

Clarification of Rabbi Yisroel Odesser's Shlichus to our Generation

Dear Friends,

In honor of the Yahrzeit of Rabbi Odesser on 18MarCheshvan, I wish to offer the following comments and observations. What follows may not be pleasant to all of you to read; but believe me it is offered with love and fervent hope for the Ge'ula, which as Rebbe Nachman says depends on Coming Close to the True Tzaddikim of the Generation, and on elevating the Truth over falsehood.

First let me start by saying that Rabbi Odesser, ztza"l (Hebrew abbreviation meaning: "May the memory of a Tzaddik [Perfectly Righteous and Holy Person] be for a blessing") was an awesome figure, a Torah Giant as well as a Mystic, in the fullest sense of the word. In his later years he suffered terribly from various ailments, and was confined to a wheelchair. He also was extremely guarded in his speech and actions. He would reveal to us only the tiniest drop of his true thoughts, desires, and hopes. Therefore it is difficult for anyone to try to speak with "authority" about him. If you talk to any one of the perhaps hundreds of people who knew him first hand, each would present a different slant on Rabbi Odesser and ideas. Each also risks coloring his perceptions with the distortions of his own personality flaws. This is another way of saying that sometimes we would have major misunderstandings about Rabbi Odesser, and he would actually let these misperceptions stand for reasons only he knew. Thus no-one really can speak authoritatively about Rabbi Odesser in the end. He viewed us all as children, a mixture of good and bad. He worked hard to try to wean us from the bad and to let flourish the good. Yet his ways of relating to people were mysterious and had the aura of a master psychologist with awesome understanding of human nature. And this from a man who spent the majority of his time in solitude, meditating and praying in the splendid isolation of Israel's parks and forests!

What I gleaned from Rabbi Odesser is the following. I saw that he stressed three main points:

1. That saying "Na Nach Nachma Nachman Me'Uman" is a powerful spiritual "segula" (Hebrew meaning "remedy") that could help a person overcome all sorts of negative thoughts, feelings, ruminations. It also could achieve minor miracles for a person in times of danger or trouble. I myself find that singing Na Nach to various melodies that I like (each one to fit a different mood and time) helps me feel more positive and generates energy and determination within me. Many so-called serious Torah scholars laugh at us, but the fact is that every Jew, no matter how pious and learned, has large periods of transitional time, such as when he is travelling or walking or shopping or dealing with his children and family when it is not possible to open a book. Na Nach fills these periods with the joy of song and the holiness of this unique Kabalistic formula for expressing the name of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov. It is the ultimate weapon to ensure that we always are in touch with our Creator and with our own souls.

2. Acquiring and learning from Rebbe Nachman's books. In this sense Rabbi Odesser seemed to use Na Nach as a sort of advertising slogan to persuade the public of the greatness of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov (Breslov was where he spent most of his years as a Chassidic Rebbe; Uman was where he lived his last half-year of life and

died and was buried--on the 18 Tishray, in the middle of the Holiday of Succoth) and to encourage them to buy his books and to learn from them and to implement their advise. Rabbi Odesser believed that Rebbe Nachman was akin literally to the Bible's Moses, and he required equal reverence from us in order to help us and to lead us and the entire world into its Final Redemption. Rabbi Odesser was uncompromising in his scorn of those who doubted or even denigrated Rebbe Nachman, G-d forbid, and would accuse such persons of the greatest evil, claiming that their reluctance to embrace the Truth stemmed from their arrogance and that they imperilled all of Israel and the World with their obstinate denial of the light of Rebbe Nachman's teachings. He even would term such persons "Hitler" and claimed that they literally were greater enemies to Israel and the World than the demon Hitler himself. (Concerning this, please see Letter #59 from Rabbi Odesser's book of letters to Israeli President Shazar, Ibay HaNachal at: <http://www.breslov.com/netzach/ibey059.html> (another web-site about Rabbi Odesser) or browse yourself through the letters at: http://www.moharan.com/pages_ang/letters.htm One letter I reproduce for you here:

THE WAR AGAINST HAMAN-AMALEK*

With G*d's Help
12 Adar 5724

In honor of the President of Israel, the daughter of my eye and my heart, Mr. Sh. Z. Shazar, who merited with mercy and great miracles from Hashem to feel a sharp feeling and to believe to believe in the True Tzaddik, father of the Sages and head of all the choice Tzaddikim, singular in their generations. And who digs with powerful exertions, with a heart burning and firing like a coal of fire to enlarge and to publicize throughout the world the name of the Tzaddik, the Master of the world and the grace and glory and loveliness and beauty of the whole world, who reveals and illuminates G*d's Divinity to everyone in the world. And through whom will be the complete rectification of the world. May Hashem finish what He began to do amazingly with you, such amazing wonders, until you will merit to behold the pleasantness of Hashem. And the main rectification of the world in each and every generation is only through [the Tzaddik].

Everyone knows that nothing is fixed in this world. And everyone will be forced to depart from here in the passing of a quick moment. For all of time is not considered even like a moment to one who puts his heart and his mind well to the flight of time, more than a bird in flight. And we need to strengthen ourselves greatly in order that we not forget all the goodnesses and kindnesses and miracles and wonders that Hashem Yisborach has shown to you. Be very very careful and guard your soul greatly not to forget at any moment the powerful kindness and mercy that Hashem Yisborach has done for you to draw you near to the True Tzaddik. Indeed all our days would not suffice to give thanks and praise for what Hashem Yisborach has done for you. Grab and eat, grab and eat the foods of the Tzaddik each and every day, as much as is possible, even in all the business and great preoccupations that you have.

The husk of Haman-Amalek wants to gain power in every generation, through heresies and atheism, through the questions and investigations that are impossible to answer now in any way. But Hashem Yisborach

fighters against him in every generation and suppresses him through the True Tzaddik, the aspect of Moses and Mordechai, who merited to such a great level until he can draw down the Holy Unity also into the very very distant places, into the force of the strengthened heresies and secular wisdoms of vanity that awaken and renew themselves in every generation in these our generations.

The Author

3. Publishing and distributing Rebbe Nachman's books to the general public. This was perhaps the sine qua non for Rabbi Odesser. And he insisted that the books be printed at cost and sold at cost. Since he died in Oct. 1994 (18 Cheshvan 5755), two major groups have emerged that spend great time and effort trying to fulfill this idea. Between them they have sold almost 2 million books, pamphlets, tapes, and posters to the Israeli public, a publishing feat in general, and even more so in the Orthodox world, with its more limited market. These books are sold literally at cost. For example, they might sell Likutay Moharan (Rebbe Nachman's Master work) for 30 shekels, when a book of its size and scope would fetch 100 shekels in a regular bookstore. This goal was part of (2) above, a way of bringing Rebbe Nachman's light into the homes and hearts of every Jew. It seemed that Rabbi Odesser viewed saying Na Nach as a preliminary to this step, although it had great value in its own right as well as a sort of Jewish super-mantra.

4. Rosh HaShana and the grave of Rebbe Nachman. This is the most precarious and obscure of the legacy of ideas that Rabbi Odesser left us with. It is a sacred part of Breslov teachings to gather by the grave of Rebbe Nachman in Uman on the eve of Rosh HaShana (a traditional time in all Orthodox sects to visit graves of Tzaddikim and to pray for mercy) and to pray on Rosh Hashanah itself together. When Breslovers were centered in the Ukraine they all made great efforts to travel to Uman to implement this teaching.

This prevailed throughout the 19th Century. Later, following the Soviet Communist Revolution, when the borders were closed, the Breslovers in Eastern Europe would gather together in Lublin, a prominent Jewish city in Poland, for Rosh Hashanah. With Rebbe Nachman's grave inaccessible to them, they sufficed with prayers and meals together in Poland. Breslovers regarded Rosh Hashanah as a holy obligation, upon which depended the fortune of the entire year to come. Rebbe Nachman himself said (written in books) that he could make spiritual rectifications on Rosh Hashanah that even he could not do the rest of the year, and that all of his followers were obligated to come to him for Rosh Hashanah, even after his death. The Breslovers would sacrifice greatly to be near Rebbe Nachman's grave, and when this was impossible at least to be together. (Incidentally, this convocation is called in Hebrew "Kibbutz" and is the source for the modern Hebrew word meaning a socialist type commune.)

