Chapter I: The Dream and the Fire

Reb Schneur Zalman Mendelovitch was a member of HABAD, an illustrator and miniaturist, who lived in Hebron in the middle of the 19th century; he has traveled all over the world. He is also associated with many surreal and anarchistic Hassidic stories. We follow his imaginary travels from chapter to chapter in the comics strip, as he wanders through countries and ages, from the Great Indian Rebellion to Akre during Napoleon’s siege and Victorian London. In the first chapter, Reb Mendelovitch leaves his home after seeing a vision, and ventures out into the world.

Column / David Duvshani January 1, 2017

Fire The And Dream The I Scroll Mendelovitch

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English translation (scroll the image from right to left):

In his fair house in the town of Schipselscherer
Neither faraway nor nigh
Many a thousand years ere events have come to pass
And several years past others
Reb Schneur Zalman Mendelovitch slept
And in his slumbers saw tidings
Images from near and far appeared before him
And first a prophet in his winged chariot.

Chapter 1: the Dream and the Fire

Wherefore blows the horn?
For corn, for sardines, for bread and chives
And for whom?
For Reb Mendelovitch, his fair house in flames.

From the smoke an image of a lady rises and he hears her name:
"Queen"
From beneath her an infant springs into the world
He is but Reb Mendelovitch himself.

Out!

Wherefore do you weep, Gwendolinda my beloved?
For apple vinegar, some sliced herring, a bed of spuds…

Hear me, for in my dream I saw the fire
And the prophet blew the trumpet
And a Queen gazed upon me
And out poured a babe
And a desire to know
Enkindled in my aged heart

The fair, benign wind
Carries Reb Mendelovitch
Far from that which is near, rousing the flames
Of knowledge and oblivion.

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