

# ME'OROS HA'TZADDIKIM

LIGHTS OF OUR RIGHTEOUS TZADDIKIM



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*A Tzaddik, or righteous person, makes everyone else appear righteous before Hashem by advocating for them and finding their merits.*

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)

❧ **TETZAVEH** ❧

❧ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ❧

## Dvar Torah

### An Incense Offering

The *Mizbei'ach HaZohov* (Golden Altar), on which the *ketores* (incense) was burned, was among the furniture and vessels of the *Mishkon*. However, although almost all the furniture and vessels of the *Mishkon* are described in *Parshas Teruma*, the making of the *Mizbei'ach HaZohov* is described only in *Parshas Tetzaveh*, in which the clothing of the *Kohanim* are depicted. Why is this so?

The time would come, explains Rav Levi Yitzchok, when Korach and his cohorts would challenge Aharon's rights to the position of *Kohen Godol*. At that time, Moshe would use the *ketores* as the litmus test. Both Aharon and the challengers would bring pans of *ketores*. Aharon's would be accepted, while the disputers would perish in the attempt. Therefore, in the context of the priestly vestments described in *Parshas Tetzaveh*, which enabled Aharon to perform his duties in the *Mishkon*, the *Torah* also describes the *Mizbei'ach HaZohov* that would one day authenticate Aharon's claims to the high office of *Kohen Godol*.



## Story

The following story, often told by Rav Sholom Schwadron, took place in a small town

in the Ukraine. It involves a kind-hearted, wealthy man named Zalman, who gave generously to poor people and other charitable causes. He always carried with him a small, silver box filled with the finest snuff that money could buy, and he gladly offered a pinch of snuff to anyone who wanted it. In the same town, there also lived a pauper named Moshe, who was too proud to ask for charity but often did not earn enough money to feed his family bread and water.

One *Erev Yom Kippur*, the want in Moshe's home was so great that after he had fed his children the barest minimum to fend off starvation he did not have enough food left for himself for the final meal before the fast. Despondent, he left for *shul* for *Kol Nidrei* on an empty stomach. The people were already saying *Tefilla Zaka*, the prayer of contrition that ushers in the holy day. Moshe also opened his *machzor* to *Tefilla Zaka*, but he could not stop thinking about the hunger pangs in his stomach. He could not imagine how he would get through the night, let alone the following day. And how would he be able to concentrate on his prayers in such a dark mood? He desperately needed something to cheer him up, but what?

It suddenly occurred to him that a good pinch of aromatic snuff might do the trick. The wealthy Zalman always carried his silver snuffbox with him and never hesitated to share its treasures with others. He would go up to him and ask for a pinch of snuff. He rose from his seat and approached Zalman, who was wrapped in his *tallis* and swaying back and forth as he said *Tefilla Zaka*.

Zalman had enjoyed a lavish feast earlier in the day with his family and friends, and a substantial meal right before the fast. While at his table, he had generously distributed alms to the beggars who came knocking on his door. He was a good man, at peace with the world and ready for the arrival of the holy day. It was time to connect with *Hashem* and confess his failures and shortcomings.

Engrossed in the passionate words of *Tefilla Zaka*, he heard someone clearing his throat behind him. With an effort, he tore himself away from his prayers and looked up. There stood Moshe, the pauper, with a crooked smile on his face.

"Rav Zalman," said the pauper, "could I trouble you for a *shmek tabak*, a pinch of snuff?"

"Are you joking?" said Zalman.

"No, I am not. I would really enjoy a pinch of your wonderful snuff."

"I can't believe it. At this most holy moment, all you can think about is the pleasure of a *shmek tabak*? Can't you see that I'm saying *Tefilla Zaka*? Maybe you should do so as well."

Moshe's shoulders slumped. He nodded his head and walked back to his seat. He stared at the open *machzor* but could not see the words. "Master of the Universe," he lamented, "is this what I've come to, that people think I am not even worth a *shmek tabak*?"

There was an immediate uproar in Heaven. All the beneficent *malochim* (angels) created by Zalman's generosity and good deeds were forced to fall silent as a phalanx of newly created malevolent angels stormed against the insensitivity and injustice with which he had treated the heartbroken pauper, and demanded retribution. The Heavenly Court weighed the matter and decided that Zalman's wealth should be transferred to Moshe starting right after *Yom Kippur*.

The morning after *Yom Kippur*, Moshe was walking through the streets looking for any odd jobs that would bring him a few pennies. Along the way, he met a relative he had not seen for a long time.

"Moshe!" said the relative. "It's good to see you. How are you?"

"Fine," said Moshe.

"You don't sound fine. Why the long face?"

Moshe shrugged. "Things have been a little difficult. Life is a struggle."

"Well, it's a new year. Hopefully, things will get better. Here, I'll lend you three hundred rubles. Do some business with it."

Moshe's face brightened. "Thank you so much."

"Don't mention it. And may *Hashem* bless your efforts with great success."

And indeed, He did. Every business venture Moshe undertook from that time on was amazingly profitable, and over a period of time, he became quite a rich man.

During the same time, Zalman suffered a reversal of his fortunes, as one investment after another failed. He was not particularly alarmed at first. Occasional reverses were to be expected in business. But as the reverses continued to pile up, he became frightened. Was *Hashem* angry with him? Had he done something to deserve this? He also noticed that as his star was descending almost into oblivion, Moshe's star was enjoying a meteoric rise. Was there a connection between the two diametrically opposite trends? What was he to do? He decided to travel to Berditchev and seek Rav Levi Yitzchok's advice.

Rav Levi Yitzchok listened patiently as Zalman told his story at great length and with abundant detail. He also mentioned his suspicion that his fate was somehow linked to Moshe's rise in fortune.

Rav Levi Yitzchok nodded. "That seems to be the case. Have you done anything to him? Have you wronged him in any way?"

"I don't think so," said Zalman. "I can't think of anything bad I've ever done to him."

"Think hard."

Zalman knitted his brows and concentrated. "I'm sorry. I can't think of anything."

"Think even harder," said Rav Levi Yitzchok.

"I can't think—" His eyes opened wide, and he slapped himself on the forehead. "Yes, yes, I can think of something. Last *Yom Kippur*, Moshe came over to me in the middle of *Tefilla Zaka* and asked me for a *shmek tabak*, and I brushed him aside. I may have been a little harsh with him."

"Yes," said Rav Levi Yitzchok, "that is the source of your misfortune. *Hashem* decreed that your wealth be transferred to Moshe, and so it was."

"But was that such a horrible thing? Did I deserve to lose everything because of it? I know that some *Rebbes* consider smelling tabak like a *ketores* offering in the *Bais HaMikdosh*. Is that why he wanted it or did he want it for a few moments of physical pleasure?"

"You can't know what a *shmek tabak* meant to him at that moment. Apparently, it meant quite a lot. Your rejection must have been like a stab in the heart."

"I did not intend to hurt him. I am really sorry. I would gladly have given him a *shmek tabak* had I known it was important to him. So what can I do?"

"Nothing."

Zalman was shocked. "Nothing?"

"The money belongs to Moshe now. You cannot take it back."

Zalman began to cry. "There must be something, anything."

"All I can suggest," said Rav Levi Yitzchok, "is that you wait for the right moment and ask him for a *shmek tabak*. If he refuses to give it to you, things may change."

Zalman returned home with a tiny glimmer of hope in his heart, but the more he thought about it the more despondent he became. Moshe was generous to a fault, never forgetting his own suffering and never having less than full sympathy for those who suffered similarly. How would he manage to get Moshe to refuse a simple *shmek tabak*?

Time passed, and Moshe's daughter became engaged to the son of the *Rav* of the town. The upcoming wedding was the sensation of the town. When the wedding day finally arrived, the excitement in the town was at a fever pitch. After the bride walked down the aisle, Moshe stood next to the *Rav* under the *chuppa* waiting with bated breath. The grand moment was finally here, and he wanted to savor every second of it.

"Rav Moshe, do you have the *kesuba*?" said the *Rav*.

"Yes, I do," he replied. "It's right here in my pocket."

Just then, Moshe felt a tap on his shoulder. He turned and saw Zalman standing there.

"Moshe, could I perhaps trouble you for a *shmek tabak*?" said Zalman.

Moshe glanced at his precious daughter standing under the *chuppa*. Then he smiled at Zalman.

"Of course," he said. He reached into his pocket, took out his silver snuffbox and handed it to Zalman. "Here, take as much as you like."

As Moshe reached into his other pocket for the *kesuba*, he heard a loud thud. He looked down and saw that Zalman had fainted. He quickly summoned two attendants to carry the unconscious man to a room and revive him.

After the *chuppa*, Moshe came to see how Zalman was faring. He had recovered consciousness and was sitting in a chair with a despondent look on his face.

"Are you all right?" asked Moshe.

"Yes, I'm fine. Go back to your daughter's wedding. Don't waste your time here with me."

"Well, you don't look fine," said Moshe. "I insist that you tell me what this is all about."

"Very well, but not now. After the wedding."

Late that night, Moshe listened sympathetically as Zalman told him the entire story, and they resolved to travel together to Rav Levi Yitzchok as soon as possible.

In Berdichev, Rav Levi Yitzchok listened to both of them and then suggested that they share the fortune. "Are you willing to do that, Rav Moshe?" he asked.

“Absolutely,” said Moshe. “Half of everything goes back to him.”



## Kedushas Levi on Purim

[Kedushah Sheniya] On the day of Purim a person should give out Matanos La'evyonim - as much as he can - with tremendous joy. This is because a person's actions are mirrored in Heaven (see Shabbos 151b). Thus, when a person acts with compassion, Hashem in turn acts with compassion to all the worlds, souls, heavenly chambers, angels etc. as well, this Heavenly kindness and mercy is dealt with tremendous joy.

In other words, the way the Jewish people act down here on this world - they awaken the very same Heavenly attributes on high - if they act with compassion towards their friends, then the attributes of kindness and compassion are aroused. This is explicitly taught by Chazal (Eichah Rabbah 1:33, Zohar Vol 3, 92) that the Jewish people empower the Heavenly tribunal.

This idea, the Baal Shem Tov taught in a similar vein to explain the passuk (Tehillim 121:5) that refers to Hashem as our shadow. The Baal Shem Tov explains that the same way the shade mirrors a person's action exactly, so too, Hashem deals with this world mirroring those actions, if they are acts of kindness and compassion then they are reciprocated by kindness and compassion and joy to all the worlds and to the person himself.

Praiseworthy is the individual who serves Hashem and through the Tzedakah that he gives with joy and thus brings joy to the poor person and his wife and family - he in turn causes a change reaction in all the tens of thousands of upper worlds, all the angels and Heavenly chambers etc. that they are filled with joy and rejoicing, kindness and mercy.

Moreover, when his soul ascends to Heaven, he is greeted by the angels who hug and kiss him for the great joy that his actions caused in the upper worlds and they proclaim, “Give honor to so and so who brought enjoyment to Hashem through his Mitzvah of Matanos La'evyonim”.



The anniversary of the *petira* of a *Tzaddik* is known as a *Hilula*, which means “A Day of Joy”.

One of the tools that *Kabbala* teaches is to connect to a *Tzaddik* (righteous person). The method to connect to a *Tzaddik* is to adopt the following ritual:

1) Learn the anniversary of his *petira* or, if this information is not available, the days of *Erev Rosh Chodesh*, *Rosh Chodesh* and the fifteenth day of the Hebrew month can be utilized for a connection.

2) Light a twenty-five-hour candle in his or her honor. There is no specific *berocha*. Some say the following: This candle is being lit in the merit of \_\_\_\_\_.

Others say that it is the custom within *Klal Yisrael* to light a *yahrzeit* candle on the day



that a relative or a *Tzaddik* has passed away. The lighting has no accompanying blessing, and people would like to express themselves in a *tefilla* when lighting the candle. This is not only true on a *yahrzeit* but on every *Yom Tov* as well.

The author of the *Pele Yo'etz*, Rav Eliezer Papo (1785–1828), did in fact compose such a *tefilla*. Rav Papo was the *Rav* of the city of Selestria in Bulgaria. Bulgaria was a part of the Ottoman Empire at the time. The *tefilla* of the *Pele Yo'etz* is reproduced and translated below, as a public service.

### Hebrew Tefilla for Lighting a Yahrzeit or Hilula Candle

[תְּפִילָּה הַנִּמְצָאת בִּסְפֶּר אֶלֶף הַמִּגֵּן מִבְּעַל הַפֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ עַל פְּרֶשֶׁת וַיֵּצֵא עֲמוּד כ"ד]

הָרִינִי מִדְּלִיק נֵר זֶה לְמִנוּחַת וּלְעִילּוּי נִשְׁמַת אָבִי / אִמִּי מוֹרְתִי / הַצָּדִיק  
בֶּן/בַּת \_\_\_\_\_, יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלֵּקֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁתִּקְבֹּל בְּרַחֲמִים  
וּבְרָצוֹן כָּל מַעֲשֵׂה הַטּוֹב שָׁאֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה, בֵּין בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה, בֵּין בְּדִבּוּר, בֵּין בְּמַעֲשֵׂה וַיְהִי הַכֹּל  
לְזָכוֹת וּלְמִנוּחַת וּלְעִילּוּי לְנִשְׁמוֹת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּבְפָרֶט לְנֶפֶשׁ רוּחַ וְנִשְׁמָה שֶׁל אָבִי / אִמִּי /  
צָדִיק \_\_\_\_\_. יְהִי רָצוֹן שְׁתִּהְיֶנָּה נְפֻשׁוֹתֵיהֶם צְרוּרוֹת בְּצִרוּר הַחַיִּים.

### Translation:

Behold I am lighting this lamp for the resting and uplifting of the soul of my father/my mother/the *Tzaddik* \_\_\_\_\_ the son/daughter of \_\_\_\_\_. May it be Your will before you, *Hashem*, our G-d and the G-d of our forefathers, that all my good deeds whether in thought, speech or action be done for a merit and a resting and an elevation of the souls of your nation Yisrael. It should be especially for the soul of my father/mother/the *Tzaddik* \_\_\_\_\_. May it be Your will that their souls be bound in the bond of life.

3) Learn about the person including history, culture, writings and teachings.

4) Study some of his teaching or writings.

See more at: [www.yeshshem.com/hilulah.htm](http://www.yeshshem.com/hilulah.htm)



## GEDOLIM BE'MISASAM YOSER



YAHREITS BEGINNING SHABBOS TETZAVEH

[http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim\\_yahrtzeit/Adar](http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim_yahrtzeit/Adar)

Biographical information and yahrzeits compiled by Reb Manny Saltiel and [www.anshe.org](http://www.anshe.org)

### \* 15<sup>th</sup> of Adar ~ Begins Friday Night (Feb 26<sup>th</sup>)

- \* **Rav Zvi Hirsch Kaidanover** of Vilna and Frankfurt, *mechaber* of *Kav HaYoshor*, (5472/1712 – Adar II);
- \* **Rav Yosef Leifer** of Pittsburgh, the *Tzidkas Yosef* (1891–1966). Born to Rav Ber of Satmar, Rav Yosef was a descendant of Rav Meir *HaGodol* of Premishlan. After marrying and living in Krula for seven years, he traveled to America in 1924 to raise funds for his orphaned sisters (his father was *niftar* when Rav Yosef was fifteen years old). One of his stops was Pittsburgh, and he decided to stay. His brothers, Rav Meir and Rav Sholom, also came to America, taking positions in Cleveland and Brighton Beach respectively. His youngest son, Yitzchok Eizik, passed away when he was eleven. Two other sons, Rav Yissochor Ber and Rav Mordechai, were murdered by the Nazis in 1944. Only his oldest son, Rav Avrohom Abba, escaped and succeeded him after his *petira*. Rav Avrohom Abba moved to *Eretz*

Yisrael in 1970 and founded *Yeshiva Tzidkas Yosef* in Ashdod, (5726/1966);

- ✧ **Rav Chaim Kamil**, *Rosh Yeshiva* Ofakim, one of the prime builders of *Torah* in the Negev (1933–2005). As a *bochur*, he learned in *Yeshiva Slobodka* in Yerushalayim. Following his marriage to the daughter of Rav Mordechai Porush, he learned at the Mir and became a *talmid muvhok* of Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz. After many years, he was appointed *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Me'or Einayim* of Rachmistrivka in Yerushalayim, and from 1979 at Ofakim. He was survived by his daughter, (5765/2005 – *Adar II*).