The problems begin with Eretz Yisroel, the Land of Israel, for here there are two seemingly incompatible contradictions in Rebbe Nachman's teachings. One is the primacy of the Rosh Hashanah Kibbutz in Uman; the other is the absolute necessity for every Jew to live in the Land of Israel. This latter point is stressed repeatedly throughout Rebbe Nachman's teachings. Thus we are faced with a dilemma of living in Eretz Yisroel in great distance from Rebbe Nachman's grave in Uman. Please remember that in the 19th century the journey to Uman from Israel was long and perilous. To travel there for Rosh Hashanah meant leaving a month early and

returning a month late, missing all the Festivals that follow Rosh Hashanah. One great Breslover leader in Jerusalem actually died in Uman following Rosh Hashanah and was buried there. Another actually refused to travel to Uman for Rosh Hashanah for fear of dying there and being forced to be buried outside of the Land of Israel. It is said that Rebbe Nachman's own attendant, Rabbi Shimon, left Uman and moved to Israel after the Rebbe's death in 1810. He never even attempted to return to Uman, even just for Rosh Hashanah. Critics reply that eventually he meant an untimely and harsh death, when he was murdered amidst meditation by an Arab marauder. Perhaps a punishment for avoiding Uman?

The problems intensify in more modern times. For 70 years the Soviet borders were sealed shut and Uman was all but inaccessible. A very few attempted to visit the grave and sometimes were allowed half-an-hour by the Soviet authorities there. Suddenly in 1989 a large gathering was allowed to take place in Uman for Rosh Hashanah. About 1000 people visited there. Since then the conditions have steadily improved and the numbers have grown, until almost 8000 prayed there this year on Rosh Hashanah. The Breslovers have created a Central Committee to oversee construction of a huge shul in Uman, housing, and other facilities. It seems that they want Uman to be the center for Judaism in all the former Soviet Union, much as New York serves that role in America.

(Please see:

1. <http://www.shamash.org/jb/bk960920/ivisit.htm>
2. <http://www.shamash.org/jb/bk990910/ustinyukraine.shtml>)

I caution you that rumors are that there is tremendous graft in Uman, with huge payoffs to the Mayor and Police, and other exorbitant bribes in order to allow the Breslovers to "do their thing." I myself merited to visit Uman ten times in the span of four years, and I saw wonderful things there. However since Rabbi Odesser died I have ceased to travel there. This is a personal and painful story that I cannot go into now. You should realize, however, that when thousands of chassidim visit Uman, with their fur hats, their Festival food, and their money it places considerable strain on relations with the locals, who largely are poor and very simple. It is an incongruous mix of realities, one that I grew increasingly wary of. Of course the officials of Uman welcome the gathering (and the payoffs they receive) but it's hard to know if it is an appropriate thing in the eyes of the local people.

Rabbi Odesser was insistent about the kibbutz in Uman. However the problem is that he also was insistent that the official Breslov leadership was corrupt and unreliable. The reason for that is their opposition to and denigration of Rabbi Odesser's "Letter from Heaven" and its song Na NAch. This requires a long and separate discussion to try to explain. Let me state now that since Rabbi Odesser's death, his followers have split into two: one group continues to travel to Uman for Rosh Hashanah. They pray and eat together there, apart from the thousands of official Chassidim, who largely belittle our group. They are stubborn that this is Rabbi Odesser's will, to travel to Rebbe Nachman's grave even if the others in the group are your detractors and opponents.

Another group remains in Israel, prays at Rabbi Odesser's grave on Rosh Hashanah eve, and prays together at the Western Wall on rosh Hashanah itself. They eat and sleep in a Yeshiva in the Old City of Jerusalem, near the Wall. This group claims that when Rabbi Odesser died he received the full spiritual gifts of Rebbe Nachman, and just as he was his messenger in his lifetime (as it says in the Petek: "My precious student" <http://www.moharan.com/album_photos/petites/13.jpg>), so has he

become Rebbe Nachman's messenger in his death. In other words: Rabbi Odesser's grave site has the equivalent spiritual power and segula as Rebbe Nachman's in Uman:

http://www.moharan.com/album_photos/grandes/g23.jpg

Personally I find this view more compelling, for a number of reasons:

1. It is logical to assume that if Rabbi Odesser was Rebbe Nachman's messenger in his lifetime, then he continues to be so in his death. The Petek clearly terms Rabbi Odesser "My precious student" and singles him out as the only true representative of Rebbe Nachman in our generation.
2. Rabbi Odesser had a Messianic fervor that no other personality in Breslov has. He was filled with fervent optimism about the Jewish Nation, and he was able to embrace even the most alienated Jew as no one else can.
3. The people who subscribe to this latter view are themselves the most aggressive and forceful purveyors of Rabi Odesser's message in the world. They seem to draw tremendous confidence and inspiration from their Kibbutz in Jerusalem.
4. Finally and perhaps most importantly, Rabbi Odesser's grave is accessible to everyone in Israel, and in the whole world. As successful as the gathering in Uman is, still even 10 thousand people is a tiny percentage of world Jewry. And Rabbi Odesser insisted that every Jew must receive his Tikkun (rectification) through Rebbe Nachman's grave. The trip to Uman is expensive (with all costs included it runs close to \$800), and is still dominated by the cloistered Me'a she'arim type Chassidim. The average Israeli, who might have a pony tail and earrings, would not consider joining with them for Rosh Hashanah.

However there are important problems with this view, which I will try to describe:

1. On Rosh Hashanah 1992 Rabbi Odesser declared (in Uman) that "Uman is finished," and that in the future Rosh Hashanah would take place in Jerusalem. He viewed this as part of the final redemption: that the Kibbutz should shift back to Israel.
2. Rabbi Odesser once told me personally, when I asked him about the wisdom of a certain person travelling to Uman: "That is good, but how much better would it be if Rebbe Nachman's grave were brought here [to Israel]."
3. Rabbi Odesser made certain efforts, even meeting with then-Israeli President Chaim Hertzog in the summer of 1992, to secure Israeli Governmental assistance to actively exhume and transfer Rebbe Nachman's body to Israel. In Feb. 1993, at an official state meeting between President Hertzog and Ukrainian President Krupchik in Jerusalem, an agreement was announced authorizing this transfer. Immediately thereafter elements of Breslov in Me'a She'arim intervened, with the assistance of Orthodox Keneset member Menachem Porush (a renowned oponent to Breslov!), to convince the Ukrainian President to retract his agreement, and the deal was cancelled.
4. The roots of this problem go even deeper. Rebbe Nachman states (Chayay Moharan (Rebbe Nachman's official biography) #162 that his had wished to die and be buried in Israel, but that two things prevented this:

1) His fear that, owing to his great weakness from tuberculosis, he would die on the ship journeying there and his body would be thrown overboard to the sea, as was the custom in those days.

2) His concern that his followers, all of whom then lived in the Ukraine, would be unable to visit his gravesite owing to the perilous and difficult journey to Israel. He wished to remain close to his followers and that his gravesite serve as a focal point of prayer for them.

5. Rebbe Nachman visited Israel in 1798, when he was 26 years old. He wished to go straight to Jerusalem, but for various reasons was prevented by the Turkish authorities and was forced to stay in the Galilee. He spent most of his time in Tiberias. In 1888 Rabbi Odesser was born in Tiberias to a prominent Chassidic family (not Breslov, as Breslov was virtually unknown in Israel, and the few elements that were here were reviled by the Chassidic community at large). In 1922, still in Tiberias, he received his Petek terming him "My precious student" and revealing Na Nach. Thus one could argue that Rebbe Nachman, who himself had arrived as far as Tiberias but had been thwarted in his goal to reach Jerusalem, "passed the baton" on to Rabbi Odesser (in the form of the Petek, which contains many allusions to a Rebbe's appointing his student as his successor), whose own burial in Jerusalem represented the culmination of Rebbe Nachman's own dream.

6. Rebbe Nachman entered Uman on 5 Iyar in 1810. 138 years later to the date this became Israel Independence Day: 5 Iyar 1948. 138 has profound mystical connotations with regard to the Messiah and the Redemption.

7. Rebbe Nachman died at 38; Rabbi Odesser at 106. Together they lived 144 years, a number that has profound significance and that is alluded to in the Song Na Nach. Thus one might argue that these two Tzaddikim together fulfilled a sort of joint-mission.

8. Rabbi Odesser was born a few months before Hitler, of accursed memory. The year in which he received the Petek, 1922, marked the beginning of Hitler's public diatribes in Munich against the Jews. Hitler committed suicide on Lag B'Omer of 1945 (18 Iyar, the Yahrzeit of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, author of the Zohar, and a great mystical Festival to this day; last year hundreds of thousands of Jews visited his gravesite in Miron in northern Israel on Lag B'Omer), when Rabbi Odesser almost surely was one of the few persons who prayed there at the gravesite in Miron. When I knew him in the early 1990s, Rabbi Odesser frequently would speak about Hitler's spirit and the tremendous danger he posed to the Jewish People. He seemed to have a personal mission in this world to uproot and destroy Hitler in specific and Amalek (his evil spiritual kin) in general. This process is one of the important tasks of the Messiah.

