

# ME'OROS HA'TZADDIKIM

LIGHTS OF OUR RIGHTEOUS TZADDIKIM



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

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)

❧ **KI SEITZEI** ❧

❧ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ❧

## Dvar Torah Spiritual Awakenings

The *Torah* tells us (22:6-7): "If you encounter a bird's nest along the way, in a tree, or on the ground ... and the mother is roosting over the fledglings ... do not take the mother with the young. Send away the mother and take the young for yourself." Although this *pasuk* is to be understood according to its plain meaning, it also carries an esoteric message.

There are two ways, explains Rav Levi Yitzchok, in which a person can be inspired to a new spiritual awakening. One kind of inspiration comes from above (*isarusa dile'eila*), meaning that *Hashem* sends a feeling of inspiration to a person who has done nothing to elicit it. The other kind of inspiration comes from below (*isarusa dilesata*), meaning that he can become inspired through the choices he makes. *Hashem* then "gives wisdom to the wise" (Doniel 2:21). When a person comes to a level of wisdom on his own he thereby elicits additional inspiration from above.

Sometimes *Hashem* will send inspiration to a person who, like an infant, lacks the wisdom to seek it himself, but it is much preferred that the inspiration originate from below, that it be earned and deserved. As Dovid *HaMelech* said (*Tehillim* 108:3), "I will awaken the dawn." The dawn is the symbol of wisdom and enlightenment. It is better to awaken the dawn, to find wisdom in the darkness and thereby stimulate the dawn than to be awakened from a dark slumber by the dawn.

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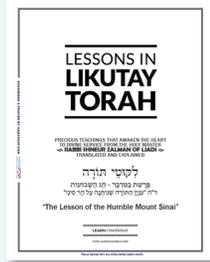
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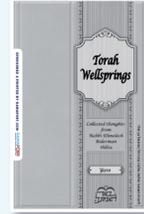
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This is the message implicit in our *pasuk*. "If you encounter a bird's nest (*kan tzippor*)" refers to a spiritual awakening, the word *tzippor* being a cognate of *tzafra*, the Aramaic word for dawn. If you suddenly feel a sense of inspiration that comes upon you "along the way", on the path of righteousness that leads toward *Hashem*, or "on a tree", the Torah, which is the tree of life, and "the mother is roosting over the fledglings", the *Shechina* is sending down the inspiration because the fledglings are incapable of acquiring wisdom on their own, "do not take the mother with the young". Do not sit back and let the inspiration continue to come from above. "Send away the mother and take the young for yourself." Take this inspiration as a sign that you lack the wisdom to seek inspiration on your own, and make the effort to pursue the rest of your awakening through your own efforts.



## Story

Professor Burchis was a famous Jewish member of the Communist Party, but he fell into disfavor with Stalin and was sent to a prison camp in Siberia on the shores of the Arctic Ocean. Although he was a prisoner, he was held in high esteem by the camp authorities and treated with deference and respect by the prison guards. The workload assigned to him was light; he was in charge of distributing prison garb and keeping a census of the prisoners. Moreover, he was allowed the rare privilege of receiving packages of food and toiletries from friends and family in Moscow.

During this time, a new prisoner, a religious Jew with a long white beard, was brought to the camp. Professor Burchis surreptitiously observed the activities of this prisoner for a long time. One day, he approached him.

"I have something for you," he said, holding out a bottle of prune butter. "I received this in one of my packages, and I want to give it to you."

The religious Jew's eyes widened with amazement. "You're giving this to me? Why, this jar is worth its weight in gold here in the camp. I can't accept such a gift from you. It is too much. You need it yourself."

"It's not a gift," said the professor. "It's an offer of payment."

"Payment for what?"

"My name is Burchis."

"I know."

"Do you know the origin of my name?"

"No."

"It is a contraction of *boruch Hashem*. You see, I am a descendant of the great Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev. Over the generations, unfortunately, my particular branch of the family has turned away from *Hashem* and the *Torah*. We've allowed ourselves to be caught up in the exciting new movements sweeping the world. We sacrificed our own heritage for those movements, and they betrayed us. I once thought that Communism was the salvation of humanity, but now I realize that it is the exact opposite." He paused, and a distant look came into his eyes. "I am an old man, and I need to make amends. You have to help me, and the prune butter is my payment to you for my imposition."

"I will be glad to help you," said the religious Jew, "and I don't need any payment."

"Take it. It will make me happy to help a fellow Jew."

The religious Jew nodded and accepted the jar. "How can I help you make amends?"

"I am ignorant," said the professor. "I barely know the *alef bais*, and I cannot read Hebrew. Please teach me a short Jewish *tefilla* so that in the darkness of my solitude I can reach out to *Hashem* according to the traditions of my holy ancestors. I cannot come before Him with my own merits, because I do not have any. All I can do is come before Him with the merits of my ancestors, and therefore, I need to speak in their language, to say the kind of things that they would have said in this situation. Please teach me."

The religious Jew with the white beard and the professor sat together for a few days as teacher and pupil, but the going was painfully slow. The religious Jew tried to teach him to say *Shema*, but the professor could not formulate the words coherently. Both men were becoming frustrated.

"Do you speak Yiddish?" the religious Jew finally said.

"Yes, I do."

"Then I will teach you a *tefilla* in Yiddish. It is simple, but it touches the bare essentials. This is what you should say: 'Master of the Universe, in the merit of Levi Yitzchok *ben Sora Sossa*, forgive my sins, and bring the Jewish people out of exile into Your holy Presence.'"

The professor repeated the *tefilla* a number of times until it flowed easily from his tongue. Then he embraced and kissed his teacher.

A few days later, he passed away peacefully in his sleep.



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

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

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

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

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

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

## Hebrew Tefilla for Lighting a Yahrzeit or Hilula Candle

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

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### Translation:

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

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

4) Study some of his teaching or writings.

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



## GEDOLIM BE'MISASAM YOSER



Yahrzeits for Week Beginning Shabbos Ki Seitsei

[http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim\\_yahrzeits/Elul](http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim_yahrzeits/Elul)

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

### \* **14<sup>th</sup> of Elul ~ Begins Friday Night (Sep 13<sup>th</sup>)**

\* **Rav Yosef Yuska** *ben* Rav Yisrael Ashkenazi, *mechaber* of *Ohel Yosef*, (5627/1867);

\* **Rav Yitzchok Gotinyu** of Izmir, Turkey, *mechaber* of *Bais Yitzchok*, (5560/1800);

\* **Rav Yaakov Malul**, *Rav* of Vezean, (5688/1928).

### \* **15<sup>th</sup> of Elul ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Sep 14<sup>th</sup>)**

\* **Rav Chanoch Henach Eiges** of Vilna, *mechaber* of *Marcheshes*, *talmid* of Rav Alexander Moshe Lapidus at his *kollel* in Rassein, (5701/1941);

\* **Rav Yaakov Koppel Chassid**, the *Shliach Tzibbur* and *chazzan* of the *Ba'al Shem Tov* and founder of the Kosov and Vizhnitz dynasties. Born in Kolomaya, Ukraine, he was able to trace his family tree through his father, Rav Nechemya Feivel, back to the *Ba'alei Tosafos* of Provence and beyond, to Dovid *HaMelech*. He was also a descendant of Rav Ovadia of Bartenura. His most famous work, *Sha'ar Gan Eden*, was printed posthumously in 1854. He also wrote a *kabbalistic* commentary on the *siddur*, *Kol Yaakov*, printed in 1859, based on the *nusach* of the *Arizal*, and a *kabbalistic* commentary on the *Haggoda*. Some of his *Torah* ideas are quoted by his son, Rav Menachem Mendel of Kosov, in his *sefer*, *Ahavas Sholom*, (5547/1787);

\* **Rav Moshe Alshakar**, *mechaber* of *Shailos U'Tshuvos Maharam Alshakar* and *Kol Bruei Maala Umata*, a *piyut* of praises to *Hashem*, featured at the beginning of some *siddurim*, (5302/1542 or 5295/1535);

\* **Rav Meir Horowitz** of Lebertov, (5601/1841);

