

ME'OROS HA'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)

❁ VA'ES'CHANAN ❁

❁ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ❁

Dvar Torah

The *Torah* tells us (*Shemos* 19:19) that when the Jewish people gathered at Mount Sinai to receive the *Torah*, "Moshe spoke and *Hashem* answered him with a voice." The *Gemora* (*Berochos* 45a) derives from this *pasuk* the principle that that an interpreter should not speak more loudly than the reader whose words he is translating. *Tosafos* immediately ask the obvious question: from that *pasuk* we see actually see the opposite: that the reader should not speak more loudly than the interpreter.

We know, says Rav Levi Yitzchok, that Moshe's *nevua* (prophecy) was different from that of the other *nevi'im* (prophets) in that "the *Shechina* was speaking through Moshe's throat". This means that the interpretation of the *nevuos* of the other *nevi'im* is not dependent on the comprehension of the people who hear it. The *nevua* arrives in this world in the mind of the *novi* and passes through the filter of his perspectives. The resulting message is the essence of the *nevua*. When Moshe prophesied, however, it was as if the *Shechina* spoke from his throat directly to all the people on their particular level of understanding. Consequently, his *nevuos* were directly accessible to all people.

In this sense then, Moshe was the reader of the *nevua*, and *Hashem* was the interpreter. Moshe spoke the words of the *nevua*, but *Hashem*, speaking through his throat, made sure that everyone among the people, from the greatest to the smallest, was able to receive the *nevua* directly and to understand it.

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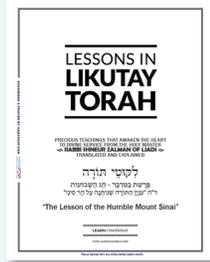
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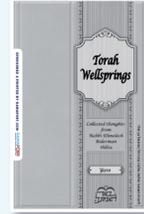
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הילולא

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

One of the tools that *Kabbola* 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 *berochah*. 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

[תפילה הנמצאת בספר אלה המגן מבעל הפלא יועץ על פרשת ויצא עמוד כ"ד]

הריני מדליק נר זה למנוחת ולעילוי נשמת אבי / אמי מורתִי / הצדיק _____
בן/בת _____, יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלקינו ואלקי אבותינו, שתקבל ברחמים
וברצון כל מעשה הטוב שאני עושה, בין במחשבה, בין בדיבור, בין במעשה ויהיה הכל
לזכות ולמנוחת ולעילוי לנשמות עמך ישראל, ובפרט לנפש רוח ונשמה של אבי / אמי /
צדיק _____. יהי רצון שתהינה נפשותיהם צרורות בצרור החיים.

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





☞ GEDOLIM BE'MISASAM YOSER ☞



Yahrzeits for week beginning Shabbos Va'es'chanan

http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim_yahrzeits/Av

Biographical information and yahrzeits compiled by Reb Manny Saltiel and www.anshe.org

* **11th of Av ~ Begins Friday Night (Jul 31st)**

- * **Rav Yitzchok Blazer**, *mechaber* of *Pri Yitzchok* and *Kochvei Ohr* (1837–1907/5667). One of the leading *talmidim* of Rav Yisrael Salanter, he wrote *Ohr Yisrael*, based on his *Rebbe's* letters and Rav Salanter's *sefer*, *Pri Yitzchok*. Rav Yitzchok was born in Vilna, married at the age of fifteen, and moved to Kovno. At the age of twenty-five, he became the *Rav* of St. Petersburg (hence his "other" name, Rav Itzele Petersburger), a position he held for sixteen years. He spent the last three years of his life in Yerushalayim, (5667/1907);
- * **Rav Aharon Perlow**, the Stoliner-Warsaw *Rebbe*, (5702/1942);
- * **Rav Hillel ben Rav Meir HaLevi Malisov** of Paritsch, best known as Rav Hillel Paritscher (1795–1864/5624). He was a *talmid* of the *Bas Ayin*, the Czernobyler *Maggid*, the *Mitteler Rebbe* and a *Chassid* of Rav Menachem Mendel Schneersohn, the *Tzemach Tzedek*. He was one of the greatest *Tzaddikim* in *Chabad* at the time and was like a *Rebbe* in his own right. He authored *Pelach HoRimon* (a work of deep *Chassidic* thought), *Imrei Noam*, *Likutei Biurim* (a commentary on various works of the *Mitteler Rebbe* of Lubavitch) and *Ma'amar Hishtat'chus*. He was also a *talmid muvhok* of Rav Avrohom Dov, *Rav* of Zhitomir. He served as *Rav* of Paritsch, and later succeeded Rav Boruch Mordechai in Bobroisk, (5624/1864).

* **12th of Av ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Aug 1st)**

- * **Rav Zevulun Arye Graz** (1904–1989). Born in Ozband, Lithuania, to Rav Yosef Nesanel, a *talmid* of the *Alter* of Kelm and, for a while, the *Menahel Ruchani* of the Telz *Yeshiva*. As a youngster, Rav Zevulun Arye studied for a while in Kelm, and then under Rav Eliyohu Lopian in Telz. In 1924, he joined a group of Telz *talmidim* in *Eretz Yisrael* to study in the *Knesses Yisrael Yeshiva* in Chevron, a branch of Slabodka. After the massacre of 1929, the survivors left Chevron and settled in Yerushalayim. Rav Zevulun Arye moved back to Lithuania in 1931, married, and delivered *shiur* at *Yeshiva Ohel Moshe*. Later, Rav Zevulun Arye studied in the Kovna *kollel* of Rav Avrohom Kahana-Shapiro, the *Dvar Avrohom*. In 1939, when the Nazis overran Lithuania, Rav Zevulun Arye, who already possessed Palestinian citizenship, headed back for *Eretz Yisrael*. Upon arriving, he moved to Chadera, where he stayed for ten years. Rav Tzvi Yehuda Meltzer, the brother-in-law of Rav Aharon Kotler, was *Rav* of Pardes Chana at that time. Opening a branch of the *Kletzk Yeshiva* in Pardes Chana, he invited Rav Zevulun Arye to deliver *shiurim* there. When Rav Tzvi Yehuda moved his *Yeshiva* to Rechovot, he asked Rav Zevulun Arye to join him there, too. Every *Erev Shabbos*, Rav Zevulun Arye would return from Rechovot to his home in Chadera for *Shabbos*, in an armored vehicle that protected him from Arab snipers, (5749/1989);
- * **Rav Binyomin Wolf Lev**, *mechaber* of *Shaarei Torah*, (5589/1829);
- * **Rav Arye Leib Katzenelenbogen**, *Rav* of Brisk. He was known as the *Rav* of Vilna, (5597/1837);
- * **Rav Moshe Ber ben Rav Aharon** of Stolin, a grandson of Rav Shlomo of Karlin, (5607/1847);
- * **Rav Efraim Zalman ben Rav Menachem Manish Margolies**, son-in-law of the Trisker *Maggid*, (5646/1886);
- * **Rav Yeshaya Weltfried** of Kalisch, a descendant of the *Chozeh* of Lublin on his mother's side.

He married the daughter of Rav Yechiel Danziger, the first Alexander *Rebbe*, and eventually moved to Kalisch, where he established his court. He was *niftar* a month before the onset of World War II, (5699/1939).

* **13th of Av ~ Begins Sunday Night (Aug 2nd)**

- * **Rav Yehuda Leib Pesach** *ben* Rav Avrohom of Lipsk (5625/1865);
- * **Rav Yaakov Dovid** *ben* Rav Menachem Mendel Hager (the *Tzemach Tzaddik*) (5625/1865);
- * **Rav Yosef of Chelm** *ben* Rav Mordechai “*Mayim Amukim*”, *talmid* of the *Chozeh*;
- * **Rav Yisrael Shmuel** *ben* Rav Arye Leibush of Tamoshov, grandson of Rav Yosef of Chelm, whose *Hilula* is also the 13th of Av, (5629/1869);
- * **Rav Yaakov Yosef** *ben* Rav Moshe of Orzetchov;
- * **Rav Eliyohu Maaravi**, a great leader of *Mekubolim* in Yerushalayim, (5715/1955);
- * **Rav Yosef Eliyohu Henkin**, *Posek* and *Menahel* of *Ezras Torah* (1881–1973/5733). Born in the Mohilev province of Russia, he studied at the *Mir Yeshiva* at the age of fifteen. Soon after, he became the youngest *talmid* in the *Yeshiva* of Slutzk headed by Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer. In 1923, Rav Henkin was on the verge of being deported to a Soviet labor camp, when he escaped to the United States. After being detained on Ellis Island for five weeks, he obtained a rabbinic position on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Shortly thereafter, Rav Henkin published his important work on the laws of marriage and divorce, entitled *Perushei Ivra*. In 1925, he was appointed executive director of the charitable organization *Ezras Torah*. He would remain in this position for forty-eight years. The *halachic* rulings in the *Ezras Torah* calendar are Rav Henkin’s, based on his work, *Edus Le’Yisrael*. He is buried on Long Island in Beth David Cemetery, Elmont, New York. He was *niftar* after *Mussaf Shabbos Nachamu*. One of the sure signs of a *Tzaddik* is to pass away on a *Shabbos*, (5733/1973);
- * **Rav Mordechai** *ben* Rav Avrohom Banet of Nikolsburg, Hungary, (born 1753), *mechaber* of *Parshas Mordechai*, (5589/1829);
- * **Rav Nosson Nota Shapira**, *mechaber* of *Megaleh Amukos* and *Ranav Ofanim* (1585–1633/5393). Eliyohu *HaNovi* is said to have visited him regularly. Son of Rav Shlomo Shapira, and grandson of Rav Matisyohu *ben* Yosef Treves of Provence (1325–1382) who was appointed Chief Rav of Paris by Charles V. The Shapiro family comes from the German town of Speyer from where the founder of the family escaped at the time of the First Crusade in 1096, (5393/1633);
- * **Rav Yosef Greenwald** of Pupa, *mechaber* of *Vayechi Yosef* and son of Rav Yaakov Yechezkel Greenwald, the previous Pupa *Rebbe*, *mechaber* of *VaYagged Yaakov*, and grandson of Rav Moshe Greenwald of Chust, *mechaber* of *Arugas HaBosem*, (5744/1984).

* **14th of Av ~ Begins Monday Night (Aug 3rd)**

- * **Rav Yosef Naftoli Stern**, *Rosh Yeshivas* Pressburg in Yerushalayim, (5731/1971);
- * **Rav Tzvi Hirsch** *ben* Rav Aharon Friedman of Liska, Hungary (1798–1874/5634). Rav Tzvi Hirsch spent several years at the court of the *Yismach Moshe*, who played a dominant role shaping his life. He was also a *talmid* of the *Divrei Chaim* and the *Rebbe* of Rav Shayele Kerestirer. Rav Tzvi Hirsch authored *Ach Pri Tevua* and *HaYoshor VehaTov*, (5634/1874);
- * **Rav Yitzchok** of Mezritch, a *talmid* of the *Chozeh* of Lublin, (5586/1826);
- * **Rav Yitzchok** *ben* Rav Sholom Yosef Friedman, the Bohusher *Rebbe* (1903–1992/5752), born in Spikov, Russia into the Rizhiner dynasty, (5752/1992).

* **15th of Av ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Aug 4th)**

- * **Nachum Ish Gamzu**, *Tanna* and Rav Akiva’s *Rebbe* for twenty-two years, buried in Tzefas. He

was known for saying, “*Gam zu le’tova*” (this, too, is for the best) for everything. There are many famous stories about Nachum Ish Gamzu LeTova;

- * **Rav Benzion Goldberg-Yadler**, *Maggid* of Yerushalayim, (5722/1962);
- * **Rav Amram ben Diwan**, a great Moroccan *Tzaddik* and famous miracle worker, (5542/1782);
- * **Rav Yaakov ben Rav Mordechai Yosef Leiner** of Izhbitza-Radzin, *mechaber* of *Bais Yaakov*, a full collection of the *Aggodos* from the *Talmud*, (5638/1878);
- * **Rav Meir Nosson ben Rav Chaim Halberstam** (the *Divrei Chaim*), father of the first Bobover *Rebbe*, (5615/1855);
- * **Rav Dovid Yosef ben Rav Shlomo Yechiel Biderman** of Lelov, from the members of the Lelover family who did not move to *Eretz Yisrael*. He was *Rebbe* in Lelov, Poland, (5657/1897);
- * **Rav Osher ben Rav Aharon II, Stoliner Rebbe**, raised by Rav Shlomo Karliner after his father’s *petira*. Rav Osher later settled in Stolin, (5588/1828);
- * **Rav Shimon ibn Lavi**, of Tripoli, Libya, *mechaber* of *Kesem Poz* and composer of the song *Bar Yochai*. The energy of this year of *Hilula* has the essence of Moshe and Healing. This is due to the letters of the year (*shin, mem, heh*) being the letters of both Moshe (*Rabbeinu*) and one of the seventy-two names of *Hashem* from the *Zohar*’s explanation of *Shemos* 14: 19–21. The year also has the same letters as the name *Hashem*, (5345/1585 approximately);
- * **Rav Tzvi Hirsch Halberstam**, *Rav* of Rudnick, (5678/1918);
- * **Rav Chanoch Henich Dov Padwa**, *Rav* of London (1906–2000). Born in the town of Busk, near Alesk, Galicia, as a young man he studied in Tzelim, and then in the Belz *shtiebel* in Cracow. In time, his family moved to Vienna. There, Rav Chaim Pinter, the *Rav* of Bukovsk, became his *Rav Muvhok*. From 1940 to 1955, he served as the *Rav* of the Botei Rand neighborhood of Yerushalayim. His first wife was *niftar* in 1946, leaving him with five children. In 1947, he married Yehudis, the daughter of Rav Avrohom Aharon Sonnenfeld, the eldest son of Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, and she raised his children as her own, even marrying them off. He served as *Rav* in London for almost fifty years, (5760/2000).
- * **16th of Av ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Aug 5th)**
 - * **Rav Menachem Mendel** of Strizov, *mechaber* of *Sova Semochos*, (5591/1831);
 - * **Rav Yitzchok Meir Levin**, chairman of the world *Agudas Yisrael* organization, (5731/1971);
 - * **Rav Moshe Perdo**, a *Sephardi* sage, *mechaber* of the *sefer Tzedek Umishpot*, (5648/1888);
 - * **Rav Bechor Aharon Alachadeef**, a *Sephardi* sage from Teverya, (5669/1909);
 - * **Sir Moshe (Chaim) Montefiore**, (5645/1885).
- * **17th of Av ~ Begins Thursday Night (Aug 6th)**
 - * **Rav Shimshon Wertheimer**, (1658–1724). Born in Worms, Germany, he learned in the *Yeshivos* of Worms and Frankfurt. After marrying the daughter of the *Rav* of Manheim in 1684, he moved to Vienna. Within a few years, he became the wealthiest Jew of his day. He served as finance minister for Austrian emperors Leopold I, Josef I, and Karl IV. In exchange for his services, Rav Shimshon requested better treatment for his fellow Jews throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He negotiated the Jews’ right to live in major cities, including Vienna and Frankfurt, saved the Jews of Rothenberg from expulsion and intervened to save the Jews of Worms and Frankfurt. He was also a *Talmid Chochom* and helped to establish forty *kehillas* in Hungary. He founded and endowed a *Yeshiva* in Frankfurt, setting up his son-in-law, Rav Moshe Kann, as *Rosh Yeshiva*. In Vienna, he set up a *Bais Din*. In 1712, he rebuilt the city of Nikolsburg, which had burned down. Rav Shimshon was also in charge of transferring monies

to *Eretz Yisrael* from all of Europe. He also left behind *kisvei yad* (manuscripts) on *Torah*, *Medrash* and *Kabbola*, (5484/1724);

