



# חסידים הראשונים

## Stories of the Early Chassidim

### Reb Michael Aharon – a Chasidische businessman

*The chassid Reb Michael Aharon Pisarevsky was an average businessman. He was never poor, but at times he was rich, making a lot of money, and at times he was just average. There was nothing special about his knowledge of the revealed Torah and Chassidus. He used to come to the public Shiurim and Droschos, and also had a regular time set up when he would learn in private. His personality, however, was another matter. He was a very spirited individual with a "chassidic heart," always concerned with the welfare of others.*

One of Reb Michael Aharon's friends was the chassid Reb Nachman Lipa Zeltzer, a storekeeper who knew a lot of Torah, both Nigleh and Chassidus. He taught classes in Mishnayos and in Likkutei Torah at the shul, and on Shabbos he spent a long time davening in the Chassidische way. But he had a large family, including sons and daughters of marriageable age, and at that time he was very poor.

When Reb Michael Aharon went in to the Rebbe for Yechidus, the first subject he mentioned was his friend Reb Nachman Lipa Zeltzer. He described how poor he was, and the fact that his sons and daughters were of the age when they should get married. He discussed this at length, and begged for Rachmonus for him. The Rebbe gave his Bracha that Hashem would help him, and would change his situation that instead of being poor, he will be rich. Reb Michael Aharon begged the Rebbe to guarantee that this Bracha would forsure become true.

Afterward, Reb Michael Aharon began to discuss his own situation. As he described his business dealings, the Rebbe was able to see that his business was in a sad state, and that he was poor and even owed money to other people. "If that's how things are," said the Rebbe, "then it seems that you're even worse off than Reb Nachman Lipa."

"Well, about myself, I know that I don't deserve anything better," said Reb Michael Aharon. "Therefore, it is forbidden to complain about my situation, and I will have to be satisfied with what I have."

The Rebbe covered his holy eyes with his hands and thought for a short while. Then he said, "If one davens for his fellow Jew, his own prayers are answered first.' May Hakadosh Baruch Hu grant you success."

Reb Michael Aharon was telling over this story and he finished it in the following way:

What do you think happened next? Nachman Lipa suddenly became a success! Avraham Shalom the linen merchant suggested to him that - besides his store - he should trade in linens on the side. Reb Avraham Shalom's expertise in the linen business is legendary, and within half a year Reb Nachman Lipa became very wealthy.

"I myself also began to have unusual success, both in my regular business, and on the side. Even when I suggested a shidduch to two of my friends, it worked out and they paid me a generous shadchonus gelt, which was completely unexpected. At year's end - with the Rebbe's consent and according to his instructions - I purchased two mansions across the river, along with surrounding estates."

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