

MEOROS HATZADDIKIM

— Lights Of Our Righteous —

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)

Parshas Yisro

CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA

לזכר נשמת

ר' זכרי' שמעון הכהן בן יצחק

Mashal U'melitza

Rav Moshe Chaim Ephraim of Sudilkov, the Degel Machane Ephraim

Everyone was dancing up a storm! One of the most accomplished musicians played his instrument and the music was exuberant. The dancers were practically dancing on the ceiling from their enthusiasm and excitement! The sweet sounds of music encouraged them to continue to twirl and swirl unceasingly. The ecstatic dancing lasted all night long.

A new guest entered and his mouth fell agape! What was this? Were these people crazy? Had they lost their minds? What were they all doing, twirling, jumping up

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and down, shaking, and moving in strange ways? The whole group had gone nuts!

These were his thoughts - because he was deaf. He could not hear a single note! And being unable to hear the music, the sight of all the dancers appeared bizarre and outlandish!

Explained the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, "Had he been wise, he would have surmised that even though he could not hear the music, the reason all these people were dancing was not because they had lost their minds, but because they could hear music and were dancing to its lively tune. Then, even though he was deaf and unable to actually hear the music. Surely, he too would have joined the dance!"

The *Degel Machaneh Ephraim*, the *Ba'al Shem Tov's* grandson, uses his grandfather's *mashal* to illustrate the *pasuk* in *Parshas Yisro*: "And all the people saw the sounds" (*Shemos* 20:15). When Hashem spoke the words of the Torah to the people, not all of them heard right away. Some of them were even deaf. Hashem healed all their blemishes and opened their eyes and ears. Even then, some were simply not on the level to hear and understand the sweetness of the Torah. But they saw the *malochim* (angels) dancing. Seeing the excitement and pleasure that others all around them were experiencing led them to understand that everyone was reveling in the pleasure of the sweet sounds of Torah. They too then "saw the sounds" - they witnessed a demonstration of pleasure flowing from the sweet sounds of Torah though they had trouble hearing it themselves. Their eyes were opened, and once they witnessed this delight, they too appreciated the sweetness of the Torah and joined in!

Stories on the Parsha



Why Did You Come To Me?

Rav Avrohom of Slonim Baranovitch, once turned to one of his followers and asked him:

“What did Yisro hear when he ‘came’? He heard of the splitting of the sea and of the war with Amalek.” (*Rashi Yisro 18:1* from *Zevachim 116a*, and *Mechilta*, combining the views of Rabbi Yehoshua and Rabbi Eliezer)

Some people come to me to be enlightened by the spiritual *avodas Hashem* like the splitting of the sea. Others come to me because they are battling their inner foes - the evil one, the *yetzer hara* - like the war with Amalek.

Tell me, why did you come to me; for which purpose are you here?” (Based on Intro to *Bais Avrohom*)

Gedolim Be'misasm Yoser



**Yahrzeits for the 20th of Shevat ~ Begins Friday Night
(02-07-2026)**



Osher ben Yaakov Ovinu (2196 / -1565 - 3,590th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yehuda HaLevi Ashkenazi - Rav & Av Beis Din of Vilna (5552 / 1792 - 234th Yahrzeit)



Dr. Rav Chaim Dovid - Holy Doctor of Piotrkow (5618 / 1858 - 168th Yahrzeit)

Rav Chaim Dovid was a secular doctor, whom Rav Dovid of Lelov made into a *Ba'al Teshuva* and brought to the *Chozeh*. After the *Chozeh's petira*, he became a *talmid* of the *Radoshitzer*. He became a great *Chassidic Rebbe*.



Rav Ovadia Hedaya (5729 / 1969 - 57th Yahrzeit)

The second son of Rabbi Shalom Hedaya and Sarah Labaton was Rabbi Ovadya Hedaya (1890 Aleppo -1969 Jerusalem), who was brought to Yerushalayim from Aleppo at age nine. During World War I, he fled the country in fear of the Sultan and spent four years in exile. He returned to Yerushalayim at the end of the war.



Rav Avrohom Abba Freedman (5762 / 2002 - 24th Yahrzeit)

Rav Avraham Abba was sent from Brooklyn to Detroit in 1944 by his *Rebbe*, Rav Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz, to help launch the day school that had been established there by Rav Simcha Wasserman. Rav Freedman is credited with the growth of Detroit into a Torah metropolis, including a *Yeshiva Ketana*, a *Mesivta*, a *Bais Yaakov*, a *Bais Medrash*, and a *Kollel*.

**Yahrzeits for the 21st of Shevat ~ Begins Saturday Night
(02-08-2026)**



Rav Yehuda Leib - Maharlach, Chanale's (5356 / 1596 - 430th Yahrzeit)



Moshe Galante (Galanti) - Mogein (5449 / 1689 - 337th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Moshe ben Yonatan Galante [5449], was the grandson of Rabbi Moshe ben Mordechai Galante. He moved from Tsfat to Jerusalem around the year 5415 (1655 C.E.), where he became the Chief Rabbi of the city and was known as "*Rav HaMogein*." He also founded a large yeshiva there, and was succeeded as its head by his main student, the great rabbinical authority known as the "*Pri Chadash*."



Rav Yitzchok of Neshchiz - Toldos Yitzchok (5628 / 1868 - 158th Yahrzeit)

Rebbe Yitzchak of Neshchiz (1789-1868), youngest son of Rebbe Mordechai of Neshchiz, close disciple of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, whose granddaughter he married. He was also a disciple of Rabbi Baruch of Medzhibuzh and the Chozeh of Lublin. He was appointed Rebbe at a young age and served in this capacity for over 60 years.



Rav Yechiel Meir Lifschitz of Gostynin - Ba'al HaTehillim, Tzuf Harim (5648 / 1888 - 138th Yahrzeit)

R. Yechiel Meir Lifschitz of Gostynin [21 *Shevat* 1888] was sometimes known as *Der Tilim Yid* (the Psalms Jew) because of his constant instruction to those who came to him for advice and support that they turn to the reading of the Book of Psalms. He was a disciple of R. Menachem Mendel of Kotsk and of R. Yaakov Aryeh of Radzymin, after whose death he became chassidic leader in Gostynin. His selfless and unsophisticated mode of living induced people to refer to him as "one of the 36 hidden tzadikim." His teachings appear in *Merom HaRim* and *Mei HaYam*.



Rav Yaakov Weidenfeld - Kochav MiYaakov, Yekele (5654 / 1894 - 132nd Yahrzeit)

His one volume of responsa, entitled *Kochav MiYaakov*, was a mere fraction of the thousands of responsa that he wrote, but which were lost in the two world wars. Rav Yaakov's glosses to *Seder Taharos* and *Talmud Yerushalmi* were written in one day, as is indicated by their original title, *Hagahos Chad Yoma*, (5654/1894).



Rav Yehuda HaKohen Kraus - Kol Yehuda, Ohel Olamim, Av Beis Din of Lackenbach (5699 / 1939 - 87th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yechiel Yehoshua Rabinowitz of Biala - Chelkas Yehoshua (5742 / 1982 - 44th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yechiel Yehoshua was born in Biala, Poland, to Rav Yerachmiel Tzvi, the son of the *Divrei Bina* of Biala and a direct descendant of the *Yid HaKodosh*. In 1924 he was formally installed as *Rebbe* of Biala, setting up court in Shidlitz, with a population of 200,000 Jews. He was exiled to Siberia with his family in 1940. In 1947, he moved to Eretz Yisrael, living in Tel Aviv for eight years before setting up his *Bais Medrash* and *Kollel* in *Zichron Moshe* in Yerushalayim, where he remained for the next twenty-seven years.



Rav Yehoshua Heschel Brim (5746 / 1986 - 40th Yahrzeit)

Yahrzeits for the 22nd of Shevat ~ Begins Sunday Night (02-09-2026)



Rav Shimon Oppenheim - Har Hamoriah, Av Beis Din of Pest (5611 / 1851 - 175th Yahrzeit)



Rav Menachem Mendel Morgenstern - Kotzker Rebbe, Ohel Torah (5619 / 1859 - 167th Yahrzeit)

Born in Goray, near Lublin, Poland, *Rav Menachem Mendel* received a thorough *Torah* education from his father, Leibush Morgenstern. He became an ardent follower of the *Chozeh of Lublin* and Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshis'cha, whom he eventually succeeded. Rav Menachem Mendel was a new type of *Chassid*. If the *Ba'al Shem Tov* embodied chessed (loving-kindness), Rav Mendel represented *din* (strict justice).



Rav Yehuda Arye Leib Eiger - Toras Emes, Reb Leibeke (5648 / 1888 - 138th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yehuda Leib Eiger was born in Posen in 5576/1816. His father, Rav Shlomo, son of Rav Akiva Eiger, was Rav of the city. When the family moved to Warsaw, Rav Leibel learned in the famous *Yeshiva* of the *Chiddushei HaRim*. Rav Leibel held court in Lublin, where he taught the ways of *Avodas Hashem*. He was known for *mofsim*.



Rav Yehuda Leib Eiger - Lubliner Rebbe, Toras Emes (5648 / 1888 - 138th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yehuda Leibush HaKohen Landau - Yad Yehuda, Av Beis Din of Sadigura (5660 / 1900 - 126th Yahrzeit)



Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson (5748 / 1988 - 38th Yahrzeit)

Rebbetzin Chaya "Moussia" Schneerson (25 Adar 5661- 22 Shvat 5748) was the daughter of the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef-Yitzchak Schneersohn. On 14 Kislev 5689 (Dec. 1928 C.E.), She married the next-Rebbe-to-be, her distant cousin, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (5662-5754), in Warsaw, in a wedding attended by many Chasidic rebbes and leading Torah scholars of the generation. She devoted herself totally to supporting her husband in his role as a leader of world Jewry, and was known in her own right for her modesty, eruditeness and plethora of good deeds.



Rav Yehuda Zev Segal - Manchester Rosh Yeshiva (5753 / 1993 - 33rd Yahrzeit)

Rav Yehuda Zev was born in London to Rav Moshe Yitzchok Segal, the *Rosh Yeshiva* and a former talmid of the *Alter of Novardok*. At the age of twenty, Rav Yehuda Zev attended the *Mir*, where he learned with Rav Chaim Shmuelewitz. He formed a close bond with Rav Yechezkel Levenstein. On April 16, 1950, he was officially inducted as *Rosh Yeshiva* by Rav Yechezkel Abramsky, supported by Dayan Yitzchok Yaakov Weiss (the *Minchas Yitzchok*), then the Manchester *Av Bais Din*.



Rav Sholom Flam (5763 / 2003 - 23rd Yahrzeit)

Born in Montreal, Rav Sholom was the fifth of eight children born to Rav Dovid Flam, *the Olesker Rebbe*.

Yahrzeits for the 23rd of Shevat ~ Begins Monday Night (02-10-2026)



Rav Aharon Perachia (5457 / 1697 - 329th Yahrzeit)

Rav Aharon was a wealthy man appointed chief Rav of Salonika in 1688.



Rav Yehoshua Roke'ach of Belz - Ohel Yehoshua, Yehoshua'le, Der Mittler Rav, Belzer Rav (5654 / 1894 - 132nd Yahrzeit)

Rav Yehoshua (Yehoshua'le) Roke'ach of Belz, fifth son and the successor of Rav Sholom, *the Sar Sholom*, founder of the Belz dynasty. After Rav Sholom was *niftar* in 1855, the Belz Chassidim had no leader for two years, after which Rav Yehoshua replaced his father. He led the Belz Chassidim for thirty-nine years.



Hamekubal Yaakov Chaim Yisroel Refael Alfia - Raiach L'Yitzchok (5676 / 1916 - 110th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yitzchok Chai Bochova - Lechem L'fi Ha'taf (5690 / 1930 - 96th Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Kliers of Teveria - Toras Ho'oretz (5694 / 1934 - 92nd Yahrzeit)

Rav Moshe was born in Tzefas. At the age of twenty-six, in response to a request by Rav Shmuel, *the Slonimer Rebbe*, Rav Moshe founded a *Yeshiva (Ohr Torah)* by the *kever* of Rav Meir Ba'al Haness.



Rav Osher Eliach (5764 / 2004 - 22nd Yahrzeit)

Born in Yerushalayim's Shaarei Chessed neighborhood, Rav Osher learned at *Yeshiva Kol Torah*, where he cleaved to Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach. Later, he studied at *Yeshivas Ponovezh* under Rav Shach, Rav Povarsky and Rav Rozovsky. For the last five years of his life, he served as *mashgiach* at *Yeshiva Rabbeinu Chaim Ozer*.



Rav Avrohom Cardozo (5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)

Rav Avrohom Lopes Cardozo was appointed *Chazzan of Congregation She'eiris Yisrael*, the historic Spanish and Portuguese shul in New York City, in 1946. Rav Cardozo was born in Amsterdam, Netherlands, in 1914, the great-grandson of the Chief Rav of the Sephardic community in Amsterdam, and attended *Yeshiva Etz Chaim* in that Dutch city. In 1939, he was appointed by Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands to be the Rav of the *Sephardi* community in Paramaribo, Dutch Guiana, now Surinam.

Yahrzeits for the 24th of Shevat ~ Begins Tuesday Night (02-11-2026)



Rav Shaul Morteira (5420 / 1660 - 366th Yahrzeit)

Rav Shaul was the *Av Bais Din* of Amsterdam.



Rav Avrohom Yechiel Michel of Halberstadt (5490 / 1730 - 296th Yahrzeit)



Rav Shlomo Margulies (5565 / 1805 - 221st Yahrzeit)

Rav Shlomo was the Rav of Zelitschek and a close *talmid* of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*.



Rav Shabtai Shaltiel - Rav in Yerushalayim (5606 / 1846 - 180th Yahrzeit)



**Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel Slonim - Daughter of the Mittler Rebbe
matriarch of the Chabad community of Chevron (5648 / 1888 - 138th Yahrzeit)**

The Rebbetzin was born on 19 Kislev, the same day as her grandfather, Rav Schneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of Chabad Chassidus and the author of the *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*. She was the daughter of the second Chabad Rebbe, Rav Dovber Schneerson *ztz"l*. She was the matriarch of the Chabad community and served as a spiritual oasis for many women who would make the trip to see her.



Rav Yitzchok Chayos - Av Beis Din of Brody, Siach Yitzchok (5661 / 1901 - 125th Yahrzeit)



Rav Nosson Dovid of Shidlovska (5679 / 1919 - 107th Yahrzeit)



Rav Sholom Zelig Steinmetz (5755 / 1995 - 31st Yahrzeit)

Yahrzeits for the 25th of Shevat ~ Begins Wednesday Night (02-12-2026)



Rav Shaul of Kashu - Mishmeres Elozor



Rav Avraham Yechiel Michel HaLevi of Gloga - Nezer Hakodesh (5490 / 1730 - 296th Yahrzeit)

Author of the famed and noted commentary *Nezer haKodesh* on *Midrash Rabbah Bereishis* published in Yashnitz ש"ע"ט.



Rav Shabsai Einbinder Hopstein (5521 / 1761 - 265th Yahrzeit)



Rav Shabtai (5521 / 1761 - 265th Yahrzeit)



Rav Dovid of Mikolayev (5560 / 1800 - 226th Yahrzeit)

Rav Dovid of Mikolayev was one of the close circle of *talmidei Baal Shem Tov*, and later a *talmid* of Rav Pinchas Koretzer.



Rav Yitzchak Moshe Azriel Licht of Belzyce - Av Beis Din of Dembitz (5591 / 1831 - 195th Yahrzeit)

Son of Rav Shmuel Shmelke Yehudah Leib, *Av Beis Din of Dembitz*, Rav Yitzchak Moshe was a *talmid muvhak* of the *Chozeh of Lublin*. He served as Rav in Belzyce and Bichov, and began serving as a *rebbe* from the year 5575 (1814).



Rav Yisrael Lipkin - Rav Yisrael Salanter, Or Yisrael (5643 / 1883 - 143rd Yahrzeit)

Rav Yisrael Salanter was the founder and spiritual father of the *Mussar* movement. Born in Zagare (near Kovno), Lithuania, to Rav Ze'ev Wolf Lipkin, a descendant of the *Vilna Gaon*, Rav Yisrael became a close *talmid* of Rav Zundel of Salant, who introduced him to the classic works of *mussar*. In 1840, he became *Rosh Yeshiva of the Rameilles Yeshiva* in Vilna, and later opened a Yeshiva in Kovno.



Rav Mordechai Pogromansky - the Iluy from Telz, Mottel (5710 / 1950 - 76th Yahrzeit)

Discovered by Rav Eliyahu Lopian the young lad who went on to become Rav Mordechai Pogromansky, the Torah giant and *ba'al mussar* who was a legend in the prewar European *yeshivah* world, as well as later in postwar France.



Rav Zerach Efraim Zelaznik (5765 / 2005 - 21st Yahrzeit)

In 1956, Rav Zerach Efraim became one of the first *talmidim* in Brisk, under Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik. He taught at *Yeshiva Eretz Tzvi* for most of his life.



Rav Zalman Ury (5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)

A great-great-grandson of Rav Dovid Teveli, *mechaber of Nachalas Dovid*, Rav Ury was born in Stolpce, Poland, and studied at *Yeshiva Etz Chayim* in Kletzk under Rav Aharon Kotler from 1934-1941. For many years he served as Rav of Young Israel Congregation of Beverly Hills.

**Yahrzeits for the 26th of Shevat ~ Begins Thursday Night
(02-13-2026)**



Rav Dovid HaLevi Segal - Taz, Turei Zahav, Duvid HaLevi Segal (5427 / 1667 - 359th Yahrzeit)

Rav Dovid, the son-in-law of the *Bach*, was born in Ludmir and was the unofficial Rav of Posen, 1619~1640. Rav Dovid headed the famous Yeshiva at Ostroh from 1643, escaped the Cossacks' rampage of 1648-49 to Lublin, then went to Moravia. He settled in Lemberg (Lvov). He was then appointed chief Rav of Potelych (Polish: Potylicz), near Rava, where he lived in great poverty. Later, he went to Poznań, where he remained for several years. Around 1641, he became Rav of the old community in the famed city of scholars, Ostroh, (or Ostrog), in Volhynia. In Ostroh, the *Taz* wrote a commentary on Rav Yosef Caro's *Shulchon Aruch (Yoreh De'ah)*, which he published in Lublin in 1646. Thereafter, Rav Segal became known by the acronym of his work, the *Taz*.



