

The RYS Daily 1/23/07 Kovna XI

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To this Yeshivah, which had become transformed into a Bet Midrash for the acquisition of Musar and the true fear of Heaven, students came flocking from all over Russia. From it, the Musar doctrine radiated far and wide.

A few lines written by one of his disciples about his experiences at the time deserve to be quoted, as affording some idea of the magnitude of the impression he created: "It was I, who a few years ago set my eyes on our Master... when he would sit and pour forth the refreshing dew of D-vine Musar, the moral lesson, to the hearts of those listening. I was vouchsafed the merit, then, to observe his holy ways in the discipline of Musar and the fear of G-d. At the time I saw my world — the world of truth — in my own lifetime. There I found my soul standing under a new heaven and upon a new earth. And one single person on earth, towering above everyone else, standing and offering service to Him Who resides above, his lips pouring out knowledge in delight-giving holiness, uncovering the veil of secrecy. So Truth came out of her hiding - clear and illuminating — and lit up the darkness of the imagination. The shadows of falsehood fled from before her, and my own darkness, too, was to some extent lit up. I have cherished his holy memory ever since. It will not be eradicated from my heart all the days I endure on earth. My heart always rejoices that at one stage of the years of my lifetime on this earth, Hashem called me to enjoy the light of that luminary of the world! And he gave me light! For he was sent as a sign from Heaven to this generation of ours, to strengthen weak hands and make firm stumbling knees. A gem — the D-vine wisdom — was suspended over his heart, and whoever gazed upon it was cured of all his spiritual ills:" [14]

[14] R. Joseph Feldberg, rabbi of Jurbarkas, in the introduction to the R. Israel Salanter memorial volume, Kedosh Yisrael.

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