share some divrei Torah, but no one seemed interested. A few people even laughed - my new way of living felt strange to them.

As the night went on, I felt more and more out of place. When I accidentally knocked over some wine, someone commented that I was causing too many problems.

I can't take it anymore, I thought.

I quietly finished the Haggada on my own, ate my afikoman, and went upstairs. I changed my clothes and looked at the clock.

1:00 in the morning.

Which is exactly where we started.

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I stepped outside and began walking toward Route 4. I reached the George Washington Bridge, but the police stopped me and sent me to a different path.

By 2:30 in the morning, I was walking through Washington Heights. Then Harlem. People stared at me as I passed - a young man with tzitzis and a yarmulke, walking alone through the night.

"Where are you going?" a group of people called out.

"I'm going to 770 to daven," I answered.

Later, people asked if I had been scared.

"It was Leil Shimurim," I always answered. "A night of protection. Hashem was watching over me. And besides - I was going to the Rebbe."

I walked past Times Square as the sky began to lighten, then through Little Italy and Chinatown. By seven in the morning, I reached Williamsburg. Around eight o'clock, my legs felt heavy and every step hurt. Someone tried to convince me to stop and rest.

"No," I said. "I'm going to 770."

At exactly 9:45 in the morning - after walking nearly nine hours - I arrived.

I walked through the doors of 770 just in time to daven with the Rebbe's minyan.

I was exhausted. But my heart was full. I davened with more kavana than ever before in my life.

That Pesach was the first time I ever celebrated Yom Tov in a truly frum home. And even though I had never seen the Rebbe with my own eyes, I knew something for certain.

Through Yom Kippur, through that long walk on Pesach - I had been there with the Rebbe. I had davened with the Rebbe even though I couldn't see him.

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After that Pesach, I couldn't stop thinking. I knew I needed to take my learning seriously. I wanted to go to a Chabad yeshiva for people who were just starting out - a place called Mayanot.

I called the shlichim I knew and told them my plan. But for some reason, they didn't get back to me. I tried again. Still nothing.

Around the same time, a rabbi on campus suggested I try a different yeshiva - not Chabad. The place sounded welcoming, and they encouraged me to come. As winter break approached, I felt pulled in two directions.

One part of me said: This is easy. Just go.

But another part whispered: I started this journey with Chabad. Something tells me I'm not finished yet.

I didn't know what to do.

That's when one of the shlichim said something that surprised me.

"Why don't you go to the Ohel," he suggested, "and write to the Rebbe about your plans?"

I stared at him. "Write to the Rebbe? How?"

It was the year 2000, a few years after Gimmel Tammuz, and I couldn't understand how you could write a letter to a Rebbe you can no longer see. The shliach answered calmly, like it was the most natural thing in the world.



"Chassidus explains," he said, "that tzaddikim are above nature. Even if it looks like they have left this world, they're still very much with us - and in ways we don't fully understand, but very much see, they can still give us advice and brachos."

I nodded slowly. I still didn't fully understand. But something about the way he said it made me feel safe enough to try.

"I guess it doesn't hurt," I decided.

A short time later, my parents were driving me to JFK for my flight to the non-Chabad yeshiva. The Ohel was right on the way.

"Can we stop there first?" I asked.

My parents looked at each other... and agreed.

At nineteen years old, I took the moment very seriously. I wrote carefully, thinking hard about every word.

"Rebbe," I wrote, "I want to learn Torah and grow in my Yiddishkeit. One yeshiva will help

me learn. Another yeshiva - Mayanot - will help me learn and connect to the Rebbe. Where do I truly belong?"

I folded the letter and stepped outside, unsure how an answer would even come.

Just then, I noticed a screen nearby. A video of the Rebbe was playing.

The very first word out of the Rebbe's mouth was - "Mayanot."

I froze.

The English subtitles spelled it out clearly: M-A-Y-A-N-O-T. The exact name I had written in my letter, just minutes before.

The Rebbe continued speaking about the wellsprings of Torah spreading outward - repeating the word "Mayanot" again and again.

I felt my heart racing.

This is real, I thought. The Rebbe is answering me.

To be continued...