* **Rav Osher**, *mechaber* of *Mayim Adirim*, (5564/1804);

* **Rav Avrohom Mordechai** of Pintchov, (5584/1824);

* **Rav Shlomo Chaim Perlow** of Koidenov, son of Rav Aharon, the son of Rav Mordechai Yaffe of Lechovitch. They were direct (*ben acher ben*) descendants of the *Levush*. He was raised by his maternal grandfather, Rav Osher Perlow of Karlin, after his father was *niftar*, and therefore he is also known by the last name Perlow. After his uncle, Rav Noach of Lechovitch, passed away, all the *Chassidim* flocked to Rav Shlomo. He had several sons who became great *Rebbes* in their own rights, (1862 / 5622);

* **Rav Shmuel Eibschutz**, *Rav* of Apta, (5600/1840);

* **Rav Yehuda Levi** (1783–1879). Born in Sarajevo to Rav Menachem Levi, he emigrated to *Eretz Yisrael*, and became chief *Rav* of Yerushalayim in 1845. He passed away in Yaffo, (5639/1879).



❧ HILLULA DE'TZADDIKA ❧

WHAT'S BEHIND YAHRZEIT MEANINGS & CUSTOMS

The *Rebbe Reb Melech* in *Noam Elimelech* explains the reason why when we mention a *Tzaddik* who has passed on we say: *Zechuso Yogen Oleinu* (may his merit shield us). The *Noam Elimelech* asks: why would the *Tzaddik* give away his merit to someone else to shield him? Perhaps he would keep that merit for his own benefit in the next world! He answers that *zechuso* should not be translated as “merit” rather as *zach venoki* – “pure and refined”. When we say *Zechuso Yogen Oleinu*, we are asking that the purity and refinement that the *Tzaddik* underwent through his *Torah* study, sincerely motivated *lishma* – which refined him; this light should be drawn down over us all and stand by his generation to shield and protect us all. (*Parshas Bo*).



Those *Tzaddikim* who, during their lifetimes, awakened and roused the hearts and souls of the Jewish people, continue to do so even after they have passed on from this world. (*Atzei Chaim – Mishpotim*).



The *Tzaddikim* who reside in the world of truth are called *Melitzei Yosher*, for during their lifetimes they advocated on behalf of the Jewish people to protect them from all manner of prosecution, and they continue to plead our case and advocate on our behalf in the next world, just as *Chazal* teach us regarding Moshe (*Sota 13b*) that “Moshe passed away there” (*Devorim 34:5*) and yet it says in *Shemos (34:28)* that he was there with *Hashem*? The *Gemora* answers the contradiction by saying that just as in the first place he stood and served before *Hashem*, so does he now still stand and serve before *Hashem* till this day, advocating on our behalf before *Hashem* just as he did in his lifetime – and so do all the *Tzaddikim* of each generation in the upper realms. (*Bais Yaakov – Zechor Bris*).



❁ GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM ❁

STORIES & ANECDOTES

Rav Hillel Paritscher, 11th of Av

Rav Hillel of Paritsch and Malisov, was born in Khometz, Russia, in 1795. In his youth, he was a talmid and Chassid of Rav Mordechai of Chernobyl, but was drawn toward Chabad Chassidus by his study of Tanya and an encounter with Rav Schneur Zalman of Liadi. In 1815, he began to travel regularly to Rav Dov Ber of Lubavitch and, after the latter's passing, was a Chassid of Rav Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch. Rav Hillel served as Rav in the towns of Paritsch and Babruisk. He passed away in Kherson in 1864. He is the mechaber of Pelach HoRimon, a book of Chassidic philosophy.



The Prodigy Under The Bed

Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe (Courtesy of MeaningfulLife.com)

Rav Hillel of Paritsch (1795-1864) was one of the many scholars of his day to join the Chabad Chassidic movement. For many years, he was a devoted talmid of the second and third Rebbes of Chabad, Rav DovBer and Rav Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch.

As a young man, Rav Hillel heard of the founder of Chabad Chassidus, Rav Schneur Zalman of Liadi, and sought to meet with him. But the opportunity seemed forever to elude the young prodigy: no sooner did he arrive in a town that Rav Schneur Zalman was visiting, than he was informed that the Rebbe had just left. Finally, he managed to locate Rav Schneur Zalman's lodgings before the Rebbe was due to arrive. In order to ensure

that he would not, once again, somehow miss his opportunity, Rav Hillel crept into Rav Schneur Zalman's appointed room and hid under the bed, determined to make the acquaintance of the great Rebbe at last.

In anticipation of his encounter with Rav Schneur Zalman, Rav Hillel had "armed" himself with some of his achievements in Talmudic study. At that time the young scholar was studying Maseches Erachin (Appraisals), the section of the Gemora which deals with the laws of how to appraise the value of one's pledges to the Bais HaMikdosh. Rav Hillel had a scholarly question on the subject, which he had diligently rehearsed, in order to discuss it with the Rebbe.

From his hiding place, Rav Hillel heard the Rebbe enter the room. But before he could make a move, he heard Rav Schneur Zalman exclaim: "If a young man has a question regarding 'Appraisals', he had best first evaluate himself!"

The prodigy under the bed fainted on the spot. When he came to, Rav Schneur Zalman was gone...

www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/42969/jewish/The-Prodigy-Under-The-Bed.htm



Tailor to the Rescue

Rav Hillel of Paritsch was renowned for his punctilious observance of the mitzvos, prepared to risk his life for the merest detail ordained by Chazal. The

Czarist regime of his day decreed that all Jews were to shave off their peyos, and some unscrupulous informer told the local authorities that Rav Hillel's peyos were still intact. They decided to shear them off by force, but Rav Hillel covered them tightly with his hands to protect them. The soldiers drew their swords and forcefully began hitting his hands and head, causing him to scream. His neighbor, a Jewish tailor who had a good relationship with the officers in charge, heard him and came running, and after promising them gifts, convinced them to leave. Grateful for his help, Rav Hillel blessed the man, and promised him that "after a hundred and twenty years" he would be rewarded by being buried next to him.

[Rav Hillel once explained that his dedication to maintaining his peyos and beard came from having seen a handwritten essay of the Tzaddik Rav Pinchas of Koretz, in which he wrote that adopting non-Jewish clothing styles and appearance was the fiftieth Gate of Impurity, which would have rendered the Jews unable to be redeemed from Egypt, had they fallen one more level (into it).

Similarly, in the times preceding the revelation of Moshiach, there will be an endeavor to make the Jews change their clothing and appearance, and unfortunately it will succeed. Only in the merit of those individuals who refuse to change their appearance even at the risk of their lives will all the Jews be blessed with the Ge'ula. Rav Hillel concluded, "Anyone who had this manuscript would of course be willing to give up his life for the sake of traditional Jewish dress and appearance."]

Many years passed. Rav Hillel, in the meantime, became Rav of Babruisk, and would travel every year around the provinces and to the cities of Kherson and

Yekatrinoslav, teaching Torah as well to the farmers of the Jewish agricultural colonies, who greatly admired him. In the summer of 1864, at age sixty-nine, he suddenly fell ill while staying in Kherson - which is very far from Babruisk and Paritsch in White Russia - and was niftar there.

On the following day, amidst widespread mourning, he was brought to burial, and his talmidim and admirers flocked there for many years thereafter to daven at the graveside of this Tzaddik.

Sometime later, on a bitterly cold and stormy day, an unknown elderly traveler passed away in the town's communal hostelry. The Chevra Kaddisha (Jewish Burial Society) prepared his body and took him to be buried, intending to place him in the section for unknown people. However, due to the fierce winter snow, they unknowingly buried him near Rav Hillel. A day or two later, it was noticed that the new grave had been dug right next to the resting place of the illustrious Rav Hillel. When the facts came to light, a great hubbub arose in town: was it proper that an unknown traveler whom no respectable citizen even knew, a nobody who had passed away in the communal poorhouse - that such a one should be buried next to the Tzaddik?

It was too late, though, to change things: the Torah would never allow it. At least let them find out just who this individual was. His identification papers disclosed his name and that of his father, and the fact that he came from Paritsch. The communal worthies of Kherson therefore wrote to their counterparts in Paritsch, asking to be told at least whatever they knew about this man.

The answer from Paritsch identified him clearly: he was a retired tailor, who

had been traveling in order to live with one of his children. They added that this same tailor had many long years earlier been promised by Rav Hillel that “after a hundred and twenty years” he would be brought to rest next to his own resting place.

And so, the decades-old promise of Rav Hillel of Paritsch came to fruition.

Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from Lma’an Yishme’u #78, and from Sipurei Chassidim, as translated by Uri Kaploun in A Treasury of Chassidic Tales (ArtsScroll).
www.ascentofsafed.com/Stories/Stories/5772/737-16.html



The Anguish Of Shabbos

Rav Hillel of Paritsch used to spend a substantial part of every year traveling through the towns of the southern parts of Russia in order to give instruction in the applied ethics of Chassidus, and to arouse people to repentance wherever the need arose.

He once arrived in a town where the Jewish tavernkeepers kept their businesses open on Shabbos. Rav Hillel was shocked to hear this, and invited them all to meet him. When he had explained to them what a serious matter this was, they all undertook to conform to proper observance – on one condition: that he persuade a certain wealthy tavern-keeper, whose turnover was the highest in town, to do likewise, for otherwise they would not be able to survive competition with him. The Tzaddik thereupon sent for that man – once, twice, three times – but the wealthy tavern-keeper ignored the invitation.

Rav Hillel stayed on in the town for Shabbos. In the morning, the wealthy tavern-keeper suddenly suffered

increasingly severe pains in the stomach, and his wife, fearing that they were brought on by the disrespect her husband had shown the Tzaddik, hastened to seek him out, so that he should intercede on his behalf. While Rav Hillel was at the Shabbos midday meal surrounded by a large company of Chassidim, she burst into the room, and, with tears in her eyes, implored the Rebbe to give her husband his blessing for a speedy recovery.

The Tzaddik remained silent.

His Chassidim were dismayed: “Rebbe, at least give the blessing that is traditional in such cases on the holy day – ‘It is Shabbos, when one may not cry out; healing will come soon!’”

But Rav Hillel said not a word. The woman left bitterly disappointed, and her husband’s pains grew worse.

On Motzo’ei Shabbos, the Tzaddik was discoursing with his Chassidim at a table on which stood a samovar, in fulfillment of the Talmudic dictum: “Hot beverages after the departure of Shabbos serve as a cure.” In ran the same woman, weeping and wailing, begging the Tzaddik to have pity on her husband and to daven for him.

Rav Hillel simply said: “It is Shabbos, when one may not cry out; healing will come soon.”

The Chassidim were amazed. On Shabbos itself the Tzaddik had said nothing – and now, when the holy day was over, he said these words usually uttered only on Shabbos!

Rav Hillel continued: “If Shabbos itself will no longer have cause to cry out against him, then healing will come soon! Go along and tell him that if he gives a solemn handshake in the presence of three witnesses that he will close his business on

Shabbos, then he will be cured.”

Three Chassidim hastened to his bedside to convey the Rav’s message – and he earnestly gave his word of honor.

His illness passed, and the sanctity of Shabbos in that town became something noteworthy indeed.

Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from the rendition in A Treasury of Chassidic Tales (Artscroll), as translated by the incomparable Uri Kaploun.
www.ascentofsafed.com/cgi-bin/ascent.cgi?Name=269-15



NIGGUN by Rav Hillel Paritscher

www.chabad.org/multimedia/media_cdo/aid/140718/jewish/Nigun-Dveikus.htm



Rav Yeshaya Weltfried of Kalisch, 12th of Av

Rav Yeshaya was a son of Rav Avrohom Moshe of Rosphsha, a descendant of Rav Yeshaya of Pshedborzh. On his mother’s side, he was a descendant of Rav Yaakov Yitzchok, the Chozeh of Lublin.

Their forebear, Rav Yeshaya of Pshedborzh became a Chassid under the influence of Rav Dovid of Lelov, who traveled with him to the Chozeh. The Chozeh would refer to Rav Yeshaya as “my seforim shrank”, and Rebbe and talmid maintained a strong bond. Rav Yeshaya became Rav in Pshedborzh, one of the ancient kehillos in Poland. After the petira of the Chozeh, Rav Yeshaya became a Rebbe, as well, as Chassidim began flocking to him.