9. Two years ago I had a very vivid dream in which it was revealed to me that the Arizal (Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, founder of modern Kabbalah and buried in Tzefat in northern Israel) is Messiah from Joseph, and Rabbi Odesser, buried in Jerusalem, is Messiah from David. Virtually every Orthodox Jew accepts that the Arizal was in fact Messiah from Joseph, as he himself alluded shortly before his death. Based on this I place credence in the latter revelation that Rabbi Odesser was Messiah from David.

10. Rebbe Nachman said that his song (NA NACH) would be revealed in the world by the greatest Tzaddik of the generation. He also said that there would be nothing new until the Messiah, implying that the Messiah would stand on a sort of equivalent

status to Rebbe Nachman himself.

11. Rabbi Odesser said that anyone who repudiated the authenticity of his Petek and the Song Na NACH was a heretic and had no true bond to Rebbe Nachman's teachings and was not really Jewish! It is an indisputable fact that the trip to Uman to this day is run by the most vitriolic and acerbic detractors of Rabbi Odesser, which makes it difficult for any Na Nacher to participate with them.

Now I wish to discuss the opposition to the Petek. Rabbi Odesser's story is clearly recorded for all to see. He describes the circumstances leading to his discovery of the Petek, insisting that he found it in a locked bookcase that only he had access to (because his fellow Yeshiva students were opposed to Breslov, and would try to steal his books!). He also insists that no one knew these circumstances, that are alluded to in the Petek.

The detractors claim that Rabbi Odesser's Rabbis saw his depression and worried for him, so much so that they wrote the Petek in an effort to encourage him. This version is implausible for the following reasons:

1. Rabbi Odesser claims to have found the Petek in his locked bookcase, to which he and only he had a key.
2. He had revealed to no one that he had eaten on a fast day, which is clearly alluded to in the Petek. ("The sign is on the 17th of Tammuz they will say that you are not fasting.")
3. The Petek contains many powerful allusions to some of Rebbe Nachman's most profound teachings. It is inconceivable that even a well-meaning Rabbi of the Yeshiva, who was not learned in Breslov teachings and in fact opposed the group, could write such words. Anyone with a modicum of intelligence and spiritual sensitivity should be able to understand this.
4. Rabbi Odesser claimed that the head of the Tiberias Chassidic community, Rabbi Mordechai of Slonim, himself an ardent opponent of Breslov, made a full inquiry into who had "written" the Petek. He discovered no one, and determined that it was in fact true and authentic. A fellow student of Rabbi Odesser at that time, a certain Rabbi Avraham Ashkenazi who lives in Benei Berak, claims to have been sent by Rabbi Mordechai to inquire of every household in Tiberias (which then was a tiny community of perhaps 100 Orthodox families). He found no one who admitted responsibility for this "prank", and based on this investigation Rabbi Mordechai concluded that the story was completely true. A friend of mine in Jerusalem, Rafael Zeitlin, an American Torah scholar, interviewed Rabbi Ashkenazi a few years ago. You may phone him at: 972.2.571.2724 to confirm this story.
5. The opponents claim that a certain Yoel Ashkenazi, Avraham's brother, actually wrote the Petek as a well-intentioned "prank" on Rabbi Odesser. However Avraham denies this. In addition Yoel has been deceased for twenty years, and when pressed the detractors can produce no hard evidence to substantiate their claim. Yoel himself certainly is unavailable for questioning.
6. Rabbi Odesser received a forceful recommendation from Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, the world's leading Halachic Authority, in New York in 1985, who writes of the Petek that he has seen "a secret document, a wondrous thing" and that Rabbi Odesser is a "genius in the field of Kabbalah."

<http://www.moharan.com/album_photos/petites/21.jpg>

7. The Talmud records a number of cases of Peteks falling from Heaven. These are recorded in a few books in Hebrew. I can try to provide you with references if you wish.

Now I will describe to you my understanding of why the detractors continue to villify Rabbi Odesser:

1. Almost all of them will concede that Rabbi Odesser was an awesome Tzaddik with great knowledge of Rebbe Nachman's teachings and great powers of prayer. However, they insist that the Petek is a fantastical delusion.

2. Almost all the detractors come from or were taught by Breslovers who grew up in Uman before coming to live in Israel in the early part of this century. Rabbi Odesser himself was taught by the great Tzaddik, Rabbi Yisroel Karduner, who had lived for many years in Uman and was steeped in Breslov wisdom and tradition. However many of the detractors seem to view Rabbi Odesser as an outsider, born in a poor village in Israel to a family of non-Breslover Chassidim. They cannot conceive of how a person from his background could merit to receive a Petek and to be ordained therein as Rebbe Nachman's "precious student". (I believe this is akin to the 18 century opposition to the Ba'al Shem Tov by the Lithuanian Torah scholars, who could not fathom how one could learn Torah mystically in the woods without constant guidance from a teacher. Incidentally a similar claim was made against Moses by the elders of the Jewish community in Egypt when he returned after a 60 year sojourn in exile, without any other Jews, to redeem the Nation from slavery. Remember that the Ba'al Shem Tov, Rebbe Nachman, Rabbi Odesser, and all great Tzaddikim have received a conventional Torah education in their youth with a regular Talmudic tutor. By the age of ten or so they have completed the entire Talmud and are by any accounts Torah genuises. They marry at the age of 13 or so, and then when they take a divergence into mysticism--heavy emphasis on meditation in the forest, prayer, fasting and mortification, etc.--they encounter criticism. However understand that these people were not neophytes at all. On the contrary they were extraordinary Torah Scholars and geniuses who took a special slant towards mysticism and Kabbalah for reasons that only they knew in order to accelerate the Redemptive Process.)

3. Most of the leading figures amongst the detractors were themselves brought into Breslov by Rabbi Odesser! For instance Rabbi Odesser gave great aid to Rabbi Koenig to establish the Breslov community in Tzefat. He taught Eliezer Berland, head of a popular Breslov Yeshiva today. When he revealed to them his Petek, these people left him, unable or willing to believe it. Rabbi Odesser viewed them as men of little faith, less humility, full of impudence and the worst sorts of traitors, and castigated them vociferously.

4. Some of the detractors actually will confide that the Petek is true, but that it is too great a source of light and must be hidden from the masses. Rabbi Odesser insisted that it should be revealed, that it's story would be source of great wonder and encouragement for alienated Jews.

5. I personally believe that many of the detractors are jealous of Rabbi Odesser's being singled out by Rebbe Nachman. Breslov has no Rebbe today. All Breslovers, even the most learned Rabbis, yearn for some sort of closeness to the Rebbe, for signs and indications that the Rebbe views them with special warmth. All Breslovers engage in meditation and are prone to delusions and false comprehensions. I believe that simple jealousy and resentment is the source of much of the opposition

to the Petek.

6. Another reason for the opposition is that Rabbi Odesser, with his Petek, succeeded in attracting huge numbers of Israelis to Breslov. He popularized Breslov amongst the masses. The more establishment figures view this process with suspicion, and fear being inundated with insincere persons who seek mystical escapes and quick fixes. Such caution is understandable; however again the problem is that they do not give Rabbi Odesser the authority to make such decisions, as is mandated to him in the Petek.

I've been typing for hours and have exhausted by mental resources. Please read-over this and let's take it from there. This is the deepest and most profound of subjects, going to the heart of the Redemptive Process. It takes time to assimilate.

With Blessings from Jerusalem,
Ibay Hanachal

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The Petek was nominated for **deletion**. The **discussion** was closed on **17 February 2010** with a consensus to **merge**. Its contents were merged into **Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman**, the original page is now a redirect to this page. For the contribution history and old versions of the redirected article, please see *its history*; for its talk page, see *here*.

This article is within the scope of **WikiProject Judaism**, a collaborative effort to improve the coverage of **Judaism**-related articles on Wikipedia. If you would like to participate, please visit the project page, where you can join the *discussion* and see a list of open tasks.

Start This article has been rated as **Start-Class** on the project's *quality scale*.

Mid This article has been rated as **Mid-importance** on the project's *importance scale*.

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"Mantra" or name/song/phrase?

Yes, I know that **mantra** is not a Jewish term, it is a **Sanskrit** or **Hindu** term, and some Jews object to it on those grounds. However, it has entered the English language, is universally-recognized, and there is a Wiki page on it, So it make sense to use it here.