Rav Shaul Brach (5700 / 1940 - 86th Yahrzeit)

The Ga'on Rabbi Shaul Brach, Av Beis Din of Kosice (1865-1940), among the disciples of the "Chasam Sofer" and among the leading rabbis of his generation. Served in the Mogendorf rabbinate from the year 1892, between 1910-1923 served as rabbi of Carei until he became rabbi of Kosice (he was replaced by Rabbi Yo'el of Satmar). Throughout his years in the rabbinical leadership he headed a Yeshiva and many of the Hungarian rabbis were his disciples. Authored many books on all Torah subjects. His biography was published in the book "*Shaul Bechir HaShem*".



Rav Yitzchok Bochanik of Djerba - Vayomer Yitzchok (5735 / 1975 - 51st Yahrzeit)



Rav Yaakov Landau (5746 / 1986 - 40th Yahrzeit)

At the age of thirteen, Rav Yaakov went to learn in Lubavitch under the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rav Sholom Ber, *the Rashab*. At the age of nineteen, he replaced his father as Rav of Kornitz, and later became the emissary of the *Rashab* in Lubavitch. In 1934, he moved to Eretz Yisrael, soon becoming Rav of Bnei Brak, a position he kept for the following fifty years.



Rav Efraim Nachum Borodiansky (5750 / 1990 - 36th Yahrzeit)

Biographies of the Tzaddikim

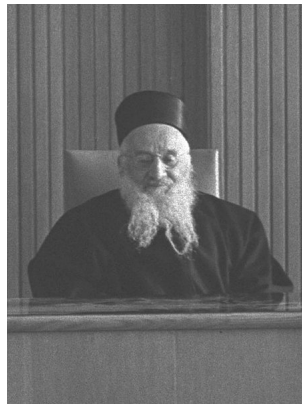


Dr. Rav Chaim Dovid Holy Doctor of Piotrkow (Shevat 20, 5618 / 1858 - 168th Yahrzeit)

Rav Chaim Dovid was a secular doctor, whom Rav Dovid of Lelov made into a *Ba'al Teshuva* and brought to the *Chozeh*. After the *Chozeh's petira*, he became a *talmid* of the *Radoshitzer*. He became a great *Chassidic Rebbe*.



Rav Ovadia Hedaya (Shevat 20, 5729 / 1969 - 57th Yahrzeit)



The second son of Rabbi Shalom Hedaya and Sarah Labaton was Rabbi Ovadya Hedaya (1890 Aleppo -1969 Yerushalayim), who was brought to Yerushalayim from Aleppo at age nine. During World War I, he fled the country in fear of the Sultan and spent four years in exile. He returned to Yerushalayim at the end of the war.

At the age of 18, he wrote his first book titled, *Servant of the King*, based on the Rambam. He received many awards for his writing including the Israel Prize as well as the Honor of Those Who Hold Jerusalem Dear. Rabbi Ovadya was made principal of Yeshiva Porat Yosef in the Old City of Yerushalayim, where he remained until 1945. He also served as Chazan at Oz Vehadar, the kabbalistic yeshiva next to Porat Yosef. Rabbi Ovadya succeeded his father as dean of the Yeshiva Bet El and became Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Petach Tikva in 1939. In 1951, he became a member of the chief rabbinate of Israel, authoring many books on Jewish law and speeches. He also served as a Dayan, judge of the Beis Din.

A pious man, Rabbi Ovadya went to the *mikveh* daily, regardless of the weather or season. According to his granddaughter, Ruth Nakash, his handwriting was very neat and he was very efficient. "People wrote to him from all over the world asking his opinion. He had a special room with books from floor to ceiling. He typed the answers and decisions himself. He was very independent."

When the Arabs burned the old building of Yeshiva Bet El in 1948 in the Old City of Yerushalayim, Rabbi Ovadya took on the task of rebuilding the yeshiva in the new section of the city.

Rabbi Ovadya married Sulha Shrem (1893 Aleppo-1975 Yerushalayim) and they had three girls and one boy - Sarah (b: 1912), Mazal (1916-1983), Shalom (b: 1926) and Esther (b: 1930) - and 29 grandchildren. Their son, Shalom, became a rabbi. Sulha was an educated woman for her time, who attended school and learned to read and write during an era when it was uncommon for women to do so. Rabbi Ovadya Hedaya is buried on Haritz Mountain in Eretz Yisrael.

<https://www.jewishgen.org/rabbinic/journal/sephardrab.htm>



Rav Avrohom Abba Freedman (Shevat 20, 5762 / 2002 - 24th Yahrzeit)

He was sent from Brooklyn to Detroit in 1944 by his *Rebbe*, Rav Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz, to help launch the day school that had been established there by Rav Simcha Wasserman. On his first Shavuos there, the only two people to stay up learning Torah were Rav Freedman and Rav Wasserman. Rav Freedman is credited with the growth of Detroit into a Torah metropolis, including a *Yeshiva Ketana*, a *Mesivta*, a *Bais Yaakov*, a *Bais Medrash*, and a *Kollel*. His biography, written by Gary Torgow, is named *Holy Warrior: A Portrait of Strength and Determination*. The “warrior” reference in the book’s title describes Rav Freedman’s legacy: fifty-eight years of relentless striving in Detroit to instill in children and share with adults - especially the waves of Russian immigrants - his love for Torah and dedication to the religious way of life. Rav Freedman wrote an essay entitled ‘We Are A Historical Society’, which abounds with joy in the here and now and optimism for the future. “Everything,” he assures us, “is in God’s hands. While the once-mighty ancient empires that oppressed us are but forgotten dust, under God’s shepherding, the Jewish people and our Torah have survived for thousands of years and will survive forever. Our future is “as clear and vivid to us as our past”.



Moshe Galante (Galanti) Mogein (Shevat 21, 5449 / 1689 - 337th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Moshe ben Yonatan Galante [5449], was the grandson of Rabbi Moshe ben Mordechai Galante. He moved from Tsfat to Jerusalem around the year 5415 (1655 C.E.), where he became the Chief Rabbi of the city and was known as "*Rav HaMogein*." He also founded a large yeshiva there, and was succeeded as its head by his main student, the great rabbinical authority known as the "*Pri Chadash*."

<http://www.ascentofsafed.com/cgi-bin/ascent.cgi?Name=rebbeBios>



Rav Yitzchok Toldos Yitzchok (*Shevat 21, 5628 / 1868 - 158th Yahrzeit*)

Rebbe Yitzchak of Neshchiz (1789-1868), youngest son of Rebbe Mordechai of Neshchiz, close disciple of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, whose granddaughter he married. He was also a disciple of Rabbi Baruch of Medzhibuzh and the Chozeh of Lublin. He was appointed Rebbe at a young age and served in this capacity for over 60 years. He was famous for his prayers and wonders and heavenly revelations. Revered in all Chassidic circles as a holy man and exceptional Chassid. (Highly praised in a letter by Rabbi Baruch Shapira, an outstanding Chassid of Przysucha and of Kotzk). Rebbe Elimelech of Grodzisk and Rabbi Ya'akov Zvi of Parysów were among his celebrated disciples.

<https://www.kedem-auctions.com/en/content/tehillim-warsaw-1864-%E2%80%93-incomplete-copy-%E2%80%93-segula-book-%E2%80%93-edition-printed-rebbe-yitzchak>



Rav Yechiel Meir Lifschitz Ba'al HaTehillim, Tzuf Harim (*Shevat 21, 5648 / 1888 - 138th Yahrzeit*)

R. Yechiel Meir Lifschitz of Gostynin [21 *Shevat* 1888] was sometimes known as Der Tilim Yid (the Psalms Jew) because of his constant instruction to those who came to him for advice and support that they turn to the reading of the Book of Psalms. He was a disciple of R. Menachem Mendel of Kotsk and of R. Yaakov Aryeh of Radzymin, after whose death he became chassidic leader in Gostynin. His selfless and unsophisticated mode of living induced people to refer to him as "one of the 36 hidden tzadikim." His teachings appear in *Merom HaRim* and *Mei HaYam*.



Rav Yaakov Weidenfeld Kochav MiYaakov, Yekele (Shevat 21, 5654 / 1894 - 132nd Yahrzeit)

His one volume of responsa, entitled *Kochav MiYaakov*, was a mere fraction of the thousands of responsa that he wrote, but which were lost in the two world wars. Rav Yaakov's glosses to *Seder Taharos* and *Talmud Yerushalmi* were written in one day, as is indicated by their original title, *Hagahos Chad Yoma*, (5654/1894).



Rav Yechiel Yehoshua Rabinowitz Chelkas Yehoshua (Shevat 21, 5742 / 1982 - 44th Yahrzeit)



Born in Biala, Poland, to Rav Yerachmiel Tzvi, the son of the *Divrei Bina* of Biala and a direct descendant of the *Yid HaKodosh*, the *Divrei Bina* passed away when Yechiel Yehoshua was only four, and tragically, Rav Yerachmiel Tzvi passed away shortly thereafter at the age of twenty-six. In 1919, Rav Yechiel married Beila Chana Pesha, and in 1924 was formally installed as *Rebbe* of Biala, setting up court in Shidlitz, with a population of 200,000 Jews. He was exiled to Siberia with his family in 1940. In 1947, he moved to Eretz Yisrael, living in Tel Aviv for eight years before setting up his *Bais Medrash* and *Kollel* in *Zichron Moshe* in Yerushalayim, where he remained for the next twenty-seven years. He authored the sefer *Chelkas Yehoshua*.



Rav Menachem Mendel Morgenstern Kotzker Rebbe, Ohel Torah (Shevat 22, 5619 / 1859 - 167th Yahrzeit)

Born in Goray, near Lublin, Poland, Rav Menachem Mendel received a thorough Torah education from his father, Leibush Morgenstern, a zealous opponent of *Chassidus*. After his marriage at fourteen, his father introduced him to the world of *Chassidus*. Thereafter, he became an ardent follower of the *Chozeh of Lublin* and Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshis'cha, whom he eventually succeeded. Rav Menachem Mendel was a new type of *Chassid*. If the *Ba'al Shem Tov* embodied *chessed* (loving-kindness), Rav Mendel represented *din* (strict justice). While the *Ba'al Shem* sought to reach all the people, Rav Mendel knew that what he sought could only be attained by the elite. The *Ba'al Shem* lifted the people up; Rav Mendel rebuked them for their inadequacies and always demanded more. Rav Leibel Eiger was entranced by Kotzk, to the despair of his father, Rav Shlomo. Rav Mendel and Rav Mordechai Yosef of Izhbitz had been close friends and *talmidim* of Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshis'cha. After Rav Bunim's passing, Rav Mendel became Rebbe. However, because of Rav Mendel's extreme aloofness the two friends were traveling on a collision course. Finally, on *Simchas Torah* of 1840 there was an irrevocable split between the two and Rav Mordechai Yosef left with his *Chassidim* to form a new *Chassidus*. Most prominent among his *talmidim* were the *Chiddushei HaRim* of Ger and Rav Chanoch of Alexander.



Rav Yehuda Arye Leib Eiger Toras Emes, Reb Leibele (Shevat 22, 5648 / 1888 - 138th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yehuda Leib Eiger was born in Posen in 5576/1816. His father, Rav Shlomo, son of Rav Akiva Eiger, was Rav of the city. Young Leibel grew up on the knee of his illustrious grandfather.

When the family moved to Warsaw, Rav Leibel learned in the famous *Yeshiva* of the *Chiddushei HaRim* (later the *Rebbe* of Ger), where many top *lomdim* (learners) gathered.

The *Chiddushei HaRim* attracted many of them to *Chassidus*, among them Rav Leibel. His father, Rav Shlomo, was upset, and sent him back to Posen, where *Chassidus* had not yet

taken hold. Rav Leibel learned with his grandfather, saying later that these were his best learning years, and that he regretted not making the most of them.

In 5595/1835, Rav Leibel married the daughter of the *noggid* Rav Ezriel Gratenstein, and settled in his wife's hometown of Lublin. Lublin at that time was a metropolis of *Chassidus*, still under the influence of the *Chozeh* (despite his *petira* several years earlier), and Rav Leibel found his place among the *Chassidim*. He davened in the *Bais Medrash* of the *Chozeh*.

At that time, the *Kotkzer Rebbe* lived in Tomashov. Rav Leibel's friends suggested that he join them on a *nesia* (trip) to their Rebbe.

With the consent of his wife, and in spite of fierce opposition from his family and his in-laws, Rav Leibel traveled to Tomashov. His father and grandfather sent messengers to convince him to leave, but Rav Leibel stood firm: there he found his place and way of *Avodas Hashem*, and he was there to stay. With time, resistance weakened — notably his grandfather's, who saw that his intent was solely *l'shem shomayim* (for the sake of heaven).

Under the watchful eye of the Rebbe, Rav Leibel became a devoted *Chassid*. The Rebbe appointed as his *madrich* in *Chassidus* one of the lions of the *chabura* (group) — Rav Mordechai Yosef of Izhbitza. Rav Leibel soon became one of the foremost *Chassidim*.

In 5600/1839, when Rav Mordechai Yosef left Kotzk and founded his own court in Izhbitza, Rav Leibel joined him. In Izhbitza, Rav Leibel was considered the right hand of Rav Mordechai Yosef.

After the *petira* of Rav Mordechai Yosef on the 7th of *Teves* 5614/1854, Rav Leibel considered returning to Kotzk. He discussed this with Rav Tzodok HaKohen, another of the leading *Chassidim* in Izhbitza. Rav Tzodok returned to him with a *kvittel*, thus appointing him as the new Rebbe.

Rav Leibel held court in Lublin, where he taught the ways of *Avodas Hashem*. He was known for *mofsim*.

Despite agreeing to become a Rebbe, Rav Leibel did not deliver *Divrei Torah* as long as the *Kotzker Rebbe* was alive, in deference to his Rebbe. He kept many of the *Kotzker* ways, like lengthy preparations before *davening*, which were done with much emotion.

On the 22nd of *Shevat* 5648/1888, the *yahrzeit* of the *Kotzker Rebbe*, Rav Leibel was *niftar* at the age of seventy-two and buried in Lublin. He was succeeded by his son, Rav Avrohom.

Rav Leibel's manuscripts, printed after his *petira*, were *Toras Emes* and *Imrei Emes*.

Zechuso yagen aleinu.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-22-shevatjanuary-23/



Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson (*Shevat* 22, 5748 / 1988 - 38th *Yahrzeit*)



Rebbetzin Chaya "Moussia" Schneerson (25 Adar 5661- 22 Shvat 5748) was the daughter of the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef-Yitzchak Schneersohn. On 14 Kislev 5689 (Dec. 1928 C.E.), She married the next-Rebbe-to-be, her distant cousin, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (5662-5754), in Warsaw, in a wedding attended by many Chasidic rebbes and leading Torah scholars of the generation. She devoted herself totally to supporting her husband in his role as a leader of world Jewry, and was known in her own right for her modesty, eruditeness and plethora of good deeds.

<http://www.ascentofsafed.com/cgi-bin/ascent.cgi?Name=rebbeBios>



Rav Yehuda Zev Segal Manchester Rosh Yeshiva (*Shevat 22, 5753 / 1993 - 33rd Yahrzeit*)



Rav Yehuda Zev was born in London to Rav Moshe Yitzchok Segal, the *Rosh Yeshiva* and a former *talmid* of the *Alter of Novardok*, who received *semicha* from Rav Yechezkel Michel Epstein, the *Aruch HaShulchon*. Rav Yehuda's father, at the age of nineteen, had been drafted into the czar's army, where he insisted on observing *mitzvos* as well as he could. One day, as Rav Moshe was searching for water, he fled to the border and crossed over to Germany. From there, he headed to England, where he settled and Rav Yehuda was born. At the age of twenty, Rav Yehuda Zev attended the Mir, where he learned with Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz. He formed a close bond with Rav Yechezkel Levenstein, whom he referred to as *mori verabi* (my master and teacher). After he married in 1934, he learned in Gateshead, but moved to Manchester after the Germans bombed Gateshead in 1940. On April 16, 1950, he was officially inducted as *Rosh Yeshiva* by Rav Yechezkel Abramsky, supported by Dayan Yitzchok Yaakov Weiss (the *Minchas Yitzchok*), then the Manchester *Av Bais Din*.



Rav Sholom Flam (*Shevat 22, 5763 / 2003 - 23rd Yahrzeit*)

Born in Montreal, Rav Sholom was the fifth of eight children born to Rav Dovid Flam, the *Olesker Rebbe*, and his Rebbetzin Sora, the daughter of Rav Moshe Langner, the *Strettiner Rebbe* of Toronto.



Rav Aharon Perachia (Shevat 23, 5457 / 1697 - 329th Yahrzeit)

Rav Aharon was a wealthy man appointed chief Rav of Salonika in 1688. He authored a responsa called *Porach Mateh Aharon*.



**Rav Yehoshua Roke'ach Ohel Yehoshua, Yehoshua'le, Der Mittler Rav, Belzer Rav
(Shevat 23, 5654 / 1894 - 132nd Yahrzeit)**



Rav Yehoshua (Yehoshua'le) Roke'ach of Belz, fifth son and the successor of Rav Sholom, *the Sar Sholom*, founder of the Belz dynasty (1825-1894). He married a granddaughter of the *Ohev Yisrael*, *the Apter Rav*. After Rav Sholom was *niftar* in 1855, the Belz *Chassidim* had no leader for two years, after which Rav Yehoshua replaced his father, in compliance with his father's wishes, despite the fact that Rav Yehoshua had four older brothers. He led the *Belz Chassidim* for thirty-nine years. He was also the founder of *Machzikei HaDas*, perhaps the first Orthodox Jewish organization to be involved in government politics. Some of his discourses are published in *Ohel Yehoshua*, a supplement to the book of his father's teachings, *Dover Sholom*. He was succeeded by his second son, Rav Yissochor Dov.



Rav Moshe Kliers Toras Ho'oretz (Shevat 23, 5694 / 1934 - 92nd Yahrzeit)



Born in Tzefas, Rav Moshe married the daughter of a prominent *Talmid Chochom* of the Slonim community in *Teverya*, and went to live there. At the age of twenty-six, in response to a request by Rav Shmuel, the *Slonimer Rebbe*, Rav Moshe founded a *Yeshiva (Ohr Torah)* by the *kever* of Rav Meir Ba'al Haness on the shores of the Kinneret. He was involved in the *Teshuva* Campaign of 1914. Rav Moshe authored the *sefer Toras HaAretz*.