He was succeeded by his son, Rav Emanuel, who, in turn, was succeeded by Rav Avrohom Moshe of Rosphsha, the

This typical heartfelt melody is divided into three sections. The melody begins with soft, moving, devotional tones, reaches its highest spiritual degree in the third part, and then returns to the second part. The talmid now resolved to rededicate this entire being and connection to the Eternal, through his complete devotion to the study of Hashem’s Torah and strict observance of His commandments.

This is one of the original Lubavitcher melodies ascribed to Rav Hillel Paritscher, who lived more than a century ago. He was both a great scholar of Torah and Chassidic teachings and a composer of many Chassidic melodies.

father of Rav Yeshaya of Kalisch.

Rav Yeshaya, carrying the illustrious name of his great-grandfather and emulating the holy ways of his forebears, was from his youth a kodosh v’tohor and a fervent lover of Hashem.

He married the daughter of Rav Yechiel Danziger, the first Alexander Rebbe, and resided in Dzunsk-Walya, where he was commonly referred to as Rav Yeshaya of Walya.

Eventually he moved to Kalisch, a less primitive city, where he was the first Chassidic Rebbe ever. The Rebbe was well-loved by his followers, stirring their souls and bringing them ever closer to Hashem with his moving tefillos. In addition to his own Chassidim, he was revered as well by many Alexander Chassidim, since he was the son-in-law of Rav Yechiel of Alexander.

The Rebbe would say that when a Yid

came to his court thinking that he could be helped by the Rebbe, and even spent money for that purpose, then the Rebbe had to do all in his power to help him.

He was niftar about a month before the outbreak of World War II. A large number of his descendants were murdered

al kiddush Hashem, although one son, Rav Yechiel, had moved to Eretz Yisrael before the war, while another, Rav Chaim, survived the Holocaust, and was niftar in 5757/1997 in Eretz Yisrael.

Zechuso yagen aleinu.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-12-avaugust-8/



Rav Mordechai Banet of Nikolsburg, 13th of Av

Mechaber of Parshas Mordechai and Techeiles Mordechai

Rav Mordechai ben Rav Avrohom Banet (1753–1829) was a Talmudist and chief Rav of Moravia born at Csurgó, a small village in the county of Stuhlweissenburg, Hungary.



A gifted child

As Rav Banet's parents were very poor and consequently unable to engage a teacher, they sent their son when only five years old to his grandmother at Nikolsburg. There



Rav Gavriel Markbreiter provided for the tuition of the gifted child for a period of six years, and then sent him to Ettingen, Alsace, the Rav of which place was Rav Markbreiter's brother-in-law. The latter became Rav Banet's teacher, and took great delight in his talmid's wonderful development. At Rav Banet's bar mitzva celebration his teacher showed the guests, to their great astonishment, three of the boy's manuscripts: a commentary on the Chumash, a commentary on the Pesach Haggoda, and novellae on the Talmud.

From his thirteenth to his fifteenth year, Rav Banet devoted himself exclusively to the study of the Tenach, with the aid of the Meforshim (Jewish commentaries) and of the Haggoda in Talmud and Medrash; his strictly halachic studies he completed later in the Yeshiva of Rav Yosef Steinhardt at Fürth, where he remained three years. He then went as a chover to Prague, where Rav Meir Karpeles started a private "klaus" for him; though Rav Yechezkel Landau (the Noda B'Yehuda) conducted a large Yeshiva in the same city, a number of able Talmudists came daily to hear Rav Banet's discourses. After staying in Prague for two years, he married Rebbetzin Sora Finkel (niftar 1828), the daughter of a prominent well-to-do citizen of Nikolsburg. Here he settled in 1773, and within a year was made Av Bais Din.

Thirteen years later, he accepted the rabbinate at Lundenburg in Moravia, which he held for six months, when he resigned to become Rav at Schossberg, Hungary. His stay in his native country was short, and in 1789 he was appointed Rav of Nikolsburg and chief Rav of Moravia. Later on, he also received offers from Pressburg and Cracow, but yielding to the solicitations of his congregation, he

remained at Nikolsburg. He was niftar in Carlsbad on August 12, 1829, where he had gone for treatment. His body was buried temporarily at Lichtenstadt, near Carlsbad, but seven months later was permanently interred at Nikolsburg, in accordance with his will.

His friend and colleague, the famed Chasam Sofer, had the highest esteem for him. The Chasam Sofer eulogized him and called him Ben Yochid Le'Kudsho Berich Hu (an only child to [Hashem](#)), meaning that no one was his equal.



His Works

Although Rav Banet's works are neither numerous nor exhaustive, they are among the classic products of Talmudic literature in the eighteenth century. They are:

- Biur Mordechai ("The Commentary of Mordechai"), Vienna, 1813, a commentary on Mordecai ben Hillel's compendium;
- Mogen Avos ("Shield of the Fathers"), Zolkiev, 1835, a treatise on the thirty-nine acts prohibited on Shabbos;
- Har haMor ("Mountain of Myrrh"), responsa, with allusion to the rabbinical explanation of the name Mordechai as mora dakya ("pure myrrh");
- Parshas Mordechai ("The Explanations of Mordechai"), Szigeth, 1889, responsa;
- Techeiles Mordechai ("Mordechai's Purple Garment"), Lemberg, 1892, halachic and haggadic discourses.

All these works clearly show Rav Banet's keenness, wide knowledge of rabbinical literature, and, what is more important, his logical and strictly scientific method. In contrast to his friends, Rav Moshe Sofer and Rav Akiva Eiger, who were casuists, Rav Banet avoided casuistry in discussing involved halachic questions, gaining his ends by means of a purely critical explanation and a systematic arrangement of the matter. An excellent example of Rav Banet's criticism is his letter to the chief Rav of Berlin, Rav Tzvi Hirsch Levin, whom he tries to convince of the spuriousness of the collection of responsa Besomim Rosh. This collection was published by Rav Shaul Berlin, Rav Levin's son, as the work of Rav Osher ben Yechiel (Parshas Mordechai, No. 5; Literaturblatt des Orients, v. 53, 55, 140). A comparison of Rav Banet's criticism on the work with Zunz's remarks on it (Ritus, pages 226-228) cannot fail to excite admiration of Rav Banet's method.



Superiority of his Style

Rav Banet's works differ in other respects from those of his contemporaries. His style is clear and elegant, and his language is a pure Hebrew. Moreover, Rav Banet's attitude toward the strict Orthodoxy of his friends and colleagues was exceptional, and may be attributed to his knowledge of modern thought (compare his letter to Rav Tzvi Hirsch Levin in Literaturblatt des Orients, v. 54). These characteristics gave him an independent position in the struggle between Orthodoxy and the so-called "spirit of enlightenment".



Opposes Religious Reform

Nevertheless, Rav Banet, conscientiously opposing the new tendency, declared every reform in religious observance to be wrong and harmful. Thus, in a letter to the government concerning the introduction of German into divine service (ib. pages 38-42), he wrote in favor of the preservation of Hebrew. His attitude is significant in view of the fact that, many years later, Rav Zacharias Frankel used the same arguments in the convention of Rabbonim at Frankfurt-on-the-Main, 1845; and events have proven the truth of the prophecy made by Rav Banet: that if the tefillos are said in another language, few Jews will care to study Hebrew, and familiarity with the Hebrew Scripture will gradually cease.

Although Rav Banet was independent in his attitude, his learning and high character gained for him many faithful friends among young and old. Even the Chassidim respected him, and Rav Dov Ber, the "middle Rav" of Chabad, speaks highly of him in a letter (as of 1906) in the possession of J. L. Sossnitz of New York. Compare also Weiss, Zikronotai, pages 77-81.

The communities of Lichtenstadt and Nikolsburg contended for the honor of interring his mortal remains, and the dispute which later arose over the exhumation of the body was fought with the weapons of learning, and figures in the responsa literature of the time.



Rav Mordechai Banet was a talmid of the famed Rav [Ezekiel Landau](#) (Noda B'Yehuda) and was considered the Godol HaDor of his time. He was the one who gave the Chasam Sofer semicha. Rav Mordechai was the Rav in Nikolsburg and

in the last years of his life, he fell sick and moved to [Lichtenstadt](#) (near Carlsbad) for treatments.

When he was niftar, the people in Lichtenstadt buried him quickly because they wanted him to stay in their town. When the people in [Nikolsburg](#) found out what had happened, they caused an uproar - until the question if they should reinter him came before the Chasam Sofer. In his teshuva (responsa), he ultimately gives three reasons why it is mutar to reinter him in Nikolsburg (even though it was a very unpopular thing to do - because it gave the non-Jews ammunition to reinter bodies at their own discretion).

He also notes in his lengthy responsa, that the people in Nikolsburg are not to be believed that Rav Mordechai wanted to have his body returned - because he states that Rav Mordechai had affirmed in his lifetime that whoever will need salvation after his petira, should just come to his kever and his tefillos will be answered - and that incentivizes the people of Nikolsburg to try to have him buried near them. However, while he was writing the responsa, the Chasam Sofer fell asleep. In his dream, Rav Mordechai appeared to him and told him that he did indeed want to return to Nikolsburg - but Hashem wanted him to be buried in Lichtenstadt for the following reason:

When he was a young man, the shidduch to the girl that he was to marry was broken. This girl suffered embarrassment due to this fact and later married the Rav in Lichtenstadt. Rav Mordechai further related that with the help and tefillos of the Rav of Lichtenstadt, it was determined that the only kappora (absolution) that he could get was by being buried next to her in the cemetery for six months. And so it was: after six months his

holy body was removed and reinterred in Nikolsburg.

Following is the text of his matzeiva - denoting part of this story:

The tombstone of the legendary Rav Mordecai ben Avrohom Banet on the Rabbinic Hill at the Jewish cemetery in Mikulov (Nikolsburg), Czech Republic.

[Editor's note: Several years ago, I made the trip to Nikolsburg to daven at his kever. We arrived very late at night in the bitter cold and wandered the cemetery aimlessly searching for his kever in the near-pitch darkness. We were almost at the point of leaving, when we quickly davened to be zoche to say a few chapters of Tehillim at his kever. Within seconds, we turned to the next row, and there, right in front of us, was his kever. I can attest that there is a palpable spiritual high at his kever].



The Chasam Sofer was known to write his responsa very quickly without any afterthought or regret. Once, an issue with an aguna was presented to him, and as was his custom he wrote a quick response and handed his response to his son, Rav Shimon, to deliver it to the Bais Din in Nikolsburg. Rav Shimon thought that since this was a grave and important matter, he would delay fulfilling his father's errand, because perhaps his father rushed the response and might want to clarify or change it later. A few days later, the Chasam Sofer asked his son if he had

delivered the responsa. His son replied in the negative and explained his reasons. The Chasam Sofer proceeded to tell his son the following: "In every generation, Hashem puts a Godol HaDor who has Siyata dishmaya and the halachic responsa will be in accordance with Hashem's will. In this generation, I was chosen for this task. Please deliver the responsa immediately."

When the lengthy responsa was received by Nikolsburg's Bais Din, Rav Mordechai Banet opened up the letter and just read the last few lines of the halachic decree. When the Bais Din questioned Rav Mordechai about why he had not read the whole p'sak din, he replied, "In reality, I only need to see the last line, if the Chasam Sofer said muttar or ossur - and that would be enough. However, I read a couple of the last lines because reading the ksav yad (handwriting) of the Chasam Sofer brings about tremendous Yiras Shomayim.



Rav Mordechai once went away on summer "break" with his good friend, the Chasam Sofer, for a mere few weeks. When they returned, Rav Mordechai related to his son that the pair covered the complete Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, Shulchon Aruch, Rambam, Ramban and Kisei HaAri HaKodosh - then stopped himself and said to his son that he had "spoken and revealed too much already".



We would like to convey our special thanks to Rav Mayer Reichberg (ah brider) and the elusive Rav D. (who refuses to be named publicly) for their tremendous help with Rav Banet's biography. May Hashem bless them in the zechus of these holy

Tzaddikim to receive a profusion of shefa,

brocha v'hatzlocha.



Rav Nosson Nota Shapira, 13th of Av

Mechaber of Megaleh Amukos

Since he merited having Torah ugedula bemokom echod, both Torah and earthly wealth, the Megaleh Amukos never took wages or benefited in any way from the public purse. For this reason, his words were readily accepted by all and he fearlessly proclaimed his daas Torah, unlike other Rabbonim who perhaps were afraid to jeopardize their posts and livelihoods. As his son wrote in the introduction to his sefer: "Money means nothing to him, just as in the days of King Shlomo."

His matzeiva is engraved with a few short sentences, one of them being: "They say of him that Eliyohu (HaNovi) spoke to him face-to-face."

Consistent with this sentence are the facts written in the introduction to his sefer: "Every night, the Megaleh Amukos would rise at chatzos (midnight) to cry and lament the loss of the Bais HaMikdosh. On one such night, Eliyohu HaNovi appeared to him and informed him that the same song that he was singing down in this world, the malochim were singing simultaneously in the heavenly spheres before HaKodosh Baruch Hu, 'and since you are so beloved, I will reveal to you some Heavenly secrets.'"

Of his holiness, the Divrei Chaim of Sanz revealed that anyone needing a yeshua in Cracow would go to the house of Rav Nosson Nota and give over his name or the name of the person in distress. Without a word of tefilla on the Rav's part,

the person was already helped just in his zechus.

According to the Sar Sholom of Belz, his lifetime was a glorious era for Yidden, when such great luminaries lit up the Jewish world. The Bach and the Turei Zohov were among those who led Klal Yisrael at the time, their holiness radiating to such an extent that in Heaven it was decided that the time was ripe to bring the final Redemption.

However, the Soton asked to be allowed one more chance to try to test the Gedolei HaDor.

Initially, the Soton came to the Bach, telling him that he was a malach who wanted to teach him secrets of the Torah, just as the Maggid learned with the Bais Yosef. However, the father of the Bach appeared to him in a dream, cautioning him to ignore this spirit.

Next, the Soton went to the Megaleh Amukos with the same ruse, but Rav Nosson Nota felt immediately that this was no holy malach. Recalling signs he had learnt from Eliyohu HaNovi, he confirmed his suspicions and drove the Soton away.

Thus the Soton tried one Godol after another until he reached Shabsai Tzvi, who too had great potential. The Soton had finally found his victim. Shabsai Tzvi fell for his disguise and accepted him, leading to the devastating cult that led so many Yidden astray and, in effect, bringing a third churban upon Klal Yisrael.