Also, the reason there are so many saves by me one after the other at the beginning of the page's history is because my toddler grandson is staying here. To avoid having him accidentally delete my work, I save every time I leave the computer tonight. Better safe than sorry <g> [User:rooster613](#)

Na Nach is a name, a song, a phrase (all NPOV), it is inappropriate and offensive to call it a mantra, like calling prayer "magic," or calling Moses a "guru," chas v'shalom. It may fit a dictionary definition but this word is strongly shaded and associated with Eastern religions. Just look at the **mantra** article, which says, "Mantras (Devanāgarī मन्त्र) originated in the Vedic tradition of India, later becoming an essential part of the Hindu tradition and a customary practice within Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism..." To suggest a Jewish practice has roots in, or owes to one of

YouTube Videos - *Talk:Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman* and Related Articles [\[show more\]](#)

Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman [\[videos\]](#)

Na Nach Nachma Nachman Meuman (Hebrew: נַח נַחמַח נַחמַח מְעֻמָּן) is a Hebrew lan

A reproduction of the petek.

A Na-Nach **Breslover Hasid** stands beside a van emblazoned with images of Rabbi "Na Nachma Nachman Meuman" phrase in downtown Jerusalem.

Judaism [\[videos\]](#)

Judaism (originally from Hebrew יהודה, Yehudah, "Judah"; via Latin and Greek) is a

Judaica (clockwise from top): **Shabbat** candlesticks, **handwashing cup**, **Chumash** an **pointer**, **shofar** and **etrog** box

Glass platter inscribed with the Hebrew word zokhreinu – (god) remi

Hindu [\[videos\]](#)

Hindu (pronunciation) refers to any person who regards themselves as culturally,

A Hindu wedding ritual in India

A young **Nepa** ceremony at t

Image: Krishna and Arjuna panoramio

Image: Balin

Moshe Feinstein [\[videos\]](#)

Rabbi Moses Feinstein (Hebrew: משה פּינשטיין Moshe Faynshtayn; March 3, 1895 – 1

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein at his desk in the **bais medrash** of **Mesivtha Tifereth Jeru**

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, together with Rabbi Yona Shtencel, founder of Daily Halach mishna

Chabad [\[videos\]](#)

Chabad, also known as Lubavitch, Habad and Chabad-Lubavitch (Hebrew: חב"ד, i:

Rabbi **Menachem Mendel Schneerson**, known as "the Lubavitcher Rebbe"

President **Ronald Reagan** receives menorah from the "American Friends of Lubavitc 1984

these traditions (all/most/many of which are considered avodah zarah by Jews) is extremely objectionable to Jews. Please be considerate and refrain from calling Na Nach a mantra. Furthermore, all the examples I saw listed under [mantras](#) are Hindu, etc. Does the [Shema](#) article call the Shema a "mantra"? Of course not. Even though it would fit the definition on the [mantra](#) page. [Five pillars of Wikipedia](#) Pillar #4 says "Wikipedians should interact in a respectful and civil manner." Does this not include avoiding labels that are heavily connotative in an offensive way? Thank you and I will assume this was done in good faith and in non-knowledge of the offensiveness of these associations. [Nissimnach](#) (talk) 02:56, 11 May 2010 (UTC)[Nissimnach](#)

Yoninah -- I didn't remove Mantra category from the article b/c it fit the technical definition, but I see someone has moved it to Hebrew Words and Phrases category -- much better! [Nissimnach](#) (talk) 16:55, 13 May 2010 (UTC)[Nissimnach](#)

Hebrew letters

I do not know how to do Hebrew letters in Wiki. If somebody reading this does, then please add them to the section explaining the meaning of the mantra. (Leave the transliterations of the names of the letters, for those who cannot read Hebrew). Thank you! [User:rooster613](#)

See [User:jfdwolff/Hebrew](#). Use the ampersand, then the code as mentioned. Write from left to right - the browser will understand the text direction (e.g. nun first, then chet etc etc). Spaces are as normal. [JFW](#) | [T@k](#) 10:27, 22 August 2005 (UTC)

Thank you -- I just did it, looks fine. What I needed was the table of Hebrew letters, which your link provided. [Rooster613](#) 14:53, 29 September 2005 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)

How come there is no final mem, at the end of 'NACHMA'? instead they used regular mem. — Preceding [unsigned](#) comment added by [86.9.56.169](#) (talk) 14:26, 7 July 2012 (UTC)

Why a "mem"?? [Debresser](#) (talk) 20:08, 7 July 2012 (UTC)

Haskoma from Rav [Moshe Feinstein](#)

I presume you meant to write 1984 not 1994 here (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Na_Nach_Nachma#Controversies [f](#) unless this was another letter from heaven since Reb Moshe "ascended to the heavenly academy" in 1986) :-)

- Yes, it was a typo, should be 1984.[Rooster613](#) 14:24, 29 September 2005 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)

More forgery claims? Got References?

Re: edits by anonymous person [User:80.178.15.203](#) that were reverted to my previous version: This person appears to be a Breslover in opposition to the Na-Nachers. Some of his/her points were possibly valid although not N-POV in style and not backed up by any sources (hence the revert). However, noting the writer's objections, I did modify "popular among Breslover Hasidim" to "popular among some groups of Breslover Hasidim" which should take care of that problem. Regarding forgeries: If indeed somebody claimed the approbation from Feinstein was a forgery, I would be willing to include that opinion under the Feinstein part of Controversies if there is a real reference to cite and not just an anonymous drive-by. Ditto for the same writer's claim that somebody "admitted" to forging the letter in an article in Maariv ten years ago. Who is this "somebody"? If anybody knows the refs. for this article, we could footnote that also. Although we should also note that anybody could *claim* to have done this to discredit Rabbi Odesser. I'm trying to keep this page N-POV while recognizing that there *are* controversies. I myself am not a Na-Nacher although I have no real objections to using the mantra, either. [Rooster613](#) 14:24, 29 September 2005 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)

In some mainstream Orthodox circles, the "Na Nach Nachma" is considered somewhat mishuga, some guys passing out Breslov pamphlets near my school, [Yeshiva University](#), weren't open NightcapNachmaners (people who wear the huge yarmulkes with "Na Nach Nachma"s on them, usually white caps)...they were black-hat, black coat guys. This is considered more authentic by such people. Unfortunately, my source for this isn't a book--but a rabbi, so I can't put in the article, right? I'm new at this.[Yodamace1](#)

- Thank you for your comments, and welcome to Wikipedia. I'm aware of the controversies. However, what "mainstream Orthodox circles" think is not the purpose of the article. After all, mainstream circles have

Mantra

[videos]

A "mantra" ((Sanskrit: मन्त्र);) is a sacred utterance, a numinous sound, a

In [Tibet](#), many [Buddhists](#) carve mantras into rocks as a form of meditation.

[Om mani padme hum](#) on the [Gangpori](#) (photo 1938–1939 German expedition to Tibet).

Sanskrit

[videos]

Sanskrit (IAST: Ṣaṃskṛtam; IPA: [sə̃skr̩təm]) is the primary liturgical language of H

Ṣaṃskṛtam in Devanagari script

[Devi Mahatmya palm-leaf manuscript](#) in an early [Bhujimol](#) script in [Nepal](#), 11th century

International Society for Krishna Consciousness

[videos]

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), known colloquially

ISKCON Temple in Delhi, Dwarka, India

ISKCON's [Bhajan](#) during [Navratri](#) Golu at [Coimbatore](#), Tamil Nadu, India

Shema Yisrael

[videos]

Shema Yisrael (or Sh'ma Yisrael; Hebrew: שמע ישראל; "Hear, [O] Israel") are the fir

Shema Yisrael at the [Knesset Menorah](#) in [Jerusalem](#)

The first paragraph of the scroll

[Schneur Zalman of Liadi](#) articulated Divine Unity in [Hasidic philosophy](#)

Yeshiva University

[videos]

Yeshiva University is a private, non-profit Jewish research university located in Ne

David H. Zysman Hall, a [Moorish Revival](#) building on Yeshiva University's Wilf Camj [University High School for Boys](#) and houses the former main [beit midrash](#) ([Torah st](#)

