

Good Shabbos Everyone and Happy Chanukah Everyone. In this week's parsha Miketz, the Torah continues its narrative of Yosef's prowess in interpreting dreams. The Sages tell us that dreams have 1/60th of the power of prophecy. The following amazing true story, which occurred less than two weeks ago, illustrates the power of dreams to uncover the hidden spiritual world.

This past Shabbos Chanukah was especially inspirational in New Square, New York, where Chassidim gathered in droves to watch their Rebbe light his massive silver Chanukah Menorah shortly before the onset of Shabbos. As the Rebbe finished lighting the Holy Chanukah lights, the Chassidim and onlookers filed out of the giant Beis Medrash (shul), rushing home to light the own menorahs in the few minutes which remained before Shabbos.

Arguably, the highlight of a Shabbos in Skvere (New Square) is the Friday night Tish – the Rebbe's Friday night meal, which is carried out in grandeur. Soon after the Tish began this last week, an unfamiliar face made his way to a seat near the front of the giant table. Who was this tall man with a white beard and deep blue eyes? Whispered the Chassidim among themselves. The man swayed with the beautiful zmiros (Shabbos Songs) and he appeared to be uplifted along with the other assembled Chassidim.

After the Tish, the word got out that the man's name was Avrohom Greenfeld (not his real name) and he had come from Eretz Yisroel. Avrohom has many interesting stories to tell. The following is one story, which Avrohom told at the Friday night meal to the assembled guests in the home of Reb Yidel Lichter on Monroe Lane in New Square. Among the assembled Shabbos guests was the author himself.

Avrohom Greenfeld was born in Germany, after the Second World War. His parents were survivors of the atrocities which beset the Jewish nation during the war years. Soon after his birth, Avrohom's parents moved with him to Eretz Yisroel.

Unfortunately, although the Greenfelds physically survived the war, their faith in Hashem did not survive, and they lived their lives like assimilated Israelis. Thus, Avrohom was raised completely secularly. All of this changed about 28 years ago when Avrohom became one of the first talmidim (students) of the then fledging Israeli section of the world renown Ba'al Teshuva Yeshivas Aish HaTorah.

Eventually, Avrohom met and married an American Gioris (righteous female convert). Avrohom's wife hailed from a small town in Western Illinois. Throughout the time that they were married, Avrohom and his wife would make periodic trips from Eretz Yisroel to visit the wife's family in Illinois. In the course of these visits to Illinois, Avrohom befriended a local resident by the name of Lawrence Robertson (not his real name). Although Lawrence appeared to be a mid-western non-Jew, Lawrence was in fact a Jew, albeit an almost totally assimilated Jew.

Avrohom maintained contact with Lawrence over the course of many years. Through phone calls and letters, and an occasional visit by Avrohom, the two became close friends. Avrohom and Lawrence often spoke about religion. Avrohom was surprised to find out from Lawrence that Lawrence had in fact had roots in the Satmar blend of Chassidus. Lawrence was however far removed from his Chassidic roots, for he lived for the most part a totally secular existence.

Avrohom often gently encouraged the elder Lawrence to increase his Torah observance. Avrohom even sent mezuzas to Lawrence, so that Lawrence should have kosher mezuzas. Despite of all this, Lawrence was never inspired to dedicate his life to Torah and Mitzvahs. Nevertheless, Avrohom and Lawrence maintained a close friendship.

About two years ago, Avrohom lost contact with Lawrence. At first, the 74 or so year old Lawrence did not return phone messages. Soon after, his phone was disconnected. Avrohom sent letters to which he received no response. Being that Avrohom was extremely busy in his personal and professional life, he did make the time to try to find out about what had become of his friend Lawrence.

On December 10th of this year, Lawrence came to his friend Avrohom in a dream. In the dream, Lawrence told his friend Avrohom, that he had passed away exactly two years earlier on the same secular date December 10th. Lawrence begged Avrohom in the dream to "take me out of here." Avrohom woke up sad, fearing that his friend had in fact passed on to the next world. Although, Avrohom was at a loss to explain the words of Lawrence: "take me out of here." When the same dream repeated itself several times, Avrohom began to wonder...

About a week ago, Avrohom's company in Eretz Yisroel sent Avrohom to the Midwest, where the company has business dealings with a large tractor manufacturer. Being that Avrohom was in the area where Lawrence lived, Avrohom searched out Lawrence. Unfortunately, Avrohom found out that his dream came true. Lawrence had in fact passed away two years previous.

Avrohom is a man of action. He took little time in finding out what had happened to his friend's remains. He was told the worst: Lawrence had been cremated, a direct violation of Jewish law. Even worse than that was the fact that the authorities had placed Lawrence's remains in a non-Jewish cemetery. Apparently, Lawrence had no close relatives and the authorities only discovered Lawrence's last will and testament after it was too late.

Avrohom visited the non-Jewish cemetery where he in fact found a grave marker with a Star of David at the head of Lawrence's grave. Avrohom now understood Lawrence's words in the dream "take me out of here." Lawrence wanted to be removed from the non-Jewish cemetery. Lawrence had a plan. It was crazy, but it just might work. However, he needed to enlist the help of someone else in order for the plan to work. He approached a local non-orthodox Rabbi. The Rabbi was shocked at the boldness of Avrohom's plan. Avrohom told the Rabbi "look, if you are a Yid, (Jew), you will do it." It took several hours of convincing, but the Rabbi agreed to help.

That night, late at night, the two slipped quietly into the non-Jewish cemetery, carrying shovels. The ground was frozen and covered with snow. It took a long time, but they managed to dig out the urn containing the remains of Lawrence. The next stop was the local Jewish cemetery. There, in the cold of the early morning hours, they buried Lawrence's remains. Despite the fact that there was no minyan, Avrohom determined that it was an "Ace La'asos L'Hashem" (a time when the Torah may be abridged, in rare circumstances) and he said Kadish for his old friend Lawrence.

Avrohom concluded his story at the Lichter's Shabbos table. All were astounded by Avrohom's dedication to Hashem, to Torah, and most of all, to his friend Lawrence, may he rest in peace. **Good Shabbos Everyone and Happy Chanukah Everyone.**