Rav Osher Eliach (Shevat 23, 5764 / 2004 - 22nd Yahrzeit)

Born in Yerushalayim's Shaarei Chessed neighborhood, Rav Osher learned at *Yeshiva Kol Torah*, where he cleaved to Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach. Later, he studied at *Yeshivas Ponovezh* under Rav Shach, Rav Povarsky and Rav Rozovsky. He learned *Maseches Eruvin* with all the *Rishonim* and *Acharonim* over twenty times, becoming an expert on the subject, and numerous *chareidi* communities consulted with him. He was involved in setting up *eruv* in every part of Eretz Yisrael. For the last five years of his life, he served as *mashgiach* at *Yeshiva Rabbeinu Chaim Ozer*. Tragically, he died suddenly of a heart attack during a *Melave Malka*.



Rav Avrohom Cardozo (Shevat 23, 5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)

Rav Avrohom Lopes Cardozo was appointed *Chazzan of Congregation She'eiris Yisrael*, the historic Spanish and Portuguese shul in New York City, in 1946. The congregation had

been founded in 1654 in Lower Manhattan by the first Jewish settlers in North America. Rav Cardozo was born in Amsterdam, Netherlands, in 1914, the great-grandson of the Chief Rav of the Sephardic community in Amsterdam, and attended *Yeshiva Etz Chaim* in that Dutch city. His was a rabbinical family that traced its origins to the Iberian Peninsula in the fifteenth century, when the Jews were expelled. In 1939, he was appointed by Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands to be the Rav of the Sephardi community in Paramaribo, Dutch Guiana, now Surinam, and in 1951 he married Irma Robles of Surinam. Soon after he left Amsterdam, the Nazis invaded the Netherlands, killing tens of thousands of Jews, including Rav Cardozo's parents and siblings. Rav Cardozo published several books of liturgical music, including *Music for the Sephardim* and *Sephardic Songs of Praise* and maintained the position of *Chazzan at Congregation She'eris Yisrael* for forty years, continuing there until 1986. On June 7, 2000, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands presented him with the decoration of Knight in the Order of Orange-Nassau, for his work in preserving Dutch Jewish culture. At the age of ninety-one, on February 21, 2006, Rav Cardozo passed away in Lenox Hill Hospital in Manhattan, New York, after a sudden heart attack.



Rav Shaul Morteira (Shevat 24, 5420 / 1660 - 366th Yahrzeit)



Rav Shaul was the *Av Bais Din* of Amsterdam and *mechaber* of *Givas Shaul*, a collection of fifty sermons on the *Chumash*, selected from five hundred *derashos* written by him. The *Givas Shaul* explains how each law in the *parsha* corresponds to an event in Moshe Rabbeinu's life: the laws of a slave, because his brothers were slaves; the laws of maidservants, because of what he saw happening to Yisro's daughters. Moshe wanted the

people to see that the laws of the Torah address and direct every detail of life, and protect us from the type of suffering the people had experienced. This was his life. This was how he placed the laws “before them”, in an accessible manner that would speak to each person on his own level. He was a Dutch Rav of Portuguese descent, born in approximately 1596 in Venice, Italy; he was niftar on February 10, 1660, in Amsterdam, Netherlands. When in 1616, Rav Shaul escorted the body of the physician Elijah Montalto from France to Amsterdam, the Sephardi kehilla of Beth Jacob in Amsterdam (House of Jacob) elected him *Chacham* in succession to Moshe ben Aroyo. Rav Shaul and Yitzchok da Fonseca Aboab (Menashe ben Yisrael was in England at the time) were the members of the mahamad, the political arm of the community, which pronounced on July 27, 1656, the decree of excommunication (*cherem*) against Boruch Spinoza, previously one of Rav Shaul's star pupils. Rav Shaul was the founder of the congregational school *Keser Torah*, in the highest class of which he taught Talmud and Jewish philosophy. He also preached three times a month, and received an annual remuneration of six hundred guilders and a hundred baskets of turf. Rav Shaul's polemical sermons in Hebrew against the Catholic Church were published, but his Portuguese writings against Calvinism remained unpublished.



Rav Shlomo Margulies (*Shevat 24, 5565 / 1805 - 221st Yahrzeit*)

Rav Shlomo was the Rav of Zelitschek and a close *talmid* of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*. He wrote: “How well do I know with what great holiness he, the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, conducted himself, with such piety and separation from worldliness. But he especially put his efforts and energy into the service of the heart - *tefilla*. He davened with complete divorcement from the body and from everything material - *hispashtus hagashmiyus* - and with tremendous *dveikus* with the living God”.



Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel Slonim Daughter of the Mittler Rebbe matriarch of the Chabad community of Chevron (*Shevat 24, 5648 / 1888 - 138th Yahrzeit*)



The Rebbitzin was born on 19 *Kislev*, the same day as her grandfather, Rav Schneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of Chabad Chassidus and the author of the *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*. She was the daughter of the second Chabad Rebbe, Rav Dovber Schneerson ztz"l. She was the matriarch of the Chabad community and served as a spiritual oasis for many women who would make the trip to see her, receive a *bracha*, especially those unable to conceive. Brides would often visit the Rebbetzin before their *chupah* for special *brachos*. Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel was *niftar* on 24 *Shevat* 5648 (1888).



Rav Avraham Yechiel Michel HaLevi Nezer Hakodesh (*Shevat 25, 5490 / 1730 - 296th Yahrzeit*)

Author of the famed and noted commentary *Nezer haKodesh* on *Midrash Rabbah Bereishis* published in Yashnitz ש"ע"ט. He passed away 25 *Shevat* ת"צ and was laid to rest in the old *bais hachaim* of Vienna.



Rav Dovid (*Shevat 25, 5560 / 1800 - 226th Yahrzeit*)



Rav Dovid of Mikolayev was one of the close circle of *talmidei Baal Shem Tov*, and later a *talmid* of Rav Pinchas Koretzer. His subjugation and humility towards his *rebbe*, the *Baal Shem* was outstanding, especially in light of the fact that he was a *gadol in Torah* in his own right. He would walk to his *rebbe*, instead of riding in the horse drawn carriage.

Reb Dovid served as *ba'al mussaf* at the *Baal Shem Tov's bais medrash* on *Yom Kippur*, and was very beloved by his *rebbe*, the *Baal Shem Tov*, who testified that Reb Dovid's *tzelem Elokim* came through in its entirety.

Some of his *divrei Torah* are printed in *Yosher Divrei Emes*, whose *mechaber* describes

Reb Dovid: "He looks like a *malach Elokim*."

A collection of all his *divrei Torah* is found in *Kuntres Birkas Dovid*, as part of the *sefer Mishnas Chassidim*.

He was a *mechutan* of Rav Zev Wolf Kitzes of Mezhibuzh; his son Reb Yosef was a son-in-law of Reb Zev.

Before his *petirah*, in his humility he said, "When one goes to the market, he is asked upon his return what he brought from there. I too am returning from my lifelong trade fair here in this world. When I come up to *shomayim* I will be asked, 'What did you bring along?' What will I answer?"

Reb Dovid was *niftar* on 25 *Shevat* 5560/1800.

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Rav Yitzchak Moshe Azriel Licht Av Beis Din of Dembitz (*Shevat 25, 5591 / 1831 - 195th Yahrzeit*)

Son of Rav Shmuel Shmelke Yehudah Leib, *Av Beis Din of Dembitz*, Rav Yitzchak Moshe was a *talmid muvhak* of the *Chozeh of Lublin*.

He served as Rav in Belzyce and Bichov, and began serving as a *rebbe* from the year 5575 (1814).

He passed away on 25 *Shevat* 5591 (1831).



Rav Yisrael Lipkin Rav Yisrael Salanter, Or Yisrael (Shevat 25, 5643 / 1883 - 143rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yisrael Salanter was the founder and spiritual father of the *Mussar* movement. Born in Zagare (near Kovno), Lithuania, to Rav Ze'ev Wolf Lipkin, a descendant of the *Vilna Gaon*, Rav Yisrael became a close *talmid* of Rav Zundel of Salant, who introduced him to the classic works of *mussar*. In 1840, he became *Rosh Yeshiva* of the *Rameilles Yeshiva* in Vilna, and later opened a *Yeshiva* in Kovno. A compilation of his thoughts was recorded in a *sefer*, *Or Yisrael*, written by one of his closest *talmidim*, Rav Yitzchok Blazer of Petersburg. Among his other close *talmidim* were Rav Simcha Zissel Ziv of Kelm and Rav Yosef Yoizel Hurwitz of Novardok.



Rav Mordechai Pogramansky the Iluy from Telz, Mottel (Shevat 25, 5710 / 1950 - 76th Yahrzeit)



Discovered by Rav Eliyahu Lopian the young lad who went on to become Rav Mordechai Pogramansky, the Torah giant and *ba'al mussar* who was a legend in the prewar European *yeshivah* world, as well as later in postwar France.

R' Efraim Oshry recounted how R' Lopian discovered young Mordechai Pogramansky: "R' Elya Lopian once told me how he discovered Rav Mottel Pogramansky. After World War One, R' Lopian was traveling from city to city in Lithuania encouraging Jews to remain faithful to Judaism, to study Torah, and educating their children in the way of Torah. He spent two to three days in a community and taught two to three hours each day. His convincing voice and passionate tone captured the hearts of the masses. At the same time, he sought out alumni and other young boys in each city who would like to resume or begin their Torah studies at his yeshiva in Kelm.

Following an uplifting lesson during a visit to the town of Tavrig, R' Lopian is approached by a young boy who tells him that he is very interested in visiting his *yeshiva*. This boy, Mordechai Pogramansky, 14, had never studied *gemara*. Although his grandfather, R' Chaim Yanover, was renowned throughout Lithuania as a genius, Mordechai's parents were modern and he was a student in a [public] high school.

R' Lopian, impressed by Mordechai's obvious intelligence coupled with his genuine interest in Torah study, agreed to take him to Kelm. But the young boy added a condition. He was already such a successful merchant that he even got an import permit from the Germans and sold wholesale paint, so he couldn't afford to stay in Kelm for very long.

R' Lopian agrees and returns to Kelm with Mordechai. He connects Mordechai with many older students and arranges for them to help him so that he is able to take the first level of *gemara* lessons. Each of these students is preparing a few lines of the Talmud with him. With his brilliant mind, he easily grasped whatever was taught to him, and within a few days, was pushing forward on his own. Despite the pressure to return home with his regular customers, he stayed in Kelm for a few weeks. He then returns home to Tavrig and loses contact with R' Lopian.

R' Lopian does not give up, and travels to Tavrig to bring him back. This time he manages to convince the young boy to give up his business and he brings him back to the yeshiva to stay there. Young Mordechai Pogramansky uses his superior intelligence in Torah study, and establishes a reputation as the *iluy* [genius] of Tavrig." When Mordechai arrived in the Telz yeshiva, the *bachurim* quickly recognized his brilliance and flocked to him with questions on every topic imaginable.

R' Oshry, who also survived the Kovno Ghetto, described how R' Pogromansky lived in the Ghetto: "He managed to spend his days and nights in the study. I do not know how he could do it. But he had to have Divine protection because he survived. Day and night, I was told, he studied without text, was always absorbed, and never engaged in a conversation."

In his speeches in the Kovno Ghetto, R' Mordechai Pogromansky (1903-1949) would say about the vicious Nazis patrolling the ghetto, "I don't see Germans around. I see the *pesukim* of *Tanach* coming to life." Rabbi Yehoshua Alt from Fascinating Insights



Rav Zerach Efraim Zelaznik (Shevat 25, 5765 / 2005 - 21st Yahrzeit)

In 1956, Rav Zerach Efraim became one of the first *talmidim* in Brisk, under Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik. He taught at *Yeshiva Eretz Tzvi* for most of his life.



Rav Zalman Ury (Shevat 25, 5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)

A great-great-grandson of Rav Dovid Teveli, *mechaber* of *Nachalas Dovid*, Rav Ury was born in Stolpce, Poland, and studied at *Yeshiva Etz Chayim* in Kletzk under Rav Aharon Kotler from 1934-1941. At the start of World War II, he was interned in a Siberian Concentration Camp, while his parents and siblings died at the hands of the Nazis. He spent the remainder of the war in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, where he met his wife, Eva. They married soon after the war ended and immigrated to the United States in 1947, where he received his *semicha* at Lakewood. Rav Zalman received his B.S. from Washington University, St. Louis, then moved to Los Angeles in 1957. He earned his M.A. in Education from Loyola University and his Doctor of Education at UCLA. For forty-seven years, Rav Ury worked with the Bureau of Jewish Education, building and nurturing the *Yeshiva* day-school system. Under his direction, *Yeshiva* enrollment in Los Angeles increased from less than a thousand *talmidim* to more than 5,500, and the number of Jewish schools increased from five in 1960 to twenty-one by the time of his passing. He wrote over a hundred articles and educational materials for journals and books, and authored the books *The Musar Movement* and *The Story of Rav Yisrael Salanter*. In 2001,

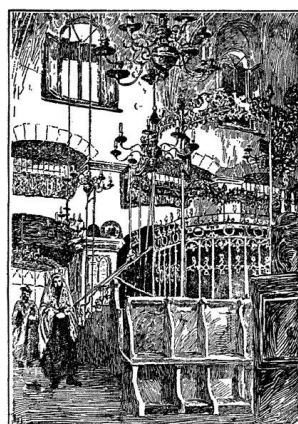
he published *Kedushas Avrohom*, a two-volume work containing *chiddushei Torah*, mussar teachings and correspondences with *Gedolei Yisrael*, including Rav Moshe Feinstein, Rav Henkin and Rav Simcha Wasserman, as well as an essay on his *Rebbe*, Rav Yosef Aryeh Leib Nanedik, the *mashgiach* at *Yeshiva Eitz Chaim*. For many years he served as Rav of Young Israel Congregation of Beverly Hills.



Rav Dovid Segal Taz, Turei Zahav, Duvid HaLevi Segal (Shevat 26, 5427 / 1667 - 359th Yahrzeit)



בילד פון ט"ז



Rav Dovid, the son-in-law of the *Bach*, was born in Ludmir and was the unofficial Rav of Posen, 1619~1640. Rav Dovid headed the famous *Yeshiva* at Ostroh from 1643, escaped the Cossacks' rampage of 1648-49 to Lublin, then went to Moravia. He settled in Lemberg (Lvov) but lost two sons to violent deaths in the spring pogroms of 1664. He sent his son Yeshaya and son-in-law Aryeh Leib (later to be the *Sha'agas Aryeh*) to investigate *Shabsai Tzvi*. He also wrote *Divrei Dovid* on *Rashi al HaTorah*.

Rav Dovid's family was famed for scholarship. His father, Rav Shmuel, was the son of the famous scholar, Rav Yitzchok Betzalels. He had an older half-brother called Rav Yitzchok HaLevi, a great Talmud scholar, who founded a *Yeshiva* in Vladomir, Chelm and Lvow, Poland, and was the *mechaber* of two books on Hebrew grammar, called *Siach Yitzchok* and *Bris HaLevi*. This great man dearly loved his younger brother, and became his first teacher and counselor for many years. The affection between the two brothers never diminished in later years, and they continued to correspond with each other in writing after they had been separated. A part of this correspondence has been preserved. These letters are of great interest not only because they testify to the deep friendship and love

that existed between the two brothers, but also because they contain an exchange of scholarly opinions on many problems of Jewish law. In addition to his scholarship, Rav Dovid's father was well-to-do, so that the young prodigy Dovid, who had shown unusual talent for study, was fortunate enough to grow up in an atmosphere of both wealth and learning. His early, happy youth was in marked contrast to his later years, when he suffered great hardships and poverty, as we shall see later. He became a reputed Talmudic scholar, and married Rivka, the second daughter of Rav Yoel Sirkes of Brest, mechaber of the famous commentary on the *Tur*, *Bayis Chodosh* (whom the *Taz* frequently quotes in his works). He was also a *mohel*. As was customary in those days, Rav Dovid stayed in his father-in-law's house for several years, during which he applied himself fully to the study of the Talmud and *Poskim* (codifiers). This period served as a good preparation for the great contribution which he himself was to make to this immense literature.

After continuing his Torah studies for several years, he left his father-in-law's house to make a home of his own, moving to Cracow. He was then appointed chief Rav of Potelych (Polish: Potylicz), near Rava, where he lived in great poverty. Later, he went to Poznań, where he remained for several years. Around 1641, he became Rav of the old community in the famed city of scholars, Ostroh, (or Ostrog), in Volhynia. There, the *Taz* established a famous *Yeshiva*, and was soon recognized as one of the great halachic authorities of his time. In Ostroh, the *Taz* wrote a commentary on Rav Yosef Caro's *Shulchon Aruch* (*Yoreh De'ah*), which he published in Lublin in 1646. This commentary, known as the *Turei Zohov* ("Rows of Gold"), was accepted as one of the highest authorities on Jewish law. Thereafter, Rav Segal became known by the acronym of his work, the *Taz*. He accepted the position of Rav in a small town, a position he changed several times for other small towns. During this time he suffered poverty and want, and was stricken by other misfortunes also. Several of his children passed away in infancy, but overall Rav Dovid HaLevi enjoyed a peaceful period of teaching and writing.

However, the *Taz* and his family had to flee the massacres of the Cossack insurrection under Bogdan Chmielnicki in 1648-1649. They were fortunate enough to leave Ostroh before it was captured by the Cossacks. He also succeeded in saving his priceless

manuscripts. Rav Segal went to Steinitz near Ostrog, Moravia, where he remained for some time. Not happy in Moravia, he returned to Poland as soon as order was restored, where he was invited to become Rav of Lvov (Lemberg), and remained there for the rest of his life. In Lemberg, Rav Segal was appointed *Av Bais Din* (head of the rabbinical court). When Rav Meir Sack, chief Rav of Lemberg, was niftar in 1653, he succeeded him in this position as well. However, a cruel blow was struck at the aging Rav when, three years before his death, in the spring of 1664, he lost his two older sons, Rav Mordechai and Rav Shlomo HaLevi, who were murdered in a pogrom in Lemberg. His wife had passed away long before; now Rav Segal married the widow of her brother, Rav Shmuel Hirz, Rav of Pińczów. His third son from his first marriage, Rav Yeshaya, and his stepson, Rav Aryeh Leib, were the two Polish scholars who were sent — probably by Rav Segal, or at least with his consent — to Turkey in 1666 to investigate the claims of the pseudo-Messiah, Shabsai Tzvi.