- \* **Rav Akiva Eiger** (I), *mechaber* of *Mishnas Rav Akiva*, (5518/1758);
- \* **Rav Avrohom Yaakov Horowitz** of Provizna, *mechaber* of *Tzur Yaakov*, (5702/1942).
- \* **16<sup>th</sup> of Elul ~ Begins Sunday Night (Sep 15<sup>th</sup>)**
- \* **Rav Avrohom Avigdor Nachum** *ben* Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Don Landau, the Strikover *Rebbe* of Bnei Brak (1917–2001/5761). Born in Kinov, in the Ostrovitze region of Poland, his father, Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Don, served as *Rav* of the city. Avrohom was raised by his grandfather, Rav Elimelech Menachem Mendel. At the age of thirteen, Rav Avrohom began to study in the *Chachmei Lublin Yeshiva*. When World War II broke out, he was at his parents' home and he escaped with his father to Lodz, from where the family fled to Warsaw, and from there, at the directive of his father, Avrohom fled to Baranowitz. A week after his arrival in Baranowitz he fled to Vilna, during *Chanuka* 1939. There, he began to study under the *Griz* (Rav Velvel Soloveitchik) of Brisk. In 1946, he married a great-granddaughter of the *Chiddushei HaRim* of Gur. After their marriage he learned that his father and eight of his siblings had perished in the Holocaust, and that only he and his sister remained alive from the entire Strikover dynasty. He became *Rebbe* of Strikov after World War II, first in Tel Aviv and then in Bnei Brak, (5761/2001);
- \* **Rav Yitzchok HaKohen Shapiro**, father-in-law of *Maharam* Lublin, (5342/1582);
- \* **Rav Yosef Kovo**, *Rav* in Salonika, Greece, (5487/1727);
- \* **Rav Avrohom Naftoli Tzvi** of Vermeiza (Worms), (5472/1712);
- \* **Rav Tzvi Dishkis** of Opatshna, (5615/1855);
- \* **Rav Masoud Yona Edre'ei**, the *Tzaddik* of Rosh Pina, (5728/1968);
- \* **Rav Yechi Shnior**, *talmid* of *Baba Sali*, (5754/1994).
- \* **17<sup>th</sup> of Elul ~ Begins Monday Night (Sep 16<sup>th</sup>)**
- \* **Rav Nosson Nota Shapiro**, *Maggid* of Lublin, (5512/1752);
- \* **Rav Yosef Yoska** of Dubno, a *talmid* of the *Maggid* of Mezritch and *mechaber* of *Yesod Yosef*, an encyclopedic work on *mussar*, drawing heavily on the *Zohar*, (5560/1800);
- \* **Rav Yaakov Koppel Reich**, *Rav* of Budapest (1838–1929/5689), born in the city of Verboi to Rav Avrohom Yechezkel, who was the son of Rav Yaakov Koppel Charif, *mechaber* of *Sefer Yaavetz* on *Chulin*. He learned in Pressburg under the *Kesav Sofer* and in Grossvardein under Rav Yitzchok Aharon Landesberg. In 1860, he succeeded his father-in-law as *Rav* of Sobotitch. In 1872, he became *Rav* of Verboi, and in 1890, he was appointed *Rav* and *Av Beis Din* of Budapest, (5689/1929);
- \* **Rav Yosef** of Ostilla, (5590/1830).
- \* **Rav Dovid Dov Ber Taub**, *Rav* of Dabrizinsk, *mechaber* of *Binyan Dovid*, (5659/1899);
- \* **18<sup>th</sup> of Elul ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Sep 17<sup>th</sup>)**
- \* On the 18<sup>th</sup> of *Elul*, we celebrate the birthdays of Rav Yisrael *Ba'al Shem Tov* and Rav Schneur Zalman of Liadi.  
The *Ba'al Shem Tov*, founder of the *Chassidic* movement, was born in 1698 in Okup, a small town in the Carpathian Mountains of Poland. Rav Yisrael (born circa 1700) was born to poor and elderly parents, Eliezer and Sora, in a settlement near Okopy Świętej Trójcy, a newly built fortress close to Kameniec in the West Ukraine. Often called the *Ba'al Shem Tov* or the acronym *Besh"t*, he was not the typical mystical *Rebbe*. He is considered to be the founder of *Chassidic* Judaism. In 1703, Rav Yisrael became an orphan, and the Jewish community of Tluste (near Zalischyky) adopted him, providing him with his basic needs. Often, after the conclusion of his studies at the local *cheder* (Jewish elementary school), he would wander into the fields and forests that surrounded the village to meditate and recognize the wonders of

*Hashem's* creation. In 1710, he finished *cheder* and became an assistant to a *melamed* (instructor in *cheder*). According to *Chassidic* lore, on his sixteenth birthday, Eliyohu *HaNovi* appeared to him and described to him the great effects the *tefillos* of simple folk had in Heaven. During the many years that he lived in the woods and came into contact with the peasants, the *Besh"t* had learned how to use plants for healing purposes. The *Besh"t* was introduced to the secrets of *Kabbola* by Rav Odom *Ba'al Shem* of Ropczyce. Caring for the Jewish poor, a group of *Tzaddikim* encouraged Jews to move to agrarian lifestyles as alternatives to the chronic poverty which was the lot of city Jews. In continuation of this policy, they decided that they needed to look after the educational needs of the children living in small farm communities. The *Besh"t* became the leader of this movement at the age of eighteen. Sometime in 1712, the *Besh"t* became a *shamash* (sexton) of the local *shul*. In the early 1700s, he formulated the approach of *Chassidus*, stressing the importance of serving *Hashem* with joy and warmth, humility and love of your fellow, and the necessity of having a *Rebbe* – a holy person who guides his followers on their spiritual journeys. After his passing in 1760, many of his *talmidim* established their own *Chassidic* courts. They all followed the *Chassidic* tradition, but each *Rebbe* developed a unique approach to *Chassidus*, emphasizing a different aspect of the *Ba'al Shem Tov's* teachings. He was *niftar* of the 6<sup>th</sup> of *Sivan* 5520 (May, 22 1760) [*Shavuot*].

Rav Schneur Zalman (affectionately known as the “Alter *Rebbe*”, “the Old *Rebbe*”), creator of the *Chabad* branch of *Chassidus*, was born in Liozna, Belarus, in 1745.

He was a *talmid* of Rav Dov Ber (the *Maggid*) of Mezritch, the primary successor of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, and after Rav Dov Ber's *petira* in 1773, Rav Schneur Zalman established the *Chabad* movement. *Chabad* is an acronym for three Hebrew words (*Chochma*, *Bina* and *Da'as*), which mean “intellect”, “understanding” and “knowledge”. *Chabad Chassidus* emphasizes the importance of studying and understanding the esoteric parts of *Torah* – which include concepts such as *Hashem*, the purpose of *Torah* and the uniqueness of the Jewish soul. Rav Schneur Zalman's magnum opus, the *Tanya*, serves as the basic text of *Chabad Chassidus*. He also authored the *Shulchon Aruch HaRav*, a universally accepted codification of Jewish Law.



