

This painting is really telling a story, the story I imagined you felt when you went to see Rav Chaim Kanievski at his home.

First what happens when you get there, you feel awed by his presence, however warm and approachable he is. The Rav is listening intently to what he is being asked. He is attentive to his people, while at the same time, his talmidim are there, behind him, protective and eager to drink his every word. In the painting, the surrounding arm of the person in a white sleeved shirt represent the love of a nation devoted to its leaders.

In order to answer to the inquiry, The Rav humbly research in his Gmarah, he retreats in his familiar and lifelong mission of learning the word of Hashem.

The chair he sits on is a worn out chair, the material incidents of his life are not important. The focus is all on the learning.

The plain wood stender that stands next to him, is also telling of his prayers and is represented throughout the canvas, again and again, like the unifying force between the learning and the being. It is only through being that the learning get actualized.

This retreat in the depth of the divine knowledge is represented by a very linear and recessed image of the Rav. He recedes in the background while the Written Word of God takes precedence and occupies the front stage.

Rav Kanievski is then ready to communicate his answer with care and positive smile on his face. The hallmark of Rav Chaim is his affirmation that “ Hakol Beseder” , When one is trusting is Hashem, one feels joy and is happy. When he lifts his head from his Gmarah, this is the unspoken message he gives over to his listeners and to his generation.