Most of Rav Segal's works were published long after his *petira*. The *Turei Zohov* was published by Shabsai Bass in Dyhernfurth in 1692. The work is subtitled *Mogen Dovid* ("Shield of Dovid", after Rav Segal's first name) in many editions. Both commentaries (*Taz* and *Mogen Avrohom*), together with the main text, the *Shulchon Aruch*, were republished frequently with several other commentaries, and still hold first rank among halachic authorities. Two years before the publication of this work, Rav Yudel of Kovli, in Volhynia, a mekubol and Talmudic scholar who wrote a commentary on *Orach Chaim*, gave money to have it published together with the *Taz*. His wishes were never carried out, but his money was used to publish another of Rav Segal's works, *Divrei Dovid* ("The Words of Dovid"), a super-commentary on *Rashi* (Dyhernfurth, 1690). *Rav Segal* also authored responsa which, though sometimes quoted from the manuscripts, were never published. He and *Shabsai Kohen* (the *Shach*) are among the greatest halachic authorities among the *Acharonim*. In 1683, the Council of Four Lands declared that the authority of the *Taz* should be considered greater than that of the *Shach*, but later the *Shach* gained more and more in authority.

His commentary on the *Shulchon Aruch* was so well-respected and esteemed that many of the leading *Rabbonim* began to use his opinions, decisions and rulings as the basis for

their own. This roused the ire of other *Rabbonim* such as Rav Shmuel Koidinover, *mechaber* of *Birchas HaZevach*, and Rav Gershon Ashkenazi, *mechaber* of *Avodas HeGershuni*, who felt that it was improper to rely on the decisions of such later authorities over deciding the case through the earlier works. They felt that the commentaries of the *Taz* and his contemporary Rav Shabsai Kohen, *mechaber* of the *Shach*, were full of errors and mistakes.

Just as earlier in history, the *Maharam Lublin* had attacked the *Shulchon Aruch* and the *Rema* for what he saw as shortcomings, and was ignored, so were the attackers of the commentaries on *Shulchon Aruch* ignored. Their opinion was in the minority and the majority of the *Rabbonim* greatly respected and followed the rulings of the *Shach* and *Taz* to the point where today, no Rav can earn semicha without having studied and mastered their commentaries in addition to having studied and mastered the *Shulchon Aruch* and the *Rema*.

[According to the *Shu"t Shoel Umeishiv* they opened the *kever* of the *Taz*, one hundred years after his petira and found him in perfect condition - even his clothes had not decomposed. (Brought in the *Shem Gedolim* of the Chida)].



Rav Shaul Brach (Shevat 26, 5700 / 1940 - 86th Yahrzeit)



The Ga'on Rabbi Shaul Brach, Av Beis Din of Kosice (1865-1940), among the disciples of the "Chasam Sofer" and among the leading rabbis of his generation. Served in the

Mogendorf rabbinate from the year 1892, between 1910-1923 served as rabbi of Carei until he became rabbi of Kosice (he was replaced by Rabbi Yo'el of Satmar). Throughout his years in the rabbinical leadership he headed a Yeshiva and many of the Hungarian rabbis were his disciples. Authored many books on all Torah subjects. His biography was published in the book "*Shaul Bechir HaShem*".

<https://www.kedem-auctions.com/en/content/letter-rabbi-shaul-brach-av-beit-din-mogendorf>



Rav Yaakov Landau (Shevat 26, 5746 / 1986 - 40th Yahrzeit)



At the age of thirteen, Rav Yaakov went to learn in Lubavitch under the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rav Sholom Ber, *the Rashab*. At the age of nineteen, he replaced his father as Rav of Kornitz, and later became the emissary of the *Rashab* in Lubavitch. When the Bolsheviks began persecuting Rabbonim, Rav Yaakov moved to Latvia, where he became close to the *Rogatchover Gaon*. It was there that he married. In 1934, he moved to Eretz Yisrael, soon becoming Rav of Bnei Brak, a position he kept for the following fifty years.

Gedolim Be'Masayhem



Stories & Anecdotes

Dr. Rav Chaim Dovid Holy Doctor of Piotrkow (Shevat 20)

THE HOLY DOCTOR - A SAVIOR FOR PATIENTS

Rebbe Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk blessed Yissochor Ber and his wife Hinda with longevity and a child, whose good deeds would illuminate the world, after they ransomed a Jewish family and gave all their possessions in order to remove the father of the family from prison. When Hinda heard the blessing, she burst out laughing, since she had begun to show signs of aging. Nevertheless, in the year 5530 she gave birth in Zoloshin, Poland, and their son was called Chaim Dovid after his paternal and maternal grandfathers.

At the age of one year, he began to speak and at the age of 3, he knew how to read Hebrew. At the age of 10 years he was already famous for his knowledge of the Talmud and at the advice of the town's Rav, he was sent to study at the *Yeshiva* in Piotrkow, Poland. However, two years later, he fell ill and the *Rosh Yeshiva* sent him to one of the Jewish doctors in the city, who was among the assimilationists. The doctor's wife began to teach him secular studies and the German language, and together with her husband managed to convince him to leave the *Yeshiva* and go to Berlin, Germany, in order to progress in his studies. After completing his studies with honors, he abandoned the Jewish way of life, and began to study medicine at the university in Breslau (Wroclaw) (Germany at that time, today - Poland). He worked at the military hospital in Breslau, married the daughter of the banker Samuel Segal Landau and lived in Berlin at the palace that his father-in-law bought them. He worked as deputy director of the military hospital in Berlin, became famous as a medical specialist, and became the personal physician of the king of

Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm William II, and the king of Poland, Zigmund Augustus.

One day, he met *Admor* Rav Dovid Biderman from Lelov and began to do *teshuva*. He continued to practice medicine, but gave the money he earned to the needy, retaining for himself only his home expenses. He regularly studied Torah and *Kabbola*, tried hard to fulfill the *mitzva* of hospitality. He healed the poor without taking wages, he immersed every day in the *mikve*, said *Tikun Chatzos* and fasted on Mondays and Thursdays.

After he met Rav Yaakov Yitzchok HaLevi Horowitz, *the Chozeh of Lublin*, he began to grow a beard and *peyos* and *davened* with devotion and reverence. When he was visited by the *Admor* Rav Shlomo HaKohen-Rabinowitz from Radomsk, who told him that the 'first days' had fallen, he replied that thanks to the holy book *Or HaChaim* that he knew by heart, he was confident that the 'first days' would be added to him.

He became famous as a savior for patients, was called by the Jews the "Holy Doctor", while among the Polish nobility he was known as the "Marvel Doctor". After the passing of the *Chozeh of Lublin*, he was asked to fill his place, and serve as *Admor*. However, at the request of his wife, Helena Hadassa, he refused, and suggested Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshis'cha for the position, on the grounds that the *Chassidim* did not need doctors and a pharmacist was enough for them.

After the passing of his wife, Helena Hadassa, in the year 5598, he married Rebbetzin Feigele, and on Thursday, the 20th of *Shevat*, in the year 5618, he was *niftar*.

YOUTHFUL PAST TRANSFORMED INTO MERIT THROUGH THE OHR HACHAIM

When Rav Chaim Dovid, the doctor of Pietrokow, lay on his sickbed, he was visited by the *Tiferes Shlomo*. The *Rebbe* found the good doctor crying and he thought that he was crying over the misdeeds of his youth, since he was a *ba'al teshuva*. The *Tiferes Shlomo* asked him, "Why are you crying? Don't worry your past. Those days will fall away and be forgiven and forgotten."

Rav Chaim Dovid answered the *Tiferes Shlomo*, "I do not wish them to fall away and be forgotten. Rather, I wish to do *teshuva* out of love! Then all my intentional transgressions will be transformed into merits! And in the merit of studying the *sefer Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* on a weekly basis and memorizing it, surely they will all become *zechuyos*

(merits)!" (*Kodesh Hillulim* p. 75)

Rav Yitzchok Toldos Yitzchok (Shevat 21)

ALWAYS ON THE TABLE

The *Tosher rebbe* once related:

Rav Mottel Neshchizer used to keep a copy of the *Rambam's Yad haChazaka* on his table at all times. When his son, Rav Yitzchok of Neshchiz was questioned as to why his father had this custom, he explained: My father had a vision in which the *Rambam* appeared before him with a complaint: "Why do you not study my *sefer*?"

"I apologize," answered my father, "but with people coming to me day and night with their problems, I just don't have the time; I am simply unable to help them and also find time to study your *sefer*."

The *Rambam* then returned, "At least keep a copy of my *sefer* on your table," I promise that if you keep a copy before you on your table at all times, whenever you need to help a Jew and achieve some *yeshua* for someone, just open my *sefer* and take a look inside. I assure you that you will find some cure and manner of healing." That is the reason for this custom, he concluded. (L'Yesharim Tehilla, see also Avodas Avoda Sichos Shemos)

KIRUV RECHOKIM

Rav Yitzchok of Neshchiz related on *Motzoei Shabbos Parshas Behaalosecha, tov-reish-kaf-zayin*:

Rav Gershon of Kitov met the *Ohr HaChaim* in *Eretz Yisrael* and told him about his brother-in-law the *Ba'al Shem Tov*. The *Ohr HaChaim* replied that he had heard of him and that his name was Yisrael. Rav Gershon Kitover also asked the *Ohr HaChaim* why he kept a certain *talmid* in his *Yeshiva* whom Rav Gershon had seen behaving improperly, unbecoming for a *Yeshiva* student. "This is our way," answered the *Ohr HaChaim*. "We draw closer those who are distant - we are *mekarev rechokim*." (*Zichron Tov* p. 16 #8)

When Rav Gershon of Kitov traveled to *Eretz Yisrael*, the *Ba'al Shem Tov* told him to meet

with the *Ohr HaChaim*. "If he doesn't know of his greatness, send him regards from me and tell him I see him in *Moshiach Heichal* - the supernal palace, where *Moshiach* sits on a throne and studies the *Ohr HaChaim*."

When Rav Gershon came to Eretz Yisrael, he arrived at the *Ohr HaChaim's* Yeshiva and asked why he studied with *talmidim* who behave inappropriately; others say that he asked why he studied with people with lowly souls.

The *Ohr HaChaim* asked Rav Gershon from where he hailed. When he said that he was from Polnoy, the *Ohr HaChaim* responded that he should return the following day. The next day, the *Ohr HaChaim* told him, "I saw your Rebbe and he is a very great man."

Rav Gershon then related his regards from the *Ba'al Shem* and relayed the *Ba'al Shem's* message. The *Ohr HaChaim* responded, "I don't know what favor he does me by revealing my greatness. Tell him I saw the Angel of Death and that he stands with one foot on Polnoy and the other on the entire world." This was a hint at the danger facing European Jewry and that they would need mercy. He also responded that the reason he studied with people with lowly souls was because he sought to redeem holy sparks from places that they had been captured and held hostage. (*Kisvei Ri Shuv of Brisk*)

ONLY THE GOOD

Rav Yitzchok of Neshchiz was once in Alik and, while wrapped in his *tallis* and crowned with his *tefillin*, one of his attendants entered and began to complain and tell the *Rebbe* about someone else's misconduct and misdeeds. The *Tzaddik* grew very upset and he grasped the door handle, saying to his *gabbai*, "You have been my attendant in this house for several years already. Don't you know by now that before a person even grasps hold of the *kolimka* - the handle of my door - that right away I can already sense everything that person has done since the day he was born? What can I do? It says, regarding Hashem in *Bamidbar* (23:21) that He sees no iniquity or wrongdoing in Yaakov. Hashem does not look at the evil that *Bnei Yisrael* do, and if Hashem does not, how can I? My way and custom is that I do not look at the negative side of people - only at their positive side, because if I did see their negative sides, I would never let anyone cross my threshold and enter through this door to see me!"

When the *Rebbe* Rav Yitzchok of Neshchiz left Berdichev to take over the leadership as

Neshchizer Rebbe, he davened to Hashem and succeeded in achieving that he should never see the negative side of a person – only the positive side. (Zichron Tov – Mei'avodas HaTzaddikim # 33)

Rav Yechiel Yehoshua Rabinowitz Chelkas Yehoshua (Shevat 21)

BEING A WELL KNOWN REBBE IS A PUNISHMENT

The *Biala Rebbe* of Lugano explained that *Tzaddikim* held that to become well known as a *Rebbe* was a form of punishment or torture, and said that his father, the *Chelkas Yehoshua*, used to say, “Better to be a shoemaker than a *Rebbe*!” (Mevaser Tov Yeshuas Avrohom p. 10)

JUST TWO DEMANDS

The *Biala Rebbe* of Lugano said that his father, the *Chelkas Yehoshua*, used to awaken the hearts of *Bnei Yisrael* to serve Hashem and would ask of them two things: “The main things I ask of you are *Kedusha* (holiness) and *Tikkun HaMiddos* (correcting character traits).” (Mevaser Tov Yeshuas Avrohom, p. 233)

BELIEF IN AM SEGULA

The *Chelkas Yehoshua* established that as one of the main principles of faith, we should daily declare that “I believe with full faith – *Ani maamin beemunah sheleima* – that *Bnei Yisrael* are Hashem’s *segula* [supernatural and above the laws of the natural order], they are His portion and they are the inheritance of Hashem, the Creator. He even incorporated this into his *siddur* after reciting the *Rambam*’s thirteen *Ikrei Emuna*. (Mevaser Tov Yeshuas Avrohom, p. 363)

Rav Menachem Mendel Morgenstern Kotzker Rebbe, Ohel Torah (Shevat 22)

SEEING, BELIEVING AND LOSING FREE WILL

The holy *mechaber* of the *Sefas Emes* once told of his first visit to Kotzk.

He observed that there was no order and no one watching and safeguarding *the Kotzker's* household and court. People and guests came and went and the doors were always open.

This lack of organization and supervision led to a series of "missing" objects which no doubt went "missing" along with those "missing" persons who had pilfered them.

The *shamash*, the *Kotzker's* attendant, was named Feivel, and his argument with the *Rebbetzin* was so loud as he bemoaned the missing – presumed stolen – silver candlesticks on that *Erev Shabbos*, that everyone in the house heard it – even the *Rebbe* himself.

"Feivel, what is all the commotion?!" *the Kotzker* demanded.

Rav Feivel was yelling, "And why shouldn't they steal, eh? Why not? When everything here is *hefker* – open and free for all!? Why shouldn't they steal?!"

"What!" roared *the Kotzker*. "Feivel, how can anyone steal? It says in the Torah: "Thou shalt not steal"!!!

Years later the *Sefas Emes* related, "When I heard the holy *Kotzker* roar those words, it seemed to me at that very moment that there was no possibility of stealing anything at all because of the negative commandment not to do so!"

This is what the *Sefas Emes* took back with him from his first visit to Kotzk.

SIACH SARFEI KODESH

There is a fine line between "should not" and "cannot". We are given free will and we are also challenged with the evil urges and temptations that try to tempt us to sin. We are free to resist and overcome temptation and thus be rewarded. We are free to give in and succumb to our desires and be punished for our misdeeds. The choice is ours. This is because we do not see or experience divine revelation first hand. Hashem is hidden from us. We believe and our *emuna* (faith) carries us to the strength needed to overcome those urges, temptations and desires. However, we do not see. If we did see or hear Hashem first hand, we would automatically lose our free choice. There is no choice or freedom to disbelieve that which is clearly and plainly right in front of your eyes. If Hashem's presence is first-hand knowledge and you hear Him command, you are not free to disobey any longer.

It seems to me that the *Sefas Emes* was transported on that *Erev Shabbos* to *Har Sinai*.

The holy *Tzaddik, the Kotzker*, became a channel, a medium for the *Shechina* that spoke from his throat as he uttered the commandment "Thou shalt not steal". The *Sefas Emes* heard this *mitzva* as if from Hashem Himself, and thus, at that moment, he was transformed from a free-willed chooser to one who had no choice but to obey. This is why he felt that at that moment he could not understand how anyone could steal! How can you steal if Hashem tells you not to? It went from "you shall not steal" to "you cannot steal". It is impossible to steal, it cannot be done, it is simply not a choice.

We all go through such stages in our lives. Our intellect and our logic tell us we should not do things, yet the evil urges tempt us beyond reason to do them – and so we give in. However, at the point where we strengthen our resolve and say, "No, I cannot do this!" At the point where we triumph and defeat the evil urge, then we lose the free will to choose evil and we transform the suggestion of "you shall not sin" into "you cannot sin". Sin becomes impossible.

SICK OF MONEY AND FOOD

Rav Feivel of Gritza, (father of Rav Yechiel of Alexander) once approached the *Seraph of Kotzk* and said, "Good news! The wealthy Jewess Tamarel is supposed to arrive tomorrow and then we will have some money to relieve the abject poverty.

The Kotzker bellowed, "Money!!! *Fech* (Disgusting)!"

"From that moment on," related Rav Feivel, "money disgusted me so, that I simply could not handle any without becoming so nauseous that I almost vomited. It took me over six months before I was able to even touch money again without becoming sick."

Rav Chanoch Henich of Alexander once told *the Kotzker*, "Tonight I am preparing a seuda with fish and meat." *The Kotzker* thundered back, "Meat? Fish? Who needs those?! Bread and borscht are plenty!"

"From then on," admitted Rav Henich, "I could taste no flavor in any food save bread and borscht for the rest of my life. Every other food was loathsome to me, all except bread and borscht." When he traveled on Shabbos to the *Gerrer Rebbe, the Chiddushei HaRim*, he ordered that they cook borscht for Rav Henich so he could delight in the taste of *Oneg Shabbos*, otherwise what would he enjoy? (*Bais Kotzk* 29)

A CHASSIDIC RENAISSANCE

His whole life he waged a war for the truth – the external and internal truth. This was the essence of Rav Menachem Mendel Morgenstern, better known as *the Kotzker Rebbe*. The word “Kotzk” has become synonymous with a burning and piercing kind of truth, a truth so hot it singes anyone who dares to delve deep enough to uncover it.

The Kotzker was born in 5547/1787 and lived at a time when *Chassidus* was making great inroads into the mainstream of Jewish society. He felt that *Chassidus* needed to be “fine-tuned” by correcting some of its basic flaws. *Chassidus* had become too *Chassidish* for him. He wanted to restore *Torah* as the focal point of all *Avodas Hashem* and get people to become more self-reliant and not subjugate their God-given minds to the *Rebbe*. A person, he felt, needed to take responsibility for his life and his ways, and to develop his own personal relationship with Hashem.