These two luminaries were both born on the same date, the 18<sup>th</sup> of *Elul*. *Elul* is a month of *teshuva*, a month of “renewing our marriage vows”, as a nation with *Hashem*. It is a time to reignite the spark in our relationship with *Hashem*. The number eighteen has the numerical value of *chai*, the Hebrew word for “life”. Studying *Chassidus*, and living a life of *Chassidus*, breathes new “life” into *Elul*, and into our relationship with *Hashem* and his *Torah*. ([www.askmoses.com/en/article/674,144488/Chai-Elul-the-18th-of-Elul.html](http://www.askmoses.com/en/article/674,144488/Chai-Elul-the-18th-of-Elul.html));

- \* **Rav Yehuda Loew**, the *Maharal* (1525/5285–1609). Born in Posen, Poland, on the night of the *Pesach Seder*, to a distinguished family of *Rabbonim* that traced its ancestry to Dovid *HaMelech*, he was the youngest of four brothers. The *Maharal* married his *Rebbetzin*, Perel, at the age of thirty-two. He had six daughters and one son who was named after the *Maharal's* father, Betzalel. In 1553, he was elected *Rav* of Nikolsburg and the Province of Moravia, where he remained for the following twenty years. In 1573, he moved to Prague, where he opened a *Yeshiva*. In 1592, the *Maharal* accepted the position of *Rav* in Posen, returning to Prague in 1598 to serve as its chief *Rav*. The *Maharal* castigated the educational methods of his day where boys were taught at a very young age and insisted that children must be taught in accordance with their intellectual maturity. One of his leading *talmidim* was Rav Yom Tov Heller, *mechaber* of the classic *mishnaic* commentary, *Tosafos Yom Tov*, who, in his introduction, informs us that the *Maharal* greatly encouraged group study of the *Mishna*. At the

same time, he was fully conversant with the scientific knowledge of his time as well as friendly with some of the contemporary eminent scientists. His *talmid*, Dovid Ganz, worked in the observatory of Tycho Brahe, the distinguished astronomer. He was a prolific writer, and his works include: *Tiferes Yisrael*, on the greatness of *Torah* and *mitzvos*; *Nesivos Olam*, on ethics; *Be'er Hagola*, a commentary on *Rabbinic* sayings; *Netzach Yisrael*, on exile and redemption; *Or Chodosh*, on the book of *Esther*; *Ner Mitzva*, on *Chanuka*; *Gevuros Hashem*, on the Exodus; and many others. Rav Kook stated that “the *Maharal* was the father of the approach of the *Gaon* of Vilna on the one hand, and of the father of *Chassidus*, on the other hand”. He has been described as a *Mekubol* who wrote in philosophic garb, (5369/1609);

✳ **Rav Abdala (Abdullah) Somech**, *Rebbe* of the *Ben Ish Chai* and head of Iraqi Jewry (1813/5573–1889/5649). Born in Baghdad, he traced his lineage back to Rav Nissim Gaon, head of the *Yeshiva* of Neharda’ah, (5649/1889);

✳ **Rav Ze’ev Nachum Bornstein**, *mechaber* of *Agudas Eizov*, *Rav* of Elkush and Biala, father of Rav Avrohom Borenstein of Sochatchov, the *Avnei Nezer*, (5645/1885) (*Hamodia* 2005: 19<sup>th</sup> of Elul).

### ✳ **19<sup>th</sup> of Elul ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Sep 18<sup>th</sup>)**

✳ **Rav Yaakov** of Orleans, one of the *Ba’alei Tosafos* and a *talmid* of Rabbeinu Tam, was killed with many other Jews in London during pogroms after the coronation of King Richard the Lion-Hearted, (4949/1189) (others say it was the 3<sup>rd</sup> of *Elul*);

✳ **Rav Moshe Zvi Arye Bick** (1911–1990/5750) was born in Medzboz (Mezhibuzh), Ukraine, but grew up in New York, and is recognized as one of the first *Gedolim* to be raised on American soil. He studied under Rav Moshe Soloveitchik at *Yeshiva Rabbeinu Yitzchok Elchonon Spektor* and attended New York City public schools at night. At age twenty-one, Rav Bick was hired by a *shul* in the Bronx. While there, he founded schools for both boys and girls. Later, he moved to Boro Park. He was recognized as a master *posek* by both *Chassidic* and non-*Chassidic* communities, but never published his *teshuvos*. His father, Rav Chaim Yechiel Michel, was the last *Rav* of Mezhibuzh. Their family had been the heads of the *Bais Din* in Mezhibuzh for seven generations, since the days of the *Ba’al Shem Tov*. He is buried in Beth David Cemetery on Long Island, (5750/1990);

✳ **Rav Hillel Vitkind**, *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Beis Hillel* of Novardok-Tel Aviv in Bnei Brak. He and his *Rebbetzin* were *moser nefesh* for *bochurim* arriving on the shores of *Eretz Yisrael*. They lived a life of great poverty as a result of the tremendous expenses which they incurred for saving the *bochurim*, (5734/1974);

✳ **Rav Chaim Benveniste** (1603–1673/5433), a *talmid* of Rav Yosef Trani. Born in Constantinople, he was appointed *Rav* of Tita (near Izmir) in 1644. In 1658, he was appointed one of the *Rabbonim* of Izmir. He became an adherent of *Shabsai Tzvi* (1665–67) but subsequently repented. He authored *Kenesses HaGedola*, a digest of *halachic* material from the time of Rav Yosef Caro until his own time, (5433/1673) (*Hamodia* 2005: 19<sup>th</sup> of *Elul*);

✳ **Rav Elimelech Alter Paneth (“Reb Meilech”)**, the *Deizher Rebbe* (1928–2005/5765). Born to Rav Yosef and *Rebbetzin* Lifash Paneth in Tekendorf, Romania, he lived with his family in Paris after the War, before they all immigrated to the United States. He married *Rebbetzin* Yocheved in 1951, (5765/2005);

✳ **Rav Moshe** of Orzistchov *ben* Rav Pinchas of Ostroh, raised by the *Shpole Zeide* after being orphaned.

### ✳ **20<sup>th</sup> of Elul ~ Begins Thursday Night (Sep 19<sup>th</sup>)**

✳ **Rav Moshe Arye Freund**, *Ga’avad/Av Bais Din* of the *Eida HaChareidis* of Yerushalayim,

(5756/1996);

- \* **Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman**, founder and *Rosh Yeshiva* of Ponovezh (5646/1886–5729/1969);
- \* **Rav Eliyohu (Elya) Lopian** (1872–1970/5730), *mechaber* of *Lev Eliyohu*; legendary *Mashgiach* of Kelm; *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshiva Etz Chaim* in London, and *Mashgiach* at *Kfar Chassidim*. Rav Sholom Schwadron (1911–1997) was one of his *talmidim*. After having dedicated twenty-five years of his life to *Yeshiva Eitz Chaim*, Rav Elya passed the leadership of the *Yeshiva* over to Rav Greenspan. Rav Elya moved to *Eretz Yisrael* in 1950, when he was seventy-six years old, (5730/1970);
- \* **Rav Yehuda Muskato**, *mechaber* of *Nefutzos Yehuda*, (5350/1590);
- \* **Rav Shimon Reisher**, *mechaber* of *Minchas Yehuda*, (5474/1714);
- \* **Rav Avrohom Weinberg** of Stutchin, *mechaber* of *Reishis Bikurim*, (5702/1942);
- \* **Rav Avrohom ben Rav Naftoli Hertz Sternhartz**, great-grandson of Rav Nosson of Breslov, he was one of the leaders of Breslov in his time. He was known as *Kochov Lev*, (5715/1955).



## ❁ HILLULA DE'TZADDIKA ❁

### WHAT'S BEHIND YAHRZEIT MEANINGS & CUSTOMS

In *Shulchon Aruch Orach Chaim Siman 581:4*, the *Rema* cites the *Maharil* who writes: “There are those who have the custom [on *Erev Rosh HaShana*] to visit the *kevorim* and to say many *techinos* (supplications) and *tefillos* there, and they give *tzedoka* (charity) there to the *aniyim* (poor) (*Kol Bo*).

The *Be'er Heiteiv* (17) explains there that the *Bais HaChaim* is a place where the souls of the *Tzaddikim* reside and therefore it is a pure and holy place where *tefillos* are accepted more readily. He also says in the name of the *Maharil* that we should not make requests of the *Tzaddikim* but rather ask *Hashem* to fulfill our requests in their merit. He says in the name of the *Shela* that you should do *hakofos*, encircle the *tziun* and also give *tzedoka* before reciting *techinos*. In the name of the *AriZal*, you should not visit the same grave twice in one day.

The *Minchas Elozor (siman chaim)* [cited by *Segulos Yisrael*, # *Kuf*] argues with the *Maharil* and cites many proofs from *Medrash* and *Zohar* that one may make requests of the *Tzaddik* (the *niftar*) that he should intercede and advocate on High on our behalf.

## ❁ GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM ❁

### STORIES & ANECDOTES

### Rav Chanoch Henach Eiges of Vilna, 15<sup>th</sup> of Elul

The Marcheshes

Rav Chanoch Henach Eiges was born in 5624/1864 in Raissen. His father was Rav Simcha Reuven Eidelman (Rav Simcha Reuven used a different last name, probably due to fear of being drafted into the Russian army), known as *Sar ben*

*Chayal Ha'Adulami*, by the *Roshei Teivos* of his name (*Sar*, Simcha Reuven) and his father's name (*Chayal*, Chaim Yehuda Leib).

