

From Soul to Soul!

- Great Chofetz Chaim story about cleansing power of teshuvah. (Uploaded by Doniel Kramer)

The following is excerpted from a truly remarkable book entitled *Reb Chatzkel*, on the life of Rabbi Yechezkel Levenstein, Z"tl, by Rabbi Yitzchak Kasnett (Artscroll, 2007). This book is highly recommended: The Chofetz Chaim told several relatives and students that he had a secret to tell them that would reveal a deep and fundamental concept of Torah. However, he would only disclose it at the end of the third watch of the night, just before dawn, and that they should prepare themselves to be present. The Chofetz Chaim's intent in meeting at that hour was his desire that his words should make the greatest possible impression upon his listeners.

Anticipating that their great Rebbe would reveal secrets of the future Redemption, all were gathered and ready. The Chofetz Chaim began by reciting the bracha of "*Elokai Neshamah*" in its entirety, emphasizing the word *LeHachazirah* to return [my soul] to me in the future to come. The Chofetz Chaim explained that the mapik (dot) in the last hey of the word *LeHachazirah* indicates that the very same soul taken from a person at the time of his death is returned to him when the dead are brought back to life. If the soul was befouled by sin during the person's lifetime, it will be returned to him befouled and sullied with spiritual impurities; exactly as it was taken, it will be returned. He further explained that the bond of closeness one establishes with Hashem in this world remains forever, as does the distance from Hashem one creates. This was the great secret the Chofetz Chaim wished to reveal just before dawn that day, when he finished, all of those present said Shema Yisroel with great intensity. •

(Hakhel Email Community Awareness Bulletin - 9/20/11)