He left no *seforim*, no tales of miracles and no biography. He did not seek honor, fortune or fame. He sought to raise *Chassidus* to a movement for the elite. He longed to metamorphose *Chassidus* into a movement with truly inspired *Avodas Hashem* and intense Torah learning as its cornerstone. His lone legacy is his short, sharp sayings that he became famous for, to the world outside Kotzk.

When *the Kotzker* was asked why he did not want to write a *sefer*, he said that in Kotzk they work hard all week. The only time to read his *sefer* would be Friday night after the meal. Then, however, a person is tired from the entire week and will lay down on the couch with it. He will shortly thereafter fall asleep without reading anything and the *sefer* will fall on the floor. So why should he write a *sefer* whose only use will be to lie on the floor in shame? Such was the Kotzker truth.

He was born into a family of *Misnagdim* and eventually became a *talmid* of the *Chozeh of Lublin*, later leaving Lublin for Peshis’cha, where he became a *talmid* of Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshis’cha. After Rav Simcha Bunim's *petira*, most of his *talmidim* who were peers of Rav Menachem Mendel, including the *Chiddushei HaRim*, the founder of the *Gerrer* dynasty, chose to follow Rav Menachem Mendel and make him their leader. His other main *talmid* was Rav Mordechai Yosef Leiner who eventually broke away and founded the *Izhbitza Chassidus*. Rav Leibele Eiger, the grandson of Rav Akiva Eiger (whose *yahrzeit* is also the 22nd of *Shevat*), was also attracted to Kotzk, much to his

father's great dismay. *The Kotzker's* son-in-law was the *Avnei Neizer* and he was succeeded by his son, Rav Dovid.

The Kotzker was *niftar* in 5619/1859. He spent the last twenty years of his life in seclusion, frustrated by his inability to create the flock of his ideals, while refusing to play the role of the ideal *Rebbe* as the *Chassidim* wished.

Yehi Zichro Boruch.

www.revach.net/stories/gedolim-biographies/Rav-Menachem-Mendel-of-Kotzk-A-Chassidic-Renaissance/1772

A TANNA

Whenever Rav Zev Wolf of Strikov came before his *Rebbe*, Rav Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, *the Kotzker* asked him to review some *chiddush* that his father had taught. *The Kotzker* was very strict about this procedure – so strict that if the *Strikover* could produce no *chiddush*, *the Kotzker* would not greet him with *sholom* and refused to see him!

On one occasion, the *Strikover* was in Warsaw on some business and happened to visit his *Rebbe* afterward in Kotzk without advance preparation and thus he had not prepared any *chiddush* beforehand. As expected, the *Kotzker* greeted him with a request for one of his father's *chiddushim*; when none was forthcoming he refused to see the *Strikover* or extend his hand in *sholom*, instead sending him packing and telling him to come back with a *chiddush*!

On the way back to Tchechonow *the Strikover* stopped off in Warsaw and went to see the *Chiddushei HaRim*, telling him what had happened in Kotzk. The *Chiddushei HaRim* asked him to stop off and relate his father's *chiddush* to him as well the next time he came back that way. And so the *Strikover* went to his father and heard a *chiddush* from him. On the way to Kotzk, he stopped off in Warsaw and related the *chiddush* to the *Chiddushei HaRim* who was greatly impressed with it and praised it highly.

"Please stop off here after relating this to the *Kotzker* and tell me what his reaction to this *chiddush* was," he requested.

When the *Strikover* returned, he stopped off again at the *Chiddushei HaRim* and told him that he had been in Kotzk and related the *chiddush* to the *Rebbe* and *the Kotzker* had retorted back, "That can't be right - it's against an explicit *Gemora*!"

"Aha!" exclaimed the *Chiddushei HaRim*. "It is no wonder that the *Kotzker* responded thus, for he himself is like a *Tanna* from the *Gemora*!" (Siach Sarfei Kodesh, #87)

THE FEAR OF A REBBE

Rav Michel of Sheps was once in Kotzk and related what he saw:

It was Shabbos and the two *Tzaddikim* and *Geonim*, the *Gerrer Rebbe* and the *Alexander Rebbe*, both *talmidim* of *the Kotzker*, sat facing one another in the *Bais Medrash*, discussing *Divrei Torah*, when all of a sudden the *Kotzker Rebbe's* footsteps were heard coming toward the closed door that led from the *Rebbe's* room to the *Bais Medrash*. Immediately, such a terror seized all those present, that before the *Tzaddik* could open the door, the *Gerrer Rebbe* took flight and hid behind the stove and the *Alexander Rebbe* ran away and jumped out of the window! Rav Hirsch Tomashover, the *Rebbe's gabbai*, was so seized with panic that he hid under the table. Then the door opened and the *Rebbe* declared in a voice that burst forth like fiery flames words of *mussar* and *hisorerus* that reached the highest heights and moved the soul to its depths! He finished and then closed the door to his room.

That is what it means to fear your *Rebbe*! concluded the Rav of Sheps. (Siach Sarfei Kodesh, #89)

Another time, *the Koztker* burst into the *Bais Medrash* and yelled, "Ha! That's what I thought, eh? I thought I would have ten white-robed *talmidim* and no more!"

Almost everyone present fled in terror that the *Rebbe* should not be angry at them; only Rav Yechiel Meir of Gustanin stood rooted to the spot in abject terror, petrified and unable to flee, when *the Kotzker* turned to him and said, "I didnt mean to include you in that." (Siach Sarfei Kodesh, #90)

Rav Yehuda Arye Leib Eiger Toras Emes, Reb Leibele (Shevat 22)

A LEAP OF TRUE FAITH FOR YIRAS SHOMAYIM

A great example of Rav Leibele's *yiras shomayim* (fear of heaven) is a story told about him in his youth, as a young *avreich* in his father-in-law's home, as he sat studying Torah. Oblivious to his surroundings, he did not notice that he had a visitor. It seems that the wife of the local duke had come to see Rav Leibele's wife about some matter. After knocking and receiving no answer, she pushed open the door and was mesmerized by the Tzaddik's singsong voice as he learned, totally absorbed.

Eventually, she grew somewhat annoyed that he had not even noticed her, and she made her presence known. Rav Leibele saw her and, not knowing who she was or why she had come, he thought of only one thing - he was now alone with a woman who not modestly attired and who was not his wife! His eyes darted to the door but she was standing in front of it and seeing no other escape from the *issur yichud* (prohibition of being alone with a woman), he did the only thing he could: he jumped out of the second-story window to the ground below. I believe he limped for the rest of his life. But his immeasurable *mesirus nefesh* and *yiras shomayim* is a lesson for us for all generations.

Rav Yehuda Zev Segal Manchester Rosh Yeshiva (Shevat 22)

THE LIFE OF THE MANCHESTER ROSH YESHIVA

During World War II, Rav Yehuda Zev secured sanctuary visas in England for as many war refugees as possible, and the Manchester *Yeshiva* opened its doors to young refugees fleeing the Nazi inferno. As the war intensified, the *Yeshiva* expanded its rescue and relief efforts, organizing daily shiurim for young men who, due to the war, were unable to attend *Yeshiva* full time. Rav Yehuda Zev opened his own home to many of the young refugees. During this period, Rebbetzin Segal assisted her husband in all of his rescue efforts, and was one of the organizers of the community's efforts to prepare food packages for new arrivals from the displaced persons camps. She also helped her husband raise funds for the *Yeshiva*, and was like a mother to its students. On April 16, 1950/5710, he was officially inducted as *Rosh Yeshiva*. Rav Yehuda Zev is probably best known for his dissemination of the awareness of the importance of not speaking *loshon hora*. "I have set

Hashem before me always," was Rav Yehuda Zev's guiding principle.

It is said that Rav Yehuda Zev Segal underwent a marked transformation in his outlook and behavior at the age of eight. This sounds rather far-fetched; how many eight-year-olds have real outlooks, and how many are capable of changing their behavior and attitudes at such a young age? Rav Yehuda Zev, however, was no ordinary youngster.

At the age of eight, an incident occurred that changed his life forever, as he told a close talmid more than fifty years later. "As I was crossing the street in London," he told his *talmid*, "a city bus suddenly veered toward me. The driver turned on the brakes, and the bus halted only inches away from me. I was only eight at the time. Nonetheless, after this incident I realized that if life in this world can end within a second, then we certainly weren't created in order to enjoy the here and now. I also felt that so great a miracle obligated me to dedicate myself to service of Hashem."

Roots

Rav Yehuda Zev Segal was born in London on the 17th of *Sivan* 5670/1910 to Rav Moshe Yitzchok and Roize Segal. Rav Moshe Yitzchok, a *talmid* of the *Alter of Novardok*, was an outstanding *Talmid Chochom*, who received *semicha* from Rav Yechiel Michel Epstein, the *Aruch HaShulchon*. At the age of nineteen, Rav Moshe Yitzchok was drafted into the Czar's army, where he insisted on observing *mitzvos* as well as he could, and on fulfilling the *mitzva* of *netilas yodayim* when required by *halacha*, in particular.

Each time Rav Moshe Yitzchok searched for water for *netilas yodayim*, a soldier would follow him. After a while, the soldier grew tired of running after him and permitted him to search for water alone. One day, as Rav Moshe Yitzchok was searching for water, he fled to the border and crossed over to Germany. From there, he headed to England, where he began to study in the *Machzikei HaDas Shul*.

In time, he was appointed *shochet* of the community. This position paid well and enabled him to save up a sizable sum, which he used to found the *Eitz Chaim Yeshiva of London*, the only *Yeshiva* at that time in England.

A number of years later, Rav Yehoshua Dov Silverstone and Rav Tzvi Hirsch Ferber

founded a Yeshiva in Manchester, and invited Rav Moshe Yitzchok to head it. He accepted the position. Rav Yehuda Zev was only three years old when his family moved to Manchester. At that time, there was no Jewish primary (elementary) school in the city. Since British law obligated all children under the age of fourteen to attend school, Rav Moshe Yitzchok was forced to enroll Yehuda Zev in the local “Jewish school” whose curriculum was entirely secular. However, when Yehuda Zev returned home each afternoon, Rav Moshe Yitzchok studied Torah with him, providing him with a full Torah chinuch.

Rav Yehuda Zev’s unique home environment, together with his deep piety and his resolve to dedicate himself to Hashem, were the factors that fashioned his personality at that time. Rav Mordechai Smith was twenty-two when he studied with the thirteen-year-old Yehuda Zev. He recalls, “Already then, Rav Yehuda Zev was very sensitive to the needs of others. Our study session began very early in the morning. In order to avoid making noise as he walked downstairs, he would climb out of a window on the second story of his house and slide down a drainpipe, reaching the backyard without having woken anyone.”

In The *Mir*

When Rav Yehuda Zev graduated from secular school, he began to study full time in his father’s Yeshiva. At the age of twenty, he transferred to the Mir Yeshiva, where he learned for three years and developed outstanding character traits. One day, a young man asked if he could study with him on a steady basis. Although Rav Yehuda Zev’s schedule was full, he arranged to study *Berochos* with him every morning before *Shacharis*. That young man was Rav Chaim Shmuelewitz.

Rav Mordechai Schwab, the late *mashgiach* of *Mesivta Bais Shraga of Monsey*, who studied in *Mir* at that time, relates, “I began each day with a *mussar* study session. During the first minutes of this session, I would watch Yehuda as he plumbed the depths of the *Gemora*. That sight could inspire anyone to increase his *hasmoda* (diligence in learning).”

Rav Yechezkel Levenstein

They were so devoted to each other that Rav Yehuda Zev would refer to Rav Yechezkel as “*Mori ve’Rabi*”, while Rav Yechezkel would say, “Yehuda Zev is my son.” In *Mir*, he soon

gained acclaim for his outstanding hasmoda. Rav Nosson Wachtfogel, the late mashgiach of *Bais Medrash Govoha* of Lakewood, another talmid of Mir during that period, once said, "From watching Rav Yehuda Zev between learning sessions, it was obvious that he was striving to develop his inner self."

In Mir, Rav Yehuda Zev formed a close bond with another *gadol ba'Torah* – Rav Shimon Shkop, *Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva Sha'ar HaTorah in Grodno*. Rav Shimon would sometimes come to England to raise funds for his *Yeshiva*, and Rav Yehuda Zev took advantage of those opportunities to be *meshamesh* him. He also spent one vacation at Rav Shimon's summer resort, studying with him and accompanying him on his walks.

Marriage

In the winter of 5693/1933, Rav Yehuda Zev's parents asked him to return home because they had found a suitable *shidduch* for him. Rav Yehuda Zev left Mir on an icy winter day. Rav Yechezkel Levenstein accompanied him to the wagon that was to take him to the train. When they reached the wagon, Rav Yechezkel handed him his scarf, but Rav Yehuda Zev hesitated to take such a gift from his mentor. At last, the two decided that Rav Yehuda Zev would wear the scarf on the trip, and then mail it back to Rav Yechezkel.

On the 15th of *Shevat*, 5694/1934, Rav Yehuda Zev married Yocheved, the youngest daughter of Rav Shlomo Zalman Cohen, a *Gerrer Chassid* from Gateshead. Although Rav Shlomo Zalman Cohen was involved in business, he made Torah his primary pursuit and earning a living a secondary one. Rav Yehuda Zev planned to return to Mir after his wedding. However, when his mother-in-law fell seriously ill, he canceled these plans and remained in Gateshead. After his marriage, he devoted himself to full-time Torah study.

World War II

During World War II, England, like all other countries in the free world, refused to accept refugees who might become dependent on the state. Thus, any refugee who applied for admission to the country had to present a statement signed by a British citizen who promised to assume responsibility for the refugee's material needs.

In order to rescue as many refugees as possible, Rav Solomon Schonfeld of London

launched a project to secure affidavits from British Jews. Rav Yehuda Zev greatly assisted him in these efforts, working primarily among Gateshead's Jews.

In 5700/1940, German bombers attacked Gateshead, and many people left the city for safer areas. Rav Yehuda Zev and his family moved to Manchester, where he remained for the rest of his life.

In Manchester, he assumed the position of *Maggid Shiur* in the *Manchester Yeshiva*, where his father served as *Rosh Yeshiva*. From there, he continued to secure visas for war refugees. During the war, the *Manchester Yeshiva* opened its doors to young refugees fleeing the Nazi inferno.

Like A Father

After the war, Dayan Aryeh Leib Grossnass brought a group of teenage survivors to England. These orphaned and destitute youngsters, who ranged in age from fourteen to sixteen, were welcomed into the Manchester Yeshiva, where Rav Yehuda Zev encouraged and assisted them. On their first Sukkos in England, Rav Yehuda Zev decided that it would be best for the group to spend the Yom Tov together in the Yeshiva, instead of at different homes. However, a misunderstanding occurred, and no food was prepared for them. Rav Yehuda Zev learned of this only a short while before *Yom Tov*. Despite the late hour, Rebbetzin Segal went to the Yeshiva and prepared a full meal for all twenty boys. Then, she and Rav Yehuda Zev spent the entire meal with them.

As the youngsters acclimated to their new life, their bond with Rav Yehuda Zev strengthened, and they truly felt that he was their father. On *Erev Pesach*, the entire group helped him with the *Yom Tov* preparations, and then joined him for an inspiring and rousing *Seder*.

During this period, Rebbetzin Segal assisted her husband in all his rescue efforts, and was one of the organizers of the community's endeavors to prepare food packages for new arrivals from the displaced persons camps. She also helped her husband raise funds for the *Yeshiva*, and was like a mother to its students.

The Search For A New Rosh Yeshiva

Rav Yehuda Zev's father, Rav Moshe Yitzchok, was *niftar* on the 12th of *Cheshvan* 5707/1947 after a serious illness, leaving the *Yeshiva* bereft.

Soon after his petira, the *Yeshiva's* board of directors began to search for a new *Rosh Yeshiva*. Although Rav Yehuda Zev was already serving unofficially as *Rosh Yeshiva*, some of the modern members of the board felt that due to his high standards of *kedusha* and meticulous *mitzva* observance, he might be unable to relate to the average layman. As a result, they strongly opposed his appointment.

Rav Yehuda Zev, who was aware of this opposition, showed no interest in the position, in order not to foster ill will among the board members. As a result, the position remained vacant for a number of months.

In February 5708/1948, Rav Yechezkel Abramsky arrived in Manchester to participate in a ceremony at which outstanding students received awards.

At a meeting with the board, Rav Yechezkel declared that Rav Yehuda Zev was best suited for the position of *Rosh Yeshiva* and that the *Yeshiva* would greatly benefit from him.

Seeing the opposition to the appointment, he then suggested that Rav Yehuda Zev be appointed "acting *Rosh Yeshiva*", adding that he was certain that if someone more qualified were found, Rav Yehuda Zev would not only step down, but would also warmly welcome the new *Rosh Yeshiva*.

During the next year and a half, many *Talmidei Chachomim* came to Manchester to apply for the position of *Rosh Yeshiva*. Throughout this period, Rav Yehuda Zev never displayed resentment or ill will.

In 5709/1949, the *Ponovezher Rav*, Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman, invited Rav Yehuda Zev to join the leadership of the *Ponovezh Yeshiva* in Bnei Brak. Rav Yehuda Zev accepted the offer and prepared to leave England. But then the president of the *Yeshiva's* board, the eminent and pious Rav Shaul Rosenberg, fell seriously ill. As he lay in the hospital, he told a close acquaintance about a frightening dream he had just had. In the dream, he had been told that he had fallen ill because Rav Moshe Yitzchok was upset by the board's failure to appoint Rav Yehuda Zev to the position he rightfully deserved.

Although Rav Shaul had not opposed Rav Yehuda Zev's appointment, he feared that he had also not done enough to secure it for him. As a result, he sent a family member to Rav Moshe Yitzchok's grave and begged his forgiveness, promising to rectify the matter immediately.

Amazingly, Rav Shaul, who had seemed on the brink of death, soon recovered in full. When he was released from the hospital, he called an emergency meeting of the board and convinced its members that Rav Yehuda Zev was the best possible candidate for the position.

The board unanimously appointed Rav Yehuda Zev as *Rosh Yeshiva*. However, Rav Yehuda had already made plans to leave for Bnei Brak. At a farewell gathering in his honor, Dayan Yitzchok Golditch publicly asked him not to leave Manchester. That evening, Rav Yehuda Zev wrote to Rav Eliyohu Dessler, the *mashgiach* of Ponovezh, asking him to discuss the issue with the *Chazon Ish*. Rav Dessler took the matter to the *Chazon Ish*, who replied that Rav Yehuda Zev should remain in Manchester.