In his youth, Rav Chanoch Henach learned in Raissen under Rav Alexander

Moshe Lapidos, *mechaber* of the *mussar* classic, *Divrei Emes*. A *masmid*, the young *talmid* sat for hours on end in the *Bais Medrash*.

From there, Rav Chanoch Henach went on to learn in Brisk, where he was close with Rav Yosef Dov, a relative.

Later, Rav Chanoch Henach learned in Kovna. Once when the *Rav* of Kovna, Rav Yitzchok Elchonon Spektor, came into the *Bais Medrash*, he saw this *bochur* learning diligently. When Rav Shmuel Zibertenski (Lubatcher), a *Dayan* in Vilna, asked Rav Yitzchok Elchonon to suggest a fitting *chosson* for his granddaughter, Rav Yitzchok Elchonon chose Rav Chanoch Henach.

After the *petira* of Rav Shmuel Zibertenski in 5658/1898, Rav Chanoch Henach became a *Rav* in Vilna, and he held the position for more than forty years.

Rav Chanoch Henach made his name in the *Torah* world with the printing of his grandfather's *sefer*, *Olas Shmuel*, in 5661/1901, adding his own *deroshos* as an appendix to the *sefer*.

In 5666/1906, with the *petira* of Rav Shlomo *HaKohen*, the elderly *Rav* of Vilna, Rav Chanoch Henach and Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinski were the acknowledged leaders of the *Torah* community of Vilna.

During World War I, Rav Chaim Ozer was forced to flee Vilna, but Rav Chanoch Henach remained. Many *bochurim* from neighboring *Yeshivos*

found refuge in Vilna, and Rav Chanoch Henach said a *shiur* for them every week.

Rav Chanoch Henach was close with the *Gedolim* of his time, especially the *Chofetz Chaim*. He was given a *kibbud* at the *bris* of a grandson of the *Chofetz Chaim*.

Initially, Rav Chanoch Henach leaned toward the *Mizrachi* movement, but in 5689/1929, when members of *Mizrachi* insulted Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinski by attempting to install one of their own as *Rav* of Vilna, Rav Chanoch Henach officially announced that he was separating from them. (Rav Aharon Rabinowitz, *Rav* of Lida, left the *Mizrachi* for the same reason.)

In 5691/1931, Rav Chanoch Henach printed the first volume of his work, the *Marcheshes*. It was a two-part *sefer* of *teshuvos* in *Halocha* and *chiddushim* on the *Shas*. These *seforim* made him famous in the *Yeshiva* world; they became standard learning material in the *Yeshivos*. In 5695/1935 he published the second volume.

After the *petira* of Rav Chaim Ozer in *Av* 5700/1940, Rav Chanoch Henach was considered by many of the *bnei Torah* the senior *Rav* and *Torah* leader.

He was killed *al Kiddush Hashem* on the 15<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* 5701/1941.

*Hashem yinkom domo.*

[www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-15-elulaugust-21/](http://www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-15-elulaugust-21/)



## Rav Yaakov Koppel Chassid, 15<sup>th</sup> of Elul

It once happened that Rav Yaakov Koppel Chassid entered a *shul* in a town he had never been to before. The regulars were curious – who was he and why had he come to their town? He was in a great hurry at the time and so he was relieved to see a quorum of men already assembled, ready to begin the morning *tefillos*. There

was no *Rav* there, and not wanting to wait, he ascended the *bima*. The “regulars” were surprised and offended that this unknown man presumed to lead the *tefillos*. After all, who was this fellow, who didn't even have the courtesy to wait a few minutes for the *Rav* or the president of the congregation?

He had already begun the morning

service when the president arrived. Seeing a stranger at the *bima*, he rushed up to him and said, “What a *chutzpa!* Who do you think you are to begin the *tefillos* before the *Rav* or I have arrived?” And he continued berating the man in this fashion. Rav Yaakov, however, just kept silent. But his refusal to respond infuriated the president even more and he blurted out, “Don’t you see who’s speaking to you?” Finally Rav Yaakov replied in a quiet voice, “You also do not see to whom you are speaking.”

No sooner had those words been uttered than everything went dark before the president’s eyes. He rushed to a doctor, then to a specialist – to several specialists – but no one could find a cause for his sudden blindness. He tried every treatment that was suggested to him, but nothing proved a cure. Then, it dawned upon him: when had his blindness begun? After he had angry words with the stranger in the *shul*. Undoubtedly, he had offended a hidden *Tzaddik* with his words, and this was the consequence of his anger.

In despair, he decided to travel to the *Ba’al Shem Tov*. He had heard about this great *Tzaddik*; maybe he could help. “*Rebbe*, I have heard that you can perform miracles. I have been blind since I angered a certain hidden *Tzaddik*. My problem is that I don’t know who he is or where I can find him.”

The *Ba’al Shem Tov* replied, “The man is my *talmid*, Rav Yaakov Koppel, and you sinned against him with your angry speech. Go to him and beg his forgiveness.

If he forgives you, your blindness will be cured.” The man indeed traveled to Rav Yaakov, who accepted his apology. His sight returned as quickly as it had vanished.

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

The *Ba’al Shem Tov* once spent *Shabbos* in the town of Kolomaya, and on the night of *Shabbos* he sensed the presence in the town of a holy soul radiating great light. So he went out for a stroll to find that light. When he passed by a certain home, he saw the light radiating from it; he also heard, within, the sounds of singing and dancing. Seeing that the door was slightly ajar, he went in and saw Rav Yaakov Koppel dancing in ecstasy before his *Shabbos* table, which was laden with good food.

Rav Yaakov Koppel sang and danced for a long time until he finally stopped and noticed the *Ba’al Shem Tov*. He welcomed his guest warmly, and the *Ba’al Shem Tov* asked him, “Why do you sing and dance this way before eating?”

Rav Yaakov Koppel answered, “Before I partake of the physical food, I first stand in front of the table and absorb the food’s spiritual essence. Sometimes, I become so aroused that I sing and dance.”

Text of story excerpted by permission from *Jewish Tales of Mystic Joy* by Yitzhak Buxbaum, JosseyBass, 2002

[www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/385241/jewish/The-Table.htm](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/385241/jewish/The-Table.htm)



## Rav Avrohom Avigdor Nachum Landau, 16<sup>th</sup> of Elul

The Strikover Rebbe

Rav Avrohom was born on the 11<sup>th</sup> of *Shevat* 5677/1917, in Kinov, in the Ostrovtze region of Poland. His father was Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Dan, *Hy”d*, son of Rav Elimelech Menachem Mendel of Strikov. Rav Avrohom, as he was called, was a child

prodigy who studied under leading Polish *Talmidei Chachomim*.

After becoming *bar mitzva*, he entered *Yeshiva Chachmei Lublin* and was a prime *talmid* of Rav Meir Shapiro, the *Kaziglover Rav* and Rav Shimon of

Zelichov. There he grew in *Torah, avoda* and *middos*.

In *Kislev* 5700/1940, obeying his father's orders, Rav Avrohom fled Warsaw for Vilna. Of all his family, only he and a sister survived the war, while their parents and eight of their siblings perished, *HY"D*. He eventually arrived in *Eretz Yisrael* and settled in Yerushalayim. He used to say that everything in *Eicha* about the slaughter and suffering of *Yidden* happened in World War II.

In Yerushalayim, he grew close to and became a faithful *talmid* of the Brisker *Rav*, Rav Yitzchok Zev Soloveitchik. After his marriage to the daughter of Rav Meir Wydislavski, he found an apartment near that of the Tchebiner *Rav*, to whom he was also close.

It took many years for Rav Avrohom to recover sufficiently from his losses in World War II to be able to undertake the rebuilding of Strikover *Chassidus*. When the time came, he moved to Tel Aviv and built a *Bais Medrash*, but did not establish a court. Instead, he founded an elite *kollel*.

