



THE WRITTEN WORD Reviewed by Rabbi Chaim Serebrowski thewrittenword@yated.com

HOLD ON: SURVIVING THE DAYS BEFORE MOSHIACH

BY ROY NEUBERGER

The Written Word features reviews and synopses of newly-released English language seforim, books and biographies. Each week, Rabbi Chaim Serebrowski selects and reviews a recently published volume, sharing with Yated readers information about its content and the background of its author. Suggestions may be submitted by authors, publishers and distributors to thewrittenword@yated.com.

When Mr. Roy Neuberger wrote the manuscript of the book *Hold On: Surviving the Days Before Moshiach*, it was impossible for him to envision the volatility that would grasp the world precisely when the final edition of the book would be rolling off the press. However, Hashem has orchestrated a somber series of events that have left *frum* people around the world increasingly primed for the *hashkafah* that this new book sheds light on. Jews seek answers, craving to understand their destiny in a larger context, hoping to envision where this all will lead. *Moshiach's* footsteps are echoing louder each day, but what does that mean for us? In this new book, Mr. Neuberger conveys those answers, culled meticulously from the words of *Chazal*, seen through the lenses of the *gedolim* he has studied under and offered with the *haskamos* of an impressive lineup of today's most prestigious *rabbonim*.

On the opening page of the book, a quote from the *Chofetz Chaim* is cited.

"Before *Moshiach* comes, Hashem will stretch a rope from one end of the world to the other and shake it vigorously," the *Chofetz Chaim* wrote. "Those who hold on tightly will survive. Those who let go will not. These turbulent times are testing us in our faith in Hashem. We must hold on tightly until the end."

This book is a survival handbook to help us hold on during these turbulent times.

Hold On provides a prism by which to view world events of today. It bridges the gap between the lofty concepts we read in *seforim* and the mundane events of the day. It traces the battle between *Yishmoel* and *Eisav* through history to its upsurge in recent times and gives insight into the events of 9/11. It explains the purpose of anti-Semitism in the past, the rise of hatred in recent times, and how the rejection of Jews is intensifying as the *geulah* approaches. It prods the role of modern technology and the trajectory of a deteriorating society, as well as our mission in this evolving world.

Hold On is a unique book. Few contemporary books have been written about the era of *Moshiach* that are geared for the Torah community, as a topic that is this sensitive cannot be conveyed without the greatest caution and the adequate approbations. *Hold On* has been reviewed by a number of *talmidei chachomim*, *rabbonim* and *baalei*

machshavah, and has garnered the *haskamos* of Rav Yaakov Bender, Rav Yitzchok Berkovits, Rav Shlomo Bussu, Rav Dovid Cohen, Rav Eytan Feiner, Rav Yaakov Feitman, Rav Yaakov Moshe Hillel, Rav Naftali Jaeger, Rav Shmuel Kamenetsky, Rav Zev Leff, Rav Yechiel Perr, Rav Yitzchok Scheiner, Rav Eliyahu Schneider, and Rav Yechezkel Shraga Weinfeld.

"I have had the *zechus* to review much of what you have written in your latest *sefer*," Rav Yaakov Bender, *rosh yeshiva* of Yeshiva Darchei Torah, wrote. "I would urge every Jew to find the time to read all of your *seforim*."

"I found this work based on solid Torah sources, interesting, informative, and inspiring," wrote Rav Zev Leff, *rov* of Moshav Mattisyahu. "This work can have the effect of solid *mussar* to wake one up to intensify one's connection to Hashem *Yisborach* through Torah, *chesed*, and *tefilah*."

Mr. Neuberger lends his keen insight to the *sefer*, a product of a lifetime of seeking Hashem. As he outlines in his book, *From Central Park to Sinai: How I Found My Jewish Soul* (published in 2000 by Jonathan David), Mr. Neuberger was born to an irreligious family and spent much of his life exploring his drive for *ruchniyus*, eventually becoming the noted author and *hashkafic* thinker he is known to be today. As Rav Shlomo Bussu points out in his *haskamah* to *Hold On*, "With great respect and admiration, I recommend this *sefer*, written with wisdom, fear, counsel, and understanding. With respect to the great toil that was invested into it, and with great admiration of the long strides that have been achieved by the *rov* and author, the precious Rabbi Yisroel Neuberger, who has ascended from [the] depth of abyss, where he hardly knew about his Jewish roots, to be transformed into one who teaches and disseminates so many vital principals of Judaism. One can tangibly feel that his words have been written with concern for *Am Yisroel* and love for every Jew."