## ✧ **16<sup>th</sup> of Adar ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Feb 27<sup>th</sup>)**

- ✧ **Rav Sholom “Charif” Ulman**. Having learned under Rav Pinchas *HaLevi* Horowitz (the *Ba'al Haflo'a*) in Frankfurt for many years, Rav Sholom became *Rav* and *Rosh Yeshiva* in Ansbach, a town in Bavaria, Germany. He later moved to Hungary and served as *Rav* in Stampen, Frauenkirchen and Lankenbach. Only one of his manuscripts, *Divrei Rash*, on several *masechtos*, has been published. Rav Sholom was *niftar* on his seventieth birthday, (5585/1825);
- ✧ **Rav Elozor Menachem Mendel Biderman**, Lelover *Rav* in Yerushalayim, the son of Rav Moshe Biderman, (5587–5643/1827–1883 – *Adar II*);
- ✧ **Rav Pinchas Menachem Alter**, the *Pnei Menachem* of Ger (1926–1996). The fifth son of Rav Avrohom Mordechai Alter (the *Imrei Emes*), Rav Pinchas was born in the resort town of Palinitz, Poland, when his father was sixty years old. Along with his father and other family members, he escaped to *Eretz Yisrael* during World War II. In 1946, he married his cousin, and two years later, his father passed away. Three of the *Imrei Emes*' sons became *Rebbs* of Ger: Rav Yisrael (the *Bais Yisrael*, *niftar* 1977), Rav Simcha Bunim (the *Lev Simcha*, *niftar* 1992), and Rav Pinchas Menachem (the *Pnei Menachem*, *niftar* 1996). However, Rav Pinchas Menachem was *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Sefas Emes* of Ger in Yerushalayim from the time he was thirty, and was head of *Agudas Yisrael* after the *petira* of Rav Yitzchok Meir Levine, (5756/1996).

## ✧ **17<sup>th</sup> of Adar ~ Begins Sunday Night (Feb 28<sup>th</sup>)**

- ✧ **Rav Yitzchok Friedman** of Boyan, founder of the Boyaner *Chassidim*, *mechaber* of *Pachad Yitzchok* (1849–1917). He was the third son of Rav Avrohom Yaakov of Sadigora, the son of Rav Yisrael of Rizhin, (5677/1917);
- ✧ **Rav Chaim Davidson** (1760–1854). Born in Pinchov, he lost his father at an early age. Soon after his *bar mitzva*, the Warsaw *gevir*, Rav Naftoli Tzvi Tzinimer, made the *shidduch* for Rav Chaim to marry his daughter, Rochel. Rav Chaim moved to Warsaw, making it his home for the next eighty years. When Hoffmann, the chief Prussian administrator of Warsaw, insisted that every Jew adopt a surname for use on official documents in 1795, Rav Chaim took the name Davidson, in honor of his father. In addition to studying at the *Yeshiva* of the *Nesivos* in Lissa, Rav Chaim often visited and studied with Rav Akiva Eiger. In the early 1800s, the Jewish population of Warsaw was skyrocketing, largely because of refugees coming in from Ukraine and other places. From 2,519 Jews in 1765, the Jewish presence shot up to fifteen thousand by 1816. In 1802, the *maskilim* were numerous enough to open their own *shul*, which they named the “German Synagogue”. After 1815, when Russia annexed Warsaw, a deadly partnership developed between the autonomous Polish government and the *Haskola* Jews. An edict in 1821 decreed the abolition of the *kehillos*, and substituted them with “Congregational Boards” consisting of the *Rav*, his assistant and three trustees. In 1822, Rav Chaim was chosen as one of Warsaw's three trustees and held

this position for two years. After the passing of the *Chemdas Shlomo* in 1839, a council appointed Rav Chaim to be the new *Rav* of Warsaw. Thereafter, his wealthy son, Rav Naftoli, supplied him with funds to continue the numerous *chessed* projects he had financed while he himself had been a wealthy man, (5614/1854);

- ✳ **Rav Shimon Sofer**, *Rav* and *Av Bais Din* of Cracow (1821–1883). Born in Pressburg, Rav Shimon was the second son of the *Chasam Sofer*, (5643/1883 – *Adar II*);
- ✳ **Rav Yisrael Ze'ev Mintzberg** (Minzberg), *Av Bais Din* of *K'hal Chassidim* (or *K'hal Masmidim*) in Yerushalayim, (5722/1962 – *Adar II*);
- ✳ **Rav Avrohom Menachem Danziger**, the ninth *Admor* of Alexander (1921–2005). The earliest *Chassidim* of Alexander followed Rav Shruga Feivel of Gritza (*niftar* 1848) who was a close *talmid* of Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshis'cha. After Rav Shruga Feivel's *petira*, they followed Rav Menachem Mendel of Vorki. After his *petira* in 1864, they followed Rav Yechiel (1828–1894), the son of Rav Shruga Feivel. He set up court in Alexander near Lodz, Poland. Rav Yechiel had three sons. One of them, Rav Yerachmiel Yisrael Yitzchok, led the Alexander *Chassidim* from 1894 to 1910 and was the *mechaber* of *Yismach Yisrael*. After his passing, his younger brother, Rav Shmuel Tzvi (the *Tiferes Shmuel*), led the court until 1924. The third brother, Rav Betzalel Yair, followed. Rav Shmuel Tzvi's son, Rav Yitzchok, took over leadership until the Holocaust. The Alexander *Chassidim*, who outnumbered all others in Europe except for Ger, all but perished. The broken pieces were put together by Rav Yehuda Moshe, son-in-law of Rav Betzalel Yair; he had departed Poland for *Eretz Yisrael* in 1934. Of his nine sons, only one survived, Rav Avrohom Menachem. He was survived by three sons, four daughters and thousands of pages of *chiddushei Torah* yet to be published, (5765/2005 – *Adar II*).

## ✳ **18<sup>th</sup> of Adar ~ Begins Monday Night (Mar 1<sup>st</sup>)**

- ✳ **Rav Alexander Ziskind**, born in Brzhen, but lived most of his life in Horodna (Grodno, Belarus), Lithuania, the product of the teaching of Rav Aryeh Leib Epstein, *Rav* of Nikolsburg. He authored the mussar work *Yesod V'shoreish Ha'avoda*, which teaches how one should behave every hour of the day and *kavonos* for *tefillos* and *mitvos*, as well as *Karnei Ohr*, a commentary on the *Zohar*, (5460–5554/1700–1794 – *Adar II*);
- ✳ **Rav Chanoch Henoah HaKohen**, (1798–1870), Alexander *Rebbe*. He was a *talmid* of Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshis'cha, Rav Menachem Mendel of Kotzk and the *Chiddushei HaRim*, (5630/1870 – *Adar II*);
- ✳ **Rav Nachum Mordechai Friedman**, Tchortkover *Rebbe*, (5706/1946 – *Adar II*);
- ✳ **Rav Yechezkel Levenstein**, *mashgiach* of Ponevezh, (1885–1974). Born in Warsaw in 1896 to Osminer *Chassidim*, he lost his mother at age five. At thirteen, he joined the *Yeshiva* at Lomza. Early in life, he moved to Radin to learn with the *Chofetz Chaim*. There, he met the *mashgiach*, Rav Yeruchom Levovitz, who was a *talmid* of the *Alter* of Kelm. He then learned in Kelm, where he was fortunate to enjoy the close attention of Rav Tzvi Hirsch Broide (son-in-law of the *Alter*), at whose table he ate his *Shabbos* meals. In 1919, while Rav Yeruchom was serving as *mashgiach*, the Mirrer *Yeshiva* was exiled from its hometown of Mir, Poland, into Russia and then to Vilna. Rav Chatzkel, who was then learning in Mir, was asked by the *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Eliezer Yehuda Finkel, to supervise the *Yeshiva's* spiritual welfare until Rav Yeruchom returned. Rav Chatzkel was approached by Rav Aharon Kotler, who headed *Yeshiva Eitz Chaim* in Kletsk, to come and serve as *mashgiach ruchani* in his *Yeshiva*. Rav Chatzkel accepted. In 1935, he moved to *Eretz Yisrael* to serve



as *mashgiach* of *Yeshivas Lomza* in Petach Tikva, which was headed by Rav Reuven Katz, but he moved back to serve as *mashgiach* in Mir after the *petira* of Rav Yeruchom. After two years in America, he served as *mashgiach* at the Mir in *Eretz Yisrael*, then, upon the passing of Rav Dessler, at Ponevezh, (5734/1974);

✱ **Rav Moshe Weber**, (1914–2000) would go to the Western Wall from his home in Mea She'orim nearly every day to *daven* and to help visitors lay *tefillin*. Less publicly, he distributed enormous sums of *tzedoka* to the city's poor. The Lubavitcher *Rebbe* said of him that he was one of the holiest and kindest people in the world. He published several volumes of *Torah* insights in *Yorim Moshe*. There is an ongoing periodical of his teachings distributed weekly called *Shemu Us'chi Nafshechem*, which also offers for sale his audio recordings, (5760/2000);

✱ **Rav Yitzchok Shlomo Zilberman**, (5688–5761/1928–2001).

## ✱ **19<sup>th</sup> of Adar ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Mar 2<sup>nd</sup>)**

✱ **Rav Dovid** of Dinov, father of Rav Tzvi Elimelech Shapira. Rav Dovid was the *mechaber* of *Tzemach Dovid* and the son of Rav Tzvi Elimelech, the *Bnei Yissoschor*, (5634/1874);

✱ **Rav Meir Yechiel Haldstok**, founder of the court of Ostrovitz, (1851–1928), a *talmid* of Rav Elimelech of Grodzinsk, a scion of the Kozhnitzer dynasty. Ostrovitz was one of two courts in Poland known for their *Yeshivos* and high level of learning; the other was Sochatchov. Rav Meir Yechiel's intricate sermons, which drew heavily on *gematria*, came to be known as “Ostrovitz *pshetlach*”. They have been collected in *Meir Einei Chachomim*, and his teachings on *Bereishis* in *Ohr Torah*, (5688/1928);

✱ **Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld**, *Av Bais Din* and *Rav* of Yerushalayim before the State of Israel was established, (5608–5692/1848–1932 – *Adar II*);

✱ **Rav Yehuda Greenwald**, *Av Bais Din* of Satmar, *mechaber* of *Shevet MiYehuda*, (5680/1920);

✱ **Rav Shmuel Engel**, (1853–1935). Born in Tarno, Galicia, he was *Rav* of Radomishla (Radimishla) from 1888. Authored *Sheilos Uteshuvos Maharash*, (5695/1935);

✱ **Rav Yitzchok Kalisch**, *Amshinover Rebbe*, New York. Son of Rav Yosef Kalisch of Amshinov, grandson of Rav Menachem Kalisch of Amshinov, (5753/1993);

✱ **Rav Yaakov Chaim Jofen** (Yaffen), *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Bais Yosef* and the son of Rav Avrohom Jofen, the son-in-law of the *Alter* of Novardok. Following his *bar mitzva* he studied at Baranovich for one year under Rav Dovid Rapaport, and then for a year under Rav Elchonon Wasserman. During these two years he lived with his uncle, the *mashgiach*, Rav Yisrael Yaakov Lubchansky. Later he returned to Bialystok to study under his father at *Yeshivas Bais Yosef*. In 1941, he arrived in the U.S. with his father. He began giving *shiurim* that year at *Yeshivas Bais Yosef*, and continued to do so for the next sixty years, (5677–5763/1917–2003 – *Adar II*).

## ✱ **20<sup>th</sup> of Adar ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Mar 3<sup>rd</sup>)**

✱ **Rav Yoel Sirkis** of Cracow, the *Bach*, (1561–1641), *mechaber* of *Bayis Chodosh* on the *Tur*, in which he traces each law to its source in the *Gemora*. In his youth, he studied under Rav Shlomo Leibush of Lublin and Rav Meshulom Feivush in Brisk. He had several rabbinic appointments throughout Poland, lastly as chief *Rav* of Cracow in 1619. He was the teacher and father-in-law of Rav Dovid *HaLevi*, the *Taz*, (5401/1641);

✱ **Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach**, (1910–1995), born in the *Sha'arei Chessed* neighborhood of Yerushalayim to Rav Chaim Yehuda Leib Auerbach, *mechaber* of *Chacham Lev* and *Rosh*

*Yeshiva of Shaar HaShomayim*. Rav Shlomo Zalman learned at *Eitz Chaim Yeshiva*. He married Chaya Rivka Ruchamkin on *Erev Purim* 1930. During the following nineteen years he wrote *Meorei Eish* on the laws of electricity, *Ma'adanei Ha'aretz* on laws regarding agriculture in *Eretz Yisrael* and a commentary on *Shev Shma'atsa*. In 1949, he left *Eitz Chaim* to succeed Rav Yechiel Schlesinger as *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Kol Torah Yeshiva* in the Rechavia section of Yerushalayim. He was the *mechaber* of *Minchas Shlomo*. His brother-in-law was Rav Sholom Schwadron. His *piskei halocha* on *Shabbos* are found throughout the *sefer Shmiras Shabbos Kehilchosa*, written by his *talmid*, Rav Yehoshua Neuwirth, (5755/1995);

✳ **Rav Refoel Blum**, the Kashau *Rav*, who replanted his *Chassidic* community from Europe to Bedford Hills in Westchester County, New York, (5670–5765/1910–2005).

✳ **Rav Itzele Ponevezher**, *Rosh Yeshiva* in Slabodka and Ponevezh, (5679/1919);

## ✳ **21<sup>st</sup> of Adar ~ Begins Thursday Night (Mar 4<sup>th</sup>)**

✳ **Rav Meir Schiff HaKohen**, the *Maharam Schiff*. Born in Frankfurt am Main, he became *Rav* of the nearby town of Fulda at the age of seventeen. His *chiddushim* on the *Talmud* are terse, incisive and profound. Soon after being appointed *Rav* of Prague, he was *niftar* at the age of thirty-six and was buried in Frankfurt, (5401/1641);

✳ **Rav Elimelech** of Lizhensk, *mechaber* of *Noam Elimelech*, (1717–1787). Learned under the *Maggid* of Mezritch. Among his *talmidim* were Rav Avrohom Yehoshua Heshel of Apta, the *Chozeh* of Lublin, the *Maggid* of Kozhnitz, and Rav Menachem Mendel of Rimanov, (5547/1787);

✳ **Rav Yitzchok Elchonon Spector**, *Rav* of Kovno (1817–1896), lived in Kovno 1866–1896, the third son of Rav Yisrael Isser *ben* Elchonon, the *Rav* of the Lithuanian town of Roush, located in the Grodno district. After he married (Sora Raizel), he moved to Volkovisk, where his father-in-law comfortably supported him. The *Rav* in Volkovisk at that time was Rav Binyomin Diskin. A great luminary himself, he was also famous for his illustrious son, Rav Yoshua Leib Diskin, the *Rav* of Brisk, who later moved to *Eretz Yisrael*. Rav Binyomin Diskin was so impressed with Yitzchok Elchonon that he set up a special *chavrusa* to study with him *Choshen Mishpot* two hours a day. In 1837, when he was twenty years old, he accepted the offer to become *Rav* of the small village of Zebelen, and then became *Rav* in Baraze in 1839. He became *Rav* of Novardok in 1851 and *Rav* of Kovno in 1864. He held the position in Kovno for thirty-two years. He authored *Be'er Yitzchok* and *Ein Yitzchok* (both *teshuvos*) and *Nachal Yitzchok* on *Choshen Mishpot*, (5656/1896);

✳ **Rav Shlomo Yosef Zevin**, editor of the Talmudical Encyclopedia, (5736/1978);

✳ **Rav Yitzchok Horowitz** of Stetchin, (1862–1940). His father was a direct descendant of Rav Naftoli Tzvi of Ropshitz, and his uncle was the *Imrei Noam* of Dzikov. Rav Yitzchok was succeeded by his son Rav Yehuda, who moved to New York before passing away in 1982, (5700/1940);

✳ **Tchaba Rav** of London, (5749/1989);

✳ **Mr. Avrohom Dov Kohn**, principal of Gateshead Seminary, (5748/1988);

✳ **Rav Doniel Schur**, a strong presence in Cleveland's Jewish community as a *Rav*, *mohel* and educator. He was appointed *Rav* of *Bais Medrash HaGodol-Heights Jewish Center*, (5766/2006).