In 5744/1984 he moved to Bnei Brak, where he reestablished his *Bais Medrash* and founded *Yeshiva Strikov*. He was sought after by *Talmidei Chachomim* as well as by suffering, downtrodden *Yidden*, all of whom valued his erudite learning, his sage advice and his welcoming, listening ear.

Rav Avrohom was one of the rare *Gedolim* acclaimed equally by the world of *Chassidus* and the *Litvishe Yeshiva* world. For two generations, he was revered as one of the illustrious disseminators of Brisker *Torah*, while leading *Chassidim* respected

him as a brilliant scion of the Strikov dynasty.

The Strikover *Rebbe's* humility was extraordinary; he simply could not bear any *kovod* at all. He never had a *meshamesh* — he opened his front door himself and answered his own telephone. For most of his life, he wore a regular suit instead of the usual Rabbinic garb (*kapota*). He would even remove his Rabbinical hat in public places so as not to stand out.

When he moved to Bnei Brak, he would often be seen helping children cross the street.

For dozens of years he traveled by bus, refusing to allow anyone to drive him. Even in his later years, he would insist on taking the bus from Bnei Brak to Yerushalayim. When a *Chassid* objected that buses were not respectable enough, the *Rebbe* rejoined with humor that, measuring by the size of his vehicle (a bus), he must be the greatest *Rebbe* around.

When the *Rebbe* did accept a ride, he would travel only at the driver's convenience. When he lived in Tel Aviv, he was driven by a *Chassid* who worked in Tel Aviv and lived in Bnei Brak, but he would never tell the *Chassid* when he needed a ride. He would only agree to be picked up on the *Chassid's* way home from work, giving no information that might lead to extra effort on the *Chassid's* part.

The Strikover *Rebbe* was *niftar* on the 16<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* 5761/2001.

*Zechuso yogen oleinu.*

[www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-16-elulaugust-22/](http://www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-16-elulaugust-22/)



## Rav Masoud Yona Edre'ei, 16<sup>th</sup> of Elul

The Tzaddik of Rosh Pina

Rav Masoud Yona Edre'ei was born in 5674/1914 in the city of Deganah in Morocco. As a young *bochur* he moved to

Marrakesh, where he learned with *hasmoda* in the local *Yeshiva*.

Rav Masoud served as a *Rav, mohel*

and *sofer*. He was actively involved in the dissemination of *Torah* and gave *berochos* and help to whoever came to him. He delved into *Kabbala* beginning in his youth and became known as a *poel yeshuos* (*miracle worker*).

In 5710/1950 Rav Masoud moved to *Eretz Yisrael* and settled in Rosh Pina. He wrote *Sfas Emes*, a compilation of *chiddushim* and *remozim* on the *Torah* and

*Nach*, and *deroshos* on a wide array of topics.

Rav Masoud was *niftar* on the 16<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* 5728/1968 at the age of fifty-four and was buried on Har HaMenuchos in Yerushalayim.

*Zecher Tzaddik livrocha.*

[www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-16-elulseptember-11/](http://www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-16-elulseptember-11/)



### Rav Yosef of Ostilla, 17<sup>th</sup> of Elul

Rav Yosef was the son of Rav Mordechai of Neshchiz. He was born in 5623/1763 and named for his maternal grandfather, Rav Yosef Katzenelenbogen, *Rav* of Leshnov.

He married the daughter of Rav Yehuda Meir Shapira of Shpitolovka, the son of Rav Pinchas of Koritz.

Rav Yosef was appointed *Rav* in Ostilla in his father's lifetime. After the *petira* of his father on the 8<sup>th</sup> of *Nissan* 5560/1800, Rav Yosef became *Rebbe* in Ostilla.

Rav Yosef often went to the court of the *Chozeh* in Lublin. The *Chozeh* held him in high esteem, calling him "the *Urim V'tumim*".

Rav Yosef was famous as a *ba'al mofes*. Many traveled to his court for his wondrous *yeshuos*.

During his tenure as *Rebbe*, the city of Ostilla became famous when his

daughter married Rav Don of Radvill, a grandson of the *Ohev Yisrael* of Apta. This wedding, known as the *Ostilla chasuna*, was attended by hundreds of *Rebbes*.

While Rav Yosef was in Ostroha, for the wedding of his son, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* 5590/1830, he was suddenly *niftar*, and was honored with a large *levaya*. He was buried in Ostroha.

When the family returned home to Ostilla they found his *tzavo'a* (*will*), in which he explicitly wrote that he would like a small *levaya*.

Rav Yosef's sons were Rav Pinchas of Ostilla; Rav Mordechai of Ostilla; Rav Levi Yitzchok of Stephin; and Rav Boruch of Kosnitin. His sons-in-law were Rav Don of Radvill; Rav Levi Yitzchok of Kamin; and Rav Aharon Tzintz, *Rav* of Turbin.

*Zechuso yogen oleinu.*

[www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-17-elulseptember-12/](http://www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-17-elulseptember-12/)



### Rav Dovid Dov Ber Taub, 17<sup>th</sup> of Elul

Rav of Dabrizinsk, Mechaber of Binyan Dovid

Rav Dovid Dov Ber Taub, born circa 5587/1827, was the son of Rav Binyomin Zev.

When he was still a young boy, he became known for his dedication to learning and for his *Yiras Shomayim*.

It is told that when Rav Dovid Dov

was just nine years old, Rav Yitzchok of Vorka paid a visit to Zaloshin. The young Dovid, wishing to see the *Rebbe's* holy countenance during the *davening* (the Vorka *Rebbe* would cover his head with his *tallis*), crawled under the table and peeked up through the *tallis* to see the *Rebbe's*

face. He related that he also saw the *Rebbe's* limbs knocking against each other, in awe of *Hashem*.

Rav Dovid Dov married the daughter of Rav Meir, son-in-law of Rav Moshe of Zaloshin, the *Mishpat Tzedek*.

Initially, not willing to be supported for learning *Torah*, he tried his hand at business. But seemingly it wasn't meant to be; he was asked to serve on the *Bais Din* in Zaloshin, as the city was short one of the three *Dayonim* required for a *Bais Din*.

In 5615/1855, Rav Dovid Dov was appointed *Rav* in Shadek.

Later, in 5620/1860, he became *Rav* in Neustadt, where he led the *kehilla* and also headed a large *Yeshiva*.

In 5635/1875, Rav Dovid Dov was appointed *Rav* in the city of Dabrizinsk, on the border between Poland and Germany. There, too, he founded a *Yeshiva*, which

attracted many *bochurim*.

Rav Dovid Dov was a *Chassid* of the first Vorka *Rebbe*, and after his *petira*, of his son, Rav Menachem Mendel of Vorka. Following the *petira* of Rav Menachem Mendel, Rav Dovid Dov traveled to Rav Dov Berisch of Biala, and after his *petira*, he traveled to Rav Yechiel, the *Alter Rebbe* of Alexander.

*Chiddushei Torah* of Rav Dovid Dov on many *masechtos* of *Shas* and *Shulchon Aruch* were published as Binyan Dovid. Many of his manuscripts were burned, however, which greatly distressed Rav Dovid Dov.

Rav Dovid Dov was *niftar* on the 17<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* 5659/1899 and buried in Dabrizinsk.

*Zecher Tzaddik livrocha.*

[www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-17-elulaugust-23/](http://www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-17-elulaugust-23/)

## Rav Yehuda Loew, 18<sup>th</sup> of Elul

The Maharal of Prague

Rav Yehuda *ben* Bezalel Loew was born around the year 5285 (1525), probably in Posen. He became famous as a great *Talmudic* scholar at an early age. In his late twenties, he was invited to become the *Rav* in Nikolsburg, Moravia, a position which he held for about twenty years. His greatest fame, however, came to him as the spiritual head of the Jewish community in Prague, then the main center of central European Jewry. In Prague, the *Maharal* established the great *Talmudic* Academy known as the *Klaus*. (The ancient building of the *Klaus* burned down about eighty years after his *petira* and was subsequently rebuilt and named the *Klaus* Synagogue.) Among his famous *talmidim* were Rav Yom Tov Lipmann Heller and Rav Dovid Ganz, who were among the most famous *Talmudists* of their age. The *Maharal* won the admiration of his great contemporaries: Rav Shlomo Luria (*Maharshal*), Rav Meir (*Maharam*) of Lublin and others, who called him affectionately “the iron pillar

supporting Yisrael”, “our breath of life” and “the marvel of the age”.