Image: Yeshiva University

is not the purpose of the article, after all, mainstream circles have always considered Breslov (even non-Na-Nachers) as a bit meshugga. (Mostly because we go off by ourselves to meditate in the forests... but that's another issue.) Even when he was alive, Rebbe Nachman was criticized for accepting all types of people at his table, including the local meshugganers. <g> Now, regarding this article, the purpose is to explain the history and meaning of the mantra in a factual, neutral way. This is an encyclopedia, not a debate forum. However, we can discuss the issues here in "discussion" and people do read the discussions, so your rabbi's opinion is noted; in reply, I ask: Is this mantra any more meshugga than Lubovitch children shouting "We Want Moschiach Now!" cheers or bumper stickers that ask "Did you put on tefillin today?" (I just made this into 2 paragraphs to sub-divide topics here) [Rooster613](#) 01:38, 3 October 2005 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)

more on the white yarmulkes

As for the white yarmulkes, I have one of those, more as a collector's item, although I have worn it on occasion. (Perhaps I should take a photo and add it to the article.) I have always preferred a large knitted yarmulke that covers my whole head. The Na-Nacher version is actually a modification of a traditional white yarmulke that has been worn for centuries in Jerusalem, which in turn is a modification of the medieval hats with the little ball on top -- hence the tassel. People wear them for group identity -- and is that any different than wearing a Zionist yarmulke that says "Yerushalayim" or some other slogan or, for that matter, one with pictures of cartoon characters like the kids wear nowadays? Breslov does not have a dress code (other than halachic zniut, tzitzit, etc.) so there is no requirement to dress in black like the Mitnagdim/Haredim. After all, if Jews wanted to be really, *really* authentic, we should all wear long robes, since that is how Abraham and Moses dressed. <g> [Rooster613](#) 14:10, 30 September 2005 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)

Well, I'm not trying to make it a debate forum. And if you're asking about if it's more meshuga the the messianic Lubavitcher belief, that is also considered quite mishuga. I'll quote from the [Chabad-Lubavitch](#) page:

Berger asserts that a few Chabad followers hold Schneerson to be God incarnate, and that they worship him as such. Responses from various Jewish spokespeople have been aimed specifically at the last two expressions of messianism. Longtime critic Allan Nadler (2001) and Rabbi Chaim Dov Keller (1998) warn that Chabad has moved its focus from God to Schneerson to the point that they "worship him".

- Well again, in these cases, there are specific rabbis who have taken public stands and can therefore be quoted. So far all I've seen re: this page is vague urban legends. I did, however, provide a link to a site that takes the stance that the letter was forged. If there are other such refs, either on paper on the Net, I have no objection to referencing them. [Rooster613](#) 02:35, 2 October 2005 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)

So I thought it might be appropriate, sorry if it wasn't...I don't think there's a mention of the 'NachmanNightcap' in the article, you seem to know a lot about it, maybe you should post about it. [Yodamace1](#)

As both a Wiki novice and someone only slightly learned in the significance of the phrase, I can't help but wonder if the the "pop culture" aspects of this phraseology should be explained in greater detail; in a recent trip to Israel, I saw the Na-Nach-Nachma-Nachman graffiti everywhere (and I've seen it a few times also in the U.S.), as well as on bumper stickers and placards and whatnot. This article seems to indicate that it is insignificant, but it seemed rather pervasive to me... Also, IIRC, there is a reference to the mantra in the Israeli "Bumper Sticker Song" which could be referenced in the article as well.[Nolij \(talk\)](#) 20:20, 13 February 2008 (UTC)

- I plan to take a photo of mine and upload it as common domain, but probably not until after Rosh Hashanah. Meanwhile I added a text ref today, which, because my computer timed out and I had to log back in, did not show up with my [Rooster613](#) sig, but the text of that edit is mine. (Apparently the "remember me" option does not work right on my system.) [Rooster613](#) 02:35, 2 October 2005 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)
 - OK, I uploaded the photo as [Image:Na-nach-nachma-yarmulke.jpg](#) and that went OK, it's up there -- but for some reason the link to this page does not work. ??? [Rooster613](#) 18:05, 20 October 2005 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)
 - Photo file was apparently corrupted en route -- I uploaded it again and it works fine now [Rooster613](#) 04:28, 24 October 2005 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)

You put in your edit that Chareidi disparagingly call such Breslovers NightcapNachmaners. I honestly didn't know that, thought I made it up. I'll stop using the term, sorry about that. [Yodamace1](#)

- I was taking my cue from you <g> But if you are the only one using the term, then the sentence is not authentic, so I removed it. The part you added to the Controversies is fine now -- you are citing the opinion of specific rabbis. Very good addition! This will be my last work here for a while -- tomorrow is erev RoshHashanah... shanah tovah! [Rooster613](#) 01:34, 3 October 2005 (UTC)Rooster613

Thanks! Shanah tovah! And thanks for the niggun advice. I've been to Kiryas Yoel for a wedding, but that's a bit out of the way...Williamsburg, here I come! [Yodamace1](#)

Book Cover Image

I upladed a scan of the cover of "The Letter from Heaven: Rebbe Nachman's Song" and linked it here. My justification for the fair use of this image is that the book is discussed and referenced on this page.

[Rooster613](#) 14:32, 7 December 2005 (UTC)Rooster613

Revert of Tanchum's edits

I reverted the material added by Tanchum in the Controversies section because it is not NPOV, being very disparaging of the people who use the mantra, essentially calling them inauthentic ignoramuses, this was obviously posted by an anti-mantra person as debunking opinion. This is the deleted text:

The Na Nach Nachma phrase, derives neither from any of the writings in the entire canon of Breslov literature, nor from the traditions of Breslov itself, nor the Bible, Talmud, or code of Jewish Law. For this reason, "Na Nach Nachma" cannot be represented as an authentic expression of Breslov doctrine--precisely because Breslov chassidus is based, like any legitimate Jewish movement, on classical Jewish sources. Hardly everyone within what can be called "mainstream", traditionally Chassidic Breslov communities believes that the "petek ha-geulah" is an authentic writing from Rebbe Nachman. Most treat the subject with passive obliviousness, at this point, "Na-Nach" is more of a rallying cry for Israeli and Sephardic returnees to Judaism, although it has caught on amongst some of the disaffected American youth who come to Jerusalem, or people who are not yet familiar enough with Breslov literature to distinguish between what is authentic and what is not.

The points are *already made* in the article that the mantra is controversial, that not all Breslovers use it and some actively oppose it, that some claim the note is a forgery, that it does not date to Rebbe Nachman himself nor did he use it, that this is a sub-group and not all of Breslov, etc. -- without the negative polemics of this text. It is *not* the role of Wikipedia to decide what is or is not "authentic" or "legitimate" in theological controversies, only to present the facts as they are. Like it or not, there is a group of people who call themselves Breslovers who use this mantra, and that must be respected in the text. I myself am neither for nor against the mantra, merely watching this page to try and keep it NPOV... [Rooster613](#) 19:36, 10 March 2006 (UTC)Rooster613

Regarding rabbi Moshe Feinstein's "approbation"

Rabbi Odessa was a Mishulach; he came to the US to collect Tzedaka. He went to Rabbi Feinstein (who, incidentally, was a non-chassidic rosh yeshiva) and asked him for a "hamlatza" letter that people could be presented with, to help him raise money (this is a standard practice of people collecting tzedahka). he showed the letter to rabbi feinstein while meeting him. Rabbi Feinstein's hamlatza does not imply legitimacy at all; it was merely a polite "and when he was here he showed me something unique he has in his possession"... Ask any of rabbi Feinstein's sons or Talmidim, they would concur, the legitimacy of the "petek" being from heaven is a bubblemeiseh.. Ther person that inserted the paper admitted to doing it before his death.[gevaldik!](#) 16:24, 10 May 2006 (UTC)

Again I ask: WHO is/was this mysterious "person who inserted it (the petek)" in the book, if indeed such a thing ever happened? So far, nobody has named a name, it just keeps coming back as hearsay. If there is a real source with a real person taking credit/blame, we can add it to the Controversies, but so far all I see is anti-Odesser urban legend -- in this case, from an unsigned comment by who-knows-who... [Rooster613](#) 04:44, 10 May 2006 (UTC)Rooster613

just signed my original comment. im still new to wikipedia and i forget

sometimes. [gevaldik!](#) 16:24, 10 May 2006 (UTC)

The gentleman who wrote it is Yoel Ashkenazi. [79.180.238.123](#) (talk) 22:42, 23 December 2007 (UTC)

What did Yoel Ashkenazi write? Does "it" refer to the comment here, or to the supposed forgery? If the latter, do you have documented sources? [Rooster613](#) (talk) 21:21, 28 September 2008 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)

The Petek has a signature: Na Nach Nachma Nachman May-Uman. So that is who wrote it. Being that there is no other known place of this signature it can not be a forgery (for it is not imitating another signature)! So the only point of contention can be; who is Na Nach Nachma Nachman May-Uman?! There is great evidence that Na Nach Nachma Nachman May-Uman is Rabbi Nachman of Breslov, besides the fact that NaNach is based on his name, there are also many proofs that this is a representation of Rabbi Nachman's name. Now it is very very difficult to claim, preposterous, that some stranger claimed the hidden, secret, and unknown identity of Rabbi Nachman of Breslov! Added to this simple logic is our knowledge that great personage such as the Saba, Rabbi Israel Dov Odesser, Rabbi Shmuel Horowitz, Rabbi Shlomo Wexler, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein and many others all agreed to the veracity of the Petek and thus attested to it's authorship by Na Nach Nachma Nachman May-Uman! So there is really no reason to contend with idiotic claims, at least not in an encyclopedia. If [Rooster613](#) you are interested in the theological aspect of Na Nach Nachma Nachman May-Uman that, as you often have cited, does not have it's place in the encyclopedia. No offence meant. Just Na Nach Nachma Nachman May-Uman![Moshenanach](#) (talk) 23:22, 23 January 2010 (UTC)

The controversy is whether the person who signed it as "Na Nach Nachma Nachman M'uman" was in fact Rabbi Nachman ben Feiga who died in 1810 and is buried in Uman. You believe it was. Others believe it was not. Both opinions are here as they should be. [Rooster613](#) (talk) 00:48, 8 March 2010 (UTC)

Regarding whether or not this is a mantra

(new topic heading inserted by [Rooster613](#) to help focus a long unsigned article by someone who appears to be a pro-Na Nacher.)