## ❧ HILLULA DE'TZADDIKA ❧

### WHAT'S BEHIND YAHRZEIT MEANINGS & CUSTOMS

The Maharil, in *Hilchos Taanis*, teaches us that the reason why there is a custom to visit the *Bais hachaim* on a fast is because “this place is the resting place of the *Tzaddikim* and is therefore sanctified, pure and holy and our tefillos are more readily heard, accepted and answered when *davened* on holy ground. When you *daven* there, do not make requests of the dead who are buried there; rather ask *Hashem* to answer you mercifully in their merit. Then circle around the graves and donate charity before reciting tefillos.”

בית הקברות הוא מקום מנוחת הצדיקים ומתוך כך הוא מקום קדוש וטהור התפילה נתקבלה שם יותר, אך אל ישים מגמתו נגד המתים, אך יבקש מהשי"ת שיתן עליו רחמים בזכות הצדיקים שוכני עפר, ויקיף הקברות, ויתן צדקה קודם שיאמר התחינות.

The *Zohar* in *VaYeira* page 71 teaches us that if we suffer any calamity or tragedy we have the custom to go and daven at the kevorim of *Tzaddikim*. The reason for this is that we approach them with fasting, remorse and repentance, and we have in mind that the departed souls ask and *daven* for us before *Hashem* on High, as opposed to the prohibition against speaking to the dead which is an idolatrous practice where the idol worshippers sought out the impure dead souls and bodies using sorcery and witchcraft. Instead, beseech our *Tzaddikim* who, in *gan eden*, are truly alive, and ask through *tefilla* and fasting and *teshuva* alone.



## ❧ GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM ❧

### STORIES & ANECDOTES

#### Rav Pinchas Menachem Ben Avrohom Mordechai Alter, 16<sup>th</sup> of Adar

The *Pnei Menachem* of Ger

##### The Tagalong

The *Pnei Menachem* would often recount, “In my youth, I heard the following saying from elder *Chassidim*: The *yetzer hora* likes to accompany us wherever we go; he follows us when we have a gathering or *farbrengen*, when we have a *seuda*, when we study *Chumash Rashi*, when we study *Mishnayos*, when we study *Medrash* – but when you study a *blatt Gemora* with *Tosafos*, there he gets erased!” (*Shnos Bikkurim*, Vol I, p. 218)



##### The Proprietor of a Bookstore

After his *chasuna*, the *Pnei Menachem* refused all offers of a position

in *chinuch*. Although his genius and erudition caused him to be buffeted by offers, his great humility prevented him from accepting any position and so he turned to his love of *Torah* as a source of income. He opened a *seforim* store and, as the *Pshevorsker Rebbe* testified, the *Pnei Menachem* could be seen seated absorbed in his beloved *seforim* for hours, all day, while buyers came and went and they bought and he sold his wares. (*Torosom Mishtameres*, p. 113)



##### The Admiration of Rav Moshe Feinstein

On the *Pnei Menachem*'s first visit

to the US, he was to participate in the Aguda Convention, at which the *Gaon* and *Godol*, Rav Moshe Feinstein, was to present him as a guest of honor. Rav Moshe, however, was in a quandary as to how to present the *Pnei Menachem*. A standard introduction, explained Rav Moshe, was out of the question; on the one hand, how can you introduce the son of the *Imrei Emes* and the brother of the *Bais Yisrael* of Ger as just any honorable guest? On the other hand, Rav Moshe did not know the *Pnei Menachem* personally at all. The solution was that although Rav Moshe had a packed schedule, a single hour was set aside for the two *Torah* giants to meet beforehand. This single solitary meeting slated for a short one-hour slot extended to many hours. When Rav Moshe exited, he told those close to him, "I couldn't believe my ears! [He knows] the entire *Torah*, and I mean the entire *Torah mamash!*" Suffice it to say that at the convention, Rav Moshe heaped praises upon the *Pnei Menachem* and was able to say to the audience assembled that he testified to these praises from personal experience.

Years later, the *Pnei Menachem's*

son, Rav Yehuda Arye, married the daughter of the *Mishne Halochos*, the Ungvar *Rav* in America, and his father asked him to be tested for *semicha* from *Gedolim* and *Rabbonim* in the US. The first one on the list that the *Pnei Menachem* gave his son was Rav Moshe.

Rav Yehuda Arye, however, was disappointed to hear from Rav Moshe's family that due to his advanced age and weak constitution, the *Godol HaDor* had already ceased testing and giving *semicha*. When Rav Moshe heard what was happening at the door he agreed with the statement, but also inquired as to the identity of the young man. When he introduced himself, Rav Moshe asked whose son he was. Upon hearing the *Pnei Menachem's* name, he responded that his decision had not been made in all circumstances. "For your father, the *Gaon*, I am making this special exception because I hold he is a *Ge'on Olom mamash!*" And so, as a rare exception, Rav Moshe tested him and gave him *semicha*. (*HaMevaser HaTorani Adar tov-shin-ayin-alef* by Rav Yaakov Heizler)



## Rav Yitzchok Friedman, 17<sup>th</sup> of Adar

The *Pachad Yitzchok* of Boyan

Among the many attributes that a person must acquire in order to ascend the ladder of *Torah* and *mitzvos* is the *midda* (character trait) of truly fearing one's *Rebbe*, as the *Mishna* writes in *Pirkei Ovos*: "*Yehei mora raboch kemora shomayim* – fear your teacher as you fear *Hashem*."

This *midda*, which is usually acquired only after much toil and hard work, was easily attained by even the most simple of the thousands of *Chassidim* who flocked, en masse, to the first Boyaner *Rebbe*, Rav Yitzchok Friedman. He was known as the *Pachad Yitzchok*, not because of a *sefer* (book) that he had authored with

that name, but because of the tremendous fear which one felt in his presence. The Boyaner *Chassidim* would tremble in fright at the mere mention of the *Rebbe's* name.

The *Rav* of Yerushalayim, *HaGaon* Rav Velvel Mintzberg, was once in Boyan and decided to take the opportunity to meet the *Pachad Yitzchok*. When Rav Velvel arrived in the *Rebbe's Bais Medrash*, he found the *Chassidim* standing, waiting for the *Rebbe* to enter to start *davening*. As the *Rebbe* approached, he perceived the newcomer and, lifting up his head, the *Rebbe* gazed at Rav Velvel with eyes that penetrated him deeply. "How can I explain



what I felt?" Rav Velvel said. "I know that I am not an emotional person, nor am I easily impressed or frightened, yet when I felt the *Rebbe's* eyes boring deep inside me I became so frightened that my whole body started to shake and quiver. I was suddenly so overcome that my feet refused to support me. I felt so weak that I had to lie down and, tottering into a bed, I lay there and cried like a baby." Then Rav Velvel concluded, "If the Boyaner *Rebbe* was able to have such a profound impact on people just by looking at them, it shows what a great and holy *Tzaddik* he must have been."

One of the greatest of the Boyaner *Chassidim* was the *Gaon* Rav Dudia of Berditchev, *mechaber* of the classic *sefer Tehilla leDovid on Shulchon Aruch* (code of Jewish Law). Once, when Rav Dudia was speaking to the *Rebbe*, the door to the *Rebbe's* room suddenly opened and Rav Dudia darted out and sat down on the first chair he saw. No sooner had he sat down than he jumped up and ran back into the *Rebbe's* room.

After Rav Dudia had finished speaking with the *Rebbe* he explained to the *Chassidim* the reason for his unusual behavior. While Rav Dudia was speaking with the *Rebbe*, the *Rebbe* asked him to take a seat. The *Rebbe's* request put Rav Dudia in a quandary. To sit in the *Rebbe's* presence was out of the question, yet to disobey his request was equally impossible. The only solution was to run outside quickly and sit down, thereby fulfilling the *Rebbe's* command that he be seated, without sitting in his presence.

The following story, which was related by the Bohusher *Rebbe* of Tel Aviv, shows the extent to which the *Chassidim* were in awe of their *Rebbe*. A man once came to the *Pachad Yitzchok*, crying that his son had left the path of *Yiddishkeit* (Judaism) and had decided to marry a *goyishe* woman. The man begged the *Rebbe* to save his son and somehow

prevent the marriage from taking place. None of the *Chassidim* knew what the *Rebbe* told the man, but as soon as the man returned home from Boyan his son canceled the marriage and repented, becoming a true *ba'al teshuva* (penitent).

For years the *Chassidim* tried to find out what the *Rebbe* had said, but the man refused to disclose anything, saying that he had promised the Boyaner *Rebbe* that he wouldn't reveal what he had told him. In 1917, after the Boyaner *Rebbe* was *niftar*, the Bohusher *Rebbe* was in the city of Kishinov, Russia, where he met this person. Now that the Boyaner *Rebbe* was *niftar* the man said that he was allowed to reveal what the *Pachad Yitzchok* had instructed him. The *Pachad Yitzchok* had simply said, "When you arrive home, go to your son and whisper my name, *Yitzchok ben Miriam*, in his ear three times."

The *Rebbe* was regarded as a *chiddush* (something novel) from his youngest years. Despite the fact that he was only a year old when his *zeide* (grandfather), the Ruzhiner, was *niftar*, he said that he had known him and even repeated a number of things that he remembered hearing from him. His father, the Sadigerer *Rebbe*, would refer to his son as "the *Otzar HaTorah*" (*Torah* treasury), in tribute to his vast knowledge. When the *Gaon*, Rav Dudia of Berditchev, came to Boyan he refused to answer the many *sha'alos* (queries in Jewish Law) put to him, saying, "Here I am not a *posek* (decisor) and I don't know how to learn!"

When he turned fifteen he married Rebbetzin Malka, the daughter of the Rachmistrivka *Rebbe*, Rav Yochanon Twersky. The *Chassidim* who came to Rachmistrivka were very impressed with their *Rebbe's* new son-in-law, his conduct already then placing him far above them. During his first *Rosh HaShana* after the *chasuna* (wedding), Rav Yitzchok cried so much that a puddle of tears formed on the floor around his feet. That a young man

just after his *chasuna* found so much to cry about was truly a wonder. When the Tolna *Maggid* saw him, he exclaimed, “This young man is totally spiritual; his body serves only as a cover for his *neshoma*.”

Being the eldest of the Sadigerer *Rebbe*’s children, Rav Yitzchok assumed his father’s position in Sadiger together with his younger brother, Rav Yisrael, after their father’s *petira* in *Elul* 5643 (1883). For over three years they sat together in Sadiger leading their father’s *Chassidim*. Although the two brothers were quite happy with this arrangement, the *Chassidim* did not take so kindly to the joint leadership. They found it difficult to cope with the new situation and they longed for the time when they would once again have just one *Rebbe*.

The brothers decided to cast lots between them to see who would stay on in Sadiger and who would leave. It fell to the *Pachad Yitzchok* to leave Sadiger, and on the 18<sup>th</sup> of *Cheshvan* 5647 (1887), he moved to the neighboring town of Boyan, thus creating a new *Chassidus* – Boyan. The 18<sup>th</sup> of *Cheshvan* became a day of rejoicing in the calendar of his *Chassidim*. As the *Rebbe*’s son, Rav Menachem Nuchem of Czernowitz, once remarked, “From that day, on the *Chassidim* were able to draw themselves even closer to their *Rebbe*.”

Many are the stories of the close bond the Boyaner *Rebbe* formed with his *Chassidim*. A *Chassid* who used to be a regular visitor to the *Pachad Yitzchok* was not in Boyan for over seven years due to various problems that had prevented his trip. When the *Yid* finally traveled to Boyan, he apologized for his absence, saying it had been a long time since his previous visit. “I know,” the *Rebbe* told him. “It’s already three years since you were here last.”

Although the *Yid* was puzzled by the *Rebbe*’s words, he didn’t dare ask for an explanation. Instead he went to the *Rebbe*’s

son, Rav Menachem Nuchem, and asked him for an explanation. “If my father said that you were here three years ago, then he must have had a reason,” Rav Menachem Nuchem told him. “Perhaps you intended to come and then in the end you didn’t make it.”

The *Yid* suddenly remembered and exclaimed, “So it was! Three years ago I decided to come to the *Rebbe* and I made all the necessary preparations to come. I was already at the train station waiting for the train to leave to Boyan, when I was suddenly forced to turn back and cancel the trip!”

“You should know,” Rav Menachem Nuchem told him, “As soon as someone prepares himself to come to my father, my father takes him on his shoulders, and it is as if that *Yid* is already here.”

The *Rebbe* instilled in his *Chassidim* that their every act must be *leshem shomayim* (totally for the sake of Heaven). He said that although a person who spends the day fasting, or abstains from sleep in order to learn through the night is praiseworthy, sometimes such conduct does not stem from the person’s *yetzer tov* (good inclination), but from his stubbornness to give in even when he is overstraining himself. A person should eat when he needs to eat and sleep when he needs to sleep and thereby be able to serve *Hashem* with his full strength, rather than be in danger of exhausting himself. At one of the *Rebbe*’s first *tischen* (*Rebbe*’s table, *Chassidic* gathering), he used this theme to explain the words of *Chazal*: *Ein kiddush ela bemokom seuda* – if a person wants to be *mekadesh* himself, it is only possible *bemokom seuda*. Through sanctifying his every mundane act, his eating, sleeping and all his daily acts become *leshem shomayim*.

The great awe and respect accorded the *Rebbe* was not limited to his *Chassidim*. The *Rebbe*’s immediate family also treated him with the same reverence and deference. When the *Pachad Yitzchok*

was *niftar*, his eldest son, Rav Menachem Nuchem, was heard saying, "We have lost our father and our *Rebbe*." Similarly, when one of the *Chassidim* called to the *Rebbe's* third son, Rav Avrohom Yaakov of Lemberg, "*Rebbe, Moshiach* should come already!" Rav Avrohom Yaakov answered him in a tear-choked voice, "Yes, but the *nechoma* (consolation) will only be after *techiyas hameisim* (revival of the dead)..."

The great esteem in which the sons held their father knew no bounds. Once, the *Rebbe's* son, Rav Menachem Nuchem, was asked why it was that while the Sadigerer *Rebbe* was alive his *Chassidim* were well-to-do and did not have to worry for their daily bread, while in Boyan many of the *Chassidim* lived in poverty. After a long silence Rav Menachem Nuchem answered, "My holy father had no connection with his generation. He should really have come to this world much earlier!"

The *Rebbe* had an only daughter, Rebbetzin Miriam. When she came of age, she married Rav Dov Ber of Chortkov in the year 5659 (1899). To the *chasuna* came the *chosson's zeide*, the Chortkover *Rebbe*, Rav Dovid Moshe. The Chortkover *Rebbe* asked his *gabbai* to tell him when the Boyaner *Rebbe* went to *daven Shacharis*. When the appointed time arrived, Rav Dovid Moshe got up from his place and went over to the window to watch the Boyaner *Rebbe* go by. As the Chortkover *Rebbe* watched, he exclaimed, "All the *malochim* (angels) are accompanying him on his way."

Although the *Rebbe* never visited *Eretz Yisrael* (in fact he hardly ever left Boyan, not even going to the towns that had large groups of Boyaner *Chassidim*), a large number of his *Chassidim* settled in *Eretz Yisrael*, in Yerushalayim, Tzefas and Teverya. The *Rebbe* was president of *Kollel Volhin*, which was based in Yerushalayim, and shouldered the heavy burden of seeing to its upkeep, supporting many families in the Old *Yishuv*. The *Rebbe* was also

instrumental in setting up *Botei Horenstein* in the Geula neighborhood of Yerushalayim. A wealthy Boyaner *Chassid*, Rav Dov Ber Horenstein, had no children, so the *Rebbe* advised him to build the houses as a memorial to himself.

Another wealthy Boyaner *Chassid* who lived in Yerushalayim was Rav Yisrael Eliezer Goldwicht, the *gabbai* of the *Tiferes Yisrael Shul* in the Old City. Despite his wealth he was very unhappy, for he had not been *zoche* (merited) to children. On one occasion when Rav Yisrael Eliezer was in Boyan, he poured out his heart to the *Rebbe*, begging him for help. After a moment's thought, the *Rebbe* told him, "We find in *Chazal* that there are four categories of people who are considered as if they are not alive (*choshuv kemeis*). Two of these categories are someone who has no children and a poor man who has no money...."