Although the conclusion to the following story is still shrouded in mystery, it gives us a fraction of an insight into the holiness of the Megaleh Amukos and those connected to him physically and in spirit.

Following the petira of the Megaleh Amukos on the thirteenth of Av 5393 (1623), a young stranger whom no one seemed to know appeared in Cracow.

Soon after, the gabbai of the Chevra Kaddisha of Cracow was surprised to see this newcomer at his door with a request that was perhaps even stranger than the man himself. Confident and soft-spoken, he asked to buy the empty burial plot next to that of the Megaleh Amukos.

"What!" the gabbai almost exploded. "The audacity to request such a thing. Who says that you are worthy of burial next to the greatest of greats!"

With that, the gabbai drove the young man away, only to have him return a few days later with the same request. Begging the gabbai to have mercy on him, he entreated that he sell him the plot. As the man continued to plead, a plan began to form in the head of the gabbai:

The treasury of the Chevra Kaddisha is empty at the moment. I am already getting on in years while this fellow looks young and healthy. I'll sell him the plot and by the time he grows old and passes on, I'll have long passed away and the Chevra Kaddisha will have to decide how to deal with the situation.

With only the four walls to witness the deal, a deal was made. The stranger paid and acquired the burial place next to the Megaleh Amukos.

The satisfaction of the gabbai was, however, short-lived. On that very day, the young man passed away, suddenly and

mysteriously. At a loss, the gabbai of the Chevra Kaddisha weighed up the facts. Was it allowed at all to place an unworthy stranger next to the holy tziun? It was not even a favor for the man himself if he did not deserve it. Anyway, the money he paid went to tzedoka, and nobody knew about the sale. He would just keep quiet and bury him somewhere else.

So, the man was buried by the Chevra Kaddisha in an ordinary plot of the Cracow cemetery.

That night, as the gabbai lay asleep, the dead man appeared to him in a dream.

"I made a deal with you," he complained, "and you have not kept your part of the deal. I am therefore summoning you to the heavenly court."

In a cold sweat, the gabbai awoke. After a few minutes, he forced himself to calm down and decided to try to forget the whole thing. But night after night, the man was haunted by the same recurring dream whose truth he knew only too well.

Brokenhearted and gripped with fear and remorse, the gabbai went to the new Rav of Cracow, the Bach, and hesitantly told him the whole story.

Trembling, the gabbai waited as the holy Bach deliberated for a few moments. "If the avreich comes to you again," instructed the Bach, "tell him that the Torah is not in Shomayim and that if he wants to summon you to a din Torah he should come to the head of the Bais Din of Cracow on a certain date."

When the dream recurred that night, the gabbai gave over the message of the Bach and the avreich agreed to appear in Cracow's court.

On the agreed-upon day, a partition was set up in the Bais Din. Those present waited with bated breath until they heard a

rustling sound from behind the mechitza, indicating that the deceased complainant had arrived. The Bach stood up and commanded that he present his case, and when he had done so, the Bach turned to the gabbai.

“What do you have to say in your defense?”

“It is true that I sold him the plot, but I never had the remotest intention to bury him there,” stammered the gabbai. “I only did it because the coffers of the Chevra Kaddisha were empty and the man was so insistent. I don’t even know his name, for he refused to tell me.”

Turning back toward the partition, the Bach asked the spirit to reveal his identity so that they could find out whether he was worthy of being buried next to the Megaleh Amukos. However, he refused to give his name.



“According to din,” announced the Bach, “the sale ought to be valid. However, since we have no idea who this avreich is, and perhaps he is unsuitable to be the neighbor in death of our holy Rav, zt”l, in which case it would be an affront to the kovod of the Megaleh Amukos to honor the sale, we will not do the job ourselves. Instead, we will leave open the grave of the avreich and the space next to Rabbeinu. If you are worthy to be next to the Megaleh Amukos, go over yourself to the place that you bought. If not, we are free of our obligations in this transaction.”

Following the instructions of the Bach, the Chevra Kaddisha opened both places. They were shaken to discover the next morning that the kever of the young man was empty, while the plot next to the Rav had been filled.

Understanding that the unknown spirit had been a Tzaddik nistar, but still unaware of his name, his matzeiva was engraved as follows: “Here lies the unknown avreich, yo’id olov rei’o – his neighbor the Megaleh Amukos testifies to his greatness.”

His talmid – the famed Chasam Sofer – was known never to give expressive titles to people. However, on his Rebbe he conferred the title of Malach Elokim – “angel of Hashem”.



Nachum Ish Gamzu, 15th of Av – Tu B’Av

Rav Akiva’s Rebbe

The Story of Nachum Ish Gamzu

(The stories appear in Maseches Taanis 21A.)

A story is told that Nachum Ish Gamzu was blind in both eyes, missing both legs, missing both hands and his

entire body was covered in boils. He was lying in a dilapidated house with the legs of his bed in buckets of water so that ants could not crawl onto him. Once his talmidim wanted to remove his bed from the house and then remove the furniture. Nachum Ish Gamzu said to them, “My

children, first remove the furniture then remove my bed because you may be assured that as long as I am in this house it won't collapse." They listened to him and removed the furniture, then the bed, and the house collapsed after Nachum Ish Gamzu was outside it.

His *talmidim* asked of him, "Rebbe, since you are completely righteous, why did this happen to you (the boils, no arms etc...)?"

He replied, "My children, I brought it upon myself. I was once traveling on a road to the house of my father-in-law and I had three donkeyloads of food items: one of food, one of drink, and the last one of delicacies. A poor man approached me and said, 'Rebbe, sustain me.'

"I replied, 'Wait until I unload some food from the donkey.'

" Before I had a chance to unload the donkey the man's soul departed. I went and fell on my face and said, 'Let the eyes that took no pity on your eyes become blind; let my hands which took no pity on your hands be cut off; let my legs which took no pity on your legs be cut off.' And my mind did not find rest until I said, 'Let my entire body be covered with boils!'"

Nachum Ish Gamzu said to his *talmidim*, "Woe to me had you not seen me like this."

The *Gemora* then goes on to ask why they called him Nachum Ish Gamzu? It answers that whatever happened to him he would reply, "*Gam zu letova* - This, too, is for the best."



Here is another story about Nachum Ish Gamzu:

Once the Jews wanted to send a gift to the court of Caesar. They decided to

send Nachum Ish Gamzu to deliver it because he was accustomed to have miracles performed on his behalf. They sent him with a chest filled with precious stones and pearls. On his way he spent a night at a certain residence. During the night the residents arose and took all the stones and pearls from the chest and replaced them with sand. The next morning he saw the dirt and said, "This too is for the good," and went on his way to Caesar. He went to the palace and untied the chest. After the emperor saw the dirt he wanted to kill the Jews, as he thought they were mocking him. Nachum Ish Gamzu thought, "This too is for the best."

Then Eliyohu *HaNovi* appeared as a Roman official. Eliyohu said to Caesar, "Perhaps this sand is from the sand of Avrohom *Avinu* (which was used in the battle of the four kings)." When Avrohom threw the sand at an enemy it turned into swords and when he threw straw it turned into arrows.

There was one city the Romans could not conquer. They tested some of this dirt against that city and they conquered it. After this they went to the emperor's treasure vault and filled the chest of Nachum Ish Gamzu with precious stones and pearls in gratitude for his gift and off he went.

When they returned and spent a night at the same residence as before (where he had been robbed) the residents asked, "What did you bring to Caesar that he gave you such honor?"

Nachum replied, "Whatever I took from here (the residence)."

The residents immediately demolished their houses and brought the rubble to the palace. They said to Caesar, "The dirt that Nachum brought was from

our residence.” They tested it in battle and, finding it contained no special powers,

they executed the residents for attempting to defraud them.

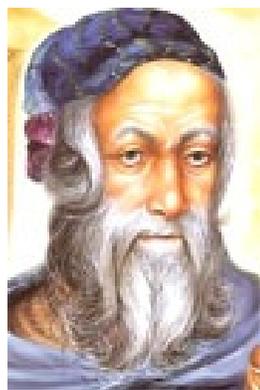


Rav Amram ben Diwan, 15th of Av – Tu B’Av

It is always with a feeling of respect and awe that the Jews of Morocco evoke the holy name of Rav Amram *ben* Diwan.

Rav Amram *ben* Diwan was born in Yerushalayim, and later settled in Chevron. In 5523 (1743), he was chosen by the *Rabbonim* of Chevron as an emissary to Morocco with the mission of collecting money for the Yeshivos of the Holy Land. He decided to settle in the Moroccan town of Wazan, and there he founded a *Talmud Torah* and a *Yeshiva*, where numerous *talmidim* came to quench their thirst for study by drinking from the source of his words.

Rav Amram became attached to his *talmidim*. His fatherly affection created a solid connection between them. He provided for all their material needs, and spiritually directed them on the path that leads to the performance of *Hashem’s* will. By his rich and varied pursuits, he contributed to the elevation and dissemination of *Torah* in all the communities of Morocco. Rav Amram was also known for his miracles. His blessings always came to pass, and Jews would travel from all the towns of Morocco to urgently seek him in order to be delivered, through his merit, from their troubles. He occupied himself with the well-being of everyone in particular, and the well-being of the community in general. His home was always open to all the afflicted who came knocking at his door, hoping that the



Tzaddik would be their staunchest defender before our Father, the Holy One, blessed be He.

After a long stay in Morocco, Rav Amram felt a great longing for *Eretz Yisrael*. He therefore interrupted his holy work. His *talmidim*, to whom he had taught *Torah*, had themselves become great scholars over the course of the years. Thus he decided to return to the Holy Land. When he arrived in Chevron, he became friends with Rav Chaim Bagoyo and Rav Avrohom Gedalia, the *Rabbonim* of the city. Together they studied *Torah* and penetrated many of its wondrous secrets, ascending day by day the rungs of perfection in *Torah* study and divine service.

However, Rav Amram’s stay in Chevron was short-lived. An unfortunate incident caused his departure, forcing him to take up the mantle of sojourner once again and return to Morocco. The following story describes what happened:

At that time, Jews were not permitted to enter the tomb of the Patriarchs. However, for Rav Amram, this prohibition did not in the least quench his fervent desire to daven there. He therefore disguised himself as an Arab, and without being

noticed he entered the cave with the rest of the Muslims

who had also come there to daven. Imagine his emotions when he approached the tomb of the Patriarchs! As his face became drenched with tears, he quietly uttered his *tefillos*, beseeching the Creator of the world



to hasten the Final Redemption. No one doubted that this “Muslim”, so absorbed as he was in his *tefilla*, was nothing other than a Jew. Suddenly, as Rav Amram was preparing to leave, an Arab saw and recognized him. Immediately, he ran to the *Pasha* and informed him of the offense.

Rav Amram incurred heavy suffering for such a sacrilege. A friend of Rav Amram, who was also a servant of the *Pasha*, hurried to warn him that he intended to arrest him. In the middle of the night, Rav Amram, accompanied by his young son, Rav Chaim, left their home. They feared returning to Yerushalayim or a neighboring country because during that era Turkish power held sway over several countries. He therefore decided to return to Morocco. As soon as he arrived in Fez, the city’s inhabitants welcomed him with great honor. Many of the city’s notable men quarreled over the merit of having him as their guest. He was finally received by Rav Menasheh *ibn* Denan, one of the leaders of Fez’s Jewish community.

The story is told that Rav Menasheh’s children were all girls, and that another girl had just been born to him. Rav Amram advised him to name her Fedina, which means, “we have finished”. In other words, we have finished giving birth to girls. And it was thus that after this girl, Rav Menasheh had only boys.



Not long after his arrival in Fez, Rav Amram and his son Rav Chaim traveled to all the towns of Morocco in order to spread the teaching of *Torah*. He arrived in Sefru, where he lodged in the Elbaz home. Having

no children of their own, they asked him for a blessing to have a son. Rav Amram blessed them and promised that in the following year, at the very same time of year, the wife would give birth to a son who would later become a great *Torah* scholar. The blessing of the *Tzaddik* came to fruition. The son who was born to the Elbaz family was given the name of the *Tzaddik*, Amram, and afterward the name of Rav Amram of Sefru became famous as a Gaon and great *Torah* Scholar.

While Rav Amram was staying in the Elbaz home in Sefru, his son Rav Chaim fell deathly ill. The doctors gave him no chance of recovering. Rav Amram davened to the Creator of the world that He take his soul in place of his son’s. His son, Rav Chaim, recovered from his illness, and they continued on their journey to all the towns of Morocco. When they arrived in Wazan, Rav Amram himself fell gravely ill, and soon afterward rendered his soul to his Creator.



The tomb of Rav Amram became a place of pilgrimage for all the Jews of Morocco. Each year on *Lag BaOmer*, thousands of Jews come to Wazan to make the pilgrimage to the grave of the saint. Numerous miracles are said to have occurred at his tomb: “incurable” illnesses have been healed, the blind have regained their sight, the mute have found



their voices, the paralyzed have returned home on their own, and infertile women have had children after davening there.

They tell that a French military sergeant had a son who

remained paralyzed after a serious illness.

This sergeant had a Jewish friend who advised



him to take his son to the tomb of Rav Amram *ben* Diwan in Wazan. At first, the sergeant was skeptical and refused, but then later promised that if a miracle were to happen and his son would be healed, he would build a road with his own money in order to facilitate access to the tomb of the *Tzaddik*. The miracle occurred: As soon as his son approached the tomb of Rav Amram, he was healed. The happy father kept his promise and constructed a road that leads to the tomb of Rav Amram.

The great poet, Rav Dovid *ben* Hassin, composed a liturgical poem especially in his honor, a song that is sung by the Jews of Morocco on the day of his *Hilula*.

His son, Rav Chaim *ben* Diwan, continued his father's work. He traveled from town to town with the goal of instructing *Torah*. He died at a ripe old age and rests in the village of Anranz, south of Marrakech. His tomb has also become a place of pilgrimage for all the Jews of Morocco.

