

Yosef recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. (42:8)

There is a story told about *Horav Chaim Soloveitchik, zl*, and the infamous Jewish apostate, Professor Daniel Chivalson, who was a Bible scholar and critic in Czarist Russia at the end of the nineteenth century. Chivalson had the position of chief censor for Hebrew books. Despite his apparent betrayal of the religion to which he was born, he continued to act favorably to his "ex" co-religionists. He was in touch with many famous *rabbanim* of his time. He signed his letters with the name Yosef, the name by which he was called prior to his spiritual demise. When Chivalson reached his seventieth birthday, he received letters of congratulations from many communities and prominent rabbis as a display of gratitude for benefitting Jewish causes. *Horav Chaim Soloveitchik* was vehemently against this move, claiming that it was absolutely forbidden to maintain any relationship with an apostate.

When Chivalson became aware of this, he sent a note to *Rav Chaim* with the above *pasuk* from our *parsha* written on it: "*Yosef recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.*" He meant to imply that he, Yosef, remembered his Jewish brethren and continued to act on their behalf, but they -- his brethren -- act towards him as if he never existed. Why? *Rav Chaim* quickly responded, "The brothers sold Yosef. In this case, however, it was "Yosef" (Chivalson) who reneged and became a traitor!"

We cite this story for the purpose of deriving an important lesson from it. We see how far one can go in his error and hypocrisy. Chivalson committed the ultimate sin when he baptised himself. Yet, he had no qualms about maintaining a cordial relationship with the people he had forsaken. He continued to think that business went on as usual, which indeed it did! After all, did not those whom he denigrated continue to "recognize" him? All acknowledged him, except *Rav Chaim Brisker*. One person was secure enough in his belief, firm enough in his conviction. He had the temerity to stand up to this blasphemer, who had the gall to vilify the G-d for whom so many of his co-religionists had died for throughout history. When we honor those that have turned their back on our religion, we give them strength and encourage them to fortify their apostasy.