Rav Yisrael Eliezer understood the *Rebbe's* words and answered, "Even if it has been decreed on me to be amongst those who are not considered living, I don't have to be included in the first category, I could be in the second group instead." Within a short time Rav Yisrael Eliezer lost all his money, suddenly becoming a pauper. Not only did this not serve to dampen his spirits, it confirmed the *Rebbe's* words, for not long afterward, his wife gave birth to a baby boy. His third child was the *Gaon* (genius) Rav Chaim Yaakov Goldwicht, *Rosh Yeshiva Kerem BeYavneh*, (*niftar* 5755, 1995).

With the outbreak of the First World War, the town of Boyan was totally destroyed. The *Rebbe* and his family managed to escape at the last minute to Vienna, where they settled. Two years later, the *Rebbe* became desperately ill and a *yom tefilla* (prayer vigil) was arranged which was attended by all the *Gedolim* (Torah Sages) in Vienna. As the Husyatiner *Rebbe*, Rav Yisrael, arrived to join in the *tehillim*, he said, "Let us *daven* for the

recovery of the *Tzaddik hador* (righteous one of the generation).” The *Rebbe* did indeed have a miraculous recovery and regained his health.

A year later, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of *Adar* 5677 (1917), the *Rebbe* suddenly took ill. He summoned his wife and children and took leave of them all, one by one. After he bade

them all farewell, the *Rebbe* started to sing a *dveikus niggun* (a melody of spiritual longing) and while he was singing, his holy *neshoma* ascended.

*Zechuso yogein oleinu* (may his merit protect us).

[www.nishmas.org/gdynasty/chapt5.htm](http://www.nishmas.org/gdynasty/chapt5.htm)



## Rav Yechezkel Levenstein Ben Yehuda Levi, 18<sup>th</sup> of Adar

*Mashgiach* of Mir and Ponovezh

The *Chazon Ish* used to say that there were three giants of *mussar* who excelled in *emuna*: In Rav Eliyohu Eliezer Dessler we see his greatness in *emuna* of mind, in Rav Eliyohu Lopian we see his greatness in *emuna* of the heart, and in Rav Chatzkel Levenstein we see that he had *emuna* in his hands – he had experiential *emuna*, the kind you can touch and feel with your very hands! (*Otzros Rabbeinu Yechezkel*, p. 23)



### You Would Have To Be Blind

One of his *talmidim* described how during a *mussar shmuess* in *Yeshivas Ponovezh*, the *Mashgiach*, Rav Chatzkel, stood up and yelled loudly with emotion, “You can experience *emuna* and feel *emuna* with your hands! You would have to be blind not to see *emuna* in every step we take – you need to shut your eyes tight in order not to experience and see for yourselves that the entire world and everything in it runs according to Someone up above!” (*Otzros Rabbeinu Yechezkel*, p. 23)



### Order and Insanity

Another *talmid* described how his room was situated above the lunchroom such that from his window he could see the *Mashgiach* walk on his daily route to the

*Yeshiva*. The *Mashgiach*’s daily routine was fixed: he walked straight past this *talmid*’s window, never veering or even looking to his right or left, but walking straight to the *Yeshiva*. One day, the *talmid* noticed the *Mashgiach* stop, turn his head toward the lunchroom as if looking at something and only then did he continue on his regular routine. The puzzled *talmid* wondered what had caught the *Mashgiach*’s eye. He didn’t have long to wait before he found out.

During the *mussar shmuess* he heard the *Mashgiach* ask incredulously, “When you walk past the lunchroom and observe all the cups, bowls, plates and cutlery neatly arranged all in their places in order...does anyone think this happened all by itself? Did the plates and cups fly in the air and land perfectly arranged in order?! Obviously someone set them in order and put them away. You would have to be insane to entertain the fanciful notion that they could arrange themselves this way on their own, just as you have to be insane to believe that this world was created all by itself!” (*Otzros Rabbeinu Yechezkel*, p. 23)



### I Got Back My Bitochon!

Rav Sholom Shwadron used to tell the following story: The *Mashgiach*, Rav Chatzkel Levenstein, was known always to walk around with a serious expression on



his face that reflected his awe and reverence – *Yiras HaRomemus* – that permeated his very being and all his 248 limbs and 365 sinews. Once, one of his *talmidim* was extremely surprised to walk in and find the *Mashgiach* smiling broadly – a rare sight indeed. The *talmid* queried the *Mashgiach* as to the source of his smile and Rav Chatzkel responded:

“When I used to be the *Mashgiach* in the Mir *Yeshiva* I almost never received my monthly salary on time (because of the *Yeshiva*’s dire financial means or lack thereof). I trusted instead in *Hashem* and had *bitochon* that He alone would see to my *parnossa* from other sources. When I took up the position as *Mashgiach* in Ponovezh I began to receive my monthly salary on time and unfortunately I lost this level of *bitochon* in *Hashem* that I had regarding my *parnossa*. But now – *Chasdei Hashem* (thank G-d) – it is some eight months that I haven’t been paid (due to the *Yeshiva*’s staggering debts) and I now have my *bitochon* back in *Hashem* that He will send me my *parnossa* in another way, and this is why I am so happy and overjoyed! (*Otzros Rabbeinu Yechezkel*, p. 54–55)



### **Hashgocha Protis Training**

The *Mashgiach* used to relate that when his daughters were still young he would give them small change if they would think about ways to see *Hashgocha Protis* in their home and in their lives. And this *Hashgocha* was easily observed in how the *Mashgiach*’s household was run, as the level of poverty was great, and yet, when they would tell him what they had seen and discovered, for each story he would pay them a coin. (*Otzros Rabbeinu Yechezkel*, p. 73)

One of his daughters, Zlata Malka Ginsberg, related, “My father *zt”l* used to educate me using *chinuch* in the ways of *Hashgocha* using a variety of methods. One of his methods was to give me a notebook;

he promised that if I filled in one daily occurrence of *Hashgocha Protis* he would buy me a prize. And true to his word, once the notebook was full, he bought me a prize, even though this cost him dearly because of our poor financial situation and his lack of means, because to my father, the need to recognize *Hashgocha Protis* was so important that it was worth the money.” (*Mipihem*, p. 196, cited in *Otzros Rabbeinu Yechezkel*, p.73)



### **A Seventy-Year Warranty on All Maintenance and Repairs**

The *Mashgiach* was once walking with one his *talmidim* when they passed by a drainpipe that was leaking. Upon observing this, the *Mashgiach* pointed it out to his *talmid* and remarked, “How old is this drainpipe? Probably not more than decade. And it is made of metal, and see how it is already cracked and leaking! The human body is made of soft flesh, not metal, and carries things worse than water! Our own “drains and pipes” are soft flesh and they carry such hazardous materials that are acidic and toxic like urine and waste, yet they last decades and decades, an entire lifetime; a span of seventy years or more can go by with no mishap. From my flesh I see the Divine!”

A different time, the *Mashgiach* asked rhetorically, “How is it that the machine we call man does not break down and need maintenance and repair as often as other machines and mechanisms do? Take a watch for example, whose mechanisms and gears are all enclosed in a metal casing shut tight. Still, every few years, it requires some maintenance to keep its timing and precision; it must be opened, dusted, cleaned and wound, and it can easily break down. Man is made not of iron, silver, or copper, but of flesh – and still sometimes he can live his whole life of some seventy years or more with nothing breaking down and no maintenance

needed! (*Otzros Rabbeinu Yechezkel*, p.76)



### **Midda Kenegged Midda – Measure for Measure**

In the days before the war, there were almost no private *Yeshiva* buildings; rather, the *Yeshivos* learned in local *shuls* and *Botei Medroshim* of the town or city where they were located. Once, one of the *gabbo'im* of the *shul* where the *Mashgiach's* *Yeshiva* studied was bothering and disturbing the *talmidim* of the *Yeshiva*. He disturbed the *talmidim* so often that his interference became simply unbearable. He constantly interrupted their studies – and one day he kicked them out of the *shul* in the middle of the learning *seder*! With no choice left, the *Yeshiva* relocated itself to a different town and *shul*.

For years afterward, whenever the *Mashgiach* met anyone who hailed from that town he asked that person about the town, its *shul* and the welfare of the *gabbai* – until one day someone reported that the *gabbai* had died.

“And how did he die?” asked the *Mashgiach*.

They told Rav Chatzkel that it was on *Yom Tov* in the middle of *Birkas Kohanim* that his heart stopped and he died. In *Chutz La'Aretz*, *Birkas Kohanim* is a special occasion that takes place only on *Yom Tov* and the *shul* was in a quandary – what should they do? To interrupt the *Kohanim* in the middle of reciting *Birkas Kohanim* was impossible, yet there was a dead body in *shul* and the *Kohanim* were forbidden to become impure from *tumas meis*. They had no choice and decided that they had to take his body and deposit it outside the *shul*.

When the *Mashgiach* heard this, he replied, “This is the story I have been expecting to hear for some time now. I knew that something like this must

happen. Just as he did, so was done to him. When he expelled the *talmidim* from *shul*, I knew that *midda kenegged midda* – measure for measure – *Hashgocha Protis* would see to it that he too would be thrown out of *shul* one day.” (*Otzros Rabbeinu Yechezkel*, page 77)



### **Tefilla – Soul food**

The *Mashgiach* Rav Chatzkel Levenstein would often repeat and review the words of the *Kuzari* that *tefilla* is like food for the soul, nourishing the soul like bread nourishes the body. *Shacharis* is breakfast and it should keep you satisfied until lunchtime – *Mincha*, he used to say. He used to give the following *moshol*: A hungry man once went to a store and purchased a variety of food and provisions to satiate his hunger that could last him some weeks. He stuffed the food into all his pockets, alas to no avail. The fool remained hungry and couldn't understand why!

Of course the fool remained hungry – he filled his outer garments with food and never satisfied his true inner self by eating the food! So too do we run after fulfilling our lusts and desires for all manner of *gashmiyus*, yet we are never satisfied, because while the externals are stuffed, our inner being remains starving. The soul thirsts and if only the pockets of the outer garment called the body are filled, then the thirst and hunger of the inner true self – the soul – remain. But if someone were to ignore the pangs of hunger in his stomach and *daven* a good *tefilla* and learn a *geshmak seder*, he could feel satiated and satisfied, because this is what it means “to do without”. The body can go without and you can feel fine, whereas the soul must be satisfied or the cravings and unquenchable thirst remains. (*Otzros Rabbeinu Yechezkel, Tefilla*, p. 55)

## Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, 19<sup>th</sup> of Adar

*Av Bais Din and Rav of Yerushalayim*

Before the modern Zionist movement began at the end of the nineteenth century, there was already a Jewish community living in *Eretz Yisrael*, which was committed to the *Torah* path. This spiritual community later became known as the *Yishuv HaYoshon* – the Old Settlement. Part of the *Yishuv HaYoshon* had been living in the Land for many centuries. This ancient community was reinforced by the followers of the *Ba'al Shem Tov* and the *Vilna Gaon* who came to the Land in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The majority of the members of this community lived in cities such as Yerushalayim, Teverya and Tzefas; moreover, in Yerushalayim – during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – they began to build new Jewish neighborhoods outside the walls of the Old City. During this period, they also began to establish agricultural settlements, where people could work the Holy Land in the holistic spirit of the *Torah*. Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld became a major leader of this community, and he was very much involved in the efforts to renew and strengthen Jewish life in the Holy Land. As Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld said, *Eretz Yisrael* is “the Holy Land, to which *Hashem* affords special supervision, from which *berocha* emanates to the rest of the world, and in which *Hashem*’s prophets foresaw the future happiness of all humanity.”

Rav Yosef Chaim was born on the 6th of *Kislev*, 5609 (1848), and he passed away on the 19<sup>th</sup> of *Adar II*, 5692 (1932). We will share with you three stories that reveal his deep understanding of the ethical teachings of *Halocha*:

It is written: “You shall safeguard the *matzos*” (*Shemos* 12:17). In Hebrew, the word *matzos* has the same letters as *mitzvos*; thus, the sages explain that the *pasuk* can be read as: “You shall safeguard

the *mitzvos*”. In the following story, Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld finds within this teaching of the sages an ethical message:

Rav Yosef Chaim took painstaking care when baking his *matzos* to ensure that everything should proceed according to the strictest standards, beyond the minimum requirements of the *Halocha*. This stricter standard is known as *mehudar*. It once happened that one of those assisting him in *matza* baking pointed out to him that one of the workers kneading the dough was not doing such a good job in terms of the stricter standards. He suggested to Rav Yosef Chaim that the worker be admonished and told to work faster and more efficiently.

Rav Yosef Chaim declined, however, saying, “I refuse to distress a poor worker by admonishing him to work harder than he already does, just because I want my *matzos* to be a notch more *mehudar*! I, for my part, am willing to undergo the greatest effort and expense to improve the quality of my *matza*. Furthermore, I *daven* that *Hashem* grant me the merit of having *matza* that meets the strictest standard, and I trust that *Hashem* will accept my *tefilla*, for He knows how intense my desire is to fulfill this *mitzva* in the best possible manner. However, to obtain *mehudar matzos* at the expense of rebuking a poor laborer – the gain in terms of *mitzva* quality would be canceled out by the loss!”

Rav Yosef Chaim did not want to achieve a higher standard of “kosher for *Pesach*” *matza* at the expense of hurting the worker’s feelings. Consideration for someone’s feelings is also a *mitzva*, as the *Torah* states: “You shall not hurt the feelings of one another” (*Vayikra* 25:17). Rav Yosef Chaim added that perhaps this is what the sages had in mind when they said that the words “safeguard the *matzos*” can be read as “safeguard the *mitzvos*”. This is

to teach us, said Rav Yosef Chaim, to take the following approach: “When baking *matzos*, one must remember that there are other *mitzvos* besides *matza* in the *Torah*, and that care should be taken to observe them scrupulously as well!”

A *chazzan* (cantor) is the person who leads the congregation in *tefilla*. Rav Nachum Bergman served for many years as the *chazzan* on the High Holidays in the Yerushalayim *shul* where Rav Yosef Chaim *davened* (prayed). He usually led the *tefillos* during *Mussaf* – the concluding section of the morning prayers. One year, Rav Nachman Bergman passed away at the end of the month of *Elul*, just over a week before *Rosh HaShana*. It was generally assumed that Rav Nachman’s son, who although was quite capable of leading the service, would not succeed him that year, as there is a custom that someone who is in a period of mourning does not lead the services on *Shabbos* or on a *Yom Tov*. The reason a mourner is not permitted to be a *chazzan* on these holy days is out of respect for the feelings of the congregation, so that the mourner’s sadness not mar the joyous spirit of these days. Rav Yosef Chaim told the *gabbo'im* (*shul* officials) who were in charge of organizing the services, that they should not worry about who would serve as *chazzan* on *Rosh HaShana*. The *gabbo'im* therefore assumed that Rav Yosef Chaim would lead the *tefillos* that year.

On the first day of *Rosh HaShana*, Rav Yosef Chaim went over to the departed *chazzan*’s son, Rav Shimon, and asked him to approach the podium and serve as *chazzan* for *Mussaf*. The *gabbo'im* – along with everyone else in the congregation – were puzzled at the *Rav*’s unconventional action.

After the services, Rav Yosef Chaim explained to the wondering circle of people who gathered around him the basis for his decision not to follow the usual custom. The reason a mourner is not generally

permitted to lead the services on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*, he explained, is out of respect for the feelings of the congregation, so that the mourner’s sadness not mar their spirit on these holy days. Imagine, however, how the unfortunate widow would feel if, at the point in the service where, in the past, she had heard her husband chant with soulful tones the introductory *tefilla* of *Mussaf*, *Hinneni He’Ani MiMa’as*, she now heard a new and unfamiliar voice chant this *tefilla*. The heart of this so recently bereaved woman would certainly ache terribly. What greater honor for the congregation could there be than for it to ease her sorrow by letting her hear the sweet tones of her son’s voice, so much like his father’s, take up the chant he had sung for so long.

Rav Yosef Chaim also told the congregants that the need to avoid causing added grief to the widow takes precedence over the usual custom, as causing pain to a widow constitutes a *Torah* prohibition (*Shemos* 22:21).