May his merit protect us, *Amen!!*

www.hevratpinto.org/tzadikim_eng/034_rabbi_amram_ben_diwan.html



There are many fascinating stories of the *yeshuos* of those who were *zoche* to *daven* at the *kever* of the great *Tzaddik* and *Mekubol* Rav Amram *ben* Diwan in Morocco.

A story is told of a couple from Monsey, New York, who were not *zoche* to have a child for fifteen years. They were told to go and *daven* at the *kever* of Rav Amram. After finishing the entire *Tehillim* at the *kever*, the husband heard the sound of a baby crying. Nobody else in the vicinity heard this wondrous sound. Nine months later this couple had a child.

One known source who wishes to remain anonymous tells the following stunning story:

“I was *zoche* to hear this story from the father and I actually held this miracle baby in my arms. After hearing this story, I called two friends who, like me, were having a challenging time with *shidduchim*. I told them we needed to book tickets and go *daven* at this great *Tzaddik*'s tomb.

“We booked and headed out to Morocco. En route we decided to spend *Shabbos* in Gibraltar. We ate our *Shabbos* meals with the president of the community, Mr. Solomon Levy. He told us about his nephew who had been crippled from birth. The parents of the boy decided to go to the *tziun* of Rav Amram. After *davening*, they went for a walk and left the boy in his wheelchair to continue *davening*. The boy *davened* a little and then drifted off into a slumber. In his dream a man with a white beard appeared.

“He said, ‘What are you doing in a cemetery? You are a *Kohen*. You must leave at once.’

“The boy replied, ‘I can't walk. How can I leave?’

“Rav Amram replied, ‘Just pick yourself up and walk out.’

The boy awoke and, miraculously,

he used his own two feet to wobble out of the *kever*. He continued with physical therapy and today is walking like a normal person.

“After *Shabbos*, we traveled from Gibraltar to Morocco. We *davened* and recited the full *Tehillim* at the *kever*. We stayed a few days and toured Fez, and then returned to the United States. The following *Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan*, I made a *l’chaim* and got engaged. The following two weeks, one after another, my two friends got engaged.”

On a recent trip to *Eretz Yisrael*, after davening at *Kever Rochel*, an Israeli-looking man asked me for a ride into *Yerushalayim*. As we were riding in the car, wanting to make light conversation, I asked his name. He said, “My name is Amram Bitton.” Stunned, I asked if he was of Moroccan descent and if he ever had heard

of Rav Amram *ben* Diwan. He turned to me in awe and said, “I am named after him. My mother was childless for many years and made the journey to his *kever*. She promised the *Tzaddik* that if she had a baby, she would name him Amram. I am that baby.”



These stories are truly beyond the scope of our imagination. Rav Amram of Diwan’s *yahrzeit* is coming up this *Tu B’Av* and people from all over the world are traveling to his *kever* to *daven*.

See more

at: www.theyeshivaworld.com/news/ad/447051/upcoming-yartzeit-of-reb-amram-ben-diwan-continues-rich-history-of-yeshuos.html#sthash.cxv53Szy.dpuf



Rav Tzvi Hirsch Halberstam, 15th of Av – Tu B’Av

Rav of Rudnik

Rav Tzvi Hirsch Halberstam, born in 5606/1846, was the son of Rav Boruch of Gorlitz, son of Rav Chaim of Sanz, the *Divrei Chaim*. His mother was the daughter of Rav Yekusiel Yehuda Teitelbaum, the *Yetev Lev* of Sighet.

At the age of fifteen, Rav Tzvi Hirsch married the daughter of Rav Yisrael Horowitz of Barnov, son of Rav Eliezer of Dzikov, and he lived with his in-laws for the next three years. Afterward, he moved to Sanz, to the court of his illustrious grandfather, who cherished him.

In 5635/1875, less than two years before his *petira*, the *Divrei Chaim* called in Rav Tzvi Hirsch and said to him, “I am old and sick and have no more strength. Go to your other grandfather, the *Yetev Lev* in Sighet, and learn *Torah* from him.” The *Divrei Chaim* was *niftar* a year later, on the twenty-fifth of *Nissan* 5636/1876.

After learning under his grandfather in Sighet for a year, Rav Tzvi Hirsch received *semicha* from him and was appointed *Rav* of the Polish town of Niska, serving for ten years.

In 5647/1887, his father, Rav Boruch, moved to Gorlitz and handed over the *Rabbonus* of Rudnik to Rav Tzvi Hirsch. Rudnik was a small town on the banks of the San River in southern Poland, near Russia.

Four members of the illustrious Sanzer dynasty served as *Rabbonim* there: the *Divrei Chaim*; Rav Yechezkel Shraga, later of Shiniva; Rav Boruch of Gorlitz; and his son Rav Tzvi Hirsch. This Rabbinic dynasty in Rudnik began in 5572/1812, when the community approached Rav Naftali Tzvi of Ropshitz to help them, and the *Divrei Chaim* was appointed *Rav*.

After Rav Boruch of Gorlitz’s *petira*

on the first of *Adar* 5666/1906, Rav Tzvi Hirsch became *Rebbe* in his place.

Rav Tzvi Hirsch's *zivug sheini* was the daughter of Rav Meir Meshulom Shapira, a grandson of Rav Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov. During World War I, Rav Tzvi Hirsch fled to Hungary, settling in Kleinvardein. In 5676/1916, he fell ill and went to Vienna for medical care. He was *niftar* on the fifteenth of *Av* 5678/1918 in Kleinvardein, and his *aron* was brought to Gornitz, where he was buried next to his father, Rav Boruch.

His most famous son, Rav Yekusiel Yehuda (later *Rav* and *Rebbe* of

Klausenburg), only fourteen at the time, delivered an hours-long *hesped*. He founded his own court in Klausenburg, Transylvania, in 5687/1927. He survived World War II and founded Kiryat Sanz in Netanya. He was known as the Sanz-Klausenburger *Rebbe*.

The other sons were Rav Avrohom, who was *Rav* in Rudnik, and (from his first *zivug*) Rav Naftoli; he also had a daughter who married Rav Moshe Halberstam of Bochnia.

Zechuso yagen aleinu.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-15-avaugust-11



Rav Menachem Mendel of Strizov, 16th of Av

Mechaber of *Sova Semochos*

Rav Menachem Mendel was born in 5548/1788 in Tarnow. His father was Rav Moshe Avrohom Dovid. As a child he excelled in *Torah*, outshining the other children his age. Aside from his *ge'onus*, he served *Hashem* with a unique inner fire, and was a *mushlom* in *Torah* and *Avodas Hashem*.

His *Rebbe* was Rav Menachem Mendel of Rimanov, who cherished him. He also traveled to the Kozhnutzer *Maggid* and the *Chozeh* of Lublin.

Rav Mendel of Strizov was the *Ba'al Mussaf* in the Rimanover court, famous for his fiery *davening* as well as for being a great *Tzaddik*. He had the privilege to help the *Yomim Noro'im tefillos* of the holy Rimanover *Rebbe* reach the highest celestial spheres.

One *Yom Kippur*, the Rimanover *Rebbe* suddenly banged his *machzor* shut in the middle of *Mussaf*. After *davening*, the *Rebbe* explained to the perplexed *Chassidim* that Rav Mendel was trying to have the *kavonos* of the *Kohen Godol* on *Yom Kippur*, and because he was so young the *Rebbe* feared that it would harm him!

Rav Menachem Mendel served as *Rav* in Strizov for a while, where he wrote many responsa in *Halocha*, especially on the topic of *agunos*. After serving as *Rav* in Strizov he returned to Tarnow, the city of his birth, where he led an elite group of *Chassidim* to higher aspirations in *Avodas Hashem*. Unfortunately, he was *niftar* at the young age of forty-three.

This is how his passing came about: During his last year, 5591/1831, a terrible plague erupted in his town and many *Yidden* tragically succumbed. It was only after Rav Mendel offered himself as a *kappora* that the dying stopped...

Sova Semochos al HaTorah, a collection of *Divrei Torah* that he told his *talmidim* on *Shabbosos* and *Yomim Tovim*, was revered by all as a holy *sefer*. It was reprinted with a lengthy foreword in 5759/1999. Another of Rav Mendel's *seforim* is *Sova Semochos al Maseches Kiddushin*.

Yehi zichro boruch.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-16-avaugust-12/

Sir Moses Montefiore, 16th of Av

Born in Livorno, Italy, in 1784, of *Sephardi* descent, Sir Moses traced his lineage back to the exiles from the Spanish Expulsion. When he was still a young child, his family resettled in England. Young Moshe became a member of the London Stock Exchange at a time when there were only twelve licensed Jewish brokers in all of England. In a matter of a few years he had amassed great wealth and had become a member of the London Aristocracy. In 1812, he married his wife, Judith, whose sister was the wife of Reb Nathan Meyer Rothschild, one of the wealthiest Jews in Europe at the time. Sir Moses eventually became the stockbroker for his brother-in-law and as a result of their partnership they amassed a tremendous fortune. In addition, he was a partner in a large insurance company as well as a gas company that introduced gas lighting to many of the major cities of Europe. Sir Moses also had a hand in building railroads and many other industrial and financial enterprises. As the years passed, Moses and Judith grew together in their *Yiddishkeit*. In 1837, Montefiore was appointed Sheriff of London. In the same year, Queen Victoria, who had recently ascended the British Throne, awarded him the honorary title of Knighthood, bestowing upon him the title "Sir" Moses. In 1846, he was elevated to the rank of Baron. By the time he was forty-one years old, Sir Moses, with his wife's encouragement, decided to retire from business affairs and devote the rest of his life, time and considerable resources to Jewish affairs. The welfare of the Jewish people became his sole business for the

next sixty-some years and his list of accomplishments is truly magnificent. When he was appointed Sheriff of London, he specifically wrote in his contract that he would be absolved from working on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*. He also specified that he was to be absolved from entering a church on non-Jewish holidays. Even when he was traveling, he almost always made sure to travel with an entourage of at least ten Jews to ensure that he would have a *minyán*. He also took along with him one of the many *Sifrei Torah* that he owned.

In 1840, a monk named Thomas disappeared from his home several weeks before *Pesach*. The French consul in Damascus blamed the Jews for his disappearance and claimed that they killed the monk to use his blood for *matzos*. Prominent Damascus Jews were imprisoned and tortured. Many died and some, who could not withstand the torture, "confessed" under duress to the crime. Upon learning of it, Sir Moses traveled to Damascus to save the honor of the Jewish people. In 1846, Sir Moses was invited by the Russian government to visit Russia in connection with its Jewish situation. Upon returning to London, he demanded equal rights for the Jews and stressed that it would also be an economic blessing for the country. Montefiore's hundredth birthday was celebrated as an official holiday in London and he was accorded great honor by both Jew and non-Jew alike. The Montefiores passed away childless, but they left behind a legacy of *tzedoka* and *chessed* that endures to this very day.



Rav Shmuel Eibschutz, 17th of Av

Rav of Apta

Born in 5514/1756, Rav Shmuel Eibschutz was the son of Rav Naftoli Hertz, related to Rav Yonoson Eibschutz, and a

descendant of the *Megaleh Amukos*.

Rav Shmuel learned under Rav

Akiva Eiger for a number of years.

After settling in Vorka, he was attracted to the ways of *Chassidus* and traveled to the court of the *Maggid* of Kozhnitz. As was customary among *Chassidim*, they did not wear woolen clothes because it was possible that they contained *sha'atnez*, an *Issur d'Oraisa* (*Torah* prohibition). Rav Shmuel, who came from a non-*Chassidic* background, wore woolen clothing, but upon joining the *Chassidim*, he changed to silk garments.

Later, in Posen, he met Rav Akiva Eiger, who asked him why he wore silk and not wool. Rav Shmuel explained the opinion of the *Chassidim*. At once, Rav Eiger ripped off his woolen garment, exclaiming that he was shocked that he hadn't thought of this issue himself. It is related that Rav Akiva Eiger stood there, waiting until he was brought new garments free of any *halachic* issues.

Rav Shmuel also went to the court of the *Chozeh*.

He was appointed *Rav* in Vorka, where he served for thirty-eight years.

Later, in 5595/1835, he became *Rav* in Apta, a post he held until his *petira*.

Rav Shmuel was *niftar* on the 17th of Av 5600/1840, at the age of eighty-six. He was buried in Apta.

His sons were Rav Berish, *Rav* in Zelichov; Rav Efraim, *Rav* in Piaseczna and Sulifa; Rav Mordechai; and Rav Simcha. Among his famous *talmidim* were Rav Yissochor Ber of Radoshitz and Rav Yaakov Aryeh of Radzimin, who grew up in Rav Shmuel's home.

From the many manuscripts of his *chiddushim*, only the one on *Torah* was published, under the name *Toras Shmuel*. His *chiddushim* on *Shas* were never published, except those on the *sugya* of *Kavsa* in *Maseches Shabbos*, which were printed at the back of *Toras Shmuel*. The *sefer* was highly regarded by many of the generation's *Gedolim* and received glowing *haskomos*.

Zecher Tzaddik livrachah.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-17-avaugust-13/



לזכר נשמת אמנו החשובה, נפש יקרה ועדינה, אשה יראת ה' ובעלת מדות טובות
מרת זיסל ז"ל בת הרה"ה מו"ה מאיר זאב הכהן כ"ץ ע"ה הי"ד
מעיר נירעדהאז יע"א

ונכדת הרה"ק רבי אהרן צבי טערקלטיוב 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.

