

## A STAR IS BORN

Every once in a while a shining star is born, making an enormous positive global impact on the world. Although these moments are rare, the continued influence of these great lights radiate uninhibitedly beyond any proximity of time and space.

We use the word greatness too often in describing these extra ordinary people. Yet, how do we measure greatness and what does the word really mean?

In the year 1698 (5458) on the 18<sup>th</sup> of Elul, in a small town in the Carpathian Mountains a special soul entered this world. A man who would touch the lives of thousands of people in his lifetime and many millions thereafter. The ideas he taught, the stories he told and the experiences he shared continue to inspire young, and old, secular and religious alike, until today.

Who was this man and how did he manage to make such an extraordinary impact on so many people.

The great phenomenon's in life as with great people in history almost always have something very simple that defines them. The complexities of their personalities or the intricacies of their life experiences exist only on the exterior. At the core however it is something pure, simple and powerful that radiates to the outside world. The more pure and simple the phenomenon, the greater the impact.

This man possessed something more pure and simple than most others. And it was this something that he shared with thousands of people that changed their lives forever. The phenomenon we are talking about is "Love". Not conventional love, but pure love. The kind of love that is selfless. Unadulterated, unconditional and uninhibited. It is so pure that nothing can stand in its way. It is so powerful that no person can resist it.

It was this pure unadulterated love to each and every Jew imbued in his timeless teachings that made the Baal Shem Tov a great man, the rest is commentary.

*Warm regards,  
Yosef Vogel*