A wealthy woman who had been married for many years without bearing children came to the *Rav* of Budapest with a large sum of money. She wanted to donate the money to the *Rav* in order that he would *daven* for her to be blessed with children.

“I’ll give you an *eitza* (a piece of advice),” said the *Rav*. “Send the money to Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, the *Rav* of Yerushalayim. He’s a great *Tzaddik*. *Hashem* will surely listen to his *tefilla* and you’ll merit *zera shel kayoma*.”

The woman agreed to the *Rav*’s suggestion, and she sent the money to the *Rav* of Yerushalayim. A few weeks passed and the husband of the woman came to the *Rav*, and complained bitterly to him, “Why did you send the money without my knowledge?! I demand that you send a letter immediately to the *Rav* of Yerushalayim requesting that he return the money.”



The *Rav* was very upset by the husband's demand and said, "I'll give you the whole amount from my pocket, as long as you don't demand the money back from the *Rav* of Yerushalayim."

While they were still discussing the details of getting the money back, the postman arrived with an envelope from *Rav Yosef Chaim*. The *Rav* opened the envelope and was astounded to find a letter in it from the *Rav* of Yerushalayim accompanied by the full amount of money the man's wife had sent to him.

The *Rav* had written, "I received the letter with the money enclosed. However, since the *Rav* wrote that the woman gave him the money, I suspected that she might

have done this without the permission of her husband. Because of this, I am sending back the money, and I request from the *Rav* that he return the money to the woman as quickly as possible. It should be understood that I did not refrain from fulfilling the woman's request because of this. I *davened* fervently for her, and may my *tefillos* be accepted before *Avinu Shebashomayim*."

The above stories help to connect us to the loving holiness of this great sage. Through studying the lives and deeds of the great sages of previous generations, we become their spiritual children, and this connection becomes a source of *berocha* and merit for us.



## Rav Dovid of Dinov, 19<sup>th</sup> of Adar I

*The Tzemach Dovid*

Once, the *Chassidim* sat in the *Bais Medrash* together next to the *Rebbe's* study, discussing the best way to serve *Hashem*. Would it be better to study and serve *Hashem* late into the night, or would it be better to go to sleep early and rise early for *Avodas Hashem*? As they were discussing this, the *Tzemach Dovid's* door opened and the *Rebbe* came in and said, "What are you doing here now! Go to bed!" The *Chassidim* got their answer!

Then the *Tzemach Dovid* explained the *avoda* of sleep with a *moshol* (a parable):

A person once lent money and took something as collateral for the loan. The

way of the world is that whoever holds on to collateral doesn't take care of it well, till the day he has to return it. Then he cleans it off, dusts it and polishes it so that it looks as good as new before it is to be returned to its owner. Similarly, each and every one of us has a holy soul, a *neshoma* that *Hashem* has entrusted us with as collateral from Him, so to speak. Therefore, each and every one of us must see to it that we safeguard the soul; at least every evening, therefore, when we give her back to our Maker, we should see to it that we clean and keep the *neshoma* pure from any stains that might besmirch her.



## Rav Yoel Sirkis, 20<sup>th</sup> of Adar

*Bayis Chodosh – Bach on the Tur*

There is a well-known story that in Cracow, where the *Bach* was the chief *Rav*, there was a great, wealthy man who used to feed the poor in secret. Every week the poor

of Cracow would come to the local butcher and baker and would be able to get free meat, bread and *challos*. No one in Cracow knew that the rich man was secretly

funding this charity. In fact, to the outside world, the rich man appeared stingy and tight-fisted. When the charity collectors came around he ignored them (having given all his charity money to fund the poor people's food). He continued in this way for many years; no one knew his secret. The townsfolk assumed he was just a wicked, stingy old man. The wealthy man liked it better this way, since he knew that any honor he would have received in this world detracted from his heavenly reward for charity.

One day, the old wealthy man passed away. The *chevra kaddisha*, knowing his openly wicked ways as a miser, dug his grave outside the cemetery gates, a spot reserved for the wicked. Even the *shammas* of the gravediggers gave the corpse's backside a good slap and chuckled, saying, "Well, in your lifetime, you never gave any charity, so let's see you be charitable in the grave!" The townsfolk disparaged the dead man with jeering, booing and hissing, and he was buried amidst insults and dishonor. Meanwhile, in Heaven, his judgment was to go straight to *Gan Eden*, bypassing the *Soton's* accusations, for charity done in secret covers over all sins and iniquities, and further, he had shunned honor and suffered dishonor in death.

Meanwhile, the poor came in droves begging for food and sustenance from the butcher and baker. The butcher and baker turned them away empty-handed, explaining that they had been giving them

charity from a secret donor who was no longer around. Then they realized who their true benefactor had been – all too late!

However, the *Soton* was given free reign to punish the townsfolk in Cracow for their dishonor of the truly righteous rich man. A great plague attacked the city and the death toll mounted daily. The city elders dispatched a representative to Rav Yoel Sirkis, *mechaber* of the *Bach* on the *Tur*.

"Please, holy, saintly *Tzaddik*! Save us and all of Cracow before we have no choice but to demote you from the position of chief *Rav* and choose someone who can save us!" he cried.

The *Bach* asked for three days. He prayed and asked Heaven to reveal the reason for the decree. When the *Soton* revealed to him the entire story, how the rich man had charitably sustained the poor in secret and how he had been buried in shame and disgrace, he quickly summoned the elders and the city council and explained the situation to them. Then he and the elders immediately went to the *bais hachaim* (cemetery). When they arrived at the cemetery to disinter and remove the rich man's body and rebury him in honor, the *shammas* who had disparaged and ridiculed the corpse died on the spot. They buried him instead in the spot reserved for the wicked outside the cemetery gates. They then reburied the rich man in his proper place with honor befitting a *Tzaddik*.



## **Rav Elimelech Ben Eliezer Lipman of Lizhensk, 21<sup>st</sup> of Adar**

*The Noam Elimelech*

Rav Eliezer Lipman and his wife Miroush, well-to-do small-town merchants, were known as pious and charitable people. Of their seven sons, two rose to great fame in the world of *Chassidus*: *Rebbe* Reb Meshulom Zusha of Anipoli and *Rebbe* Reb

Elimelech of Lizhensk. Even as young boys, the two brothers immersed themselves in *Torah* study, in both its revealed and mystic forms, particularly the *kabbalistic* teachings of the *Ari HaKodosh* (Rav Yitzchok Luria, 1534–1572).

For a number of years they went into self-imposed exile, wandering from town to town, spreading *Torah* and inspiring people to mend their ways. The brothers became attracted to the growing movement of *Chassidus*, becoming outstanding *talmidim* of the *Maggid* of Mezritch.

*Rebbe* Reb Elimelech became one of the leading figures of *Chassidus*. He developed the idea of making the personality of the *Tzaddik* the focal point of a *Chassid's* existence; he believed that the *Tzaddik*, the accomplished righteous man, has the mission "to give life to all the worlds by virtue of his Divine soul". This concept is expressed in his book *Noam Elimelech*, which is one of the principal works on *Chassidus*.

Among his *talmidim* were such leading figures as the *Chozeh* (Seer) of Lublin, the *Maggid* of Kozhnitz, Rav Menachem Mendel of Rymanov, Rav Avrohom Yehoshua Heschel of Apta, Rav Naftoli Tzvi of Ropshitz, Rav Moshe Leib of Sassov, and Rav Klonymos Kalman Epstein, known as the *Ma'or VaShemesh*. A man of unrivaled greatness, he was admired by his *talmidim* and has been so by *Chassidim* through the ages.

*Rebbe* Reb Elimelech left behind three righteous sons: Rav Elozor of Lizhensk, Rav Lipa Eliezer of Chemelnick and Rav Yaakov of Maglanitza, as well as two daughters: Esther Etil and Mirish.

*Rebbe* Reb Elimelech said, "One should always see the good attributes of another person and never see his shortcomings." It stands to reason from this that good educators can identify individual qualities in each child and "fan the flames", to evoke enthusiasm and love for *Torah*, set a strong, spiritual and developmental foundation and bring out potential.



## **Stale Coffee**

Once, when *Rebbe* Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk and his brother, *Rebbe* Reb Zusha, visited their spiritual master, the *Maggid* of Mezritch, the *Maggid* told them that he would like to offer them some food, but all he had was some left-over coffee from *Shabbos*. They arrived on a Monday and the coffee was from *Shabbos*! So he served them the stale coffee. Much later, *Rebbe* Reb Elimelech and *Rebbe* Reb Zusha said, "That coffee kept us going for a whole year!"

(*Chassidic* custom teaches us that remnants of a meal, or even a drink, from a holy person, has a special potency and even a healing property. But perhaps the idea in this story is also that being served by their *Rebbe* transmitted to them spiritual power. That is, because the *Rebbe* was holy, he treated them as if they were holy – and that energized them to live up to their *Rebbe's* view of them.)



## **Food from Gan Eden**

Toward the end of his life, *Rebbe* Reb Elimelech ate very little, and even the entreaties of his friends and relatives had little effect. One time, when his son, Rav Elozor, pleaded with him to eat enough to sustain life, *Rebbe* Reb Elimelech said, "I wish I could eat, but my body rejects all things physical. Ah! One time, during my years of wandering in exile, I lodged at an inn near a certain village, and there I ate a delicious soup. If that were available, I could eat it. But the inn is so far away!"

Many years later, Rav Elozor happened to be in that village, and sought out the inn to which his father had referred. He asked the hostess whether he might have some of her special soup, and she said, "How I wish I could serve you the food that is appropriate for a great person like yourself. But we are very poor. Very few travelers pass this way, and we just

have enough flour and beans to eat for our meals. I will be glad to make a bean soup for you.

When Rav Elozor tasted the soup, he experienced a spiritual delight, as though he were eating of the offerings of the Mizbei'ach (Altar) in the Bais HaMikdash in Yerushalayim. He asked the hostess, "Please tell me, what ingredients do you use for this soup?"



The woman began crying. "I am so sorry that it is so meager. I do not have any spices to put in. All I did was cook the beans with water, and then I *davened* to Hashem: 'Master of the Universe! You have provided me with the *mitzva* of preparing a meal for a special guest. If only I had meat, vegetables and spices, I would prepare a meal for him that would befit him, but I have nothing. But You, Master of the Universe, have everything. You have *Gan Eden* (Paradise), where there are all the finest scents and flavors. Please put some of these in the soup, so that my holy guest can enjoy his food.'"

Rav Elozor thought, "Now I know why my father longed for this soup. This pious woman's sincere *tefillos* were answered, and the soup did indeed have the taste of *Gan Eden*."



### **Hashem's Will**

One night, while on their wanderings, *Rebbe* Reb Elimelech and his brother, *Rebbe* Reb Zusha, were stranded in a village inn where a wedding was in progress. The drunken peasants, seeing the two bearded brothers hiding behind the large stove, grabbed *Rebbe* Reb Zusha and

made him perform a dance, while goading him, poking and jabbing at him from all sides. Round and round poor *Rebbe* Reb Zusha danced, to the uproarious laughter of the rowdies. Between dances, *Rebbe* Reb Elimelech whispered, "Why do they always pick on you?"

"It is *Hashem's* will," *Rebbe* Reb Zusha sighed.

"You know what, let's change places," *Rebbe* Reb Elimelech suggested. "They can't tell us apart. The next time they'll grab me, and you will get some rest."

So *Rebbe* Reb Zusha took his brother's place behind the stove. Just then one of the peasants roared, "This time, let's get the one behind the stove! The other one danced enough!"

When it was all over, *Rebbe* Reb Zusha said, "When something is *Hashem's* will, it will come to pass, no matter what we do."

May the merit of the *Tzaddik Rebbe* Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk protect us all, *Amen*.

[www.rabbishimon.com/tzadikim/showz.php?p=elimelech.htm](http://www.rabbishimon.com/tzadikim/showz.php?p=elimelech.htm)



### **An Author Par Excellence**

A *Rav* once asked the *Rebbe* Elimelech if he was engaged in writing anything or authoring a *sefer* [called a *chibur*, which also means "connection" or "attachment"]. "I have been in the process of authoring something and putting together something – a *chibur* – for some forty years now," replied the *Noam Eliemelech*, "but it's still not finished."

"Please show me this *chibur*," requested the *Rav*.

"It's still not complete. I am working on





the *chibur* of my heart to my Creator, you see,” explained the *Tzaddik*. (*Kisvei Ri Shuv* of Brisk #6)



### **Hallel on Parshas Beshallah**

Rav Yitzchok Isaac of Kaliv was once in Lizhensk during *Parshas Beshallah*. The Rebbe Elimelech asked the Kaliver to be absent when he recited *Torah* at the *tisch* for some secret reason that the *Rebbe* would not divulge, but the Kaliver did not wish to miss the opportunity to hear the *Rebbe's* *Chassidic* discourse and so he remained.

As soon as the *Noam Elimelech* began to say *Torah*, the Kaliver jumped up away from the table and began to run to and fro in the entire house, singing *Hallel* at the top of his voice! Everyone present was very surprised by such aberrant behavior. Afterward, the Kaliver explained himself: “When the *Rebbe* said *Torah* about the weekly *Parsha*, I was infused by such excitement and it set me aflame with such hislahavus that I imagined myself to be in the midst of offering the *Korban Pesach* – and so I sang *Hallel*!” (*Ohel Elimelech* #274)



### **Miraculous Hands to Aton for the Very First Sins**

The *Chakal Yitzchok* of Spinka related, “The Rebbe Reb Melech once entered the kitchen and observed a baby being nursed by his mother. The child acted as all infants do, kicking and hitting his mother and generally striking out with his limbs with wanton abandon. The *Rebbe* chuckled and admonished the baby, “No, no, my child – don’t you know the



*Torah* forbids striking and hitting a parent?!”

The Rebbe Elimelech’s mother was also present and she was very amused. “Don’t you realize that all babies behave this way? Why do you think you were any different?” she challenged him.

Hearing this the *Rebbe* was greatly troubled. He quickly went over to the stove where the flames were merrily crackling beneath a pot cooking something suspended above the fire. “The hand that sinned shall be burned!” declared the *Rebbe*, aflame with emotion to atone for his infantile misdeeds and childish misdemeanors, and, to the horror of all present, the Rebbe Elimelech burned his hands in the fire!

Later, when a miracle occurred and his hands healed, returning to their original state, the *Rebbe* would display a hand to the *Chassidim* and say, “See this hand? I wasn’t born with it – it grew back miraculously through *Hashem's* mercy and kindness!” (Introduction of *Chakal Yitzchok* to *Imrei Yosef Spinka* on *Shemos*. See also *Divrei Chaim Sanz*, *Parshas Ki Savo* p. 275)



### **Escape From Gan Eden**

The *Tiferes Shlomo* of Radomsk once testified that if the Rebbe Eliemelech were allowed to perform just one more *mitzva*, he would seize the opportunity to run away from *Gan Eden* to do that and fulfill *Hashem's* will! (*Ohel Shlomo Radomsk*, Vol. II #10)



### **Tears of Teshuva**

Rav Levi Yitzchok Bender used to say that for some six years the Rebbe Elimelech would dip his bread in his own tears [through doing *teshuva*]! (*Siach Sarfei Kodesh Breslov*, Vol. III #634)

### **A Shtickel Emes!**

When the Rebbe Elimelech was *niftar*, two of his *talmidim*, Rav Uri Strelisker and Rav Gavriel MiTschuk, came together and sobbed unrelentingly, crying bitter tears and saying, "A *shtickel emes iz*

*gevein oif dem oilom, hut men es oich aveckgenumen fun inz!!* – There was at least a piece of truth in this world, and now that too has been taken away from us!!" (*Devorim Areivim*, #40)



לזכר נשמת אמנו החשובה, נפש יקרה ועדינה  
אשה יראת ה' ובעלת מדות טובות  
מרת זיסל ז"ל  
בת הרה"ח מו"ה מאיר זאב הכהן כ"ץ ע"ה הי"ד  
מעיר נירעדהאז יע"א  
ונכדת הרה"ק רבי אהרן צבי טערקלטויב זי"ע מבריד  
אשת הרה"ח מו"ה אברהם חיים ע"ה גאלדענבערג

She was a Holocaust survivor who never let that period of time define her life. Although she lost most of her family - she claimed that *Hashem* gave her an amazing life. She had a unique knack of making everyone who encountered her feel like they were the most important loved person. Her inimitable smile never left her face.

