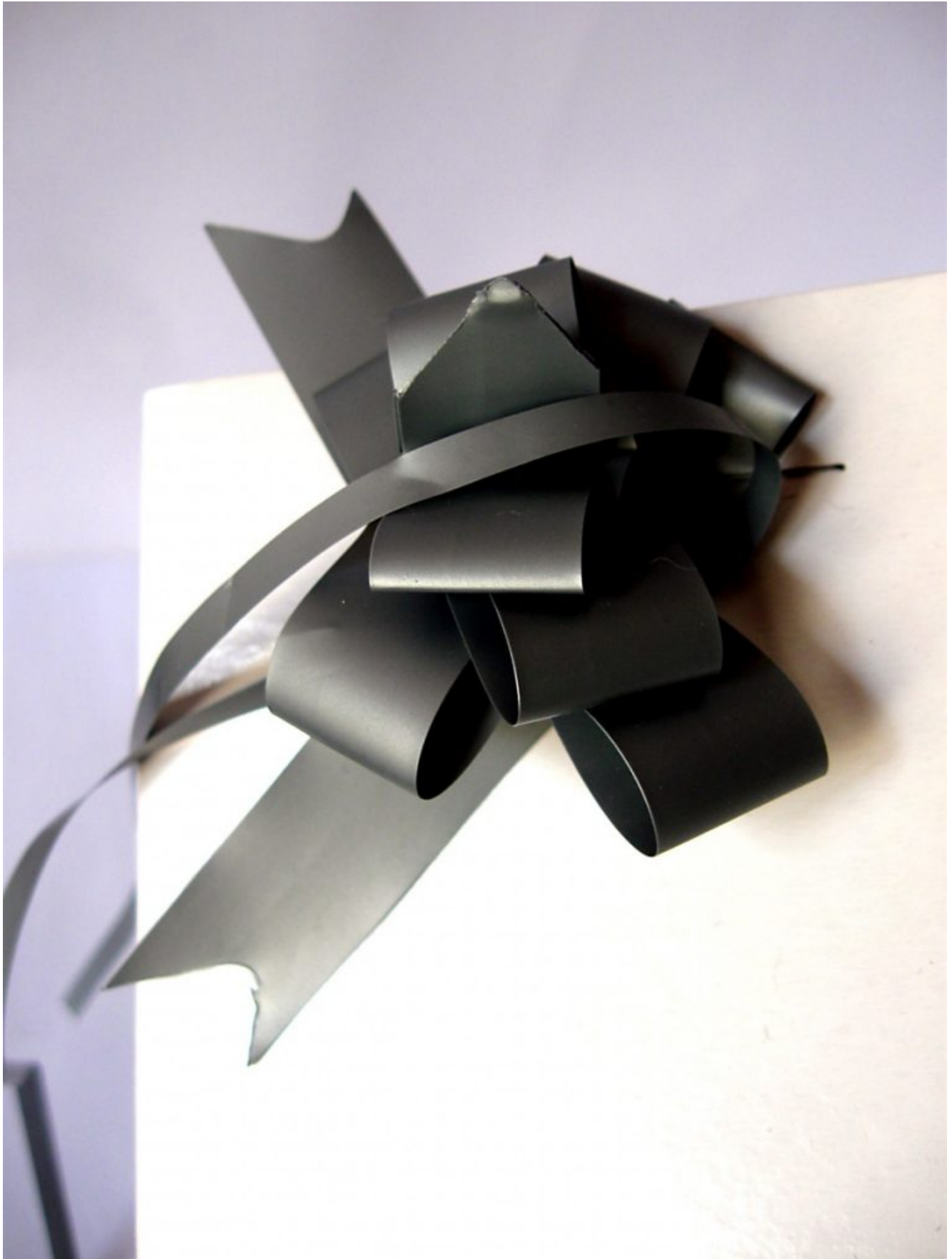


# **The Gift of Giving**

written by Yehudis Golshevsky

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**Rebbe Nachman of Breslov taught...**

*Reb Nosson wrote: "Please, my son, apply yourself diligently and determinedly to your studies. Devote several hours to study each day. You should also read Psalms and extra prayers and express yourself daily before G-d... If He grants your requests, very well. If not, not. Our joy is to stand before Him like a destitute beggar and to plead with Him to rescue our souls ~ not because we have earned it, but out of His pure lovingkindness." ([Healing Leaves, p. 88](#))*

**What does this mean to me?**

The last of Rebbe Nachman's thirteen tales is called The Seven Beggars, and it is a master work of symbolism, mysticism, narrative and inspiration. The story is also extremely complex, with numerous sub-stories and an almost holographic structure; it is acknowledged as a classic of world literature, aside from its significance to the Jewish people as a wellspring of wisdom. The seven beggars are the archetypes of seven *tzaddikim*—the seven shepherds, as they are also known—and each of them plays a role in the rectification of the individual and the world. In the original Yiddish, the word for beggar is *bettler*—not just a collector of charity, but a beggar in the sense of pleading and beseeching. The seven beggars are all accomplished *bettlers*—their identity is linked to their power of prayer. When we know that prayer is begging, it keeps us aware that we have nothing, and that we are dependent upon G-d for everything. As Reb Nosson emphasized in his letter to his son, it is a privilege to serve G-d; doing so doesn't give us "points." No matter what we have accomplished or failed to accomplish, when we stand before G-d the simplest person and the greatest *tzaddik* have at least this in common—we are simple beggars, depending on His lovingkindness.

**A prayer:**

*Dear G-d, open my eyes to see the countless amazing miracles You perform for me constantly. Open my mind to understand that what appears to be the natural order of things is in truth miraculous in every way. Your guiding Hand directs and empowers me in everything I do. (Gentle Weapon\*, p. 78)*

We encourage hearing your feedback and may anonymously publish your remarks. Please send

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