On April 16, 5710/1950, Rav Yehuda Zev Segal was officially inducted as *Rosh Yeshiva* by Rav Yechezkel Abramsky.

His appointment was supported by Dayan Yitzchok Yaakov Weiss, the *Minchas Yitzchok*, head of the Manchester *Bais Din* at that time.

During subsequent years, Rav Yehuda Zev was greatly assisted by Rav Shaul Rosenberg, who assumed responsibility for all of the *Yeshiva's* fundraising activities. He would often say, "The *Rosh Yeshiva* and I have an understanding between ourselves. He doesn't get involved with the budget, and I don't mix in with the *chinuch*." Rav Shaul was also a model of *kibbud Talmidei Chachomim*, a *ba'al chessed* and supporter of Torah.

As Rosh Yeshiva

As *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Yehuda Zev's sole concern was developing his students' full potential. When a student enrolled in the *Yeshiva*, Rav Yehuda Zev would ask him for his complete Hebrew name as well as his mother's, so that he could *daven* that he grow spiritually. Every morning, before *Shacharis*, he would give *tzedoka* and then daven that

he merit to see all his *talmidim* following the path of Torah.

As *Rosh Yeshiva*, he was very warm and loving toward his students. If a student was ill, he would summon a doctor for him, visit him in the dormitory and even bring him tea. As a result, students would jokingly say, "If you want the *Rosh Yeshiva's* special attention, become sick!"

When the *Rosh Yeshiva* felt that a student would develop best somewhere else, he would help him to transfer to a different *Yeshiva*. But if he thought that a student who was having difficulties should nonetheless remain in the *Yeshiva*, he would make an all-out effort to achieve that goal.

Thus, when parents of a French student told their son to return home to pursue a career, Rav Yehuda Zev and his wife traveled all the way to Paris to convince them to let him remain in *Yeshiva*.

Despite his warm and caring nature, Rav Yehuda Zev maintained strict discipline in the *Yeshiva*, inspiring his students to awe and revere him. He did this because he believed that holding one's Torah mentors in awe is crucial for a *ben Torah's* development, as it is written, "The awe of your Torah teacher should be like the awe of *Shomayim*" (Pirkei Avos, 4:12).

Once, a mother called him on the phone and when he picked up the phone to speak to her, he automatically took off his glasses because that is what he did when he spoke to women in person.

Many former students called Rav Yehuda Zev every Friday to wish him a good *Shabbos*. Others would call to report on the progress of their children or about *simchas* in their families. One time, the *Yeshiva* students hosted a *sheva berochos* for one of Rav Yehuda Zev's grandchildren. When he rose to speak, he said, "It is written that one should not mix one festive occasion with another. This gathering is a double *simcha* for me, since it affords me the opportunity to be with my *talmidim*, too. However, a *sheva berochos* is a family affair - and my *talmidim* are my children, too."

As *Rosh Yeshiva*, he would stress that *talmidim* should use their *Yeshiva* years for optimal

growth, especially with respect to amassing Torah knowledge. With an eye toward their future, he told them that the more knowledge they acquired during those years, the greater would be their influence later on.

With his unique *hasmoda*, he was a role model for such spiritual growth and love of Torah.

An 'Ordinary' Man's Tefillos And Blessings

Before beginning his morning *tefillos*, Rav Yehuda Zev would *daven* that Hashem help him *daven* with *kavona*. To achieve this goal, he recited every single *tefilla* from a text, even *Asher Yotzar*, which one says a number of times a day. He would recite this prayer with the same *kavona* and emotion that one recites *Ne'ila* on *Yom Kippur*.

When eating, Rav Yehuda Zev would also recite *berochos* from a text. Since he could not always carry a *siddur* with him, he kept a card in his pocket that had the various *berochos* printed on it. Before making a *berocha*, he would recite a preparatory *tefilla*, such as, "I am about to utter the blessing of *shehakol*..." On Shabbos, when the *Shemoneh Esrei* is shorter than during the week, it is more difficult to accrue the hundred *berochos* one is required to recite daily. To solve the problem, on Shabbos Rav Yehuda Zev calculated how many blessing he had already made, and during the day he ate small pieces of food in order to arrive at the requisite number of *berochos*.

Quite soon, he became renowned for his manner of tefillos, and people from all over the world would seek his *berochos*. Great Torah sages such as Rav Yaakov Kaminetsky would advise people in distress to seek the Manchester *Rosh Yeshiva's* *berochos*. When Rav Yaakov himself was ill, he asked someone who was going to Manchester to ask that Rav Yehuda Zev daven for him.

Similarly, the late *Satmar Rav* told someone who had approached him for a *berocha*, "Why seek a *berocha* from me when you can go to the Manchester *Rosh Yeshiva*?"

During the last decades of his life, Rav Yehuda Zev was flooded by requests for *berochos*, and he related to every single request with deep emotion. Yet in his humility, he often said of his *berochos*, "A *berocha* given by an ordinary person should never be insignificant in one's eyes."

One of his students was diagnosed with a malignant disease. When the boy's father, who had hoped that his son would study a profession, asked Rav Yehuda Zev for a *berocha* for the boy's recovery, Rav Yehuda Zev replied, "If your son dedicates his life to Torah study, he will recover fully."

That night, as Rav Yehuda Zev davened *Shemoneh Esrei*, he was heard saying, "*Tatte*, I promised him." Not long afterward, the young man recovered.

On another occasion, Rav Yehuda Zev joined a group traveling to Eastern Europe to daven at the graves of *Tzaddikim*. At the *Chasam Sofer's* grave, he took out a sheet with a long list of names of people who needed a *yeshua*, and began to *daven* for each one. A short while later, the group was ready to leave, but Rav Yehuda Zev still hadn't finished *davening* for everyone on his list. Having no other choice, he clutched the sheet to his chest and cried out with intense emotion, "*Ribbono Shel Olam*, may the requests of all who those whose names are on this list be fulfilled for the good."

A Paragon Of Chessed

Rav Yehuda Zev tried to perform at least one *chessed* each morning before *Shacharis* in order to enhance the efficacy of his *tefillos*. When he lived in his daughter's home, he would prepare a thermos of hot water before going to shul, so that his son-in-law could have a hot drink before leaving the house. While at his summer resort, he would prepare *negel vasser* for those of his companions who awoke after him.

In his *mussar* talks, he would stress that no opportunity to perform *chessed* - big or small - should be overlooked. This was a lesson he taught by personal example. Whenever he washed his hands, for instance, he filled the cup for the next person. And when he returned home from *Yeshiva* at night, he deposited his students' letters in a mailbox on his way. Before dropping these letters into the box he would say, "*Hareini mechaven lekayem mitzvas aseil shel chessed* - I intend to fulfill the positive command to do *chessed*."

Visiting the sick was another *chessed* to which Rav Yehuda Zev dedicated his time. Every Friday, he would visit the aged and the bedridden members of the community, comforting and encouraging them.

Rav Yehuda Zev saw a siddur that contained an inscription praising the ill man's son for excellence in *tefilla*. With a glowing smile, Rav Yehuda said, "You must be so proud of your son." Then he noticed a picture of the boy on the wall and exclaimed, "That boy looks like a *Tzaddik*. May you have much *nachas* from him."

Once, he was asked to *daven* for a number of older *bochurim* who still hadn't found *shidduchim*. Looking over the long list of names, he said, "I feel terrible for them. May Hashem help them."

At *simchas*, he was equally caring and emotional, and as he danced before a *chosson*, his face would literally glow. Once, before he was about to undergo minor surgery, he stopped by the sickroom of a man with a fatal disease; a smile spread across the ill man's face and his pain seemed to ease.

In Sorrow And In Joy

Rav Yehuda Zev shared both the pain and the joy of others. He once told his doctor before an operation that he was worried that the operation would interfere with his ability to dance at weddings. The doctor jokingly replied, "I didn't know that people your age still dance." Of course, the doctor did not realize that dancing at weddings was a form of *chessed* for the *Rosh Yeshiva*, not a form of recreation. During the Gulf War, Rav Yehuda Zev constantly *davened* for Eretz Yisrael's Jews. When people asked if he was worried about a particular relative in Eretz Yisrael, he would reply, "*Klal Yisrael* is in Eretz Yisrael. I am worried about them all."

In 5752/1992, Rav Yehuda Zev asked Rav Yosef Eckstein, founder and director of the *Dor Yeshorim* organization in Yerushalayim, to include testing for Cystic Fibrosis in his program. Rav Yosef was agreeable to the idea, but he explained that financial difficulties prevented him from realizing such a plan. Then and there, Rav Yehuda Zev launched a drive to solicit funds for the cause.

A week before Rav Yehuda Zev's *petira*, Rav Eckstein told him that the sum of \$250,000 was still needed to implement the program. Immediately, Rav Yehuda Zev began to write letters to collect the remaining funds.

In addition to the numerous calls Rav Yehuda Zev received from callers in need of *berochos*, there were many others from people who merely wished to share their troubles with him. Once, when he was in a summer resort, he spent the day in Vienna. A student who had accompanied him there said, "*Boruch Hashem*, you had no phone calls today. At least you were able to get a bit of rest."

To this Rav Yehuda Zev replied, "I may have rested a bit, but I doubt if those who tried to reach me had any rest."

Shemiras HaLoshon

Rav Yehuda Zev is probably best known for his dissemination of the awareness of the importance of not speaking *loshon hora*.

It all began at the end of Rav Yehuda Zev's first *zman* in the Mir Yeshiva, when he went to Radin to visit the *Chofetz Chaim*. After that meeting, Rav Yehuda Zev became deeply attached to the *Chofetz Chaim* and his works.

When Rav Yehuda Zev joined a shiur in the Manchester Yeshiva in 5700/1940, he inspired his students to study *Sefer Chofetz Chaim*.

In 5727/1967, he suggested that a group of students study *Sefer Chofetz Chaim* every day, according to a fixed schedule. Later, these students prepared a written schedule of the *halochos* to be studied each day of the year, and hung it in the *Bais Medrash*.

In this manner, the first yearly cycle of *shemiras haloshon* study was launched. Every year, from then on, Rav Yehuda Zev published a *shemiras haloshon* calendar, which contained a schedule for the daily study of two *halochos* from *Sefer Chofetz Chaim* and one page from *Sefer Shemiras HaLoshon*, which explains the concepts behind the *halochos*.

In time, students of the Manchester Yeshiva spread the idea of studying two *halochos* a day from the *Chofetz Chaim's seforim* to other Yeshivos and Kollelim.

Rav Yehuda Zev himself was very active in organizing *shemiras haloshon* study groups

and classes not just in England, but also throughout the world. He often said that a home in which *shemiras haloshon* is observed and studied is saturated with *kedusha*.

For the remainder of his life, Rav Yehuda Zev devoted great amounts of time to disseminating this calendar, which he called his “passport to *Olam HaBa*”.

He was also the founding rabbinic advisor of the *Chofetz Chaim* Heritage Foundation, which has played a leading role in heightening awareness of the importance of *shemiras haloshon*. Inspired by his counsel and direction, this organization promotes dozens of programs throughout the world.

Whenever people sought Rav Yehuda Zev’s *berochos*, he would encourage them to undertake the study of these *halochos* on a daily basis. He would explain that the *Chofetz Chaim* felt that the majority of *Klal Yisrael’s tzoros* are caused by their failure to guard their tongues, and that *shemiras haloshon* invokes divine compassion, which benefits both the individual and *Klal Yisrael*. Two weeks before his *petira*, Rav Yehuda Zev asked the *Chofetz Chaim* Heritage Foundation to produce a sefer containing *halochos* of *shemiras haloshon* and the concepts behind them, arranged for daily study. The English version of this book, *A Lesson a Day*, is now studied by thousands of Jews worldwide.

It is said that every family that studies these *halochos* according to the daily schedule will surely merit *yeshuos*.

Striving For Perfection

Rav Yehuda Zev strove for perfection in all his deeds and thoughts. The *kabbolos* he made one *Tishrei* clearly illustrate his life’s aspirations. They included the following: To seek to do acts of kindness even for someone who has hurt me; to control my thoughts; to go to sleep while thinking in Torah; to always meditate on Torah or *mussar*; and contemplate the effect of my words before they are uttered.

He also adopted the practice of the great *mussar* sages known as *Asiri Kodesh* - “The tenth day is holy”. Starting from *Rosh HaShana*, he would devote every subsequent tenth day to introspection and self-examination, conducting himself with added *kedusha* on those days.

Still, on every day of the year, *Shivisi Hashem Lenegdi Tamid* – “I have set Hashem before me always” was Rav Yehuda Zev’s guiding principle.

Until the last days of his life, Rav Yehuda Zev was in full possession of all his faculties, maintaining his regular learning schedules and accepting visitors as usual.

Shortly before *Shabbos Kodesh*, the 21st of *Shevat*, 5753/1993, he suffered a stroke and was rushed to the hospital. On Friday night, the 22nd of *Shevat*, he returned his pure soul to its Maker.

Thousands of people attended his *levaya*. In accordance with a request he had made while alive, he was buried in Manchester – and not in Eretz Yisrael – so that England’s Jews would have a place to visit and pour out their hearts. He had also asked to be buried among children, and in a place where *kohanim* are able to daven.

All of Torah Jewry owes Rav Yehuda Zev a tremendous debt of gratitude, especially for his efforts to inculcate *Klal Yisrael* with the importance of *shemiras haloshon*. As a result of these efforts, thousands of Jews worldwide regularly study the *halochos*, and many have experienced long-awaited *yeshuos*. In his merit, may *Klal Yisrael* soon be delivered from all its *tzoros*.

Article by D. Sofer. This article originally appeared in Yated Neeman.

www.matzav.com/the-manchester-rosh-yeshiva-rav-yehuda-zev-segal-ztl-on-his-yahrtzeit-to-day-2/

Rav Yehoshua Roke'ach Ohel Yehoshua, Yehoshua'le, Der Mittler Rav, Belzer Rav (Shevat 23)

BE MEKAREV ALL BNEI TORAH

Rav Bromer of Sanik said in the name of the *Mahari of Belz* that while in previous generations there was a custom among *Chassidim* to disparage and distance themselves from anyone whose Torah study was not *leshem Shomayim*, that was the case only when in the past the study of secular subjects was generally foreign, ignored and not

widespread. Today, however, when secular subjects are widely studied and Torah study has diminished, we should draw close any *ben Torah* from any background, even those who do not yet study *leshem Shomayim*, in order to distance the masses from secular studies and discourage their dissemination. (Etz Chaim, Gilyon 11, p. 219)

(See also below a story Rav Yehoshua used to say about the Taz, and the story of Rav Yehoshua of Belz and Rav Shaul Brach of Kashau - 26th of *Shevat*.)

Rav Shabsai Einbinder Hopstein (Shevat 25)

CONFIDENCE IN HASHEM

The *Ba'al Shem Tov* was sitting at the table with his *talmidim* one Friday night, when all of a sudden - three times - he let out a loud laugh.

After Shabbos, he was asked why he had laughed, to which he replied, "I really would like to tell you, but first you have to come with me. That is when you'll find out what you want to know."

The *Ba'al Shem Tov* called his servant and told him to hitch up the wagon, into which his *talmidim* climbed. They traveled the whole night, and in the morning they arrived at a tiny village. The *Tzaddik* commanded that *Shabsai* the bookbinder and his wife be brought to him.

Rav Shabsai (who was advanced in years) and his wife immediately came to see the *Tzaddik*. He turned to the bookbinder and said to him, "Tell me what you did last Friday night."

The bookbinder began his story:

"I am a craftsman, and I used to earn a living working with my hands. Every Thursday, my wife and I would go to the market to buy what we needed for Shabbos. On Fridays, I would leave my work at ten in the morning and prepare for Shabbos, going to *shul* early. This is what I did my entire life. However, I'm old now and I no longer have the strength to work. Yet despite having great difficulty in making a living, I have never needed gifts

from anyone. Hashem has always helped me to honor Shabbos as I normally would.

“Last Friday, however, I didn’t even have a cent. Yet, I decided that it was better to fast than to ask anyone for help. My wife, who is an upright woman, promised to abide by my decision and not to ask people for help either. I went to *shul* early enough, as is my usual practice, and I stayed there until the last person departed. When I went home, from afar I could see the lit Shabbos candles in my home. When I arrived, I saw that the table was set and covered with a great many good things. Since I was certain that my wife did not fail to keep her promise of not asking for help from anyone, I immediately came to the table and recited *Kiddush* on the wine and commenced the meal.

“As we were eating, my wife told me the following: ‘You remember your old coat with the silver buttons that we lost a while ago? Today, I found it after you left for *shul*. I then sold the buttons, and with the money I purchased everything we needed for Shabbos.’

“When I heard that, my eyes let out tears of joy. I took my wife and together we danced in gratitude to Hashem.”

When he finished his story, the *Ba’al Shem Tov* said to his *talmidim*, “Know that the angels of Heaven also rejoiced and danced with them. And now, *Shabsai*, what is your desire?”

Shabsai asked the *Ba’al Shem Tov* to give him a blessing for a son. He agreed, on the condition that he name the son after him. One year later, in 5500 (1739), a son was born to him whom he named Yisrael.

Since he was born in his father’s old age, Yisrael was by nature a weak child. Nevertheless, he possessed a strong mind and soul. By the age of seven, he already knew several *masechtos* of the Talmud by heart, and he became one of the youngest students of the *Maggid of Mezritch* and his *talmidim*: Rav Shmelke of Nickolsburg, Rav Elimelech of Lizhensk and Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev. Rav Chaim of Volozhin recounted that when he had been in Kozhnitz, he studied with Rav Yisrael for an entire day and found him to be an expert in all fields of Torah.

When the inhabitants of Kozhnitz heard of his fame, the prominent members of the

community came to him with an offer to be their *Maggid*.

The people of Kozhnitz greatly loved their Rav, whose fame quickly spread around the Jewish world. From the four corners of the globe, people began to seek out the *Maggid* in order to receive his blessing.

Despite his frailty (and even though he spent most of his time lying down wrapped in covers to warm his body) when the time for prayer arrived, he experienced no weakness. When he went to *daven* in the morning, he entered the *Bais Medrash* holding a Torah scroll in his arms, and he danced before the *Aron Kodesh* as two rows of people stood on either side of him. He would *daven* with a powerful voice, one whose echo was heard throughout the building.