(מותוך 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 תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה ותקים לתחיה לקץ הימין מהרה ת'נצ'ב'ה'

נוסח מצבתו:

הצפון פה באדמה קבורה מה רב טוב
ראש שבטי ישורון אבן פנה יקרה
דמע עיני כל תירדנה על שבר בת עמו
כי לוקח תפארת עוזמו מעל ראשימו
יפעת אורימו חשכה בעלות הכורת עלימו
בשוב נפשו עדינה טהורה אל מקורה
היה בן שבעים וחמש שנים לגבורה
לא נס ליחא ולא כהתה עינו מאורה
הרבה והרביץ תורההעמיד תלמידים
ובאחריתו היתה מאת ה' נסבה בגבורה
כי יסע לעיר קרלסבאד לשתות מי בארה
ושמה בקשו העליונים נפשו הטהורה
ביום ד' י"ג אב עזב אותנו לאנחה וצרה
לפרט עיני עיני ירדה מים ונפשנו מרה
ולמחרתו נקבר ע"מ לפנות בל"ש העירה
ואחריו בז' אדר בהסכמת שרי התורה
העלוהו בניו מקברו והובל פה העירה
והושם בין קברות משפחתו היקרה
בכבוד גדול בבכי והספד מרה
ביום א' י"ב בחדש אדר התק"ץ ליצירה
ה"ה אדוננו גאון הגאונים רשכבה"ג יקר בדורו
ויחיד בעמו כק"ש מו"ה מרדכי בנעט זצ"ל ע"ה
ארבעים שנה היה רועה נאמן
והמדינה אב"ד ור"מ פה קהלתנו

Nusach of Rav Mordechai Banet's gravestone/matzaeiva

How great is the goodness concealed here;
A chief and head of the tribes of Jeshurun, a
precious cornerstone;
All our eyes tear over the tragedy of our
people;
Because our splendor and beauty has been
taken away the crown removed from our
heads;
Darkness has descended as He who takes life
overtook him;
His pure *aidel* soul has returned to her source;
He was seventy five years full of strength;
His power did not diminish nor did his eyes
darken;
He taught many disciples and spread *Torah*;
His end was from *Hashem* in his greatness;
As he traveled to Carlsbad to drink well waters;
And there those on High asked for pure soul
and took it;
On Wednesday 13th of Av he left us to our
troubles;
At the time our eyes shed tears and our souls
are bitter;
The next day he was buried in town;
And later on 7th *Adar* with the approval &
agreement of the princes of *Torah*;
His children disinterred and brought him up out
of his grave here to this city (Nikolsburg);
And he was re-interred and buried here
amongst his precious honorable family;
With great honor and weeping and eulogies
on Sunday the 12th of *Adar* the year *Tav Kuf
Tzaddik*;
He is our master the *gaon of gaonim*, head of
all the diaspora, precious and honored of his
generation;
and a unique individual from among his people,
the holy master and *rav*, Mordechai Banet A"H;
He served as a faithful shepherd for forty
years;
As the *Av Beis Din* and *Rav* of our
congregation and country.

Zera Shimshon



Va'eschanan

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 6th 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

כבד את אביך ואת אמך וגו' למען ייטב לך (ה' מז')

Honor you father and mother etc. so that it shall be good for you (5:16)

The Gemara (Baba Kama 54b-55a) relates that R' Chanina ben Agil asked R' Chia bar Abba why in the first luchos the word טוב, good, is omitted and it is only mentioned in the second luchos? To which R' Chia answered, "Before you ask me why the second luchos have the word טוב in them, you should be asking me if they contain the word טוב. Rather, go ask R' Tanchum this question". R' Chanina indeed went to R' Tanchum with his question and R' Tanchum responded that since the first set of luchos would eventually be broken, had they contained the word טוב, people would see it as a bad sign as if to say that there is no more good in the world.

The Zera Shimshon asks the obvious question - how could R' Chia say that he doesn't know if it does or does not say the word טוב in the first luchos, did R' Chia never read the Aseres Hadibros? As well, even if he did not know the exact wording, why couldn't he just bring a Torah and check up the wording?

Another question that the Zera Shimshon asks is that R' Chia's retort to R' Chanina's question seems to imply that he misunderstood the gist of the question since R' Chanina's main question was why the first luchos do not contain the word טוב, not why the second ones do. If so, why did R' Chia word his reply as - before you ask me why the second luchos have the word טוב in them etc. this was not R' Chanina's main question. He really wanted to know why the first luchos did not contain the word טוב. The reasoning being simple - if the word טוב is mentioned in the second luchos, the fact that it is missing from the first luchos is a clear omission of a word that would make sense to include?

The Zera Shimshon explains the exchange as follows. There is no doubt that R' Chia knew very well that the second luchos contain the word טוב and the first ones do not. However, we first must understand what R' Chanina was really asking in order to understand what R' Chia responded.

The first luchos were given to Moshe Rabbeinu before the Jewish people sinned with the Egel. Had the Jewish people not sinned, the world would have been completely different. There would have been no Yetzer Hara, no wars, etc. essentially, it would have been like the world to come on earth, namely, there would have been reward for mitzvos in this world. We would not have had to wait until the world to come. Therefore, it would have been very apropos to have included the word טוב in the first luchos. The opposite would seem true with the second luchos. These, Moshe Rabbeinu received after the sin of the Egel where the Yetzer Hara was back inside us and there was no option to receive reward in this world. Why then did these luchos contain the word טוב? In other words, R Chanina's question was in reality on the wording of both luchos, not just the first ones.

R' Chia's response was that R' Chanina's question is based on the understanding that the word טוב refers to reward in this world, and after the Egel there was no longer the possibility of receiving reward in this world for one's mitzvos. On this R' Chia said he is unsure if it says טוב in the second luchos. By this he meant that he is unsure if טוב in the second luchos means what R' Chanina assumed it meant and if indeed it does not mean that, then R' Chanina's question is no longer such a strong one.

R' Chia's reasoning was that we do find that reward is given for mitzvos, even in this world. Numerous times throughout the Torah there are promises of reward to those that keep Hashem's commandments. As well, we recite the mishna every morning (Pe'ah 1:1) these are the things that upon performing them, ones eats their fruits in this world etc.

Therefore, even after the Egel it still made sense to include the word טוב in the luchos since even after the Egel it is still possible to receive reward in this world.

To address why it did not say טוב in the first luchos, R' Chia sent R' Chanina to R' Tanchum. R' Tanchum's response was that since the first luchos were before the Egel, the word טוב there would clearly be referring to the status of the Jewish people in this world. Such a clear indication of receiving good in this world and then having that broken may have mistakenly made people understand that there is no hope of receiving any good in this world - even if the second luchos contained the word טוב. For this reason the word טוב was omitted.

לזכות חיים דוד בן טויבא חוה להצלחה וסייעתא דשמיא בכל מעשה ידיו ובכל הענינים

זכות רבינו זיע"א יעמוד לזיווג הגון בקרוב עבור שושנה נחמה בת חנה פעסא ולרפואה שלימה לזכבד בת דבורה

ולזכות רבקה רויא בת פייגא לזיווג הגון בקרוב

לזכות החפץ בעילום שמו לזיווג בניו ובנותיו בקרוב בזכות רבינו זיע"א

שבת שלום

לזכות כל
ישראל

MeOros Ramchal VaEsChanan

Why did Hashem tell Moshe to See and Gaze at the Land?

“Climb to the top, of the hill and lift up your eyes westward, northward, southward and eastward, and see with your eyes, for you will not cross this Jordan (river). Command Yehoshua strengthen him and encourage him because he will cross over ahead of the people and he will bring them to inherit the land which you will see.” (Devarim 3:27-28)

The *Ramchal* explains the reason why Moshe exerted some much effort and *davened* so hard to try and be able to be allowed to reach *Eretz Yisroel*.

Ramchal says the secret of this matter is that if Moshe had in fact reached *Eretz Yisroel* it would never have been destroyed and no foreign nation would ever rule it as is known, this is the mystery behind why Moshe so deeply desired to get there.

However, this was not to be and he was unsuccessful in his efforts and *Hashem* knew that in the future there would be exile and we would go into *golus*.

Nonetheless, despite all that we needed Moshe to gaze upon the land and see it. Why was this so? The *Ramchal* teaches us that the secret of this matter is that *kedushah* does not shine openly in a revealed manner over *Bnei Yisroel* in *golus*. Still it says “from afar *Hashem* is seen to me,” we can see *Hashem* from a distance, which means that nonetheless that shine from the Divine light comes but from afar and not from up close in order to preserve us in exile.

Therefore, Moshe also needed to see the land of *Eretz Yisroel*, because the power of his gaze over it is equal to a form of providence and *hashgacha* to watch over the land and this invites repair and rectification in the form of *tikkunim* to safeguard the land of *Eretz Yisroel* from her enemies even during *golus*. Moshe *Rabbeinu’s* protective gaze gave her some power to withstand the *churban* so that it would not be total destruction nor total devastation.

Therefore, it says in our *pasuk* “see with your eyes,” even though Moshe did not ask to see except for just Yerushalayim, and the site of the *Bais haMikdash*, however *Hashem* asked Moshe and wanted him to gaze at the entirety of the land of Israel, all of it in order that his protective gaze imbue it with a virtue of safeguarding and *shemirah* through his *hashgacha* to watch over it in each nook and cranny and in every detailed locale so that the hand of the *sitra achra* not remain or have any hold on the land as it says in our *pasuk* **“lift up your eyes westward, northward, southward and eastward, and see with your eyes.”**

Afterwards, the *pasuk* says to Moshe **“Command Yehoshua strengthen him and encourage him,”** *Ramchal* asks why did Yehoshua need strengthening and encouragement by *Hashem* [and Moshe] what was he so afraid of?



Ramchal answers by explaining that when there is one spiritual pipeline in the generation that draws down an influx of abundant blessings and *shefa*, if he passes away that is a great loss for his students and disciples as well. As *Chazal* say “so long as *Eliyahu haNavi* was alive many prophets existed as well,” they prophesied because of his power of prophecy relying on him. However, when he passed on, their prophecy ceased and passed away from them as well.

Similarly, *Yehoshua* was afraid that so long as *Moshe*, his main pipeline, and connection to be hooked into spirituality I can stand my ground and remain on my level, however once *Moshe* passes away, who knows? Perhaps I too will lose all what I have gained and all the *shefa* will cease.

Therefore, *Hashem* strengthened and encouraged *Yehoshua* not to fear this. After *Moshe*’s passing *Hashem* said “As I was with *Moshe* so shall I be with you.” The reason is explained in our *pesukim* “because he will cross over ahead of the people,” when we say that pipeline has passed away and the *shefa* ceases from the disciples and students as well, that is true specifically when he himself needs it alone, however when many people rely on him *Hashem* safeguards and protects that pipeline of *shefa* to continue flowing for the sake of the many. Therefore, the *pauk* says strengthen him and encourage him that he won’t lose the pipeline of *shefa* because the many rely on him and he shall go ahead to bring them in to inherit the land.

The *Ramchal* then explains the secret of the conclusion of our cited *pesukim* “**he will bring them to inherit the land which you will see.**” Everything is achieved through *Moshe*’s power, nothing is achieved without him and he is the one who prepared the way for them to inherit the land. Had *Moshe* not gazed upon it even *Yehoshua* would have not been able to bring them in to inherit. That is why it says he will bring them to inherit the land, *Yehoshua* will do so because “you will see,” *Yehoshua* will be able to using the preparation laid down by *Moshe*’s gaze, you *Moshe* prepare the inheritance by gazing upon the land first and *Yehoshua* concludes it by bringing them in.

Why did *Bnei Yisroel* keep *Shabbos* in Marrah?

“Safeguard and Keep the *Shabbos* day” (*Devarim* 5:12)

The *Ramchal* explains why *Bnei Yisroel* were commanded to keep *Shabbos* in Marrah. He says that since *Bnei Yisroel* needed to receive the *Torah*, *Hashem* had to sanctify their souls and prepare them, to merit being ready to receive the *Torah*. There is nothing else, explains the *Ramchal*, that can sanctify and imbue *Yisroel* with *kedushah* like *Shabbos* can. This is the secret of the words of davening when we say *MeKadesh haShabbos veYisroel* – that *Hashem* sanctifies *Bnei Yisroel* through *Shabbos* observance. Therefore, the giving of the gift of *Shabbos* before *Matan Torah* was a prerequisite preparation to receiving the *Torah*.





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Hilula

11 - Rabbi Yitzchak Blazer of St. Petersburg

12 - Rabbi Yosef Lavton

13 - Rabbi Zevulun Graz

14 - Rabbi Yosef Naftali Stern, Rosh Yeshiva of Pressburg

15 - Rabbi Avraham Ben Chassin, of the Meknes Sages

16 - Rabbi Yehuda Pinto, Son of Rabbi Chaim Pinto

17 - Rabbi Avraham Pinto, of the Saloniki and Tzefat Sages



The Advantage of Repentance and Hashem's love of His People

"When you are in distress and all these things have befallen you, at the end of days, you will return unto Hashem, your G-d, and hearken to His voice"

(Devarim 4:30)

Hashem seeks to love His people, the Chosen Nation, and since He knows that in the natural way, the conduct of strict judgement will prevent peace and love from residing between Him and His people, He is therefore Slow to Anger and covers our offenses. We know that a person is judged for every single moment in his life and when he arrives in the Heavenly Court, he will be shown everything that he did during his time in This World. This will not be a concise review of days and weeks, but a thorough and meticulous report of every single second in a person's life. Anyone who sins relying on the fact that Hashem readily makes concessions, is relinquishing his life since Hashem pays back those who transgress His word. But since Hashem desires a relationship of love and closeness with His people, He therefore does not punish His sons immediately after they sin, but He subdues His wrath and is Slow to Anger for perhaps the person will rectify his ways and repent for his sin.

If a person has a bleeding wound on his finger, simply binding the wound with a bandage is not enough to heal it. It only serves to conceal the wound, as in the concept of 'covering offenses'. Only if one applies different creams or healing remedies to the wound, will it truly heal and the skin will regain its original smoothness. So too, Hashem covers up His people's sins and disregards them temporarily, in the hope that they will repent their bad ways. In this situation where Hashem 'covers His eyes' from seeing Yisrael's sins, love can continue to reside between Hashem and Am Yisrael.