She transmitted a strong value system stressing *Emunas Hashem* and *Tzaddikim*. Her love for stories of *tzaddikim* gave her *chiyus* and she conveyed that *chizuk* to anyone who met her. In her eighty-nine years of life, there wasn't one person who had an untoward word or adverse feelings about her.

She loved her family deeply and immensely. May *Hashem* console her family and may she be a constant *melitza yeshura*, אמן.

(מתוך אמונה טהורה) בדרך המסורה (והתנהגה כאשה כשרה) לכל משפחתה, היא הודה היא הדרה - נקיה וטהורה היוצר וצר צורה (וקיבלה הגזירה)

נפטרה בש"ט בת תשעים שנה  
ביום כ"ד לחודש כסלו (ערב חנוכה) שנת תשע"ח לפ"ק  
ת"נ'צ'ב'ה'

תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה  
ותקים לתחיה לקץ הימין במהרה

# Zera Shimshon



## Tetzaveh

The Zera Shimshon, Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachmon Michael Nachmani, was born in 5467 (1706/1707) into an illustrious family with great Rabbinical lineage. He studied the revealed and concealed parts of the Torah by the Torah greats of his day.

He served as Rav of Modena, Pisa, Sayna and Reggio, Italy, and was recognized as a holy and pious individual, as well as a tremendous Torah scholar in all areas of Torah. He passed away on the 6<sup>th</sup> of Elul 5539 (1779).

His Seforim were named, Toldos Shimshon (The 'Offspring' of Shimshon) on Pirkei Avos and Zera Shimshon (The 'Seed' of Shimshon) on the Parshi'os of the Torah. In his introduction, he explains that since his only son had died during his lifetime, he wrote his Seforim to perpetuate his own memory after his passing.

The following is his passionate request to learn his works.

*"I implore of you with ten terms of supplication to choose from my Chiddushim (novella) the piece that finds favor in your eyes, for your learning will sooth my soul etc..."*

*"This righteousness will stand by you forever – to 'eat' in this world, and be satiated in the next. In this merit, Hashem will repay you with children, health and sustenance.*

*"...and now my brothers and friends etc. do a true kindness, and with your eyes you will see children and grandchildren surrounding your table, houses filled with all that is good, wealth and honor will not cease from your children..."*

לזכר נשמת

רבינו שמשון חיים בן רב נחמן מיכאל זצ"ל

בעל הזרע שמשון זיע"א

ויה"ר שיתקיימו בנו ברכותיו של אותו צדיק

לזכות חיים דוד בן מייבא חוה להצלחה וסייעתא דשמיא בכל מעשה ידי ובכל הענינים

זכות רבינו זיע"א יעמוד לזיווג הגון

בקרב עבוד שושנה נחמה בת חנה

פעסא ולרפואה שלימה ליוכבד בת

דבורה ולכל משפחתה שימלא הקב"ה

משאלות לבם לטובה במהרה

ולזכות רבקה רויזא בת פייגא לזיווג הגון

בקרב בתוך שאר ישראל

לזכות החפץ בעילום שמו לזווג בניו

ובנותיו בקרב בזכות רבינו זיע"א

והטור הרביעי תרשיש שהם וישפה וגו' (כח' כ')

*And the fourth row, tarshish, shoham and yoshfeh (28:20)*

The Gemara (Baba Basra 75a) says on the passuk (Yeshaya 54:12) וישמתי "I will make your walls (at the time of the final redemption) out of Kodkod". There is an argument about what Kodkod is. One opinion is that it is the שהם, Beryl/Onyx, stone and one opinion is that it is the ישפה, Jasper stone. Hashem says, "Let it be like both!".

The Zera Shimshon asks - why are the walls going to be built out of specifically these two types of stones?

The Zera Shimshon answers as follows. The Shoham stone is the one on the Kohen Gadol's breastplate for the tribe of Yosef. Regarding the qualities of these stones the Shiltay Hagiborim says that the Shoham stone helps for memory, eyesight, speaking abilities, deeper understanding and wealth. Yosef had all these qualities and was therefore matched up with this stone. (He is associated with memory, Bereishis 42:9, understanding, ibid 41:39, eyes, ibid 49:22, understanding, ibid 39:2.)

Therefore, when the world will be worthy of receiving an abundance of such qualities, the walls will be built with the stone that possess the ability to emanate the strengths needed to hone these qualities.

The stone for the tribe of Benjamin on the Kohen Gadol's breastplate was the Yoshfeh stone. The word ישפה can be split to read יש פה, 'there is a mouth'. This, the Zera Shimshon explains by that fact that the Beis Hamikdash was built in the section of Binyamin. The reason why, out of all the tribes, Benjamin was the one that merited having the Beis Hamikdash in his portion is because of all the brothers, Benjamin was the only who was entirely not involved in the selling of Yosef. Had the Beis Hamikdash been built in the portion of any of the other brothers it would have been very hard for the prayers of the Jewish people to be answered there. They would come to beg Hashem for mercy but the prosecuting angels would say, "The brothers did not show mercy to Yosef when he begged them not to sell him. Why should You be merciful on them!?"

Therefore, it is Benjamin who enables us to beseech Hashem since he was not involved in the selling of Yosef. Hence, יש פה, Benjamin creates our ability to pray to Hashem without obstructions.

The use of the stone of Benjamin to the walls of Yerushalayim is added since Rachel, the mother of both Yosef and Benjamin, continually cries for the Jewish people in exile, that they don't suffer so much, therefore, at the time of the redemption, the stone of her son Benjamin which also helped the Jews be able to pray for better times is added to the wall.

לזכות זיווג הגון בקרב לאה בת שרה חנה, רינה ברכה בת שרה חנה

ולאלישבע נעמי בת רחל



**Tetzaveh**  
**February 27<sup>th</sup> 2021**  
**15<sup>th</sup> of Adar 5781**  
**892**



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**Hilula**

15 - Rabbi Tzvi Hirsch Kaidanover,  
 author of 'Kav HaYashar'

16 - Rabbi Pinchas Menachem Alter, the  
 Admor of Gur

17 - Rabbi Petachye Mordechai  
 Bardugo, author of 'Nofet Tzufim'

18 - Rabbi Yehoshua Rafael Pinchas  
 DeSigura

19 - Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, Av  
 Beit Din of Yerushalayim

20 - Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach,  
 Rosh Yeshiva of 'Kol Torah'

21 - Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk, author  
 of 'Noam Elimelech'

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

# Pachad David

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Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

Son of the tzaddik Rabbi Moshe Ahron Pinto, zt"l, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zy"a



**MASKIL LEDAVID**

Weekly talk on the Parshah given by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

## Bnei Yisrael Are Able to Uplift Themselves in the Merit of the Tzadik

**"Now you shall command the Children of Israel that they shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually" (Shemot 27:20)**

Several questions arise from this verse. Firstly, why does the verse begin with the words "Now you shall command", unlike other places in the Torah where it says, "Hashem spoke to Moshe" or "Hashem said to Moshe, saying"?

Secondly, Bnei Yisrael were commanded to bring this oil for a lofty purpose, for the kindling of the Menorah. So it would seem more in place to write "Let them take for Me pure, pressed olive oil" as it says in Parshat Terumah (Shemot 25:2), "Let them take for Me a portion" rather than "take for you" as it says here?

Furthermore, the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 231:1) writes, "When enjoying any worldly pleasures one should not intend for one's personal enjoyment but for the service of Hashem as it says (Mishlei 3:6), 'In all your ways know Him'. Our Sages said (Avot 2:12), 'Let all your deeds be for the sake of Heaven', this refers even to permitted matters, for example eating, drinking, walking... and all your physical needs should be for the sake of serving your Creator or for the sake of something that leads to serving Him."

The difficulty is, how it is possible to demand that man be wholly focused in all his thoughts on the Creator alone? After all, man is created with a physical body so how can he consider only the Creator throughout the day? Besides, since man resides together with the Yetzer Hara, how can he prevail over his natural desires and overcome all his temptations?

Is it even possible to demand of a very wealthy individual who works tirelessly and invests every hour of his day to advance his business and increase his profits, to understand that all he has, in fact, belongs to Hashem and not consider that "My strength and the might of my hand made me all this wealth"? It seems quite impossible that no matter the situation man finds himself in, he is required to believe that all is 'futility of futilities' and has no substance.

I would like to suggest a possible answer: We offer praises to Hashem that He does not approach any man unfairly. Only in accordance with his individual strength does Hashem try him, never G-d forbid beyond his capabilities. On this topic, the Beit Yisrael zya"a of Gur says in the name of Maran the Chidushei Harim zya"a that man is not given a challenge from Heaven if he cannot withstand and overcome it.

Our Sages zt"l have also expounded on the verse (Tehillim 147:16) "He Who gives snow like fleece", that if Hashem gives snow, He also sends fleece with which to warm ourselves against it. However, in man's eyes, it seems that the test is extremely challenging and endless. Why is this? Due to the power of the image that the Yetzer Hara skillfully draws for man, depicting the challenge as particularly trying so as to cause him to despair, G-d forbid.

But the truth is that Chazal tell us (Succah 52a), "In the future, Hashem will bring the Yetzer Hara and slaughter it in front of the righteous and wicked. To the righteous, the Yetzer Hara appears like a high mountain and to the wicked, he seems like a strand of hair... The righteous cry and exclaim, 'How did we manage to conquer this high mountain?' And the wicked cry and exclaim, 'How did we not succeed in conquering this strand of hair?'" How do we understand the meaning of the Yetzer Hara appearing like a mountain or a strand of hair?

But in light of the above, we can now understand this Gemara. The test which man faces is indeed very small like a strand of hair but the Yetzer Hara is the one who magnifies and enlarges it in man's eye. It is self-evident that the Yetzer Hara invests enormous strength to make the righteous stumble even with small matters. On the other hand, the righteous consider the Yetzer Hara's every challenge as something great, since in line with their strength and holiness, they consider every negative act, even if small, as something big and a serious sin if transgressed. This is why the righteous regard the Yetzer Hara as a high mountain.

This shows us that Hashem expects a tall order from man and as a result we wonder, do we possess the strength to withstand this difficult test of showing self-sacrifice in forgoing our personal desires? This is why Hashem said to Moshe, "Now you shall command...that they shall take for you" implying that in order for Bnei Yisrael to achieve the level of "they shall take for Me", meaning taking their very selves with self-sacrifice for the holy service and annulling all materialistic desires from their hearts, it is necessary that at the outset there should be "וְאָתָּה, Now you", meaning Moshe.

Not without reason did Hashem choose Moshe Rabbeinu to serve as an example for Am Yisrael. The tzadik of the generation is considered equal to the entire generation, for he has the power to influence and inspire them with his radiance and they, in turn, will revere him as it says (Avot 4:12), "Let the reverence for your teacher be as the reverence of Heaven".

But so that everyone should surround the tzadik and be influenced by him, there must be "וְאַתָּה, Now you". The 'vav' is added to the word 'you', implying something additional. Only when the tzadik conducts himself in line with "Take for Me", meaning he is totally taken to Hashem and serves Him wholeheartedly, then automatically the tzadik has the power to influence others. Through this, the souls of Bnei Yisrael cleave to him and he elevates all of them with a very great spiritual promotion.

This teaches us that man possesses the strength to forgo his desires and temptations and withstand his wealth and all worldly pleasures, only when he is totally given over to Hashem. Then he can annul "my strength and my might", for he is a client of Hashem alone. If he indeed behaves in this way, he merits an abundance of both material and spiritual goodness.





## Walking in their Ways

Tidbits of faith and trust penned by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu  
Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

### The Sign

When we celebrated the chanukat habayit (inauguration) of the Beit Midrash in Paris, I sat among the audience asking Hashem for a sign that this place will indeed be sanctified for His Name and the sound of Torah should never cease to be heard here. Suddenly, a couple walked in with their son. They came directly to me and the woman said, "Honored Rav, I have brought my dear son to you."

For a few moments, I was confused, I had no recollection of these people and did not understand what the mother wanted from me. She reminded me of their story. This child had slipped and fallen from the third floor. He had been in critical condition and his

to me for a blessing for a refuah shleimah in the merit of my ancestors zya"n, and I had blessed them.

"Certainly the Rav remembers," the mother added, "how he promised us that the merit of his ancestors would bring the boy a complete recovery and he would attend this chanukat habayit on two healthy feet.

"Until a few days ago, our son was still in a deep coma. Suddenly, he opened his eyes and regained consciousness! Then he began speaking and communicating with us. Finally, he stood up, to the astonishment of all the doctors.

Now we have come to fulfill the second half of the Rav's prophecy. Our healthy son has come to participate in the chanukat habayit of this hallowed sanctuary."

Upon hearing her words, I thanked Hashem for the wonderful kindnesses that He performs with His creatures and for returning this boy to good health.

Then I turned to HaGaon HaRav Solomon, shlita, who sat near me and had heard the entire amazing incident. I told him, "Before these people walked in, I asked Hashem for a sign that this place would be a haven for Torah and holiness. This family's miracle clearly indicates that this edifice will be a fount of Torah and serve as a sanctification of Hashem's Name in the world, drawing countless members of our nation to drink from its spiritual waters."

## The Haftarah

**"You, Son of Man!"** (Yechezkel 43)

The connection to the Parsha: The Haftarah talks about the dedication of the Altar and the Seven Days of Inauguration, part of Yechezkel's vision about the second Beit HaMikdash. In the Parsha, Moshe Rabbeinu is commanded about the Seven Days of Inauguration at the dedication of the Mishkan.

Residents of Yerushalayim, as it is Purim for them, read the Haftarah **"Shmuel said"** (Shmuel I, 15) while Ashkenazim begin from **"So said Hashem"** (ibid).

## Guard Your Tongue

### Hints, Winks, Signs or Facial Expressions Are Also Forbidden

The prohibition of lashon hara is not limited to speech. Included in this prohibition is any form of expression through which derogatory or harmful words are conveyed. Therefore, lashon hara that is expressed in writing, or through hints, winks, signs or facial expressions that convey a derogatory or harmful message, are also forbidden.



## In Our Father's Path

### Rabbi Moshe's Compelling Decision

The concept "chachmei lev", wise-hearted people, that appears several times in the topic of the construction of the Mishkan, is used as a metaphor in all areas of Jewish life when wishing to describe the image of a Ben Torah. In our generation too, we have merited having among us these precious personalities, those who possess 'chochmat lev'. Regarding one such individual, Rabbi Moshe Shapira zt"l, we will relate the following:

The wealthy father-in-law of a respectable avreich from Bayit Vegan went bankrupt. The avreich began raising money to set him back on his feet and among other people visited the home of Rabbi Moshe Shapira, despite not having much of a connection with him. After hearing the details of the incident, Rabbi Moshe was crestfallen. Known for his insight into the ways of the soul, Rabbi Moshe sensed how this wealthy person felt, now bereft of his source of livelihood. From the depths of his sensitive soul, Rabbi Moshe felt the implication of falling 'from a high roof to a deep pit'.

"You say that he used to be very wealthy?" he asked the avreich in distress.

"Absolutely".

He sighed deeply, took out his checkbook and wrote out a large sum. "I am giving you all that I have right now," he said.

Later on, the avreich related that when Rabbi Moshe handed him the check, his eyes glistened with tears.

Rabbi Moshe took a tremendous proportion of his deeds with him to the grave, but on this subject of fatherly concern for the fate of his talmidim, many inspiring stories have been told. One of his talmidim, a ba'al teshuva, related: "Rabbi Moshe was extremely devoted to me at all times, even when I cried to him that I am in a constant state of 'They rise heavenward, they descend to the depths'. One can say that he built me up from scratch and stood by my side throughout, to the extent that it was as if 'all my breakers and waves passed over him'! He fed me spoonful by spoonful, until I built myself up and became a Ben Torah.

During a certain period, I was hospitalized and confined to bed with an infectious illness. At some point, I was forbidden to make the slightest move and I did not always have someone to aid me with my physical needs.

To my great surprise, Rabbi Moshe turned up! He entered my room with a bowl, washed my hands, brushed my teeth and took care of my different physical needs himself. I, from my pathetic position, found it hard to watch the sight: The esteemed Rabbi Moshe of Slabodka troubling himself with these things...