The *Maharal* also became famous among non-Jews for his great secular knowledge of mathematics, astronomy and other sciences. He was a great friend of the astronomers Tycho Brahe and Johannes Kepler. They in turn introduced him to Emperor Rudolph II. According to many legends, the emperor paid him frequent visits during the night, to discuss with him both politics and science, and Rav Yehuda Loew made use of these excellent connections to the advantage of his community whenever it was threatened by attacks or oppression.

Rav Yehuda Loew wrote many works on Rabbinic subjects, one of the most important of which is *Gur Arye*, a commentary on *Rashi* on the *Chumash*. Some of his best works are on Jewish philosophy and ethics. In his writings and teachings, he laid stress on understanding

the simple literal meaning of the passages studied, avoiding the complicated form of study known as *pilpul*. He insisted that children should have a thorough knowledge of the *Chumash* and *Mishna* before taking up the study of the *Talmud*. His writings, particularly his commentary on *Pirkei Avos* (the *Talmud's* "Ethics of the Fathers") and the collection of his lectures such as *Netzach Yisrael* ("The Eternity of Yisrael") and *Nesivos Olam* ("Ways of the World"), reflect his saintly character.

The *Maharal* of Prague must also have been a master of *Kabbola*, for most of the legends concerning him speak of his knowledge of the divine creation and the hidden ways of *Hashem*. The *Maharal* was credited with being a miracle worker. The most famous story is that of the *Golem* that he created out of clay and which he brought to life by the use of *Hashem's* holy name. The *Maharal* averted many calamities and blood libels through the *Golem*. Every Friday evening, he would remove the sacred amulet bearing the name of *Hashem* from the *Golem*, in order that it might not profane the *Shabbos*. When the *Golem* had performed its mission, the *Maharal* laid it away in the attic of the Prague shul. In later years, a statue of Der Hohe Rav Uwe, created by a famous Czech sculptor, was placed before the new city hall of Prague.

Few among the great men of Jewish history have been the subject of so many popular legends as Rav Yehuda *ben* Bezalel of Prague. He was said to possess great powers. One legend tells of the *Maharal* showing the emperor his far-off castle by "television". Another one tells of the *Maharal* having brought down the spirits of the twelve sons of Yaakov *Avinu* in the presence of the emperor.

But the *Maharal* has not become so revered a figure among the Jewish people because of his supernatural powers. To us, he is the man who, during one of the trying periods of Jewish history has done so much for his Jewish brethren, who was their spiritual leader and their spokesman, and

who, in his writings, has left us a wealth of deep Jewish thought and moral teachings. We do not think of the *Maharal* as the creator of the *Golem*, but rather consider the light he has brought to *Torah talmidim* and the source of inspiration and faith contained in his ethical writings.

[www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/111877/jewish/Rav-Yehuda-Loew-The-Maharal-of-Prague.htm](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/111877/jewish/Rav-Yehuda-Loew-The-Maharal-of-Prague.htm)



### **Rav Yehuda Loew: the Mahara! of Prague – the Man and the Legend**

Even until today, about four hundred years after his *petira*, few *Gedolim* capture the imagination like the *Maharal MiPrague*. Walking through the streets of the old city of Prague, you can hear the hoofbeats of long ago. Step into the Alt-Neu shul and you can vividly see the *Maharal* sitting next to the *Aron Kodesh* before your very eyes. Stand before his grave with your feet buried in six inches of snow and you still feel the heat emanating from his very alive *kever*.

Surely the emperor with whom the *Maharal* had a private audience on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of *Adar*, 5352/1592, according to his famous *talmid*, the *Tosafos Yom Tov*, was deeply impressed by him. The great astronomers of his day, including Johannes Kepler and Tycho Brahe saw him as a friend. The *Maharal's* stature among men was so great that he is the subject of many legends including that of the *Golem* of Prague. True or not, the *Maharal* is a legend for the *Torah* he taught and left for the ages.

Rav Yehuda Loew was born anywhere from 1510–1525, to a distinguished family said to trace its roots back through the *Reish Galusa* in Bavel and to Dovid *HaMelech*. His older brother, Rav Chaim *ben* Betzalel, was a *talmid* of the *Maharshah*, as well as Rav Sholom Shachne, together with the *Rema*, and was one of the great *Gedolim* of his day.

The *Maharal* was engaged to be

married at the age of fifteen. However, when his future father-in-law lost his fortune and could not keep his financial commitment, he wrote to the *Maharal* that he was free to marry anyone else he chose. The *Maharal* chose to keep his commitment and waited ten years for his *kalla* until she miraculously became wealthy, as told by the *Maharal's* son-in-law, who heard the story from the *Maharal* himself. After a soldier stole a loaf of bread from her bakery, he threw her a saddle when she begged for compensation. In the saddle were hidden gold coins.

The *Maharal* became *Rav* of Nikolsburg in Moravia and remained there for over twenty years until he came to Prague. In Prague, he started a very successful *Yeshiva* and produced two famous *talmidim*, *Rav Yom Tov Lipman Heller* (the *Tosafos Yom Tov*) and *Rav Dovid Ganz*. The *Maharal* earned the great respect of the leading *Gedolim* of his day, including the *Rema*, the *Maharshal* and the *Maharam Lublin*.

The *Maharal* believed that a child must learn the fundamentals before jumping into *Gemora*, including a strong knowledge of *Chumash* and *Mishnayos*. He set up many *Chevra Mishnayos* to restore the crown that had lost its luster. He was the driving force behind the *Tosafos Yom Tov's* groundbreaking work on *Mishnayos*. The *Maharal* is also one of the great



influences on modern Jewish thought, becoming the basis for both *Chassidic* and non-*Chassidic* philosophy and even, to an extent, *Kabbala*. The *Maharal* was said to be a great *Mekubol*, although he hid his ideas behind mundane language and avoided *Kabbalistic* terms. It is interesting to note that the *Arizal's Kabbala* had not spread to Europe yet in the days of the *Maharal*.

The *Maharal* was *niftar* on the 18<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* 5369/1609. The *Maharal* wrote a number of landmark *seforim*, including his *peirush* on *Rashi* in *Chumash*, *Gur Aryeh*; his *peirush* on *Aggoda* in *Shas*; *Derech HaChaim*, on *Pirkei Avos*; and many more. The *seforim* he wrote are the pulse of *Yiddishe Hashkofa* and give us an added dimension of life as *Hashem's* nation. Maybe that's what they meant when they said that he made a *Golem* come to life. May the light of the *Maharal* live on within us until the coming of the wonders of *Moshiach*, *Bimheira B'Yomeinu Amen!*

[www.revach.net/stories/gedolim-biographies/Rav-Yehuda-Lowy](http://www.revach.net/stories/gedolim-biographies/Rav-Yehuda-Lowy)

The-Maharal-of-Prague-The-Man-And-The-Legend/4061



### **The Young Rav Yehuda Loew Plays Child Judge Before the Ruler of the City**

In the marketplace in Prague, in side-by-side stores with adjoining walls, were stores owned by a crooked fragrance dealer and an honest oil merchant. The Jewish oil merchant had a good reputation and his business thrived, while the crooked fragrance dealer struggled to bring customers into his store.

One night, after the market was closed, the fragrance dealer drilled a small hole in the adjoining wall. He spent the next several days observing the oil merchant. He noticed that each night the oil merchant would count his daily revenue and place it into a red pouch that he would hide. This gave him an idea.

The next day he ran into the street

screaming that his money had been stolen and that he suspected the oil merchant since he was the only one who knew that he placed his money in a red pouch. Sure enough, the police found the red pouch in the store of the oil merchant. Because of their respective reputations, no one really believed the fragrance merchant, but he told a good story and a trial was set to take place.

The talk of town was the big trial and the streets were full of debate as to who was the thief. Even the children talked voraciously about the upcoming trial. The ruler was in a conundrum and didn't know who to believe.

