

Rebbe Nachman's Stories: The Tainted Grain

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The king's star gazer saw that the grain harvested that year was tainted. Anyone who would eat from it would become insane. "What can we do?" said the king. "It is not possible to destroy the crop for we do not have enough grain stored to feed the entire population."

"Perhaps," said the star gazer, "we should set aside enough grain for ourselves. At least that way we could maintain our sanity." The king replied, "If we do that, we'll be considered crazy. If everyone behaves one way and we behave differently, we'll be considered the not normal ones."

"Rather," said the king, "I suggest that we too eat from the crop, like everyone else. However, to remind ourselves that we are not normal, we will make a mark on our foreheads. Even if we are insane, whenever we look at each other, we will remember that we are insane!"

Translated by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan.

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