Hold On can be understood by *hashkafic* novices and appreciated by advanced *talmidei chachomim*. Mr. Neuberger often draws from the basic tenets of *hashkafah*, but his perspective and classification of the concepts are what makes the book a masterpiece, allowing readers on all levels to gain a tangible clarity of these vital sub-

jects.

The book is set up in a clear, concise format. Quotes and anecdotes appear throughout the book, adding a dynamic perspective to the primary lessons.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the book is that it is refreshingly practical. Conversation about *ikvisa d'Meshicha* is often regarded as remote and aloof to many. Sources are often hard to understand, and people conflate various Kabbalistic concepts with confusing, hard-to-grasp speculation. *Hold On* is clear and straightforward, addressing these subjects with a firm frankness and with unapologetic honesty.

In *Hold On*, Mr. Neuberger describes how to survive through Torah and through acts of kindness. In an especially informative chapter called "*Shemoneh Esreh* as a Life Preserver," Mr. Neuberger expounds on *Shemoneh Esreh*, taking readers on a walkthrough of the *brachos* and explaining the deeper meaning in each one. Throughout the entire book, readers can gain important suggestions on how to act and think, allowing them to make their approach to these historic times real and meaningful.

The importance of studying this book is accentuated by a vital message depicted in Chapter 4, which is reproduced here verbatim.

"Please contemplate, my friends, the following words, which are so powerful and important that they defy description," Mr. Neuberger writes, repeating a message he's heard from Rav Matisyahu Salomon. "The *Chofetz Chaim* is quoted as having said that the third and final war will be different from the first two wars. In World War I and World War II, the Angel of Death was given freedom to harm *tzaddikim* as well as evil people. But that will not be the case in the third war.

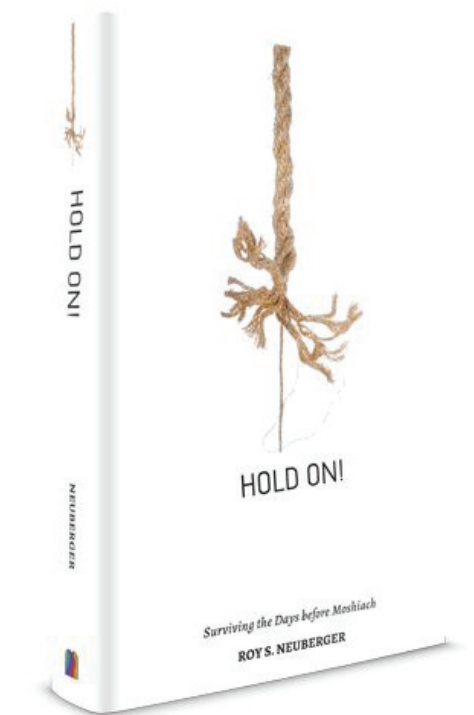
"The *Chofetz Chaim* is reported to have said that in the war directly before the coming of *Moshiach*, the Angel of Death will not have the power to harm those who cling with all their strength to Hashem and His Torah and who reject the culture of the surrounding nations.

"Those who stick like glue to Hashem and His Torah will survive and go on to live in the days of *Moshiach*!"

Mr. Neuberger adds another quote stressing this point, from *Leket Reshimos*, as quoted in *Redemption Unfolding*.

"I read a similar statement in the name of Rabbi Yechezkel Levenstein, who said, 'In the final war before the coming of *Moshiach*, all the Jews who fear Hashem will survive. Hashem will say to them, 'All those who are removed from the secular, worldly culture...you are Mine!'

"This is of cosmic significance!" Mr. Neuberger concludes. "Does this not give us tremendous incentive to reassess our lives?"



These stirring words should compel every Jew to delve into the lessons of the day in order to be best prepared for the coming of *Moshiach*, and the handbook for this goal is finally available.

Hold On: Surviving the Days before Moshiach was published by Mosaica Press and is available at your local Judaica stores or from Feldheim at feldheim.com, now offering free shipping with no minimum purchase. Questions or comments about the book can be directed to the author at info@2020vision.co.il or through his website at www.2020vision.co.il. [Please note that, as of several days ago, Feldheim Publishers, the distributor of *Hold On*, was sold out of this book. Additional books are now on the way to the distributor from the printer in Israel.]