One night before the trial, the ruler walked the streets and overheard some Jewish children playing "court". One child presided, while arguments were made by other children pretending to be the two claimants. The ruler amusedly stood by listening to the proceedings.

After hearing both sides, the young judge asked them to bring a bowl of water. "We will put the coins in the water. If oil spots come floating to the top then we know the coins were handled by the oil dealer and he is innocent. If nothing floats to the top we will know that the rightful owner is the fragrance dealer and the oil merchant is a thief."

The very next day during the real trial before a packed courtroom, after hearing both sides, the ruler asked for a bowl of water...The oil merchant was proven innocent and the plot was discovered. When all the townspeople praised the ruler for his incredible wisdom, he said, "Do not praise me but the little boy who gave me the idea."

That little boy whose name was Rav Yehuda Loew, said the Brisker Rav, is better known today as the *Maharal MiPrague*. (*Zichronam Li'Vracha/Uvdos V'Hanhagos L'Bais Brisk*)

[www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/The-Young-Yehuda-Lowe-Plays-Child-Judge-Before-The-Ruler-Of-The-City/4742](http://www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/The-Young-Yehuda-Lowe-Plays-Child-Judge-Before-The-Ruler-Of-The-City/4742)

## **Maharal MiPrague – The Magic of Turning Leah into Rochel**

*Vayehi vaboker v'hinei hi Lea* (*Vayeitzei* 29:25). After the controversial *chasuna* where Yaakov was supposed to marry Rochel, the *Torah* tells us: "When the morning came, behold it was Leah". *Rashi* adds, "But at night it was not Leah, since Yaakov gave the *simonim* to Rochel." What does this mean – at night it was not Leah? Then who was it?

The *Maharal MiPrague* tells us that from here we learn a very powerful lesson: the *Torah* is the blueprint and central power of the world. He says that the *Halocha* is that *simonim muvhokim* are *min HaTorah*. This means that although the *Chachomim* decree that



*Maharal's Seat*

we can return an *aveida* to the person who gives *simonim*, nevertheless it is still not clear that the item belongs to him without a shadow of a doubt. This can have ramifications in *Halocha* such as returning a lost *Get* (divorce document). However, when a person gives *simonim muvhokim*, perfect, detailed and unique *simonim*, the *Gemora* concludes that the item belongs to that person *Min HaTorah*, as these *simonim* are conclusive.

Since Yaakov gave Rochel *simonim muvhokim, midinei Torah* that night the *Kalla* was actually Rochel, since she presented the *simonim* that were unique to Rochel alone. It was only in the morning light, when Lea physically appeared before Yaakov, that *Min HaTorah* the *Kalla* was Lea! We can learn from this *Rashi* and the *Maharal* what it means to have *emuna* in the *Torah*.

[www.revach.net/avodah/olam-hatorah/Maharal-MiPrague-The-Magic-Of-Turning-Leah-Into-Rochel/4187](http://www.revach.net/avodah/olam-hatorah/Maharal-MiPrague-The-Magic-Of-Turning-Leah-Into-Rochel/4187)

The following story has been excerpted from the English weekly *Hamodia*, with a small supplement from an excellent biographical sketch by Ben Zion Bokser at Wellsprings.

### The Patience of the Maharal

When Rav Shmuel Shmelke Reich of Worms, who was great both in Torah and in worldly affairs, being wealthy, esteemed and close to the king, entered his daughter Perel into an engagement with the *Maharal*, Rav Yehuda was only fifteen years old. For the three years until the wedding, Rav Shmelke sent his future son-in-law to learn under the *Maharshal* in Przemysl, but in the meantime, the future father-in-law lost much of his fortune.

When the *Maharal* turned eighteen, Rav Shmelke wrote to him, explaining that he could not live up to his dowry obligations, and therefore he was releasing the *Maharal* from any obligations toward the engagement. If the young man wished to marry someone else, he was free to do so. The *Maharal* wrote back that he was not interested in going back on his word, and that he

hoped Rav Shmelke would be helped from Above.

However, if the father did not wish to keep his daughter waiting until he should

regain his wealth, he should find her another *shidduch* [match], and then the *Maharal* would know he was free.

The *mehutan* [father-in-law to be] remained poor, so much so that the *kalla* [fiancée] opened a small bakery to help her parents. And so she stayed single for ten



*Maharal's Matzeiva*

years. The *Maharal* likewise did not marry. He sat and learned, and thus earned the title "Rav Leib *Bochur*". About the *Maharal* during those years, the *Rema*, Rav Moshe Isserles, quoted the pasuk: *Harimosi bochur mei'om, motzosi Dovid avdi* – "I have raised a young *bochur* (i.e., unmarried man) from the people, I have found Dovid my servant (*Tehillim* 89:20–21)", for he was descended from Dovid *HaMelech*.

A war sprang up after those ten years and the advancing armies marched through Worms. As a cavalryman among the rear guard rode past the open window of the *kalla's* shop, he pierced one of her loaves with his spear. Perel ran after him, crying out not to steal from a poor girl who was supporting her elderly parents. The rider called back, "What can I do? I have no money and I am very hungry." But then he offered her one of the two saddles he was sitting on, and tossed it roughly into her shop.

When Perel went to pick up the saddle, she saw gold coins peeking out of the split seams. She ran to tell her parents of their good fortune, and how *Hashem's* salvation had come, and her father immediately wrote to the *Maharal* to come and marry her, since *Hashem* had miraculously helped them cover the dowry and pay for the wedding.

The marriage finally occurred in 1544. Bride and groom, according to the Loew family chronicler, Meir Perles, were then thirty-two and twenty-eight years old respectively. Their marriage was a very happy one, and they were blessed with seven children: six daughters and a son.

One of the *Maharal's* sons-in-law, Rav Yitzchok *HaKohen* Katz, later noted that his father-in-law had always refused to join a *Bais Din* asked to break off engagements because of defaulted dowries. When such cases arose, the *Maharal* always tried to persuade the parties to maintain the engagement. If that failed, he sent them to other *Dayonim* [judges].



## Rav Moshe Arye Freund, 20<sup>th</sup> of Elul

Ga'avad of the Eida HaChareidis of Yerushalayim

Rav Moshe Arye Freund, a descendant of the *Rema*, the *Maharshal*, the *Shach* and the *Bais Yosef*, was born in 5664/1904 in the Hungarian town of Honiad where his father, Rav Yisrael, served as *Av Bais Din*.

His paternal grandfather was Rav Avrohom Yehoshua Freund, the *Naszoider Rav*; his mother, Sora, was the daughter of Rav Zev Goldberger, the *Rav* of Honiad. At sixteen, he married the daughter of Rav Boruch Goldberger, who was a distant relative.

Before World War II, Rav Moshe Arye served as *Rosh Yeshiva* in Satmar. In 1944, the Nazis deported the entire family to Auschwitz, where his wife and all nine of his children died at the hands of the Nazis; only Rav Moshe Arye survived. *Hashem yinkom domom*.

In 5711/1951, Rav Moshe Arye moved to *Eretz Yisrael*, settling in Yerushalayim, where he became *Rav* of the Satmar community. He was also *Rosh Yeshiva* of the Satmar *Yeshiva*, *Yeshiva Yetev Lev* in Yerushalayim.

Following the *petira* of the Satmar *Rebbe*, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of *Av* 5739/1979, Rav Moshe Arye was elected *Rosh Av Bais Din* (*Ra'avad*) of the *Eida HaChareidis* in Yerushalayim.

When Rav Yitzchok Yaakov Weiss was *niftar* in *Sivan* 5749/1989, Rav Moshe Arye was appointed *Gaon Av Bais Din* (*Ga'avad*) of the *Eida HaChareidis*, a position he held until his *petira*.

In his later years, he was fondly known as the Yerushalayimer *Rav* and was

considered a *Rebbe*. He was close with all the *Gedolim* and all the *Admorim* of his time. He wrote *Ateres Yehoshua* on the *Torah*. Despite having Satmar leanings, Rav Moshe Arye was close with all *Gedolei HoRabbonim* and *Gedolei HaChassidus*.