This article about Na Nach was, in my opinion, written very nicely and objectively. However there are many mistakes and insufficiencies; in truth there really isn't anyone worthy of writing about Na Nach, which is (as clearly stated by Rabbi Yisroel Dov Odesser ZTVK"l) the root of the whole Tora and all of the souls of Israel!

It is a theological opinion that "none is worthy" to write about this -- we are simply trying to present neutral facts. [Rooster613](#) (talk) 21:21, 28 September 2008 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)

The article states that R' Yisroel was born in a year and later recieved the Petek in years that most accounts differ. This requires extensive research. Bear in mind that the Saba (R' Yisroel) said frequently that he was older than one hundred years. Unfortunately I can't write at great length right now.\

I have also found discrepancies in his age and when he received the petek BUT this is not unusual in a time when many people did not have birth certificates. If you have a verifiable source(s) for a different date(s) that info can certainly be added. Perhaps we should note the controversies over these dates? If "most accounts differ" what are the refs for those differing accounts? [Rooster613](#) (talk) 21:21, 28 September 2008 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)

The article refers to Na Nach as a mantra, this is a fallacy which I put most of the blame on the late Rabbi Arye Kaplan ZT"l who not withstanding his saintliness and mesirat nefesh for Israel and the amazing things he did, was not 100% Breslur, to say the least (if your not Breslur i.e. Na Nach you'll say, so what, but even you can understand that this will prevent him from fully capturing, portraying, and correctly and accurately giving over the ways, ideology, and wel. of Rabbi Nachman). If I remember correctly, Rabbi A. Kaplan himself writes that possibly his biggest chidush (novelty) was his breakthrough in transalating the hebrew word Kavana, which previously had been concentration, to meditation, this led the RAK z"l to the path he chose of teaching the ways of Jewish meditation and Kabala. The RAK z"l is the one that brands hisbodidus as meditation, at first I felt that writing this was okay for those that get excited by this, and are strengthened and motivated to actually carry out what Rabbi Nachman says. However in truth, this is not a correct interpretation of Hisbodidus, and Na Nach is not a mantra.

Rabbi Kaplan doscusses various forms of meditation, some of which were not mantras. Meditation does require concentration and focused attention which are also meanings of *kavanna* but that is

too complex to go into here. If in Hisboddidus you pour out your heart to HaShem in a spontaneous flow of words & prayer, then this is a form of a flow-of-consciousness meditation -- a form that Rabbi Kaplan also discusses. Meditation does not necessarily have to use a mantra or lead to altered state of conscious to be meditation.

[Rooster613 \(talk\)](#) 21:21, 28 September 2008 (UTC)Rooster613

A mantra is a word or phrase meant to be repeated over and over. Na Nach Nachmu Nachmun MayUman, we should be blessed to say it over and over, but even to say it one time in a lifetime is a mind boggling accomplishment! (It has been said that it is worth coming down to this world for 80 years just to say one time Na Nach Nachmu Nachmun MayUman! There is some discussion whether hearing it one time would also be sufficient). Just as it is obvious that Shma Yisroel is not a mantra, even though it is recommended (by unknowledgable people and or Briskers, as opposed to Halacha and Kabala which forbids the recital of Shma repeatedly) to be used as a mantra.

The [Hare Krishnas](#) say the same thing about their mantra, i.e., to say it even once brings about great merit and redemption in their theology, to say it more times is more is meritorious, etc. So you cannot say that something is not a mantra simply because there is power in saying it once! And *Shema Yisroel* has indeed been used as a mantra and not just by so-called "New Agers." Your purpose here seems to be to discredit any comparison with other spiritual practices because de facto they are "unjewish" even if there are clear parallels in the practices. Again, that is a theological opinion and not an impartial presentation of facts. [Rooster613 \(talk\)](#) 21:21, 28 September 2008 (UTC)Rooster613

Dear Rooster613, it seems to us that you are avoiding the main point. Just because something could be used as a mantra does not brand it as a mantra, as you yourself write anything can be used as a mantra, and almost any activity can be called a meditation. This Nanach has heard people categorizing sports as a meditation, and it could very well be a meditation for some, but that does not define sports as a meditation! Hisboddidus is not an act of meditation, even if many can also use it as such. Shema Yisroel, aside from the fact that it halachicly, as stated by Na Nach Nachmu Nachmun is not allowed to used as a mantra, is not a mantra, it is a holy verse from the Bible which Jews use daily to proclaim their belief in the One All-Merciful God. To define Shema Yisroel as a mantra is ludicrous! This article begins with the title "History of the Mantra", I have already revised this many times to a more correct title, "History of the Song", Na Nach Nachma Nachman is a song, as explained in the article. If you have an issue with such a title please let me know what it is, and offer an alternative title, but to entitle this article labeling Na Nach Nachma Nachman as a mantra is unacceptable, the reason why the title should call Na Nach a song, because this is in fact what Na Nach is, a song. This is clearly written in the Holy Zohar (Parshas Pinchas, and in Tikunay Zohar page 51 and in Likutay Moharan Tineena 8:1) and found in many other places.[Moshenanach \(talk\)](#) 22:47, 23 January 2010 (UTC)

Na Nach Nachma Nachman does discredit other spiritual practices and you should mention that in the article. Rabbi Nachman said that his way is completely new, so obviously Rabbi Nachman felt that the comparisions that you are drawing are incorrect. Now it could be that you feel that since you are living in modern times that you are more knowledgable than Rabbi Nachman, but even still since this is an article about Rabbi Nachman himself we should take into account what Rabbi Nachman himself was trying to give over.[Moshenanach \(talk\)](#) 22:47, 23 January 2010 (UTC)

In the same way hisboddidus should not be branded as meditation, which is an exercise to achieve different states of mind.

Not necessarily. There are also forms of meditation that are more like contemplating an idea from all angles. And I would say that many people who chant Na Nach *do indeed* use it to achieve an altered state of consciousness. Rav Odesser is described as being *in ecstasy* when chanting it -- so isn't that an altered state???

[Rooster613 \(talk\)](#) 21:21, 28 September 2008 (UTC)Rooster613

Once again, just because something can be used as a meditation does not brand it as such. Certainly Na Nach will often bring one to ecstasy, and certainly people in ecstasy will be chanting Na Nach, this is the nature of holy songs and prayers. Prayers can be meditations, but we call them prayers, and those that want to meditate on them are more than welcome.[Moshenanach \(talk\)](#) 23:08, 23 January 2010 (UTC)

Hisboddidus is nothing more and nothing less than what it's definition connotates, being alone i.e. with G-d. Hisboddidus is also often used to mean personal conversation. musing. and accounting a person conducts

mean personal conversation, making, and accounting a person conducts alone, i.e. with G-d. Certainly this can be extended to meditation, but the whole message of Rabbi Nachman is complete simplicity (even though the advocates for meditation may claim that the goal of meditation is to achieve a state of simplicity etc.. Rabbi Nachman's message is of complete simplicity from beginning to end, not having to resort to any methods, systems, and practices). Rabbi Nachman taught everyone how to act on simple truth that they knew in their own hearts.