Anyone who wishes to repent can achieve this easily since the ways of repentance are well known and clear to all. Since this is the case, all that is required is a person's desire, and this will lead him to Hashem his G-d. My master and teacher, Hagaon Rabbi Shammai Zahn zt"l, once posed the following difficulty: We find that the Torah goes to great length concerning the command to designate cities of refuge, detailing their location and the need to repair, from time to time, the roads that lead to these towns. One must also ensure that appropriate signposts are showing the way to these cities of refuge, so that the murderer should not be held up on the way and place himself in danger from the avenger of his blood. On the other hand, we do not find that the Torah clarifies the location of and guides a person to the city of Yerushalayim, even though we are commanded to appear before Hashem in Yerushalayim three times a year. But even without this, Yerushalayim is the umbilicus of the world, the dwelling place of the

Beit Hamikdash, the place where Hashem's presence is most profound and the main source of purity. If so, why are we not commanded to affix signposts directing us to this Holy City, while we are warned repeatedly about the importance of signposts that lead to the cities of refuge? Can one say that the cities of refuge were of greater benefit than the Holy City of Yerushalayim? The Torah only hints to Yerushalayim's location, as it says, "Rather, only at the place that Hashem, our G-d, will choose from among all your tribes to place His Name there shall you seek out His Presence and come there".

The explanation could be that the Torah intentionally does not describe the location of Yerushalayim in order to teach all those who wish to draw closer and cleave to holiness, that they do not require exact instruction on how to achieve this since inside every Jew beats a wise heart that is capable of leading him to the holy and correct place. He cannot evade his obligation with the pretext that he is not aware of the location since as mentioned, Yerushalayim's holiness is felt all over and it draws with a strong pull all those who desire to come close to it. On the other hand, the Torah details the cities of refuge and warns Am Yisrael to ensure that the roads leading to these cities are always accessible, so as to prevent a further situation of murder.

Hashem tells His children that He desires their love and therefore He is Slow to Anger when they sin and does not rush to punish them. But if one sins repeatedly and does not repent, relying on the fact that Hashem readily makes concessions, or with the excuse that the way to repent is unclear, this intensifies Hashem's anger and He does not accept this excuse since the key to repentance is given over to man and he has the ability to return to Hashem his G-d whenever he wishes.

A wealthy person who owns many profitable businesses around the world, once came to see me. He wished to ask my advice regarding where to invest his money since he had several investment options and was not sure where to begin. I answered him that coming to ask my advice was simply a pretense since only someone familiar with the intricacies of commerce and investments can decide what is the most preferable and safest way of investing. I added that even if I would tell him to invest his money in a certain area, I am certain that in the end, he will do as he deems appropriate, relying on his own knowledge and talents to make the right decision.

Nobody knows better than himself as the sincerest way to return to Hashem. Chazal have told us (Makot 10b), "A person is led on the path that he wishes to take". Therefore, if a person is honest with Hashem and reveals his desire to draw closer to Him, then this desire will lead him closer to G-d.



Walking in their Ways

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

Joining Benefactor with Recipient

Once when I was in Paris, a woman approached me with her daughter's wedding invitation and bewailed her difficult financial situation. She did not have a cent for the wedding expenses and could not even afford to provide her daughter with the basic necessities with which to begin married life.

That day, I was scheduled to deliver a shiur to thousands of participants. I promised the woman that after the shiur, I would ask the crowd to each donate generously towards the mitzvah of helping a poor bride. However, when the shiur ended, it was G-d's will that I completely forget about my promise, and only after everyone had already left the hall did I remember, leaving me with a sense of anguish.

The woman, needless to say, was greatly disappointed and on the verge of despair. At that moment, I made up my mind to help her in any way possible. Resolutely, I turned to her and said, "Madame, have no fear. Hashem's salvation is in the blink of an eye. You will yet be rescued from your plight."

I had just finished talking, when who should pass by but an old student of mine. As is my practice, I asked how he was doing and he replied that everything was Baruch Hashem fine with him. Then he turned on his way. But something in his demeanor struck me. I called him back and asked if it was true that everything was fine. He was taken aback at my repeated queries. "Everything is one hundred per cent okay," he affirmed. But after taking a few steps, he returned to me. "Just now I received a call from home and they told me that a problem came up. The Rav's repeated questions have made me concerned and I don't know what to think." I told him he had nothing to fear and he can go home with peace of mind.

But he was not appeased and insisted that he perform a mitzvah immediately to bring merit to him and his household. When I heard this, I told him that he had the chance to perform a very important mitzvah, that of helping to marry off a poor bride. I warned him against letting this precious opportunity slip away.

From thought to deed. We immediately asked the woman how much she required to marry off her daughter and she specified the amount. The very next day, my student transferred his donation to the mother and I added my own donation to complete the sum. Baruch Hashem, the wedding took place on time, to the delight of all those involved.

The Haftarah

"Comfort, comfort My people" (Yeshaya 40)

The connection to Shabbat: This Haftarah is the first of the seven special 'Haftarot of Consolation' that are read beginning with the Shabbat following Tisha B'Av. They are taken from the Sefer Yeshaya and are called the 'Shiva Denechemta' (The Seven of Consolation).

Guard Your Tongue

I Did Not Do It

If something inappropriate was done and Reuven asks Shimon, "Who did this?", then even if Shimon feels that Reuven suspects him of being the guilty party, he is forbidden to reveal the true perpetrator, even if he witnessed him carrying out the act. Rather, he should only reply, "I did not do this".



In Our Father's Path

Who Determined the 'Pythagoras' Theorem'

"For it is your wisdom and discernment in the eyes of the peoples" (Devarim 4:6)

The extent of the Torah's wisdom is endless and comprises all of the wisdoms in the world. "Its measure is longer than the earth and wider than the sea" (Iyov 11:9). The entire Torah is made up of Hashem's Names and is the source of the entire wisdom of the creation and nature. It includes everything and is the source of everything!

The Ramban, in his introduction to his commentary on the Torah, explains at length how the wisdom of the Torah is all-encompassing. All the powers of the creation were said and written in the Torah and are contained within its letters (otiyot), vowels (nekudot), hints (remezim), and crowns (tagim). It contains the knowledge of medicine, the astrological Zodiac signs, botany and everything within the natural world.

The great Sages of Am Yisrael throughout the generations had a profound knowledge of nature without ever studying any book written by the world's experts and intellectuals. From where did they glean this extensive knowledge of all the wisdoms, an expertise which amazed the learned non-Jewish professors? Only from studying the Torah, as the Giver of the Torah testified, "For it is your wisdom and discernment in the eyes of the peoples, who shall hear all these decrees and who shall say, 'Surely a wise and discerning people is this great nation!'"

In light of these principles, the Chazon Ish explains that the abundant wisdom with which Torah Sages are enlightened, stems from a pure source - studying the Holy Torah.

His own prominent and impressive medical and scientific knowledge was evident throughout all sections of the Shulchan Aruch. On the Mishna, "One who plants a vegetable in a vineyard" (Kelaim 5), he introduced his explanation by saying, "Those who have mathematical wisdom write...", and he went on to explain the well-known geometric proof named the 'Pythagoras' Theorem', without mentioning its name. He then points out and stresses that Chazal were familiar with all these ideas through Divine Inspiration.

The famous story related below reveals the scope of the Chazon Ish's knowledge of the anatomy of the human body and animals. Rabbi Dr. Moshe Rothschild zt"l, was the guardian of a famous piece of paper on which the Chazon Ish had sketched in his own hand an accurate diagram of the brain, showing the best way to operate on it. The story took place when a dangerously ill patient who suffered from a brain complication came to see Professor Ashkenazi, one of the most skilled neuro-surgeons in Eretz Yisrael. It was clear that he required brain surgery, but after examining the patient the professor declared determinedly, "I am not prepared to perform this operation. An operation in his condition means certain death!"

Not knowing how to proceed, the family went to ask advice from Maran the Chazon Ish. After hearing all the details of the illness and the doctor's opinion, the Chazon Ish took a piece of paper and sketched a picture of the brain and of the ideal way to operate, including the side of entry and exact spot. He asked that they present it to the doctor and tell him that if he operates according to these instructions, with G-d's help the operation will be successful.

Professor Ashkenazi looked at the picture and was amazed! How can it be that a Jew who had never studied medicine had succeeded in a situation where the most professional doctors had given up? He performed the operation exactly as the Chazon Ish instructed and with Hashem's help, it was successful.



Pearls of the Parsha

The Past and Future Meet in an Inn

"For a killer to flee there, who will have killed his fellow without knowledge" (Devarim 4:42)

Rabbi Shlomo Algazi zt"l points out that one should take note of the double expression in the verse: "a killer...who will have killed". Furthermore, why does the verse call him a 'murderer' before he has actually murdered, since the verse uses the term "who will have killed" in the future tense, implying that he has not yet murdered?

In his sefer 'Shema Shlomo', Rabbi Shlomo answers these difficulties by quoting the Gemarah (Makot 10b) on the verse, "But for one who had not lain in ambush and G-d had caused it to come to his hand" (Shemot 21:13). What is this verse referring to? It refers to two people who both killed another person. One of them killed unintentionally, while the other one killed purposely, and in both situations there were no witnesses. What does Hashem do (so that each should meet their fitting punishment even though there were no witnesses)? He causes them to meet up at the same inn. The intentional murderer is sitting under a ladder, while the one who killed unintentionally climbs down the ladder, falls on him and kills him.

The result is that the one who previously killed purposely now met his punishment and was killed, while the one who previously killed unintentionally now has to run to a city of refuge, for this time there were witnesses.

In light of this, we now understand the double expression "for a killer to flee there, who will have killed". The verse is referring to someone who already killed previously unintentionally, but no one witnessed the act. What is his rectification? Hashem will make him come to a certain inn in the future so that he should unintentionally kill someone who previously killed another human being intentionally. This is why the words "who will have killed" are written in the future tense, for it is only in the future (after his second unintentional killing which was witnessed) that he will be liable to exile, and in this way, his sin will be atoned for.

Who Can Assure

"Who can assure that this heart should remain theirs, to fear Me and observe all My commandments all the days" (Devarim 5:26)

The wording of the above verse is mystifying:

How is it possible for Hashem, the Omnipotent, to say "who can assure"? Is it feasible that Hashem is entreating, 'if only it would be so'? After all, strength and power are in His hands, 'and He alone made, makes, and will make everything'.

But, the Ramban explains, since Chazal have told us, 'all is in the hands of Heaven besides yirat shamayim' (Berachot 33b), it follows that this matter, as if, is not in Hashem's hands, rather it is given over to man. Therefore, Hashem, as if, begs us, Yisrael His dear nation, to fill our hearts with fear of Him.

The Ten Commandments Were Given Over in an Individual Manner

"I am Hashem, your G-d" (Devarim 5:6)

The Ten Commandments, in their entirety, were given over in the singular form.

A most significant foundation lies in this observation. Every single Jew must tell himself that the Ten Commandments were given to him personally and he is obligated to fulfill them.

The Chozeh of Lublin adds that the singular expression used in the Ten Commandments is a message for each Jew: Even if the entire world turns away, G-d forbid, from the Torah path, you should remember that the Torah was given to you personally, and you may not follow them.

The Harmful Spirits Flee

"And write them on the doorposts of your house and upon your gates" (Devarim 6:9)

The mitzvah of mezuzah is well-known segulah for protecting the home from evil mishaps, destructive spiritual impediments, and harmful spirits.

The sefarim write that the word 'מזוזת', mezuzot, can be re-arranged to form two words, 'זז-מות', Chazal say (Shabbat 32a) that for the sin of not placing a mezuzah on one's doorpost, one's children may die ר"ו, but one who is careful with mezuzah, 'זז מות', 'death moves away' from his home.

This is the reason, writes the 'Sha'ar Bat Rabim', for writing the Name 'ש-ד-י' on the outside of the mezuzah. 'ש-ד-י' is an acronym for 'שומר דלתות ישראל', 'He guards the doors of Yisrael'. When they see Hashem's Holy Name written on the outside of the mezuzah, all harmful spirits and impediments are subdued and flee from this doorway.

Treasures

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



Achieving Perfection in Avodat Hashem

"But Hashem became angry with me because of you, and He did not listen to me; Hashem said to me, "It is too much for you! Do not continue to speak to Me further about this matter" (Devarim 3:26)

The Gemara (Sotah 14a) tells us that the only reason why Moshe Rabbeinu wished to enter Eretz Yisrael was so that he could fulfill the mitzvot dependent on the Land (certain mitzvot that can only be performed in Eretz Yisrael). The difficulty is, if Moshe so desperately wanted to enter the Holy Land for this reason, why did Hashem prevent him from doing so? Not only this, but Hashem also told him, "It is too much for you! Do not continue to speak to Me further about this matter".

The Holy Zohar explains that Hashem told Moshe that he had already achieved perfection in fulfilling the Torah and mitzvot, therefore his entry to the Holy Land may blemish the perfection that he had merited, as in the concept of 'anyone who adds, subtracts'. Hashem who is aware of our thoughts and feelings, knew well that Moshe had already completed his work in This World and merited achieving perfection. Therefore, Hashem prevented him from entering the Land and even requested that he not continue praying about this matter, so as not to blemish in any way the perfection that he had already achieved.

We have no understanding and perception at all of why entering the Holy Land and fulfilling its particular mitzvot would blemish Moshe Rabbeinu's perfection, nevertheless we see to what extent Hashem desired Moshe's benefit. By anticipating what could happen to him, He prevented him from the start from entering the Land, and instead took him to the World that is entirely good.

Hashem, who is Compassionate and Gracious, Slow to Anger and Abundant in Kindness, had only Moshe's benefit in mind, and since this was the case, He prevented him from entering the Land so as not to blemish his perfected state of Avodat Hashem. Whereas Moshe Rabbeinu, even though he had already achieved perfection, felt that he still had much work to accomplish in This World, therefore his soul longed to enter the Holy Land so as to fulfill the mitzvot that are dependent on it. This now clarifies the matter.



A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA

The core of the first of the Ten Commandments is the mitzvah of belief in the Creator Yitbarach, and recognition of the fact that He is the One who took us out of Egypt, the house of bondage. Seemingly, it would be fitting to commence with the basic foundation with which Sefer Bereishit begins, namely that Hashem is the One who created the world and all that is in it. Since this is the basis of our faith in Hashem, why does the Torah only mention that Hashem took us out of Egypt? This is apparently only a one-off incident and not as fundamental as the creation of the world?

Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi, in his sefer 'The Kuzari', explains that although it is correct that faith in the creation of the world is more basic and fundamental, recognition of the redemption from Egypt will instigate a greater strengthening of faith and affixing of it in man's heart, since the generation of the Wilderness actually experienced the redemption from Egypt and personally witnessed all its miracles.

