

# What Made Me a Breslover

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May 23, 2021



*Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld, zt"l, was the great-great-grandson of Rabbi Aharon of Breslov, one of the two witnesses to Rebbe Nachman's famous pledge that he would save whoever came to his grave, recited the Tikkun HaKlali, and pledged a coin to charity. But while he was raised in a staunch Breslov home in the United States, the young Zvi Aryeh didn't feel the excitement of being a Breslover ... until one transformational experience.*

Every Shabbat, my father would say a *shiur* in *Likutey Moharan* and try to impress upon me the fact that it's important being a Breslover. But it's difficult to inject *emunah* (faith) into a person, because everyone has freedom of belief. A person believes or doesn't believe according to his own whim. It's easier, of course, when you're brought up in a Breslov home and you go to yeshivah and learn.

Also, at that time, the type of learning then was different than it is today. I would safely say that an elementary student then knew more Gemara than a regular high school student at a yeshivah does now. But the interest in learning about Breslov did not reach a peak of excitement or feeling. It was matter of *mitzvas anashim milimada*, sort of lip service...

I got to a point where I felt that I wanted something more. I wanted to have a little more religion, a little more abstinence from pleasures, and this suddenly happened one night.

I began to think. The fact was that I was the son of one of the leading Breslovers in the world, and there must be something to it. Why not look into it a little more?

That night I selected the *sefer Hishtapkhut HaNefesh* (Outpouring of the Soul), which deals with the topic of *hitbodedut*. It's a selection of statements about *hitbodedut*, praying to God in private, from different Breslov books. The introduction describes Rebbe Nachman's custom in this practice of *hitbodedut*, and how he became great through *hitbodedut*

I began to read that very slowly, very carefully, and when I got to a certain very brief paragraph, something suddenly happened. It's difficult to describe. I felt somehow the gates of Heaven were opened.