

Contacting the Next World

Rabbi Nachum Rabinovitz, an elder chassid who lives in Jerusalem, was once waiting for yechidut (a private audience with the Rebbe). Among those waiting was a young man, obviously wealthy, but wearing a morose and despondent expression.

A short while later, the young man entered the Rebbe's room, and when he emerged, his expression had changed. His face beamed forth energy and vitality.

Curious about this abrupt shift in emotion, when his own yechidut concluded, Reb Nachum inquired about the young man's identity from the Rebbe's secretaries and was able to arrange a meeting.

"I am a wealthy man," the young man told Reb Nachum, "but recently, my only son died. At that point, I felt that my life no longer had any purpose. I saw no value to my wealth or my position.

"I went to the Rebbe for solace and advice.

"The Rebbe asked me what my feelings would be if my son went overseas and was living in a foreign country from which he could not communicate to me, but in which I could be assured that all his needs were being met and he had no suffering at all.

"I answered that although the separation would be difficult to bear, I would be happy for my son.

" 'And although he could not respond, if you could communicate with him and send packages to him,' the Rebbe continued, 'would you do so?'

" 'Of course,' I answered.

" 'This is precisely your present situation,' the Rebbe concluded. 'With every word of prayer you recite, you are sending a message to your son. And with every gift you make to charity or institution which you fund you are sending a package to him. He cannot respond, but he appreciates your words and your gifts.' "

(From: To Know and To Care)