# 10 MAKKOS & 6 WILD FACTS!

IN HONOR OF PESACH, WE'VE PUT TOGETHER AN AMAZING COLLECTION OF WILD FACTS AND INCREDIBLE PHENOMENA – ALL ABOUT THE TEN MAKOS! WHICH ONE DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST MIND-BLOWING?

## 1. DAM (BLOOD) — NATURE'S PAINT BUCKET

What do you see in this picture? It's not a paint palette – it's Yuncheng Salt Lake in China, also called "China's Dead Sea!" Just like the first makka, when the Nile River turned blood-red, this salty lake turns all kinds of amazing colors every summer. How? When the water heats up, tiny algae grow super fast and paint the lake in shades of red, pink, purple, and green!



## 2. TZFARDEA (FROGS) — MEET GOLYAS THE FROG



Remember Golyas, the giant that Dovid HaMelech defeated with one shot? Well, his name was given to the biggest frog in the world – the Goliath Frog! This frog is bigger than a human baby, weighs about 3 kilograms, and is strong enough to move rocks heavier than half its own weight – just to build a little pool for its eggs. Its tadpoles are born regular-sized, but grow into the biggest tadpoles on earth! Was he the one that the Mitzriyim tried to kill?

## 3. KINIM (LICE) — 3,700 YEARS OF ITCHING



Everyone hates lice and tries to get rid of them any way possible. Turns out, people were already doing that back in the time of the actual makka! An ancient ivory lice comb was discovered in Lachish – made about 3,700 years ago! It has a “blessing” carved on it in Canaanite letters that roughly says: “May this ivory remove the lice from the hair and beard.” One side untangled knots, the other removed lice and eggs – though all the teeth broke off long ago. But guess what? Scientists still found lice remains on the comb. Looks like the blessing worked... at least a little!



## 4. AROV (WILD ANIMALS) — WHO OWNS THIS CITY NOW?

Remember COVID? During lockdown, when people were stuck inside wearing masks, animals had the time of their lives! Just like the makka of Arov, creatures that belong in nature decided to take over – wandering into empty streets and highways like they owned the place. Looks like they felt right at home, doesn't it?



## 5. BARAD (HAIL) — ICE THAT BURNS!

During the makka of Barad, fire and ice joined together to do Hashem's will, sending balls of flame inside ice crashing down on Egypt. The closest thing we have today is a stunning natural phenomenon called methane bubbles. Methane is a flammable gas that forms from rotting plants deep under lakes. In frozen places like Abraham Lake in Canada, the gas gets trapped as the water freezes, creating gorgeous glowing bubbles in the ice. Some people actually break the ice to release the gas – and light it on fire, creating the incredible sight of flames burning inside ice!



## 6. CHOSHECH (DARKNESS) — LIGHTS OUT AT LUNCHTIME!

It's 3:00 in the afternoon, the sun is shining, and life in São Paulo, Brazil is going on as usual. Then suddenly – total darkness! About five years ago, thick smoke from massive Amazon rainforest fires drifted all the way to São Paulo and completely blocked out the sun – as if it were the middle of the night! For 40 minutes, the huge city was plunged into darkness. People had to turn on all their lights just to go about their day!



Of course, the Ten Makkos were not natural events — they were pure miracles performed by Hashem! The amazing phenomena you just read about are just little reminders of those incredible miracles. Nothing in nature comes close to the real thing!

Chag Kasher V'Sameach!

# The Chinese Connection

At the Fish Processing Plant in China

We're leaving.  
Yekusiel is waiting for us!

Will our bodyguard  
join us?

What for? In a factory  
humming with people, no one  
would dare do anything to us.  
Let him stay here...

They're still here...  
I must put an end to this...

Good morning to you!  
Let's go into the  
main work hall.

The "eyes in the  
back of my head"  
sense that someone is  
following us...

Maybe I should tell the adults what  
I'm feeling. But I'm not sure... maybe  
it's just my imagination, because that  
threatening note scared me.

Oho! So many workers!  
There seem to be thousands  
of them....

Yes, about two  
thousand Chinese work  
in this plant. Hakadosh  
Baruch Hu employs  
them for us, so the  
Jews will have kosher  
l'mehadrin fish!