Chanting a mantra is indeed "simplicity" compared to the complex Lurianic kavvanot that were popular among kabbalists in his day. But even Rebbe Nachman himself used *Ribbono Shel Olam* as a mantra, and he clearly recommends saying a holy word or phrase over and over as this article cites. I see no conflict between "simplicity" and using a mantra. [Rooster613 \(talk\)](#) 21:21, 28 September 2008 (UTC)Rooster613

When someone in distress and great anguish call out to the Holy All-Merciful One God, he has no plans and intentions, just from the depth of his heart he cries out to his creator, that is called simplicity. A mantra, even though it is much simpler than other forms of meditation, is much more complex. Mantra is repeated, the previous example of a person crying out to God, that person does not have any intentions or plans, he is more than overcome by the predicament he's in, he's not looking to do anything, he's just, simply, crying out to God, this is something very simple to understand, and you must very steeped in your philosophies and complexities to acquiesc. Try saying Na Nach Nachma Nachman May-Uman this will help you lose all the intricate sophistications, and to be really simple in front of the Lord.[Moshenanach \(talk\)](#) 23:08, 23 January 2010 (UTC)

well put Moshenanach! According to what you wrote it is clear as well that Rabbi Nachman did not use the word "Ribbono Shel Olam" as a mantra, as R' Aryeh Kaplan and Rooster613 suggest. Rabbi Nachman said explicitly that during Hisbodidus one should try to come up with new words to present to God, but if one is unable to then what ever he could say he should, even if he will just be repeating himself, thus it is clear that the person doing hisbodidus and calling out to the One All-Merciful God, "Ribbono Shel Olam" is hoping and praying that the Holy Merciful One will send him new words and he will not have to resort to repeating himself. Thus it is quite clear that Rabbi Nachman was not trying to tell people to use it as a mantra, although it is obvious that if one will actually be forced to repeat himself in front of God, he will merit to great things, far and above a regular mantra invoker.[Na Nach Nachmu Nachmun \(talk\)](#) 10:12, 25 January 2010 (UTC)

Yes, Moshenanach *shapir kaamar!* NA NACH NACHMA NACHMAN MEUMAN IS THE **SONG-NAME** OF RABBI NACHMAN, IN FORM OF (and in partnership with (LM II 8 et al) THE DIVINE SONG OF THE FUTURE (Tikkunei Hazohar #21, daf 51: "When the sinners are annulled from the world, prayer will ascend in the **melody** of the four species -- which is the **song** that is single -- yud; doubled -- yud kay; tripled -- yud kay vav; quadrupled -- yud kay vav kay. In the name of yud kay vav kay, the prayer -- which is the Divine Presence -- rises, the Torah in a **song**, the Divine Presence in a **song**, Israel leaves the Exile in a **song**. As it is written, 'Then Moshe and the children of Israel will sing this **SONG** to Hashem' [Ex. 15]" The labeling as "mantra" is POV and repulsive. May God enlighten your heart to change this. NA NACH NACHMA NACHMAN MEUMAN [Nissimnanach \(talk\)](#) 00:58, 6 May 2010 (UTC)Nissimnanach

Nissimnanach: Perhaps there is a language problem here? In English, a "song" is something you perform or sing through once, not something you chant over and over. The "Song at the Sea" you reference was a long song with multiple verses and fits the common ENGLISH definition of what a song is, the NaNach, on the other hand, is a short phrase repeated over and over as a chant. The question is not whether you sing it (the *Hare Krishna* mantra is also sung) but whether it is repeated over and over as part of a devotional practice. And you cannot deny that Nanachs DO repeat the Na Nach phrase over and over and over. I realize that you do not like the term mantra because you feel it somehow disparages your Rebbe, or because it is a term from Eastern mysticism, or whatever -- but it is a technical term that has been adopted into English and IN ENGLISH it conveys a more accurate description of the practice than "song." This is not about "God enlightening my heart" (your words) it is about academic requirements for writing a secular encyclopedia. And frankly, I am getting very, very tired of all these little digs at me personally from members of your group. If anything here is "repulsive" (your word), it is your own behavior toward people who do not agree with you. [Rooster613 \(talk\)](#) 15:40, 15 July 2010 (UTC)

Authenticity of the Petek

I am dividing the discussion into this new topic here, since it seems to have been done that way. BTW, if we use the word "petek" on the main article, it needs to be defined the first time it is used. [Rooster613 \(talk\)](#) 00:54, 8 March 2010 (UTC)

Regarding the authenticity or better yet the importance of the approbation given by R. Moshe F.. It is very important to point out that even though it is known that R. Moshe went out of his way to help people, never in his whole life did he write anything remotely similar to what he wrote for R. Yisroel. R. Moshe, as the Saba points out, was a Litvak, i.e. someone who puts the study of Gemara on the forefront and will never engage (at least openly) in the study of Kabala. In all the written books of R. Moshe the closest discussion related to Kabala is a response about the proper time to say the prayer Brich Shmay. There is great differences of opinion among the followers of R. Moshe as to whether or not R. Moshe did or did not study Kabala secretly. So it is amazing that approx. 2 years before his passing R. Moshe meets the Saba and writes an approbation stating that the Saba has great knowledge of Kabala! R. Moshe's meeting with the Saba obviously had a tremendous effect on R. Moshe, leading him to publicly acclaim Kabala. There is much more to write about this but presently I am unable.

Also R. Moshe wrote explicitly that he saw the Petek and it very wonderful! Also there are people living today who were in the room together with R. Moshe and the Saba (R. Moshe also approached the Saba and asked him for his blessing, and R. Moshe called his wife to receive a blessing from the Saba!), and there are people that can tell over the turn of events that led R. Moshe to ask to be introduced to the Saba (after R. Moshe was shown the Petek he said, this, don't laugh at this, it is very wonderful, and then he asked to meet the person that received the Petek, and the meeting was arranged).

This is an issue that is not likely to be solved objectively. Some say he thought it was authentic and others not. Only Rav Feinstein knows for sure what he actually thought, and he is no longer with us, a"h". [Rooster613 \(talk\)](#) 21:21, 28 September 2008 (UTC)Rooster613

That seems ridiculous. If there is a signed approbation from Rabbi Moshe F. why is that not sufficient evidence of his belief? [Moshenanach \(talk\)](#) 23:08, 23 January 2010 (UTC)

Even though Rabbi Nachman never explicitly revealed that his name is the song of simple, double, triple, quadruple, there is an almost explicit reference to this in the beginning of his holy book Likutay Moharan. {It is also interesting to note that the acronym for Rabbi Nachman is RuN, which is the Hebrew word for sing, and the title of his holy book Likutay Moharan, the Saba told the kamarnar rebbe, is to be pronounced Likutay Meron i.e. a reference to the master of the Zohar (Book Of Splendor, the sourcebook of Kabala) Rabbi Shimon, who is buried in Meron, and as related by the Saba (Israel Saba, Hebrew, somewhere around page RuN), when Rabbi Nachman visited Rabbi Shimon in Meron, Rabbi Shimon asked him, Meron, Me Rone?, i.e. who's singing, and Rabbi Nachman answered Me Rone? Ani (I) Rabbi Nachman, Na Nach Nachmu Nachmun MayUman! (although it is not for certain that Rabbi Nachman revealed Na Nach to Rabbi Shimon then, perhaps the Saba added it)}. There is a poem composed by Rabbi Nachman published there, in the poem Rabbi Nachman spells out his name in the first letters of every line, then proceeds to double them and triple them and then includes the name of his father Simcha (which has a numerical value of Na Nach Nachmu Nachmun); in the introduction to the poem it says that the poem will discuss the song that will arise (an allusion to the song that is simple, double etc., as it is referred to in the Zohar and in Likutay Moharan), and finishes by stating that Rabbi Nachman's name is signed in the poem, double triple quadruple. This is basically a clear cut exclamation that Rabbi Nachman's name is this holy song which is simple, double, etc..

Also anyone of proper belief and knowledgeable in Rabbi Nachman's writings knows that the name of the Tzadik is united in the name of G-d, and know that Rabbi Nachman is THE tzadik, and therefore knows that the song that is alluded to in the Zohar as simple, double, etc. Y, YH, YHV, YHVH, is going to apply to the name of Rabbi Nachman, these two paragraphs are objective proofs and substantiation for Na Nach Nachmu Nachmun MayUman, irregardless of whether or not one believes in the Petek.

Nobody is denying that the Na Nach is based on Rebbe Nachman's name. The controversies center around whether Rebbe Nachman himself wrote the petek or whether it was written by somebody else. [Rooster613 \(talk\)](#) 21:21, 28 September 2008 (UTC)Rooster613

The Petek was written by the one who signed it: Na Nach Nachma Nachman May-Uman! Now you may want to dispute who exactly Na Nach

Nachma Nachman May-Uman is, but the fact is that Na Nach Nachma Nachman May-Uman is the author of the Holy Petek.[Moshenanach](#) (talk) 23:08, 23 January 2010 (UTC)

Now to say that some prankster, even one with good intentions, merited to chance upon signing Rabbi Nachman's name in such a way is almost as big as a miracle as the actuality that it was in fact written by Rabbi Nachman.