Later on, he helped me understand that to engage in these matters when necessary, can be the epitome of dignity!"

And another amazing story: The story of a kidney.

One of his talmidim from 'Or Sameach' required a kidney transplant. The fee for a kidney that matched his requirements was a hundred thousand dollars, a fortune in those days that he had no way of acquiring. When Rabbi Moshe Shapira heard about his talmid's suffering, he said without hesitation: "Take a bank loan! I will mortgage my house for it!"

The talmid was embarrassed and hesitant. He tried to refuse, but Rabbi Moshe Shapira's decision was more compelling than a bank mortgage...

He mortgaged his own apartment for the loan of this enormous sum!



## Pearls of the Parsha

### A Tzadik Kindles Jewish Souls

*"Now you shall command the Children of Israel that they shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually" (Shemot 27:20)*

The esteemed Gaon and tzadik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto shlita says that this verse serves as an allusion to the power of a tzadik's holiness, which he can use to kindle the souls of the holy Am Yisrael for the service of Hashem.

"Now you" refers to the tzadik, "shall command the Children of Israel that they should take for you pure, pressed olive oil", implies that Bnei Yisrael should bring their oil, their souls, (the letters of השמן can be re-arranged to spell נשמה, soul) to the tzadik.

"Pressed for illumination" implies that Bnei Yisrael should crush their very being and annul themselves before the tzadik, since he is the "illumination", just as we are told that a tzadik lights up the eyes of Bnei Yisrael.

"To kindle the lamp continually" means that the tzadik should kindle their souls, because the word נר, lamp, hints to the soul as it says (Mishlei 20:27), "A man's soul is the lamp of Hashem".

### Torah Study Without Distraction

*"They shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination" (Shemot 27:20)*

Rabbeinu Chaim ben Atar, the Holy Ohr Hachaim zya"a, teaches that this verse hints to the Torah that is compared to oil. Just as oil lights up the world, so too Torah illuminates the world.

The precise wording of "pure" is a lesson that one must engage in Torah for its sake without other considerations and distractions, just as the oil must be pure without preservatives.

Rabbi Shabtai Atton zt"l in his sefer 'Ruach Chochma' adds that this verse also alludes to not diverting one's attention from Torah study, as Chazal say (Chagigah 15a), "Words of Torah can be lost as easily as glass vessels". Therefore, man must engage in Torah constantly without distraction. This is the meaning of "to kindle the lamp continually". Diligence results in the flame of Torah being preserved in one's heart and in this way one retains one's learning.

### Kindling the Lights is a Segulah for Kingship

*"An eternal decree for their generations" (Shemot 27:21)*

Even though due to our sins, we no longer have a Beit Hamikdash, our Batei Knesset and Batei Midrash remain in existence for all generations and the practice is to kindle the Menorah in these holy places of worship.

The Midrash HaGadol writes: One who is accustomed to kindling the lights in the Batei Knesset and Batei Midrash merits kingship as it says, "Ner begot Kish. Kish begot Shaul" (Divrei Hayamim I, 8:33), yet elsewhere it says "There was a man of Binyamin whose name was Kish son of Aviel" (Shmuel I, 9:1).

If he was called Aviel why is he referred to as Ner in Divrei Hayamim?

Because he would kindle the lamps, nerot, in the Batei Knesset and Batei Midrashot. In the merit of this, King Shaul descended from him.

### A Positive Thought is Considered as a Deed

*"The belt with which it is emplaced, which is on it, shall be of the same workmanship, it shall be made of it" (Shemot 28:8)*

It is a well-known principle that concerning a mitzvah "A positive thought is considered as a deed". Even if in the end one was unable to carry out the mitzvah as one intended due to circumstances beyond one's control, the Torah considers it as if one actually performed the mitzvah.

In light of this idea, the Chida, in the name of Rabbeinu Ephraim zya"a, explains the verse "The belt with which it is emplaced (חשב)": The thought of performing a mitzvah that adorns a person (אפוד, belt also means adornment), is considered as "כמעשהו", as if he already performed the mitzvah. But what does this concern? When "it shall be made of it", he truly desired to perform the mitzvah and only because he was compelled he could not do so...

## Treasures

Based on the teachings of  
Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon  
Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya  
Pinto, shlita



### The Potency of Piety Lies in its Beginning

*"They shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually" (Shemot 27:20)*

Our Sages have taught (Menachot 86a) "There are three references to olives in the Torah and each refers to a different kind of oil that they produce. The first kind, the superior grade, is that one picks the ripe olives off the tree, pounds them and puts them into a wicker basket, where the oil drips through the holes of the basket into a vessel. Pressing the olives under heavy wood is the second type, while grinding and then pressing again is the third kind. The first one is fit for kindling the Menorah while the other oils are used for flour-offerings."

The question is, what is special about the first kind of oil that only this is fit to be used for the Menorah?

We will offer the following explanation that teaches us an ethical lesson: Chazal say (Shir Hashirim Rabba 5:2), "Open for Me just one opening of repentance the size of a needle's eye and I will open for you openings that wagons and carriages can enter. Rabbi Tanchuma and Rabbi Chunya and Rabbi Abahu said in the name of Reish Lakish: It says (Tehillim 46:11) 'Desist and know that I am G-d'. Hashem said to Yisrael, 'Desist from your bad deeds and know that I am Hashem'. Rabbi Levi said, if Yisrael would only repent for just one day, they would immediately be redeemed and Ben David would arrive immediately. Why is this? 'For He is our G-d, and we can be the flock He pastures, and the sheep in His charge, even today, if we but heed His call' (Tehillim 95:7)."

It follows that Hashem asks of man one thing alone: That he should just begin the process of repentance and performing good deeds and then Hashem will immediately assist him in standing up to the Yetzer Hara. As we are told (Makot 10b), "A person is led on the path he wishes to take". Everything is dependent on the beginning of the matter, as it says (Tehillim 111:10) "The beginning of wisdom is fear of Hashem". We are also told (Devarim 10:12) "Now, O Israel, what does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you? Only to fear Hashem, your G-d". One who possesses fear of Heaven possesses everything and one who is lacking fear of Heaven has nothing. Even if he repents, his repentance lacks substance.

This shows us the importance of the beginning of the matter, for the essence of a mitzvah and the core of everything is dependent on its beginning. The Rishonim say (Rokeach, Introduction) that nothing can match the strength of piety at its initial stage, for once one is habituated to the matter, he becomes lax and is no longer meticulous.

This being the case, we can understand why only the first grade of oil was fit to be used for the Menorah. Hashem was hinting to Yisrael that through opening for Him a small opening like the eye of a needle, He will open a large opening for them and they will succeed in defeating the Yetzer Hara. Since they have taken the first step, Hashem will immediately come to their assistance. Man should not wonder, how can I begin to observe Torah and mitzvot? The Torah is extremely broad! How many hundreds of serious mitzvot there are; how many hundreds of serious sins does the Torah involve. How can I be careful with all of these? Therefore, the Torah tells us that the first grade of oil alone is fit for the Menorah, meaning the only action you need to do is to take the initial step and subsequently Hashem will help you complete the journey.



## A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA

**T**he offerings brought great satisfaction to Hashem, as it were, to the extent that the Torah calls the offerings "an appeasing fragrance".

Rashi writes on the words "an appeasing fragrance": "It is a source of contentment before, Me that I spoke and My will was done". This is the most refined form of Avodat Hashem, pure of any trace of personal intent or benefit. It gives great pleasure and special satisfaction to Hashem, as Rashi writes.

On a superficial level, it seems to us that the pleasure Hashem derives from the korbanot is the satisfying aroma that arises from them and in this way He is appeased.

However, Rashi reveals to us that the satisfaction brought about by the korbanot is the fact that we carry out Hashem's command, Who told us to offer korbanot.

Harav Binyomin Birenzweig shlita asks that every time one performs a Torah command, it is an expression of fulfilling Hashem's will. So why does the Torah not say that doing any mitzvah affords a satisfying aroma to Hashem? The answer seems to be that the superiority of the offerings is the performance of Hashem's will in the most complete manner, for through bringing a korban a person sacrifices all his deeds entirely to Hashem, everything becomes sanctified for Hashem. There is no personal bearing or benefit when bringing a korban, on the contrary, one takes an animal or money and gives it entirely to Hashem. This is an act of doing His will in the most complete way possible and this is what gives rise to the satisfying aroma.

We can derive from this a lesson for our performance of all mitzvot. If a person performs a mitzvah wholly for Hashem's will without any personal pleasure, rather he intends and acts for the sake of Heaven, one can certainly say that this mitzvah produces a satisfying aroma.

Rabbi Meir Rubman zt"l (Zichron Meir) writes that one can say that whenever

one performs a mitzvah with perfection, it gives a satisfying aroma to Hashem.

A most moving and powerful story, concerning the merit of performing a mitzvah with a purity of heart and perfection, is brought in the sefer Ohel Moshe. Harav Yitzchak Eisenbach was born to a well-known Orthodox, Yerushalmi family. In his younger years, he was an active, cheerful child who transformed the town's alleyways into his playing fields where he frolicked around.

One Shabbat afternoon, Yitzchak made his way to the Kotel passing through the Jaffe Gate and the Old City, through the quarter populated extensively by Arabs. Suddenly, he caught sight of a gold coin gleaming on the roadside. The value of this kind of coin was so great that it could be used to support a large family for two whole weeks.

The child was excited about the inherent potential of finding this treasure; it would enable him to assist his family that found themselves in dire financial straits. However, he well remembered that due to the holiness of Shabbat he was forbidden to pick up the muktzah coin. What did he do? He decided to place his foot on top of the coin to hide it from the view of passersby, choosing to remain standing in that spot until the end of Shabbat.

And so Yitzchak stood still in the Arab street for over an hour. Suddenly, an Arab lad approached and asked him why he was standing there like a statue. At first, he did not reply but the lad kept interrogating him until he answered with childlike innocence, "I have something underneath my foot that it is forbidden for me to pick up, so I am waiting here until after Shabbat so that I can..." Before he even managed to finish his sentence, the Arab pushed him over and while Yitzchak lay stunned on the ground, he quickly bent over, grabbed the coin and ran off.

By the time he managed to pull himself together, the Arab had already jumped over the fence and disappeared from sight. The disheartened child made his way to the Beit Midrash of HaRav Nachum Twersky zt"l of Chernobyl, where his father used to pray Minchah and eat Seuda Shlishit.

It was Yitzchak's regular responsibility to put out the chairs, set the table and

serve the food to all the participants who came to be with the Rebbe. But this week he disregarded his custom and just sat crouched in a corner. The Chernobyler Rebbe who was fond of the child, noticed that something was not right. The benches and tables remained unprepared.

The Rebbe approached him and asked, "What happened today? You look so sad. We all need you to set the tables!" Itzele told the Rebbe what had happened and expressed his great regret at the golden opportunity that had slipped through his fingers. The Rebbe listened attentively and then took the child's hand and said, "Come with me now to sit down by the table and after Shabbat, please come to my home".

On Motzei Shabbat, the child accompanied the Rebbe to his home. The Rebbe opened a drawer and took out a gold coin, similar to the one he had found in the Old City. "Here, this coin is yours," the Rebbe said, "but I am giving it to you on one condition. I am asking that in exchange you give me the reward of the mitzvah you fulfilled today!" Itzele was moved and asked the Rebbe in amazement, "The Rebbe wants the reward of the mitzvah in exchange for the coin?" "Yes", replied the Rebbe, "today you sanctified the Name of Heaven in an outstanding way by not picking up the coin due to the holiness of Shabbat. What perfection of mitzvah from a young child! Here, I am offering you this other gold coin instead. Take it, I am just asking for the reward of the mitzvah."

Itzele was shocked. He gazed at the gold coin and quickly thought of all that he could buy for his family. And then he raised his eyes to the Rebbe and said, "If the value of the mitzvah that I performed today is so great, it is not for sale!"

The Rebbe leaned over to the child and kissed him on his forehead.

For many years Rabbi Yitzchak would relate to his children and grandchildren that this lesson he learnt in his childhood from the Chernobyler Rebbe, demonstrated to him more powerfully than anything he learnt as he grew older, the great significance of performing a mitzvah with a purity of intention and perfection. How great is this kind of mitzvah in Hashem's eyes!





# MEOROS HATZADDIKIM

— Lights Of Our Righteous —



## Purim

The *Gemara* in *Megillah* 7a teaches us that *Rava* said a person is obligated to get so drunk on *Purim* until he cannot tell the difference between cursed is Haman and blessed is Mordechai.

Rav Mordechai Steiner explained this *Gemara* further based on what the *seforim ha'kedoshim* tell us that on *Purim* we have the opportunity to perform and achieve great salvation and whoever puts out his hand they give him whatever he asks for, meaning that whatever a person requests for on *Purim* he is granted his request. Based on this we can explain that a person is obligated to drink on *Purim* and become drunk on all the great *berachos* and *yeshuos* – to become high on all the blessings and salvations, because he can no longer tell the difference between *arur* Haman and *baruch* Mordechai – alluding to the fact that on *Purim* they do not differentiate, no matter how wicked or righteous he is, and this is what we *pasken* in *halachah* - that the rule of Jewish law is decided that “whoever puts out his hand we give him and grant his request and we do not check to see how righteous he is or not”, *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 694:3). We see therefore, that even if we deem ourselves unworthy of *Hashem's* *berachos* and *yeshuos*, He gives us and grants our requests on *Purim*. Therefore, the most important thing is that we ask and then *Hashem* will grant us favors and blessings that we merit true *Simchah*, with the coming of our righteous redeemer, *Amen*.

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Rav Mordechai Steiner explained this based on the well-known *gematria*, that Amalek is equal to *safek* – doubt. (*Ayin*=70, *Mem*=40, *Lamed*=30, *Kuf*=100; together they equal 240) (*Samech* =60, *Pay*=80, *Kuf*=100; together they equal 240).

Because Amalek causes us to doubt our *emunah* and faith in *Hashem* and in general the *yetzer hara* always seeks to prevent us from *avodas Hashem* – the Divine service by sowing doubts in our minds and hearts. It is a well-known saying that there is no greater joy and *simchah* than the resolution of all doubts – *ayn simchah kebataras hesafekeis*. Therefore, since each *Purim* we blot out and erase the memory of Amalek and reach a clarity of mind in regard to our *avodas Hashem*



therefore the *simchah* and joy is great indeed!

This then is another way to understand our *Gemara* that a person needs to get drunk on *Purim*, he must be drunk on *Simchah* - high on joy, the *simchah* should make him drunk with joy, and the reason is because until now he did not understand the true meaning of the difference between cursed is Haman and blessed is Mordechai, because until *Purim* he was mixed up and unable to tell the difference between what is truly good and what is truly evil. However, now that those doubts have been resolved he is truly happy and joyful, because *ayn simchah kehataras hasafeikos* – there is no greater joy than the resolution of all doubts! May *Hashem* help us always be *b'Simchah*!

Another way to understand that *Gemara* is based on the idea that everything that *Hashem* does is for the best, as the *pasuk* in *Eicha* tells us from on High no evil or good comes down, therefore, we have to say that what sometimes appears to us as evil is only a facade, it is just externally appearances that look bad, however, the inner truth is that it is good. Therefore, all we need to do is just ask of *Hashem* – *harenu Hashem chasdecha* – *Hashem* reveal to us Your loving kindness so that we can truly see the good with our own eyes.

The holy *seforim* cite that when a person repents and returns to *Hashem*, doing *teshuva* out of love, he then merits to see the loving kindness and observe the *chassadim* - then even pain and suffering is transformed from *nega* and affliction to *oneg* and delight. *Purim* is a time of *teshuva me'ahava* – repentance out of love, as the *Gemara Shabbos* 88a relates that we accepted the *Torah* willingly out of love once again anew during the days of Achashverosh. Therefore, everyone should be merrily drunk and high on *Purim*, inebriated with such joy that comes from doing *teshuva* out of love, that when we accept the *Torah* anew out of love - we won't know the difference between *arur* Haman and *Baruch* Mordechai, because we will accept all of what *Hashem* does is for the best, it's all for the good - even what seems at first like a curse is a blessing, whatever seems bad is only due to our sins, but no sooner do we repent and do *teshuva* out of love - we see immediate salvation and realize that all *Hashem* wants is our best and to send us bountiful blessings and *shefa*. As Dovid *haMelech* says *Tehillim* 3, to *Hashem* is salvation over Your people is Your blessing forever – *selah*. *Rashi* there comments that the *pasuk* means – to *Hashem* is salvation, however, all that is holding salvation back from being realized is – *al amcha birkasecha*, that we the people need to be ready to receive the blessings, we must create a vessel a container that can hold the *berachah* – once we are ready to be a *keli machzik berachah* we can enjoy all of *Hashem's* blessings, *Amen*.



