

## The RYS Daily 9/8/06 Truth and Legend XII

In his day Rabbi Israel was about the only notable mitnagid who had won the respect of the hasidic world. He was a disciple of the Vilna Gaon and disliked many hasidic customs because he thought they led to frivolity, yet many hasidim thought highly of him, and he was quite influential among the hasidim of Lubavich. One hasidic rabbi expressed it this way: "After many generations God had pity on the unfortunate mitnagdim and sent them the soul of a rebbe - Rabbi Israel Salanter. But those bunglers deadened his spirit too."

Rabbi Israel used to say that both the hasid and mitnagid ought to be reproved: the hasid for saying "Why do I need a book for religious study, when I have a rebbe?" The mitnagid for saying, "If I have a book for religious study, why do I need a rebbe?"

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