Theologically it is true that God can work in strange ways, and the article does suggest it could have been "a miracle of timing" or some such. But in an NPOV encyclopedia, we can only state what various people believe happened, not whether or not it was actually a miracle.

There is a general rule that G-d doesn't use unworthy people to be agents of miracles (c.f. the Brisker rav, beginning of Parshas Toldos, that the scoffers wanted to say that Sara became pregnant from King Avimelech, the commentators ask that even still the main miracle was that Sara, who was her whole life barren and now 90 years old, gave birth.

Whether or not God uses "unworthy people" -- or even deciding who "merited" to do such and such -- is beyond the scope of Wikipedia. As the article states, some people accept the miracle, others do not; in an objective article such as this you cannot discount possible historical facts because they contradict a theological principle.

[Rooster613](#) (talk) 21:21, 28 September 2008 (UTC)[Rooster613](#)

If the people disputing the article believe in the theological principle, then certainly we can question their claims. So the question is dear [Rooster613](#) do you believe in God and His Holy Ones?[Moshenanach](#) (talk) 23:08, 23 January 2010 (UTC)

This is over the line, Moshenanach. Submitting me to an inquisition about my personal beliefs is irrelevant. However, if you go to the [Yonassan Gershom](#) page that somebody created about me here, I think it will be pretty obvious that I believe in God. So I will ignore the insult, the same as I have ignored other put-downs here -- which only prove you are not on a very high spiritual level, or you would not resort to personal insults as "proofs" of your POV, as for believing in "His Holy Ones," that depends on your definition of "believe in." I am a monotheist, I worship ONE GOD. I do not worship Rebbes and Zaddikim, although I do believe that such holy people exist and we can learn from them, but *only* GOD is perfect, everyone else is capable of making mistakes. As for disputes, sure, you can dispute, but Wikipedia is NOT a [soapbox](#) and you Na Nachers insist on trying to make it into one. Why not spend your energy in finding documentable second party sources (published books, articles, opinions from OUTSIDE your own websites) and footnote them? That would be much more productive than dragging me over the coals for not believing exactly as you do. [Rooster613](#) (talk) 00:24, 8 March 2010 (UTC)

The Brisker Rav say that this is the way of scoffers, they'll admit that a great miracle took place, but they will take the credit away from the Tzadik and give it to the Rasha). There are countless other proofs, not to mention that the Saba vouched for it testifying to its authenticity and amazing powers. Also Rabbi Nachman says in Sichot HuRan, it is better to be a foolish person who believes everything, and therefore believe in what he is supposed to, rather than being a wiseman who due to all his analyzation refuses to believe in most things, thus missing out on important beliefs. Na Nach is in no way similar to the Lubavitch falsehood proclaiming their dead rabbi as moshiach, which is a belief borderlyng on rejection of basic tenets of Jewish belief and logic which even non Jews are required to heed. Someone opposed to Na Nach at worst can call it dubious or meaningless, or possibly G-d forbid a somewhat disrespectful name calling of a Holy Tzadik, but there is no way to associate it G-d forbid with Kfira, therefore certainly one should heed Rabbi Nachman's words in the Sichot, and believe in Na Nach.

There are presently a few books written about the Petek and Na Nach. First and foremost a composition of the Saba's conversations titled: Yisroel Saba, this is available in Hebrew, English, and French (possibly other languages). Seventy Rectifications of the Petek (this is not a completely accurate book as the author himself states while he records his own 'dimyonot' and upholds certain things which I don't consider to be completely pure to Na Nach). Matzpon Hapetek, a booklet which analyzed all of history in the light of the Petek; in addition there are various little booklets floating around. The author of these comments, myself, has the makings for a book apx. 90 large pages about Na Nach. The book is meant primarily for someone already very familiar with the common knowledge of Rabbi Nachman his disciples in particularly the Saba. There is a blogspot recently started, and presently containing only one thought, visit it: [NaaNaach.blogspot.com](#). Or email me at

NaaNaach@gmail.com.

There is much more to be written,—Preceding [unsigned](#) comment added by [67.85.88.110](#) (talk) 22:17, 18 February 2008 (UTC)

Clearly you are a sincere beleiver and as such, it must be very hard to see others question the very foundations of your beliefs. However, the role of an encyclopedia is not to debate the untimate "truth" of any theology. I've been involved in this page since its creation and my goal has always been to keep it NPOV (Neutral Point of View) and see all sides presented objectively. Thank you for taking the time to write all of this out, there are many good references in your comments which, although they might not fit into the article itself, do provide some clairification of a Na Nacher POV for those who might come here to read them. I must log off now to get ready for Rosh Hashanah tomorrow -- Shanah Tovah 5769. [Rooster613](#) (talk) 21:21, 28 September 2008 (UTC)Rooster613

Meaning

No meaning explained in the meaning section—Preceding [unsigned](#) comment added by [129.171.180.22](#) (talk) 17:17, 5 June 2008 (UTC)

do you have a suggestion on how the article can be improved?[Jon513](#) (talk) 17:32, 5 June 2008 (UTC)

The meaning is given. It is explained that it is an expansion of the Hebrew letters of the name "Nachman." A translation is given at the bottom of that section as "now to Nachman from Uman." Some of the sounds used in the repetition do not, in and of themsleves, have a translateable meaning. It is a play on Hebrew letters and sounds -- hard to convey in English. [Rooster613](#) (talk) 21:28, 28 September 2008 (UTC)Rooster613

It should be mentioned that the concept of expanding a name of a person probably relates to the Talmudic idea of vanishing a demon, by chanting its name continuously, whilst subtracting the last letter, until the last remaining letter is gone, as is the demon. The reverse effect seems to be at play here, a matra to conger up the spirit of Rav Nachman.

[93.172.122.215](#) (talk) 22:21, 19 June 2011 (UTC)

You can mention anything as long as you have [a source](#) for it. :) [Yoninah](#) (talk) 13:36, 20 June 2011 (UTC)

this is a b-class article

wikipedia is so terrible. —Preceding [unsigned](#) comment added by [72.95.231.76](#) (talk) 10:35, 6 June 2008 (UTC)

"Fringe" is not NPOV

I forgot to log in before changing "fringe" to "spin-off" in two places. Here is my reasoning: To call something a "fringe group" is to disparage it as not important, unworthy, a bunch of crazies, etc, it is a value judgement that does not belong here. A "spin-off," on the other hand, is neutral, as for example, [Deep Space Nine](#) is a spin-off from the original [Star Trek](#) series. "Spin-off" indicates that something is a branching-off from the original but without the negative connotations of "fringe." I think we can agree that since Reb Odesser, "revealer" of this mantra, was himself a respected Breslov leader in his day, that the current movement is a spin-off from mainstream Breslov.

There has been an ongoing war here between the supporters and opposers of this mantra. Supporters want to canonize Reb Odesser as the saint of saints, opposers want to discredit him as a fake, etc. Please stop it! The purpose of this encyclopedia is to give FACTS, not be on a [[soapbox]. [Rooster613](#) (talk) 14:23, 12 August 2009 (UTC)

Hi Rooster, Sorry I didn't see this note before I reverted your edit. I agree with your reasoning and will honor it in this article as well as the [Breslov \(Hasidic dynasty\)](#) article. Kol tuv, [Yoninah](#) (talk) 00:47, 13 August 2009 (UTC)

Hi, Yoninah -- as you know from previous discussion, I'm neutral on this mandtra, I'm just trying to keep the article NPOV. We have both worked hard on this page, trying to keep sectarian squabbles from ruining it. We need to watch carefully for attempts to skew it in either direction (pro or con). I posted my reasoning for preferring "spin-off" to "fringe" on the discussion of the [Na Nach](#) page also. Kol tuv! [Rooster613](#) (talk) 16:04, 16 August 2009 (UTC)

"Spin-off" may be fine for a secular topic -- it is flippant and disparaging for a religious one. "Fringe" is obviously POV and marginalizing. "Subgroup" is most accurate and neutral, in my opinion. I believe Na Nachs, Breslevers and everyone can be happy with it, for it is even written that Rabbi Nachman said "I will make you into a subgroup and subgroup (Gikat Likav)"

nachman said "I will make you into subgroups and subgroups (kitot kitot):" (Chayey Moharan 319). [Nissimnach \(talk\)](#) 02:20, 11 May 2010 (UTC)Nissimnach

It was not my intent to be "flippant and disparaging" with "spin-off," which is neutral to me. But if people prefer "subgroup" then I am OK with that, too. [Rooster613 \(talk\)](#) 15:26, 15 July 2010 (UTC)

Merge complete

I merged the contents of [The Petek](#) into both this article and [Yisroel Ber Odesser](#). [Yoninah \(talk\)](#) 11:29, 17 February 2010 (UTC)



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