

him why he didn't attend. He said, "I'm a Polisher. In Poland, Brisk was emulated. So if the Brisker Rov is sitting now in Jerusalem and he doesn't attend, how can I attend?"

His son-in-law, Rav Leib Shachar, wore *tzitzis* with *techeiles* because that was the custom of his father-in-law. He was as brilliant as an Einstein. All he did in the States was learn in *Beis Hatalmud*. We used to ride the subway together back to Boro Park from East New York every evening. It must have been at around seven o'clock, when the trains were full. We would talk about the Talmud we had studied that day. He was incapable of anything other than discussing Talmud. He would get very emotional about it. He'd get up on the subway, start talking loudly, and gesticulate with both hands. I'd tell him, "Reb Leib, there are other people here," but he didn't know the difference. He would just keep right on, as loud as ever, and people wouldn't have the faintest idea of what he was talking about. I just couldn't convince him that there were other people around.

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We learned that Rav Leib (Shachar) had lymphatic cancer. He was still ambient but he was terribly ill. Some of us who were close to him made an appointment to speak with one of the specialists at Mt. Sinai Hospital who were on his case. Reb Leib (Malin) went, along with the Amshinover Rebbe, Reb Yerucham Leiner, Reb Shmuel Kharkover, and me. The Amshinover was known as Reb Shimmaleh *Oheiv Yisroel* (the lover of Israel). He was a very unassuming man. They took me along to be the spokesman because I knew English. They wanted advice.

The doctor we spoke to was a Jew, a very respectable man. One of those present asked, "Doctor, is there still hope?"

The doctor looked at all the bearded Jews in front of him and said, "You gentlemen are asking *me* this? I'll tell you a little story. Just a few weeks ago a lady was here with a big tumor. Two weeks ago she left without any malignancy at all. I can't give you any medical reason why. You probably have some sort of answer."

A bit later I went with Goldie to Denver to raise money for *Beis Hatalmud*. It was the first time I had ever flown. I got a phone call from Reb Leib (Malin) telling me to come back right away because of Rav Leib (Shachar). I was present in the hospital room when he died. Reb Leib's (Malin) alter ego, Rab Chaim Vissoker, was also there, but he was a *kohen* so he ran out of the room when he saw the end was approaching.

Rav Leib said *Shma Yisroel* with fervor right before he passed away.

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RAV SHLOMO FISHER

Rav Shlomo Fisher is a member of my faculty and one of the most brilliant Talmudists of this generation. He was born and raised in the heart of Meah Shearim, but he has connections with Religious Zionist institutions. I once came into Rav Shach, and he started calling Rav Shlomo a *kalyekker* (someone not firmly devoted to the purest Torah ideals). I was annoyed, but I didn't say anything. This happened a

second time. I said to myself then, "If this happens again, I have to do something about it." It happened again. So I went into Rav Shlomo's room here in the yeshivah, and I took out a letter written by the Steipler in which he calls Rav Shlomo "*pe'er hador*" (the glory of the generation). Next time I went to Rav Shach, he said again that Rav Shlomo is a *kalyekker*. I said, "Rav Shach, listen to me. The Steipler is also a *kalyekker*." He looked at me like I was crazy, but then I showed him the letter. I never heard any more complaints about Rav Shlomo. I told this to Rav Shlomo and it didn't mean a thing to him. The only thing he cares about is understanding the Torah.

Then there was a time when a member of my own staff came to me with similar objections. He wanted me to get rid of Rav Shlomo. He quotes Bialik, Nietzsche, and all sorts of other things that are generally unacceptable in yeshivos. I told him, "You're right, but I've got one problem. You and me, we can teach these boys here how to understand Talmud. But there's a lot more to education than that. Who's going to teach these kids about purity, humility, and integrity? You? Me? That's what we need Rav Shlomo for." The guy chuckled and agreed with me.