In a different light, Rabbi Eliyahu Baruch Finkel zt"l, offers an alternative insight, based on a mashal from the Mechilta in Parshat Yitro, explaining why the Torah does not begin with the Ten Commandments:

"A man arrived in a country and asked its inhabitants, 'Shall I be your king?' They answered him, 'Did you bring us any benefit that you should rule over us?!' What did he do? He built a wall for them, provided them with water, and fought their wars. Again he asked them, 'Shall I be your king?' They answered, 'Yes, indeed'."

"So too," the Midrash concludes the mashal, "Hashem took Yisrael out of Egypt, split the sea for them, brought

them down the manna, provided them with the Well, blew them quail from the sea, and fought their battle with Amalek. Again he asked them, 'Shall I be your King?' They answered 'Yes, indeed!'"

This Midrash teaches us that the foundation for all mitzvot is the feeling of appreciation that we have towards Hashem for performing miracles on our behalf. This is also clear from the way the Torah answers the question of the wise son (Devarim 6:20), "What are the testimonies and the decrees and the ordinances that Hashem, our G-d, commanded you?" And we answer him, "You shall say to your child, 'We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and Hashem took us out of Egypt with a strong hand... Hashem commanded us to perform all these decrees, to fear Hashem, our G-d'" (ibid 21-24).

So it follows that the first Commandment, besides the inherent command to believe in Hashem Yitbarach, is also the foundation for all the Torah commandments. This is the reason why the Torah mentions the redemption from Egypt, since as we explained it is the foundation and reason for fulfilling all the mitzvot.

The attribute of showing appreciation is one of the greatest qualities required of man. This insight is well-reflected in the Ten Plagues with which the Egyptians were smitten, when the first three plagues were carried out by Aharon the Kohen and not by Moshe Rabbeinu.

The Midrash asks, "Why was the River and dust of the land hit by Aharon? Rabbi Tanchum says, Hashem said to Moshe, the waters that protected you when you were placed in the River and the dust of the land that protected you from discovery when you killed the Egyptian, should not be smitten by you, therefore they were smitten by Aharon".

Rabbi Meir Rubman zt"l writes in his sefer 'Zichron Meir' that this teaches us a novel concept in showing appreciation. The common understanding is that expressing appreciation is a form of remuneration to the one who did you a favor. However, water and dust are inanimate objects who did not intend to bring

benefit to Moshe Rabbeinu, and they similarly could also not object to Moshe Rabbeinu's actions. Besides, since they have no feelings, they would not feel humiliated and insulted if Moshe Rabbeinu were to smite them. All this demonstrates that the matter of showing appreciation is beneficial for our soul, it is necessary for our own self-perfection and is not only something that the one who assists deserves. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to show appreciation to the element of assistance, no matter whether it is an animal, a form of growth or plant, or even an inanimate object. And even though it cannot differentiate between good and bad and did not intend to provide one with any benefit, the very fact that one benefitted from a particular cause is enough of an obligation to feel appreciation towards the source of that benefit.

Do Not Open a Gemach!

How are we supposed to relate to the important insight of living with a constant feeling of appreciation towards our Creator? The following story will enlighten us. The 'Netivot Shalom' of Slonim zt"l, had a disciple who was delivered from a great misfortune that he experienced. With tremendous feelings of hakarat hatov to the Creator of the World, he contemplated opening a 'gemach' (free-loan service) for the public, thinking that benefitting others will be his way of 'repaying' Hashem's kindness to him.

The disciple went to the 'Netivot Shalom', wishing to ask his advice on how to go about establishing the Gemach. To his great surprise, the Admor told him: "If you want to take my advice, do not establish a gemach and do not do anything else either!" The disciple was most surprised, but the Admor explained his reaction: "It is better for you to retain the feeling for the rest of your days, that you are indebted to the Master of the World. Establishing a gemach will 'exempt you' and you will cease feeling appreciation to Hashem for the great kindness that He performed for you."



The Meaning of Tu B'av

Six events occurred on *Tu B'Av*, the 15th of *Av*, making it a festive day in the Jewish calendar.

By: Rav Yisrael Meir Lau

The *Mishnah* tells us that: "No days were as festive for *Klal Yisrael* as the 15th of *Av* and *Yom Kippur*." (*Tractate Ta'anis*) What is *Tu B'Av*, the 15th of the Hebrew month of *Av*? In which way is it equivalent to *Yom Kippur*?

Our Sages explain: *Yom Kippur* symbolizes *Hashem's* forgiving *Klal Yisrael* for the sin of the Golden Calf in the desert, for it was on that day that He finally accepted Moshe's plea for forgiveness of the nation, and on that same day Moshe came down from the mountain with the new set of tablets.

Just as *Yom Kippur* symbolizes the atonement for the sin of the Golden Calf, *Tu B'Av* signifies the atonement for the sin of the Spies, where ten came bearing such negative reports which reduced the entire nation to panic. As a result of that sin, it was decreed by *Hashem* that the nation would remain in the desert for 40 years, and that no person 20 or older would be allowed to enter *Eretz Yisrael*. On each *Tisha B'Av* of those 40 years, those who had reached the age of 60 that year died – 15,000 each *Tisha B'Av*.

This plague finally ended on *Tu B'Av*.

Six positive events occurred on *Tu B'Av*:

Event #1 - As noted above, the plague that had accompanied the Jews in the desert for 40 years ended. That last year, the last 15,000 people got ready to die. *Hashem*, in His mercy, decided not to have that last group die, considering all the troubles they had gone through. Now, when the ninth of *Av* approached, all the members of the group got ready to die, but nothing happened. They then decided that they might have been wrong about the date, so they waited another day, and another...

Finally on the 15th of *Av*, when the full moon appeared, they realized definitely that the ninth of *Av* had come and gone, and that they were still alive. Then it was clear to them that *Hashem's* decree was over, and that He had finally forgiven the people for the sin of the Spies.

This is what was meant by our Sages when they said: "No days were as festive for *Klal Yisrael* as the 15th of *Av* and *Yom Kippur*," for there is no greater joy than having one's sins forgiven – on *Yom Kippur* for the sin of the Golden Calf and on *Tu B'Av* for the sin of the spies. In the Book of Judges, *Tu B'Av* is referred to as a holiday (Judges 21:19).

In addition to this noteworthy event, five other events occurred on *Tu B'Av*:

Events #2 and 3 - Following the case of the daughters of Tzelofchad (see Numbers, chapter 36), daughters who inherited from their father when there were no sons were forbidden to marry someone from a different tribe, so that land would not pass from one tribe to another. Generations later, after the story of the "Concubine of Giv'ah" (see Judges, chapters 19-21), the Children of Israel swore not to allow their daughters to marry anyone from the tribe of Benjamin. This posed a threat of annihilation to the tribe of Benjamin.

Each of these prohibitions were lifted on *Tu B'Av*. The people realized that if they kept to their prohibition, one of the 12 tribes might totally disappear. As to the oath that had been sworn, they pointed out that it only affected the generation that had taken the oath, and not subsequent generations. The same was applied to the prohibition of heiresses marrying outside their own tribe: this rule was applied only to the generation that had conquered and divided up the land under Joshua, but not future generations. This was the first expression of the merging of all the tribes, and was a cause for rejoicing. In the Book of Judges it is referred to as "a festival to the Lord."

Over the generations, this day was described in Tractate *Ta'anis* as a day devoted to betrothals, so that new Jewish families would emerge.

Event #4 - After King Yerovam split off the kingdom of Israel with its ten tribes from the kingdom of Judea, he posted guards along all the roads leading to Yerushalayim, to prevent his people from going up to the Holy City for the pilgrimage festivals, for he feared that such pilgrimages might undermine his authority. As a "substitute," he set up places of worship which were purely idolatrous, in Dan and Beth-el. Thus, the division between the two kingdoms became a *fait accompli* and lasted for generations.

The last king of the kingdom of Israel, Hosea *ben* Elah, wished to heal the breach, and removed all the guards from the roads leading to Yerushalayim, thus allowing his people to make the pilgrimage again. This act took place on *Tu B'Av*.

Event #5 - At the beginning of the Second Temple period, the *Eretz Yisrael* lay almost totally waste, and the wood needed to burn the sacrifices and for the eternal flame that had to burn on the altar was almost impossible to obtain. Each year a number of brave people volunteered to bring the wood needed from afar – a trip which was dangerous in the extreme.

Now, not just every wood could be brought. Wood which was wormy was not permitted. And dampness and cold are ideal conditions for the breeding of worms in wood. As a result, all the wood that would be needed until the following summer had to be collected before the cold set in. The last day that wood was brought in for storage over the winter months was *Tu B'Av*, and it was a festive occasion each year when the quota needed was filled by that day.

Event #6 - Long after the event, the Romans finally permitted the bodies of those who had been killed in the defense of Betar (in the Bar Kochba revolt) to be buried. This was a double miracle, in that, first, the Romans finally gave permission for the burial, and, second, in spite of the long period of time that had elapsed, the bodies had not decomposed. The permission was granted on *Tu B'Av*.

In gratitude for this double miracle, the fourth and last blessing of the Grace After Meals was added, which thanks God as "He Who is good and does good." "He is good" – in that the bodies had not decomposed, "and does good" – in that permission was given for the burial.

To this day, we celebrate *Tu B'Av* as a minor festival. We do not say *Tachanun* on that day, nor are eulogies rendered. By the same token, if a couple are getting married on that day (and, as we will see below, it is the custom for the bride and groom to fast on their wedding day), neither fasts.

Beginning with *Tu B'Av*, we start preparing ourselves spiritually for the month of *Elul*, the prologue to the coming Days of Awe. The days begin to get shorter, the nights get longer. The weather, too, helps us to take spiritual stock: the hectic days of the harvest are over for the farmer, and the pace has slowed down considerably. Even on a physical level, the heat of the summer makes it hard to sit down and think things out, and now that the days and nights are cooler, it is easier to examine one's actions.

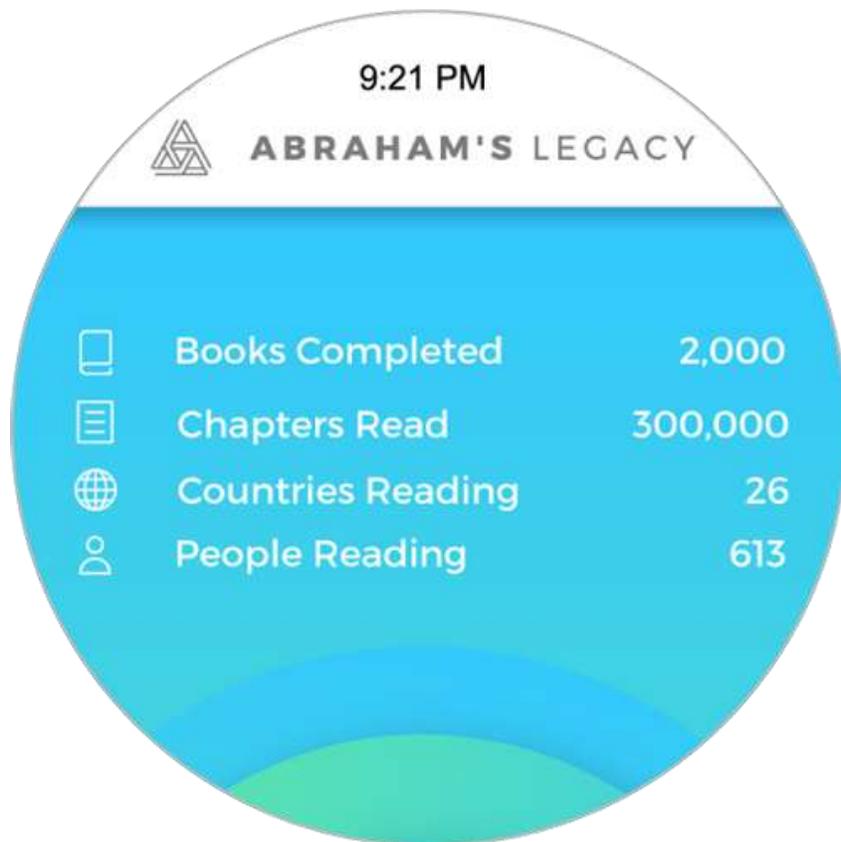
In earlier times, it was the custom already from *Tu B'Av* to use as one's greeting "May your inscription and seal be for good" (*kesiva vahachima tova*), the same blessing that we today use on *Rosh Hashana*. Those who work out the *gematria* values of different expressions found that phrase adds up to 928 – and so does the words for "15th of Av."

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Attached are some *shidduch tefillos* and interesting elements. May we hear the *kol* of *Mazel Tov* and *simchos* by all of *Klal Yisrael* quickly, *Amen!*

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Meditate on the following thoughts after each sip and before you rotate the glass counterclockwise.

Sip 1: *Chesed* of *Chesed* or in English Right of Right.

חסד שבחסד

Sip 2: *Gevurah* of *Chesed* or in English Left of Right.

גבורה שבחסד

Sip 3: *Tiferes* of *Chesed* or in English Center of Right.

תפארת שבחסד

Sip 4: *Chesed* of *Gevurah* or in English Right of Left.

חסד שבגבורה

Sip 5: *Gevurah* of *Gevurah* or in English Left of Left.

גבורה שבגבורה

Sip 6: *Tiferes* of *Gevurah* or in English Center of Left.

תפארת שבגבורה

Sip 7: *Chesed* of *Tiferes* or in English Right of Center.

חסד שבתפארת

Sip 8: *Gevurah* of *Tiferes* or in English Left of Center.

גבורה שבתפארת

Sip 9: *Tiferes* of *Tiferes* or in English Center of Center.

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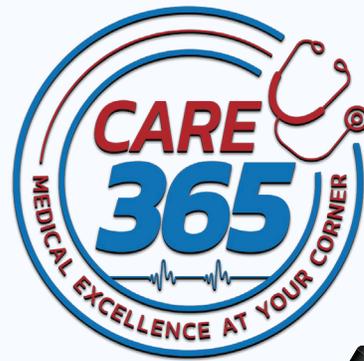
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