

# Now You're Talking!

written by Yehudis Golshevsky  
March 20, 2014



Reb Hershel Tepliker, a successful and sharp Breslover businessman, had been a bit wayward in his youth. Along with many young Jews of his time, he was forcibly inducted into the army. Since he was naturally frail, life as a soldier was extremely difficult for him. When his unit was ordered to load and lug huge sacks of sand, he felt sure he would keel over and expire under his staggering burden.

"Hashem!" he cried out in earnest prayer. "If You save me, I promise to return to You and be an outstanding Jew!" Miraculously, he was released from service soon afterward.

He tried to fulfill his commitment to the best of his ability, wandering through the Ukraine until he came to Uman. He understood that to keep strong he would have to become part of

a community, but he had no idea which one to choose. So he decided to visit every synagogue in Uman to see where he felt most at home.

He entered one synagogue and approached a few men who were chatting together. In those tumultuous times, it was no surprise that they were talking about the war. Each man spouted quotes from the papers: what one leader allegedly said, how this politician reacted, and so on. Reb Hershel drifted to other corners of the synagogue, where it seemed like everyone was having the same conversation, presenting different perspectives of current events. His visits to other synagogues yielded similar results.

Entering the Breslover *kloyz*, he also saw people talking. Eavesdropping on one conversation, he was intrigued to find that they were earnestly speaking about serving God. Reb Hershel figured they were crazy. After all, who could focus on spiritual matters in such uncertain times?

Listening in on other conversations, he grew increasingly amazed to find what seemed to be an entire synagogue filled with men speaking not about the war, but about their Divine service! Reb Hershel was a very practical man. "If these chassidim can stay focused on the spiritual in the middle of a war, I've found the place for me!"

*Siach Sarfey Kodesh VII, 230*