## **Ohev Yisroel - PURIM**

### **Mordechai is *PasachYah***

*Chazal* say *Menachos* 65a *Pesachya* is Mordechai. This statement can be understood based on the *pasuk* in *Iyov* 8:7 “Though your beginning be small, in the end you will grow very great.”

There is a deep matter that is known as the unknowable beginning – *reisha de'lo isyada*, and this is hinted at by the crown on the letter *Yud* of *Hashem's* Divine Name. The next level after that is a thin path called *shvil dakik* alluding to the attribute of *Chochmah* – wisdom hinted at by the letter *Yud* itself. The next level is the first letter *Hay* – the supernal *Hay* of the attribute of *Binah* – insight. This is known as the world of questions, where we can ask and seek answers trying to understand (as opposed to the unknowable beginning) this is the *alma de'kayama lisha'alab* (*Zohar Bereishis 1a*).

The best way to understand this is by an illustrative example or *mashal*: Let's say that someone is studying something and does not understand the material, but then suddenly like a flash a clear understanding comes to him and enters his mind. This lack of understanding is the first stage of the unknowable beginning the– *reisha de'lo isyada*, then all of sudden inspiration and understanding comes to him, arriving via that thin narrow path called the *shvil dakik*, and then the matter takes form in his mind and imagination, this is initially *Chochmah* and the final detailed understanding is *Binah*.

This thin narrow path is called *Yesod Abba*, and from there all manner of influx and bountiful blessings are released and descend and all of the supernal worlds are illuminated thereby. This is represented by the Divine Name *YH"VH* punctuated by the *Pasach*, as is explained elsewhere.

This is also the intended *kavanah* that we have when we recite all the *Berachos* when we say and utter the word *Baruch*. That *Baruch* is the source of supernal wisdom – *chochma ila kadisha*.

In the writings of the *Arizal*, it is revealed that Mordechai is the aspect of *Yesod Abba*, and this is what *Chazal* hinted at by saying that *Pashachya* is Mordechai.

They meant that the vowel of *Pasach* is the *klalus* of *shefa* gathered together and collected inside the crown of the *Yud*. And therefore, *Yud* and *Hay* from *PashachYah* refers to Mordechai who is *Yesod Abba*.

This is how we understand the *pasuk* in *Iyov* “Though your beginning be small, In the end you will grow very great.” The small beginning refers to that thin narrow path the *shvil dakik*, and the end that grows very great is the bountiful influx of blessings – the *shefa* that comes down over all of the worlds, *Amen!*

## **Ohev Yisroel Parshas Ki Sisa**

### **The Broken Luchos (Tablets)**

“The *Luchos* that you broke – *asher shibarta*” (34:1): *Yasher kochacha sheshibarta* (*Shabbos* 87a).

*Chazal* say that *Hashem* thanked Moshe for breaking the *Luchos*. The *Apta Rav* is quoted in *Nachlas Yeboshua Zos HaBerocha* at the end of the *sefer* as explaining as follows:

When Moshe came down the mountain, he witnessed thousands of Jewish souls that had fallen into the deepest pits and descended into spiritual depths. Moshe wanted to uplift them and save them from destruction; he was afraid they might not be able to climb back out and ascend again!

Therefore, Moshe broke the *luchos*, because the letters, vowels and cantillation points all allude to the Jewish souls. These letters, *taamim* and *nekudos* would also be broken and would descend and be reunited with their corresponding *neshomos*. They would safeguard the fallen souls, and when we study *Torah* and uplift those fallen letters, we would simultaneously uplift the attached souls.

This is hinted at in the acrostic that spells “Thank you for breaking them – *Yasher Kochacha SHeshibarta*”, which spells the holy kabbalistic name of *Yud Kaf Shin*, derived from the *Ana BeKo’ach* prayer stanza that reads *Yichudcha Kevovas Shomreim* – “Guard them like the apple [pupil] of Your eye”, thus safeguarding the fallen souls of *Bnei Yisrael* till they were uplifted once again.

The Dinowitz edition of *Sifsei Tzaddikim* teaches us further in the name of the holy *Apta Rav*, that the *Torah* concludes with the *pasuk* in *Devarim* 34:12 “and for all the great might and strong hand that Moshe displayed before all the eyes of the Jewish People”, *Rashi* in his commentary there says “BEFORE THE EYES OF ALL ISRAEL — This refers to the fact that his heart inspired him to shatter the Tablets before their eyes, as it is said, (*Devarim* 9:17) “And I broke them before your eyes” (*Sifrei Devarim* 357:45), and the opinion of the Holy One, blessed be He, regarding this action was to agree, as it is stated that *Hashem* said regarding the *Luchos*, (*Shemos* 34:1) אשר שברת "Which you have broken", [which implies] "*Yasher Koach* – Thanks to you, that you broke them" (*Yevamos* 62a; *Shabbos* 87a).

We might however ask: how does this refer to being strong handed?

The answer is that everything exists in this world backwards and forwards - the light shines forth and bounces back in the manner of *obr yashar* & *obr chozer*. Similarly, when we study the *Torah* it must also go forward and bounce back to us through being reviewed constantly.

However, had the *luchos* never been smashed the *Torah*, the *Torah* would never have been forgotten and we would only be studying going forward with a light that stretches out in one direction only, but we would never have to review and go over them again and we would never study *Torah*, reviewing them over and over constantly.

Therefore, in order to ensure the continued existence of *Torah* and the continued existence of the world *Hashem* desired that the *Torah* be a greatly exalted and therefore Moshe smashed the *luchos* and therefore he revealed the returning light the light – *obr chozer* of review which refers to the second Divine name hinted at in the acrostic that spells “Thank you for breaking them – *Yasher Kochacha SHeshibarta*”, which spells the holy kabbalistic name of *Yud Kaf Shin*, derived from the *Ana BeKo’ach* prayer stanza that reads *Yichudcha Kevovas Shomreim* – “Guard them like the apple [pupil] of Your eye”, and that is what *Rashi* means when he concludes and says thank you for smashing the tablets because this spells that Divine name.

(*Sifsei Tzadikim Dinowitz Bereishis*)

## *Imrei Tzaddikim*

The *Gemara Shabbos* 98b teaches us that “the middle bar between the planks and beams extends from end to end,” (*Shemos* 26:28) - The *Tanna* taught that this stood miraculously.

*Rashi* explains that the central bar has no ring and the other beams have holes bored through and the central beam passes through them, therefore the meaning from end to end is that the central bar extends within the other beams, so that the other beams are aligned, so that the upper and lower bars extend from north, to south and the central beam extends thirty *amos* from east to west, that is what from end to end means.

There is no artisan that could possibly achieve this miraculous feat with human hands, rather it miraculously stood on it's own. These are the holy words of *Rashi*.

The *heilige* Berditchever Rav explained that although we see that almost all of the punctuation and *nekudos* are placed below the holy letters in the Hebrew *Alef Bais*. There are only two punctuation *nekudos* that are not below the letter but appear either above the letter like the *cholam* and in the middle of the letter like the *malipum*.

The Berditchever explained the reason for this as follows: The *cholam* symbolizes supernatural miracles above nature just as it is above the letter. The fact that *Hashem* is all powerful and can do anything even acting above nature in a supernatural manner. He can therefore overcome and overturn the natural order at Will to do as He so pleases for example to do a favor to the Jewish people at any moment and at any time, He can act beyond nature and change it. This matter can be actually seen with our own eyes, how the pure and holy people, the nation of Israel, like a small lamb among seventy wolves (the seventy nations that existed in ancient times).

As we declare each and every day – I believe with full faith – *Ani Maamin BeEmunah Sheleima* – that he [*Moshiach* the righteous redeemer] can arrive and come any day and so we faithfully await him. Such an event will be supernatural and miraculous. This is symbolized to by the *cholam* vowel, therefore, this punctuation appears above the letter because it hints at matters that are supernatural and transcend the natural order.

There is another aspect of how *Hashem* does us favors and that is symbolized by the *malipum* punctuation. This is similar to the *Purim* story of Achasheverosh which a person might, heaven forbid, assume was just a natural event, heaven forbid. Someone



might think that Achashverosh killed Haman because of his love for Queen Esther and that is why we were saved, however, heaven forbid, we should entertain such thoughts, that the entire story is a coincidence when a whole sequence of events come together.

Rather the entire story was one great supernatural miraculous event, as our rabbis and sages taught *Megillah* 7a – the story of Esther was told with the Heavenly Spirit of *ruach haKodesh* – Divine Inspiration. Nonetheless we still refer to this as a hidden miracle as in the *pasuk* (*Devarim* 31:18) “ ‘And I shall surely hide my face” (and as our sages learned regarding this *pasuk* in *Chullin* 139b that it hints at Esther even in the actual *pasuk* in *Chumash*.)

This is *malipum* - the *nekudah* in the middle of the letter, because it symbolizes going the middle way - where we see this event as going either way (ordinary or supernatural), but even this is actually supernatural above nature as our sages teach us that everything comes from *Hashem* and if so, actually everything is all above nature and supernaturally miraculous.

Based on this we can understand the previously cited *Gemara* – *malipum* refers to the middle bar that extends from end to end, it is *malipum* that has a punctuation in the middle of the letter, and it is in the middle between all the other bars and planks, only able to standing miraculously. Teaching us that we too must also believe that *Purim* is a supernatural miracle above nature, (even though it does not seem that way to us). Now we can also understand how the story of the miracle of *Purim* which appears to be an ordinary mundane event is really revealed miracle is actually supernatural above nature similar to the events of the Exodus from Egypt.

When *Hashem* delivered us from Egypt He changed the natural order and renewed creation, that is symbolized by the *cholam* punctuation – because it is above nature as the *cholam* appears above the letter, whereas *Purim* is symbolized by *malipum* and it appears in the middle of the letter like the middle plank or board of the *mishkan* that stood miraculously – so too does *malipum* symbolize a supernatural miracle even though it appears to be ordinary and is enfolded within the middle of nature. . .

This then is how we understand that the middle pillar stood miraculously – in past tense, the middle pillar refers to *Purim* as we already explained, it stands miraculously, it stand based on the past miracle of the Exodus from Egypt, just as the miracle of the Exodus was a supernatural abrogation of the natural order it is what causes the middle pillar of *Purim* to stand – it teaches us that the standing of *Purim* is also supernaturally miraculous above nature, even though it appears otherwise. (Based on *Imrei Tzaddikim*)

## *Imrei Tzaddikim - Purim*

The *Gemara Megillah* 2a teaches us that we cannot read the *megillah* neither on the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> of *Adar*, because the *pasuk* says Esther (9:27) that these days of *Purim* shall never pass over us, and we learn from this that we cannot pass the 15<sup>th</sup> of *Adar*.

The holy Berditchever *Rav* expounded on the reason why we must read the *megillah* at the appropriate time - and if not, we cannot read it later neither on the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> of *Adar* as the *Gemara* explained. He asked why not, since it is such a great miracle what prevents us from reading about it and publicizing it even on a later date?

The answer he gave was, that *Purim* is a day of hidden miracles whereas *Pesach* is a time of openly revealed miracles. To us, it seems that openly revealed miracles are greater and more precious and desirable than hidden miracles that we cannot see or experience. When an open miracle is revealed this sanctifies, glorifies and exalts *Hashem* in the whole world, publicizing Him even among the gentile nations, like the splitting of the sea and the Exodus. Hidden miracles, however, are not openly revealed and they are only known to us, *Hashem's* nation and people, *Bais Yisroel*. [Elsewhere, the *Kedushas Levi* says that the miracle of *Purim* was greater than the miracle of *Pesach* – because a hidden miracle that is enmeshed in ‘happenstance’ – is proof that *Hashem* loves us. That is precisely the reason we say *Al Hanissim* on *Purim* and not on *Pesach* – because it is considered a higher *bechinah*).

The *Gemara Pesachim* 6a says that we begin teaching the laws of *Pesach* and discussing them thirty days before the onset of the *Yom Tov*. If so, this means that the *Mochin DeGadlus* – the expanded consciousness of the *Pesach* holiday begins on the 17<sup>th</sup> of *Adar*, which is a period of thirty days before *Pesach*. This is a preparation, to prepare ourselves to receive the openly revealed miracles.

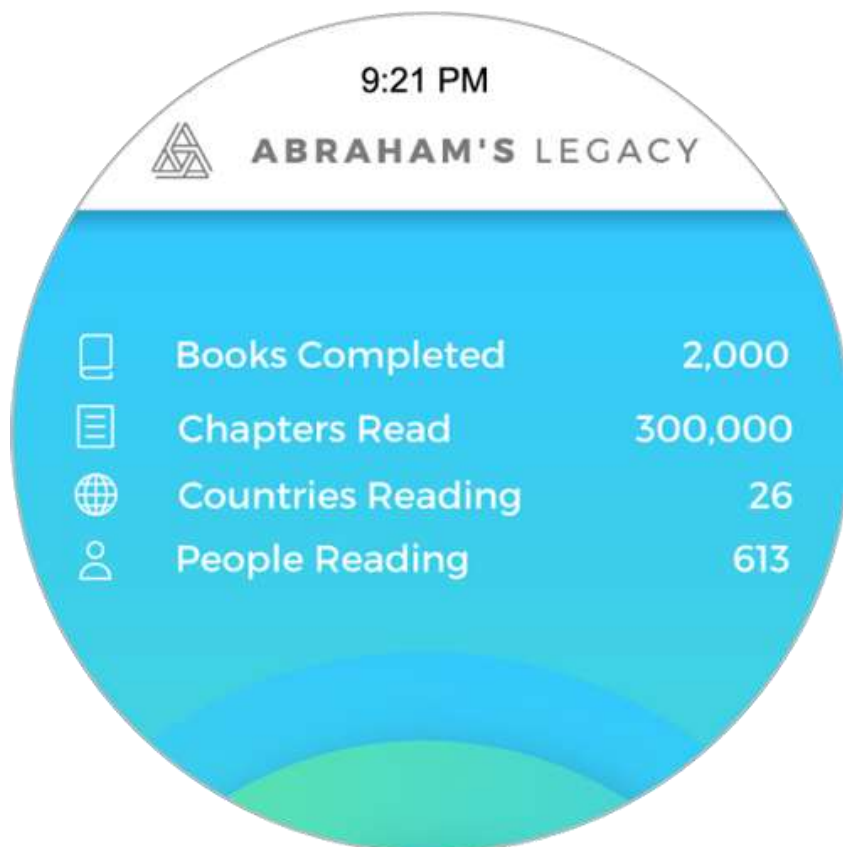
If so, based on that, how can we read the *megillah* at that time? How could we celebrate *Purim* and eat the festive meal at such a time since *Purim* commemorates hidden miracles and their time has now passed, whereas the time has now come to begin preparing for openly revealed miracles!? Thirty days before *Pesach* we already begin to prepare ourselves for the light of open miracles.

Therefore, *Chazal* told us regarding *Purim*, “*lo yaavor*” – it says do not pass it up, we cannot read the *megillah* or celebrate *Purim* with a festive meal on the 17<sup>th</sup> of *Adar* because now the time has come for open miracles. (Based on *Imrei Tzaddikim*)

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הרה"ח אברהם חיים בן מו"ה שלום ז"ל  
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ימליץ טוב צעד משפחתו היקרה ויקום לגורלו לקץ הימין צמחרה

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- Track staff overages and avoid costly OT
- Robust analytics and custom reporting
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- Choice of biometric time clocks
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... ונהפוך הוא

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*Purim or any other day **CARE365** is here for you!*

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check-in is 10  
minutes before  
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בס"ד

שנה טובה ושמחה!  
המגן אלה



**HAPPY PURIM!**

THE RAMAPOST TEAM

*Shraga Rajel Dani Ziv Lavi Nikki Sarah Ziv*

5781