

# Reb Noson's Last Will and Testament

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Rebbe Nachman once said of Reb Noson, "If not for Noson, not a shred of even one of page of my teachings would have been preserved!" The day of Reb Noson's passing, the tenth of Tevet, hints to the greatness of the task that he undertook. For the fast of the Tenth of Tevet commemorates not only the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem, but the passing of Ezra the Scribe.

It was Friday and Reb Noson was very ill. He asked those who were with him to read two of Rebbe Nachman's famous tales, "The Lost Princess" and "The King and the Emperor." In "The Lost Princess," the king's daughter disappears and his viceroy searches for a tortuously long time until he finally finds her. He must release her from a "pearl castle on a golden mountain."

In "The King and the Emperor," the king's son is engaged to the emperor's daughter, but she is abducted before they can

marry. The story describes her escape and how she contrives to become the ruler of a kingdom and bring back her long-lost fiancé. After rewarding those who suffered because of her, she turns to her fiancé and says, "Come! Let us go home!"

Reb Noson asked those who were with him to repeat these final words several times. Then he said, "It is my time to go home."

He spoke as if giving his last will and testament: "You must keep together and love one another. You are all good people, but you are *shlimazelniks*—unlucky!"

Suddenly Reb Noson said, "Three tragedies befell the Jewish people in the month of Tevet. What were they? Ezra the Scribe passed away, the Torah was translated into Greek in the time of King Ptolemy, and Jerusalem was besieged.

"When Ezra the Scribe leaves the world, and atheism and heresy engulf the world, as we find today, with false ideologies springing up in their thousands and myriads ... still, I trust that even one page of Rebbe Nachman's writings will be enough to rectify everything! I therefore want to give you instructions. Your work will be to *print the Rebbe's books*, and 'Your wellsprings will flow outward' (Proverbs 5:16). Be strong – with money, willpower and effort!"

*From "Through Fire and Water," pp. 542-543*