He taught his *talmidim* to have confidence in Hashem. And how powerful confidence is - the confidence that comes from the depths of the heart!

There was a certain peasant who lived with his wife for more than ten years, yet they remained childless. A *Chassid*, who was among one of the *Maggid's* closest *talmidim*, said to the peasant, "Follow my advice. Go see the great *Maggid of Kozhnitz* and ask him for a *berocha*. He has already saved many childless couples."

The peasant and his wife hurried to the *Maggid*. They implored him to give them a *berocha* so that they could have offspring. He looked at them and finished by saying, "If you want a son, you must put fifty-two gold pieces on the table, the numerical value of *ben* [son]." The astonished peasant exclaimed, "Fifty-two gold pieces? Only the rich have that kind of money! I only have ten gold pieces." However, the *Maggid* maintained his demand for all fifty-two of them.

The peasant raised his hands to heaven and said to his wife, "Let's go. Hashem will help us even without the *Maggid*!"

At that point, the face of Rav Yisrael began to shine. He said to them in a confident tone, "Go home in peace, because from Heaven your salvation is near!"

The words of the *Tzaddik* were quickly fulfilled; how great is the power of faith in Hashem

when it comes from the depths of the heart.

Rav Yisrael supported people who moved to Eretz Yisrael, and he was among the *Tzaddikim* of the generation who established the Rav Meir Ba'al HaNess fund to aid the poor of Eretz Yisrael.

On the 14th of *Tishrei*, 5575 (1814), on the eve of *Sukkos*, the holy *Maggid of Kozhnitz* left this world. His son, Rav Moshe Eliakim Bria, replaced him as Rav of Kozhnitz.

The published works of the *Maggid* include *Avodas Yisrael* (a commentary on the Torah and *Pirkei Avos*), *Ohr Yisrael*, and many others.

www.hevratpinto.org/tzadikim_eng/129_rabbi_israel_the_maggid_of_kozhnitz.html

Rav Yisrael Lipkin Rav Yisrael Salanter, Or Yisrael (Shevat 25)

STORIES FROM THE 'SALANT CENTER'

One organization that follows the teachings of Rav Salanter in the order of *mussar* is the "Salant Center". They ask for email *addresses* to be sent to them in honor of the *Hilula* of Rav Salanter. The email address to send suggested names of people who might be interested in learning *mussar* is: salantorg@gmail.com.

Here is an excerpt from the English translation of *Ohr Yisrael* published by the Salant Foundation and Targum Press:

On one occasion, Rav Yisrael was carrying a gift. A colleague asked, "Where are you taking the gift?"

Rav Yisrael responded, "I am delivering it to a certain individual."

His friend asked, "Why don't you send the gift with a messenger?"

Rav Yisrael responded, "The Torah obligates me to personally deliver the gift." His friend was puzzled. "I am not familiar with any such law."

Rav Yisrael explained, "The *Talmud* (Yevomos 78b) tells us that when *Hashem* judges a person for a misdeed, at that very moment He recalls the good deeds of the person. We understand from here that if we feel someone has done something wrong, it is important to reflect on his good deeds. In this way, we will not lose our perspective. Instead of magnifying his improper conduct, we will see him as a good person who made a mistake.

"This is the reason I am delivering the gift. A certain Rav acted improperly and it is my duty to speak to him about his behavior. It is a *mitzva* to emulate the attribute of *Hashem*. Since I must tell him that he acted improperly, I must remember and mention that he is a Torah scholar. Therefore, I am honoring him with a gift, even though at other times I would not necessarily do so. Yet under the circumstances I am obligated because 'at the time of judgment is the time to mention his good deeds.'"

How elevated were his paths! How deep were his thoughts - to inspire him to find this precious attribute of *Hashem* and conduct himself accordingly. Human nature is just the opposite. When someone harbors resentment against another, he will forget all of the person's good points, *chas v'sholom!*

May we realize the vital importance of keeping our perspective in our relationships by always mentioning and remembering the good qualities of others.

Hakoras HaTov

Rav Yisrael Salanter once noticed that a fancy restaurant was charging a high price for a cup of coffee. He approached the owner and asked why the coffee was so expensive. After all, some hot water, a few coffee beans and a spoonful of sugar could not amount to more than a few cents.

The owner replied, "It is correct that for a few cents you could have coffee in your own home. But here in the restaurant, we provide exquisite decor, soft background music, professional waiters, and the finest china to serve your cup of coffee."

Rav Salanter's face lit up. "Oh, thank you very much! I now understand the blessing of *Shehakol* - 'All was created by His word' - which we recite before drinking water. You see, until now, when I recited this blessing, I had in mind only that I am thanking the

Creator for the water that He created. Now I understand the blessing much better. 'All' includes not merely the water, but also the fresh air that we breathe while drinking the water, the beautiful world around us, the music of the birds that entertain us and exalt our spirits, each with its different voice, the charming flowers with their splendid colors and marvelous hues, the fresh breeze - for all this we have to thank Hashem when drinking our water!"

Late one night, Rav Yisrael Salanter walked past the home of an old shoemaker, and noticed that despite the late hour, the man was still working by the light of a dying candle. "Why are you still working?" he asked. "It is very late and soon that candle will go out." The shoemaker replied, "As long as the candle is still burning, there is time to make repairs."

Rav Salanter spent that entire night excitedly pacing his room and repeating to himself, "As long as the candle is still burning, there is time to make repairs." The human soul is compared to a candle: *ner Hashem nishmas odom* - "A man's soul is the lamp [candle] of Hashem...." (*Mishlei* 20:27). From the simple shoemaker, Rav Salanter took the message never to give up. As long as the candle is burning you can still make repairs. As long as there is life, there's still time to make spiritual repairs as well. We can still do *teshuva* - make positive changes in our lives - and set right all the things that are wrong.

A CALL FOR TESHUVA

Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank (born 5633/1873), chief Rav of Yerushalayim and *mechaber* of *Har Tzvi*, used to tell a story from his childhood that made a deep impression on him all his life:

"When I was a child in Kovna and it was the beginning of *Chodesh Elul*, I followed all the adults into the *Bais Medrash* to hear the *derosha* of Rav Yisrael Salanter *zt"l*. The *Bais Medrash* was packed and, finding nowhere else to sit, I sat myself down on the steps leading to the *Aron Kodesh*. In the middle of Rav Yisrael Salanter's *derosha* he called out, 'Yidden! Mir gefinen zich itzter in Chodesh Elul - macht teshuva! - Fellows Jews! We find ourselves in the midst of the month of *Elul* - do teshuva!'

As he said these words, he fainted and fell at the foot of the *bima*! I saw him lying there, pale as a ghost; he looked like he had died. The sight of such a thing has left its mark on me all my life!" (Kodesh Elul Chapter 3, cited from Bais Va'ad II p. 33)

THE FACE OF A DOG

Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer of Slutzk said in the name of Rav Yisrael Salanter that the meaning of *Chazal's* statement in *Sanhedrin* 97a that "the generation before *Moshiach* has the face of a dog" is that usually when a dog runs before a wagon, it looks like the dog is leading the way. The way that one can tell that the wagon driver is leading is when they reach the crossroads. There, the dog waits to see which way his master drives the wagon and follows, except that he then again runs up ahead, as if he is in the lead. This *moshol* illustrates our lowly generation before *Moshiach*. Those brazen-faced individuals who attempt to be the leaders will walk in front as if they know how to lead the way, and whichever way the generation actually leads them, they will again run up ahead in front as if they chose the course and are leading, when, in reality, they are nothing but followers of the masses. (Shema Eliyohu Over Orach by the Aderes #7)

Rav Mordechai Pogromansky the Iluy from Telz, Mottel (Shevat 25)

A JEW IS NEVER LOST

It was a Friday morning when Rav Mordechai Pogromansky boarded a train en route to a certain town for Shabbos. A man sat down next to him and they began talking. A *mohel* and *shochet*, he was also a *talmid chochom* and took advantage of the opportunity to engage Rav Mordechai in conversation. They became so engrossed in learning that they didn't notice that they missed the stop for the town where they had planned to spend Shabbos.

By the time the *mohel* looked out of the window and noticed that they were far past their intended stop, it was too late to do anything about it. There was no train going back to their intended destination before Shabbos. He turned to Rav Pogromansky and informed him of their predicament.

"Where will we stay?" asked the man. "Where will we obtain wine for *Kiddush*, *challos* for *lechem mishnah*, and food *lekavod Shabbos*?"

Rav Mottel consoled him. "A Jew is never lost," said the *tzaddik*. "When a Jew ends up in a certain place, it is always with *Hashgocha Protis*, because Hashem wants him there."

The next stop was coming up, and even though through the window it appeared as if the area was sparsely populated and they didn't know anyone who lived there, when the train stopped, they disembarked. They began asking people if there were any Jews in the town. Nobody could identify any. The *mohel* was growing pessimistic and stopped asking, but Rav Mottel didn't give up. He continued to ask people if there was a Jew in town. Finally, his persistence paid off and one of the people he asked was able to show him where to locate the town's only Jewish family. They hurried there and knocked on the door.

When the homeowner opened the door, he began shedding tears of joy. To him, it was as if Avrohom Avinu and Eliyohu Hanovi had appeared at his door. The guests, however, let him know that they were normal human beings just like him, who had been sent to his door *min haShomayim*. Very happily, the man let them in and invited them to stay for Shabbos.

When he heard that one of them was a *mohel*, his joy was multiplied. He told them his story.

"A week ago, my wife gave birth to a baby boy. Today is the day he should be having a *bris*. I was davening the whole day, begging and crying that Hashem send me a *mohel* to perform the *bris* on my son. Behold, you have been sent by Heaven."

Rav Mottel was the *sandek* as the *mohel* performed the *bris*. The two guests remained with the overjoyed couple for Shabbos.

When they left the home after Shabbos, Rav Mottel turned to the *mohel* and said, "Remember, a Jew is never lost."

Rabbi Pinchos Lipschutz

A LONG LASTING FRIENDSHIP

Rav Wolff Rosengarten *Zt'l* of Zurich related that when he arrived in Telz, he heard how the *tzaddik* Reb Mordechai Pogramansky *zt'l*, had arrived in the *yeshiva* when he was

fourteen years old, and within a year, had been promoted to the highest level and earned himself a name as the best *bochur* in the yeshiva. Subsequently, whenever a *bochur* wanted to jump to a higher level than he was by age entitled to be in, Reb Chaim Rabinovitch (Telzer) *zt'l*, would remark, "*Alle meinen zennen Mottels!* (Everyone thinks he's a Mottel!)"

Reb Wolff himself related, "My arrival in Telz Yeshiva coincided exactly with a certain controversy in the *yeshiva*. This naturally aroused the interest of the *bochurim*, who would gather in groups to discuss everything that was happening.

Once, I also listened in to what they were discussing and tried to catch what they were saying about the situation in the *yeshiva* etc. etc. Suddenly, I felt a light tap on my shoulder and when I turned my head, I saw a short man with a luminous face, motioning to me with his finger to come over to him. When I approached him, he asked me where I was from and when I told him I was from Switzerland, he asked me how I had reached the *yeshiva*. I did not understand what he was driving at, but I gave him a detailed reply, reviewing the progress of my journey by train from Switzerland to Germany, including how many kilometers I had travelled and how many hours it had taken, and then from Germany on to Lithuania, while he kept asking about distances and travelling time.

When I had finished, he looked at me with his piercing eyes and asked me, "Was it worth all that great bother just to hear this nonsense?"

"Later, I found out that the speaker had been HaRav Mordechai Pogromansky *zt'l*. Those words of his penetrated deep into my heart and they still echo in my ears. Was this what I had come from Switzerland for?

From then on, I became bound to him with bonds of love, from the days in the Telz Yeshiva where I spent much time learning and talking with him in learning, to the end of his life, when he was suffering from his final illness and I brought him from the hospital in Paris where he had been to our home in Zurich and on to a hospital in Switzerland.

Reb Wolff was a frequent visitor at Reb Mordechai's lodgings, where they would talk in learning. In later years, Reb Wolff would describe the tremendous yiras Shomayim and scrupulous devotion to every detail of *halocho*, which flickered within Reb Mordechai.

For example, he would keep his bread in a metal bowl that floated in a container of water, to prevent any bugs from finding their way to it. He wore a suit made from cotton to avoid any doubt of *shatnez*. In the house where he lodged he had erected a cardboard partition around his own quarters, lest the mistress of the house pass by with some of her hair uncovered.

When Reb Mordechai grew ill towards the end of his life, Reb Wolff merited caring for him and bringing him for treatment to Switzerland. Reb Mordechai would not allow a nurse to tend him and Reb Wolff himself would change his bed linens and take care of his needs.

During this period, Reb Mordechai would say that he was now paying dearly for the miracles that he had experienced while he was in the Kovno ghetto. For example, he related that when the Germans *ym'sh* had once set fire to the ghetto houses, he had told those with him to stay close to him and the entire house burned except for the corner where he was.

By Rav Shimon Yosef Mahler
<http://www.chareidi.org/archives5760/bechukosai/features.htm>

Rav Dovid Segal Taz, Turei Zahav, Duvid HaLevi Segal (Shevat 26)

LOCATED ABOVE THE SHUL

The *Taz* wrote about his personal tragedies in his commentary, the *Turei Zohov* (see comments to *Orach Chaim*, end of *Siman* 151, the laws of the *shul*). "In my youth, when I lived in the holy community of Cracow, my home and personal house of study where located above the *shul* (this is a frowned-upon location as indicated by the *Shulchon Aruch*, *ibid*) and I was greatly punished when my children died and I pointed to this as the cause of their untimely death." Later, he was appointed as *Rav* of several cities, including Lwów.

[According to the *Shu"t Shoel Umeishiv* they opened the *kever* of the *Taz*, one hundred years after his petira and found him in perfect condition - even his clothes had not decomposed. (Brought in the *Shem Gedolim* of the Chida)].

THROUGH TORAH STUDY IN DVEIKUS ONE HAS THE ABILITY TO REVIVE AND RESURRECT THE DEAD!

In his commentary to *Pirkei Avos 1:1, Ruach Chaim*, Rav Chaim of Volozhin tells us the following story: "The story is told regarding our master Rav Dovid, *the Gaon* and *mechaber* of the commentary *Turei Zohov (Taz on Shulchon Aruch)* that once a woman came before him, crying and shouting, 'Woe is me! Rebbe, behold my son is so weak he is at death's door!'

"He answered her, 'Am I in Hashem's place?'

"She responded: "I am calling out to the Torah which you learn and represent! For the Holy One and His holy Torah are one and united!'

"And he answered her, 'I will do this for you: I will give as a gift the Torah which I am studying now together with my students for your sick son; maybe in its merit he will recover and live, since the *pasuk* says: 'With this [Torah] shall you live a long life,' and at that moment his fever broke. We see that through Torah study, with the power of his *dveikus*, attaching himself to Hashem, one has the ability and merit to revive and resurrect the dead!"

HEALING THE SICK

The *Taz* was well known as a miracle worker. Once the daughter of a wealthy householder in Levov had taken ill and the *Taz* was asked to visit her and pray for her recovery. He agreed, and when he arrived and opened the door the girl opened her mouth and exclaimed "*Baruch HaBah! Welcome!*," and she immediately turned to face the wall.

When the *Taz* asked her why she had turned away? She answered that the wicked cannot look at the face of the righteous *Tzadikim*, and that "In Heaven you are called, 'Our master and Rabbi the author of the *Turei Zahav*.'" He answered her, "If this is true, I hereby decree that you should be healed immediately through the merit of my Torah study. For today I sat and studied a difficult and wondrous passage in the *Tur* and I answered the difficulty in the true manner of Torah." And so she was cured. This was recorded in the ledger of the Levov community records.

(Shem haGedolim HaShalem Chida Kuntres Shatz p118)

WHISKEY & WINE

The *Ta"z* was often an innovator and his novel rulings in *Halacha* often had a global impact on customs that today we take for granted. For example in Europe during the *Taz's* lifetime kosher wine was often hard to come by and often very expensive. This led to the question of whether one could use *Sheychar* – Beer or Whiskey or *Yayin Seraf* – Brandy in lieu of wine for *kiddush*. The *Shulchan Aruch* itself discusses this question, but there were several differing opinions quoted. The question is even more appropriate to the *Kiddusha Rabbah* – the *kiddush* recited Shabbos morning which is an enactment of the Rabbis rather than of Torah origin. Based on the realities of hardship and poverty the *Taz* ruled that: "In a place where there is to be found wine, surely one must recite *kiddush* over wine even during the day. However if the wine is expensive as it is in our countries we do not act stringently and use wine, since it is not a complete obligation as it is during the *kiddush* at night. This is why even the greatest of the sages among us did not have the custom to recite the blessing over wine during the day. However whoever does pronounce the blessing [of *kiddush*] over wine during the day surely is acting in a proper and meritorious fashion."

Source: (Orach Chaim Hilchos Shabbos Siman 272 Taz #6)

I heard from the Rav of Nalivitz who heard this from someone who read it in Prozhina's town ledger. When the *Taz* was the Rabbi of Prozhina he was extremely poor. His poverty was so great that he could not afford to heat his meager home in the cold winter nights. He would study Torah all night long and the bitter cold would seep into his bones. Not far away was a tavern and sometimes he would visit to have a drink to strengthen himself and warm his frozen spirit allowing him to continue learning and studying Torah. Since he was too poor due to his meager salary to pay up front, the bar man gave him credit by writing what the *Taz* owed him on the wall of the bar. Many locals also frequented the tavern, and when one day one of them noticed the Rabbi's name on the wall he asked the bar man what it meant. When he heard that the Rabbi bought spirits on credit, the man was astonished to think that the Rabbi drank at all! One friend has another, and pretty soon all the local tongues began wagging with exaggerated tales of the Rabbi's drinking and debts. He was voted out of office and the town had him removed with great dishonor on the wagon used for refuse.

Afterwards when the *Taz* became the Rabbi of Ohstrah and he began to print his magnum

opus the commentary *Turei Zahav* on *Shulchan Aruch*, the price of wine rose, since there was a shortage of grapes in those environs. The *Taz* innovated that whiskey and brandy should also be considered fit for *kiddush*. However he wrote a condition that in Prozhina this was not the case since they all hate brandy and whiskey The *Taz* wrote this in utter sincerity since he truly believed that he was removed from office for drinking something the townspeople considered unbecoming for the Rabbi and that spirits must be considered poor and tasteless in those parts!

