

ANBODY ANYBODY

by Rabbi Label Lam

Then HASHEM said to Moshe, "Is the Hand of HASHEM short? Now you will see if My word comes true for you or not!" (Bamidbar 11:23)

This phrase is a stand-alone line in the Torah? Is the Hand of HASHEM short? It is hauntingly similar to the rebuke Abrahm delivers to Sara after the laugh. "Is something too wondrous for HASHEM!?" As if to say, "Oh ye of little faith, if HASHEM wills it a 90 year old woman can be a mother!"

While in Israel one summer I joined a class given by Uri Zohar. He had been Israel's top entertainer for many years until an encounter with a rabbi turned the talents of his mind to Torah at the age of forty. At the end of one class he related a story: He had just received a call from an old friend, someone from the old bohemian days. This fellow and his wife had gone out to the beach like so many others on the Holy Shabbos! After a day of sun bathing he returned to the car with his wife and soon became aware that he could not find his keys. After checking all his pockets he implored his wife to search the depth of her pocket book for the missing keys. He retraced his steps in the sand back to the place where their blanket had been. No keys. He emptied the nearby trash can. No keys. He looked under the car. Still no keys! People were driving away with ease and the sun was an orange ball setting in the western sky. In a moment of desperation he began to march across the sand and out to the water as his wife looked on in horror. He waded up to his thighs in water.

Rabbi Uri Zohar stood from his chair to demonstrate. It was obvious he had lost none of his dramatic flair. The fellow raised his hands and shouted out, "Elochim! Elochim! Give me my keys!" At that very moment, floating in the water, touching his leg were his keys. He came back to the car shaken and his wife observed that he had found the keys. He told her that he had found more than the keys. That Sunday morning he gave a call to his old friend Uri Zohar to ask, "Where do I begin?"

What was the greater improbability; that this man untutored in prayer should find his keys in the Mediterranean Sea the very moment he cried out or that this secular Israeli at the beach one Shabbos would wake up the next week as a Shomer Shabbos or as one who puts on Tallis and Tefilin? We should not be so surprised because three times a day we say, "HASHEM is close all, to all who call out to Him in truth!" (Tehillim 145) Now, if that story sounds like it was across the ocean, it was. Here's the same story on this side of the Atlantic. A couple who had gone to a number of seminars decided months earlier to send their boy and girl to a Hebrew Day School. At an evening class in their apartment in Riverdale the father told me something that had just occurred. Since he

would come home from work earlier than his wife he would take his kids and a few others out to a local park after school. Later he would shepherd them back to the apartment for dinner- homework.

That week, when it came time to leave the park, and all the children were around him he realized that he couldn't find his keys. Even if the door man would let them into the building he would be left waiting for hours in the hallway till his wife came home. He began to fret anxiously as he searched and searched for the keys. His eight year old boy, now newly immersed in Yeshiva for only a few months watched as his father became nervous, and he too began to feel upset. So he grasped his tennis ball, the one he had just been playing with, like you and I would hold a Sefer Tehillim, and he whispered with sincerity, "HASHEM, please help my father find his keys!" Then he threw the ball any which way with all his might and when he went to pick up the ball there were his father's keys touching the ball. Astonished? Why? "

HASHEM is close to all who call to Him in truth!" Nothing is lost in HASHEM's world. No one is lost. HASHEM can find anybody-anything and **anybody-anybody**.

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