When the townspeople of Prozhina heard about the *Taz*'s rulings they immediately called together an assembly and urgently met to discuss the issue since it greatly hurt them financially. They decided to send a prestigious delegation to Ohstrah to meet with and ask for the *Taz*'s forgiveness. The *Taz*'s home was located above the *Beis Midrash* and when heavy footfalls were heard on the stairs leading up, all the *Taz*'s household assumed it was the householders of Prozhina since they wore heavy boots.

When the delegation came before him they all asked his forgiveness in the name of the entire town as was the law and custom. The *Taz* asked them to be seated and had the *Rebbetzin* honor his guests with some cakes. When he noticed that they had not touched the food he asked them why? The Prozhina delegation searched for a proper way to broach the issue of the spirits and here was the opportunity. "Why how can the *Rav* set cakes before us without something to drink? Everyone knows that the primary form of refreshments is the drink! And the cake is but an added delicacy to flavor the spirits!" They then explained that this was their principle reason for visiting the *Taz*. "The honorable *Rav* wrote that one can recite *kiddush* over spirits except in our locale since we hate them. And this is not true rather we like them very much however it was not our desire that our *Rav* would be a drinker." They asked him to change his ruling and the *Taz* had it erased from his work *Turei Zahav*. (Kisvei Rav Yoshe # 12 p135)

CAN I BORROW THE SEFER FOR JUST ONE NIGHT?

Rav Dovid HaLevi Segal also known as the *Taz* because of his work the *Turei Zahav* on *Shulchan Aruch* was quite poor. His paltry earnings and monthly wages as the *Rav* of the city left him without any extra money besides what he had to purchase the bare necessities. However he never complained about his lot, in fact the only thing that caused him suffering was his inability to purchase any new *seforim* from which to learn.

One day a *seforim* salesman arrived in town with a wagon of new *seforim* for sale. As was the custom he displayed the books on tables in the *beis midrash* so that clients would be able to see them and study them before making a purchase. Rav Dovid was delighted to see so many *seforim*. He opened and studied them one after another, but to his dismay all of them were well known to him and he had studied them all at one time or another. The salesman who noticed that Rav Dovid was looking and searching for something asked the Rav, "I have a new volume, a *sefer* of great importance that I have not yet placed on the table due to its expensive price.

However if your honor is interested I can take it out and let the Rav take a look at it?" "What is the name of this *sefer*?" asked Rav Dovid. "This is the *sefer HaAgudah* whose author Rav Alexander Zuslin Katz sanctified Hashem's name and died the death of a martyr many years ago. Till now his *sefer* was unavailable except as a handwritten manuscript. However just recently it has been printed and published." Rav Dovid had heard of the *sefer* but had never actually seen nor studied it. He asked the salesman to be allowed to look at the *sefer*.

After the salesman took out the newly published volume and Rav David had studied it he realized that it was full of new, novel and innovative Torah thoughts. He decided that he wished to purchase it and inquired after the price. But when he heard the exorbitant sum asked by the salesman he put the precious *sefer* back down on table in defeat. The asking price was almost as much as his entire monthly salary as the Rav of the town!

"I am sorry I cannot afford to buy this *sefer*," he explained. The salesman could see the Rav's disappointment and so he offered him a substantial discount, however even with the discount the price was still too much for him to afford. However when he heard that the salesman planned to spend the night in town the Rav had a plan.

"Please," asked Rav Dovid, "would you allow me to borrow this *sefer* just for tonight and tomorrow I will return it to you?" The salesman agreed happily.

With the *Sefer HaAgudah* in hand Rav Dovid went home, closeted himself in his room and studied the *sefer* all night long with no breaks until he had completed the entire *sefer* by dawn.

He reviewed it and its main points and returned to the *Beis Midrash* that morning to

return the *sefer* to the salesman.

"Although I was careful to guard this *sefer*," explained Rav Dovid, "I know that your rely on the sale of your books as a means of livelihood and sustenance for yourself. Please I do not wish to have benefitted from your *sefer* for free. Allow me to pay you a small fee for having read the *sefer*."

The salesman was so taken and excited by the Rav's offer that he decided to give the *Taz* the book as a gift. The *Taz* however refused his gesture.

And from then on the *Taz* never saw the *sefer HaAgudah* again in his life. However he quoted it in his commentary several times all from memory, all based on that one night when he had the opportunity to study and memorize it from the borrowed volume he had on loan. (Masay Avos p31-34)

THE GREATNESS OF THE TAZ

His commentary on the *Shulchon Aruch* was so well-respected and esteemed that many of the leading *Rabbonim* began to use his opinions, decisions and rulings as the basis for their own. This aroused the ire of other *Rabbonim* such as *Rav Shmuel Koidinover*, *mechaber* of *Birchas HaZevach*, and *Rav Gershon Ashkenazi*, *mechaber* of *Avodas HeGershuni*, who felt that it was improper to rely on the decisions of such later authorities over deciding the case through the earlier works. They felt that the commentaries of the *Taz* and his contemporary *Rav Shabsai Kohen*, *mechaber* of the *Shach*, were full of errors and mistakes.

Just as earlier in history, the *Maharam Lublin* had attacked the *Shulchon Aruch* and the *Rema* for what he saw as shortcomings, and was ignored, so were the attackers of the commentaries on *Shulchon Aruch* ignored. Their opinion was in the minority and the majority of the *Rabbonim* greatly respected and followed the rulings of the *Shach* and *Taz* to the point where today, no *Rav* can earn *semicha* without having studied and mastered their commentaries in addition to having studied and mastered the *Shulchon Aruch* and the *Rema*.

As is well known, the *Taz* wrote a commentary on the *Shulchan Aruch*. He was a *Rav* and *Rosh Yeshiva* in the big city of Posen in Western Poland, but after a few years decided that

he was not cut out for the Rabbinate. He decided to become anonymous by going to the town of Lvov in Eastern Poland, where nobody would recognize him and he would be able to learn in peace and quiet. After a few weeks in this town, someone came over to him in the shul and said, "*Rabbeinu*." It turns out it was one of his former *talmidim* who happened to live in the town. He swore him to secrecy that he would not reveal who he was.

After a few months, the *Taz* was resigned to find work to support his family. He found work in the slaughterhouse, skinning and cutting meat. A number of *shailos* came up in the plant. They happened to ask him if he knew what the *din* was and he *paskened* a few questions. Word got to the Rav of the town and he was very upset. He called in the *Taz* and decided to put him in *cherem* for *paskening shailos* instead of referring them to the Rav of Lvov. He could no longer learn in the *shul* but would have to stay in the booth where the guard sat.

One time a young girl came with a question about a chicken to the Rav and the Rav *paskened* that it was not *kosher*. The girl ran out crying. The *Taz*, who was in the booth outside the shul saw her and asked her why she was crying. She said, "My mother is a widow and this means we will not have chicken for Shabbos."

The *Taz* looked at the chicken and said, "The chicken is *kosher*. Go and tell the Rav to look in *Yoreh De'ah Siman 18* in the *Taz*, in footnote 8, and he will see that the chicken is in fact *kosher*."

The young girl went back into the *shul* and told the Rav. The Rav looked up the *halocha* and then realized that he had made a mistake; the chicken was in fact *kosher*. He asked the girl, "Who told you this information?"

She replied, "The man sitting outside in the booth."

The Rav went outside and asked him, "How did you know that *Taz*?"

"Because I am the *Taz*!"

The Rav immediately called the entire town together and announced in the shul that he

was stepping down as Rav and handing the reigns over to the *Taz*. The *Taz* accepted. The student, who had known the whole time of the *Taz*'s identity, asked his *Rebbe*, "Why did you reveal your identity and why are you accepting the position?"

The *Taz* explained, "I really wanted to remain in hiding, but when I saw the tears and felt the pain of this *yesoma* (orphan), all my personal plans were no longer significant. I had to do something to prevent the pain and anguish to this poor family and any other poor family in the future."

Rav Yehoshua of Belz (whose *Yahrzeit* is 23rd of *Shevat*) used to relate the following story he had heard from his father [the *Sar Sholom*] about the *Taz*:

Once, a woman who was having a very difficult time giving birth cried before the *Taz* to save her life and the baby.

"What can I do to save you? Only this can I offer," replied the *Taz*. "Because of the fact that today I answered a difficulty in the commentary of the *Tosafos*, I hereby give this merit to you!"

As soon as he had spoken, she delivered the baby easily, without any further distress or difficulty.

The *Sar Sholom* concluded that this is no wonder at all: because the *Taz* answered a difficulty, easing the understanding of the *Tosafos*, when he passed on that merit on to her, they eased her difficulty and just as easily did she give birth. (Cited in the name of the Rav of Vilkomín - *Chemda Genuza* II, p. 30)

NOT TO EMBARRASS ANOTHER JEW

The *minhag* of the *Taz* was always to recite *Kiddush* on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov* from the *siddur*. He explained that besides the *kedusha* found in the *osiyos* (letters) themselves, it prevented the embarrassment of others. Many times the *Taz* found himself a guest among people who were ignorant and did not know to recite *Kiddush* by heart. The *Taz* sought ways to avoid embarrassing other Jews, and was sure that if he said *Kiddush* by heart, they would be embarrassed to recite *Kiddush* from a *siddur*. Therefore, he always said it from a *siddur* and encouraged others to follow his example. (Beis Rochel, Shaar Hachona,

by Rav Naftoli Katz #34)

Rav Shaul Brach (Shevat 26)

THE BEROCHA FOR THE YESHIVA

Rav Yisrael Ehrlich writes in his *sefer Shaul Bechir Hashem* the following, as he heard it from Rav Shaul Brach himself:

Rav Shaul related how he traveled to the *Mittler Rebbe of Belz*, Rav Yehoshua, in the winter.

To this day, I myself do not comprehend all I experienced there,” he admitted and continued, “I entered the Rav’s room with my *kvittel*, and it was as if I was enshrouded in darkness. I felt, *chas vesholom*, as if I were blind; I could not see and I was struck by a great fear. The Rav came and held my hand and guided me to his table, and he took my *kvittel* and read it. He then began to describe my apartment in Mogendorf, where I served as Rav, and depicted each room with its dimensions, and where it was located, whether north or east and so on. He then calculated and related the dimensions of the adjoining *Bais Medrash*, how many trees were planted there and where they were situated. Afterward, the *Belzer Rebbe* blessed me that I should merit to have a *Yeshiva* with good *talmidim*.

This, in fact, was what Rav Shaul left behind. He writes in his *tzavo’a*, printed in the *sefer Tov Devorecha*,

And if someone will be present at the *levaya* who wishes to say a *hesped*, they should refrain from false grandiose titles like *Tzaddik* or *Gaon*. Rather, they may deliver the *hesped* and eulogize me that I merited to uphold and run a *Yeshiva* with upright students and *talmidim hogunim*, full of *Yiras Shomayim* and love of Torah who toil in it. I merited all this through the *berocha* of *Geonim Moron Admor* the holy Rav Yehoshua of Belz and the holy *Gaon* Rav Yechezkel Shraga of Shinova.

(Admorei Belz, Volume II, p. 66-67)

THE PASSING OF THE BELZER RAV AND THE FINAL BEROCHA FOR RAV SHAUL OF KASHAU

On the 23rd of *Shevat*, in the year *tov-reish-nun-dalet*, Rav Yehoshua, *the Mittler Belzer Rebbe*, passed away. He had traveled to Vienna to seek the advice and care of the doctors and professors and was admitted there to the hospital. It was there that he was *niftar* and was brought back to Belz for burial.

For *Parshas Bo*, Rav Shaul left Mogendorf, where he served as Rav, and traveled to Vienna to visit the *Tzaddik*, Rav Yehoshua, *the Belzer Rav*. This is one of the stories Rav Shaul related from that visit:

“On Sunday, I heard that the *Pressburger Rav*, *the Shevet HaSofer*, was also in Vienna seeking medical advice and care, and so I went to visit him. During my visit, he expressed surprise that I had left my post as Rav and teacher to see the *Rebbe*.

“‘How can you leave a public matter to see a *Rebbe*?’ he asked in astonishment.

“At first, I replied that it says in *Eruvin 13* that *Rebbe* said he was sharper than his fellow Rabbonim and he attributed this to having once seen Rav Meir from behind. I merited seeing the *Belzer Rav* face-to-face!

“This did not appease him, and so I related a *chiddush* on *Parshas Bo* that I had heard from the *Belzer Rebbe*, Rav Yehoshua. The *pasuk* says, ‘In order that you relate to your son and grandson’ and concludes, ‘In order that you all know that I am Hashem’. Rav Yehoshua of Belz pointed out that the *pasuk* begins in singular and concludes in plural. He explained that the *mitzva* of *Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim*, the *mitzva* to retell the story of the Exodus, which we fulfill through reading the *Haggoda* at the *Pesach Seder*, was already incumbent upon *Bnei Yisrael* to fulfill even in the very first year that it was commanded. However, only Moshe could fulfill it because only his wife and sons were not exiled in Egypt. Because Moshe’s *neshoma* included all the souls of all of *Klal Yisrael*, he was able to fulfill the *mitzva* on behalf of them all. This is why the *pasuk* begins in singular, referring to Moshe, and concludes in plural; he fulfilled the *mitzva* for all of *Klal Yisrael*.

“When I concluded, the *Pressburger Rav* turned to his attendant and told him that they must get ready to go and see the *Belzer Rav*!

“When I entered the hospital room of Rav Yehoshua of Belz, he took my *kvittel*, gave me a *berocha*, sank into thought for a moment and then told me, ‘*Mogendorf Rav*, hear now what I say to you: a person must be strong in his resolve to have *bitochon* in Hashem and never to give up hope, even when things are bad and the situation is a dire and difficult one. Even if a person is very sick with a serious disease, and even if they take him to Vienna, and admit him to this hospital, and in this room and in this very bed – still, do not give up hope and do not despair, because you can recover fully with Hashem’s help, and become the Rav of a large town, and after that, become the Rav of a great city!’

“The *Rebbe’s* words were a riddle to me, and a few days later he passed away. Several years passed and I became very sick. I was still the Rav in Mogendorf and the doctors urged me to seek medical attention in Vienna, whose expert doctors could help, because they could not diagnose my disease nor properly treat me. During the journey by train my situation worsened and I fainted. They took me and lay me down across the benches in one of the cars. As I lay unconscious, I heard a commotion and awoke. I saw sitting beside me a stranger in *Chassidic* attire who asked me, ‘Do you remember what the *Belzer Rav* told you in Vienna?’

“When I arrived in Vienna, I was admitted to the same hospital as Rav Yehoshua had been. I was placed in the same room and even in the same exact bed he had previously occupied! It was then that I realized what the *Tzaddik* had meant, and I did not give up hope. Obviously, his *berocha* was effective and I left the hospital fully healed. The doctors, however, warned me not to strain myself; instead I should plant a garden, tend its flowers and play *Shach* [chess]. I listened to them and I played *Shach* and *Taz* and studied the *Shulchon Aruch* and all its commentaries!!!

“Afterward, the rest of the Belzer Rav’s riddle unraveled, when I was appointed Rav of the great town of Kruly, and afterward as the Rav of Kashau, a great city in Hungary. At first, I was hesitant to take the post but when I sent a letter asking the new *Belzer Rav* if this was the fulfillment of his father’s *berocha*, he applied in the affirmative and said that I must accept.

“I left Rumania and took up the position of Rav of the great city of Kashau, as the *Tzaddik* had blessed me in Vienna.” (Admorei Belz, Volume II, p. 67-69)

Segulos Yisroel



SEGULOS FOR PARSHAS YISRO

Shovavim

See Appendix Below

את הפסוקים הללו יש לומר כל יום בימי השובבים :

לקט עצות קלות של הרב מוצפי מדברי רבותינו הקדמונים
כדי לכפר על העוונות בימים גדולים אלו :

(1) לַעֲוֹנֶיךָ יְהוָה דְּבָרְךָ נִצָּב בַּשָּׁמַיִם: 12 פעמים (מכפר על דיבורים אסורים)

(2) אֹרֶךְ יָרֵעַ לַצַּדִּיק וּלְיִשְׁרֵי לֵב שְׂמוֹנָה: 17 פעמים (מכפר על העוונות)

(3) וְהוּא רְחוּם יְכַפֵּר עֲוֹן וְלֹא יִשְׁזוּת וְהִרְבָּה לְהָשִׁיב אָפּוֹ וְלֹא יַעֲרִיר כָּל זִמְתּוֹ: 3 פעמים

(4) בֵּן פֶּרֶת יוֹסֵף בֶּן פֶּרֶת עָלִי-עֵין בָּנוֹת צַעֲדָה עָלִי-שׁוּר:
וַיְבַרְכֵהוּ וַרְבּוּ וַיִּשְׁטַמְּהוּ בַּעֲלֵי זִצִּים:
וְהָשִׁיב בְּאִיתָן קִשְׁתּוֹ וַיִּפְּזוּ זָרְעֵי יָדָיו מִיַּדִּי אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב מִשָּׁם רָעָה
אֲבֵן יִשְׂרָאֵל:
מֵאֵל אֲבִיךָ וַיַּעֲזֹרְךָ וְאֵת שִׁדְּי וַיְבָרְכְךָ בִּרְכַּת שָׁמַיִם מֵעַל בִּרְכַּת
תְּהוֹם רַב־צֶדֶת תַּנּוֹת בִּרְכַּת שָׁרִים וְרוֹחַ:
בִּרְכַּת אֲבִיךָ גָּבְרוּ עַל-בִּרְכַּת הַזֵּרִי עַד-תַּאֲוֹת גְּבַעַת עוֹלָם תְּהִלָּין
לְרֹאשׁ יוֹסֵף וּלְקֶדֶד נָזִיר אֲזוּזִיו: 3 פעמים

(5) לומר את השם יוסף. 24 פעמים

(6) לומר המילה יסוד. 24 פעמים

(7) לכוון בתפילה בברכת מקבץ נדוזי עמו ישראל שהקב"ה יוזיר את כל
העוונות למקומם ואת כל הזוטאים שזוטא למקומם העליון.

(8) לומר וידוי בכוונה.

(9) מעל הכל אמירת *קריאת שמוע שעל המטה בכוונה* מכפרת את כל עוונותיו
של אדם.

לעילוי נשמת לזכר עולם יהי' צדיק



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