Rav Moshe Arye was *niftar* on the 20<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* in the year 5756/1996 at the age of ninety-two, and buried on *Har HaZeisim*. He left no children. Numerous *mosdos* were named after him in Yerushalayim. In Beit Shemesh there is *Kiryas HaRema* (*Rema* = Rav Moshe Arye).

*Zecher Tzaddik livrocha.*

[www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-20-elulaugust-26/](http://www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-20-elulaugust-26/)



Rav Moshe Arye quoted in the name of *Tzaddikim* that to eat *kugel* after *Kiddush* and before washing for the *seuda* (after the famous *sholom bayis* story with the *Kozhnutzer Maggid*) is a *segula* for marrying off children with *harchovas hadaas* – without worrying about expenses.

It happened one Friday, that Rav Moshe Arye stepped into the kitchen where the *Shabbos* meal was being prepared. The vapors of the dishes filled the kitchen. Said Rav Moshe Aryeh, “If the women knew the powerful remedies contained in the vapor of the *Shabbos* dishes, they would not leave the kitchen all week.” (*Zemiros Ateres Yehoshua*, page 22).

(Editor: My family personally witnessed Rav Moshe Arye giving *shirayim* at his *tisch* on Friday nights from *kugel*

that was burning hot – straight from the oven – and calmly distributing it by hand even though none of the recipients could bear to hold onto the *kugel*.)



### **Being Sandek**

It was well known that the Yerushalayimer *Rav* loved doing the *mitzva* of being *sandek*. His *talmidim* always offered this *kibud* to him and merited seeing phenomenal offspring.

Once, a *talmid* who had already given the *Rav sandek* many times at the *brisos* of his previous children, asked the *Rav* if he would be *mochel* that he wanted to give the *kibud* to someone else due to the fact that this individual offered the father \$5,000 for the *kibud* [being *sandek* is a well-known *segula* for becoming wealthy].

The *Rav* replied that the *mitzva* was so dear to him that he too would pay the \$5,000 – and he did.

Editor: Once, while a family member discussed this story with Rav Yaakov Meir Schechter, *Shlit"á*, he remarked that he was the *mochel* many times when Rav Moshe Arye was *sandek* and noticed that at each *bris* Rav Moshe Arye's face shone like the sun and radiated *kedusha*. He surmised that since Rav Moshe Arye lost all his children during the Holocaust – he felt that every child for whom he was *zoche* to be *sandek* was like his own. He pronounced about Rav Moshe Arye, "A *Tzaddik* is measured by his *ahavas* Yisrael – which the Yerushalayimer *Rav* had in abundance!!"



## **Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman, 20<sup>th</sup> of Elul**

Rosh Yeshiva of Ponovezh

Rav Kahaneman was born in Kuhl, Lithuania, a small town of about three hundred residents, of whom about a third were Jews. As a young boy he attended the *Yeshiva* in Plunge led by Rav Chaim Yitzchok *HaKohen* Bloch, who is credited for cultivating Rav Kahaneman's great potential. At the age of fourteen he went to study *Talmud* at the Telshe *Yeshiva*, where he studied *Torah* until he was twenty, under the direct inspiration of Rav Eliezer Gordon, who saw his potential. Another mentor of his in Telshe at the time was Rav Shimon Shkop. He then spent half a year in Novardok *Yeshiva*, after which he spent three years in Raduń *Yeshiva* studying under the tutelage of the *Chofetz Chaim* and Rav Naftoli Trop. He married the daughter of the *Rav* of Vidzh, and became *Rav* there at the end of 1911, when his father-in-law became the *Rav* of Vilkomir (Ukmergė).

With the passing of Rav Itzele

Rabinowitz in 1919, Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman was appointed the new *Rav* of Ponovezh (Panevėžys), one of the largest centers of Jewish life in Lithuania. He was just thirty-three years old. There, he built three *Yeshivos* as well as a school and an orphanage. He was elected to the Lithuanian parliament.

All of his institutions were destroyed and many of his *talmidim* and family were killed during World War II.

Rav Kahaneman immigrated to the British Mandate of Palestine in 1940 and built Kiryat HaYeshiva ("Town of the *Yeshiva*") in Bnei Brak and *Botei Avos* orphanages. Rav Kahaneman traveled widely in the Diaspora to secure financial support for his *Yeshiva*, which he constantly improved and extended. With the help of long-time friend, Rav Moshe Okun, Rav Kahaneman succeeded, in the face of opposition, in turning the reestablished Ponovezh *Yeshiva* into one of

the largest in the world.

He sought to take care of many orphans and tried to rescue them from the clutches of secular Zionist organizations, especially the *Yaldei Tehran* (“Children of Tehran”) – children who had escaped from Nazi Europe by walking across Europe to Tehran (including the *Biala Rebbe*, Rav Ben Zion Rabinowitz).

A famous story of Rav Kahaneman involved his rescue of Jewish orphans from Catholic orphanages throughout Europe. He would go accompanied by American soldiers asking if the orphanages had any Jewish children hidden from before the war. The nuns would deny the presence of Jews. When it was time for the children to sleep, he would call out, “*Shema Yisrael*,” the Jewish declaration of faith, and the Jewish children would respond with various cries, enabling their rescue.

In contrast to the prevalent *Chareidi* opposition to Zionism, Rav Kahaneman showed some signs of support for the State of Israel. For instance, he insisted that the flag of Israel be flown outside the Ponovezh *Yeshiva* on Israel’s Independence Day (a practice still continued to this day). He also refrained from saying the *Tachanun tefilla*, a daily *tefilla* of penitence, on that day as a sign of celebration. When asked about the apparent hypocrisy for his not saying the *Hallel tefilla*, a *tefilla* of active celebration, he answered jokingly that he was following the practice of Dovid *ben* Gurion who also didn’t say *Hallel* or *Tachanun* on that day.

Following Israel’s military successes of the Six-Day War, he published an article that included the following:

My dear brothers! Can we allow ourselves to be small-minded at this great and awesome hour? Should we not be embarrassed to remain unobservant of this wondrous period, when we are surrounded by obvious miracles, and even a blind person can sense the palpable miracles...the miracles, wonders, salvations, comforts

and battles [Ed. a reference to the *Al HaNissim tefilla* recited on *Purim* and *Chanuka*], that occurred in the Holy Land and in the Holy City [Ed. of Yerushalayim] and the Temple Mount, even those who saw it with their own eyes, even those who experienced it themselves, they cannot manage to express the depths of their emotions. Perhaps one like myself who was wandering during those days among the Jewish communities in the Diaspora, is better capable of recognizing the tremendous miracles and can consider the nature of these wondrous events.

—Rav Kahaneman, *Bais Yaakov monthly*, edition 100, Elul 5727

[www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yosef\\_Shlomo\\_Kahaneman](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yosef_Shlomo_Kahaneman)



The *Rambam* writes in his *Mishne Torah (Gifts to the Poor 10:1)*: “We are obligated to be more careful about the *mitzva* of *tzedoka* than about all the other *mitzvos* of action, for *tzedoka* is a distinguishing characteristic of the descendants of Avrohom, as it is written: ‘For I have loved him because he commands his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Compassionate One to do *tzedoka* and justice’ (*Bereishis 18:19*).”

Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman *HaKohen*’s life was an example of the above teaching of the *Rambam*.

Rav Yosef Shlomo’s grandparents lived in the Lithuanian village of Kuhl, and their home was a refuge for the wandering poor, especially during the cold and bitter winters. His grandmother, Fraidel Kahaneman, would welcome her guests and remove their “poor man’s boots” – the rags they wrapped around their feet as shields from snow and rain. These putrid rags were soaked with mud and other filth, yet Fraidel would wash them and then hang them up to dry so that her guests could wear them again in the morning. This

legacy of loving-kindness and devotion was passed down to the young Yosef Shlomo, a future leader of his people.

Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman was appointed chief *Rav* of the Lithuanian town of Ponovezh after World War I, a town full of poor refugees as a result of the war. When Rav Kahaneman became the *Rav* of the town, he became known as the “Ponovezher *Rav*”. The day he took office, he began to organize the Jewish community in order to provide assistance for the victims of the war. This was a challenging assignment, as the community was divided into various factions; moreover, there was growing tension between those residents who were still loyal to the path of the *Torah* and those who had begun to stray from this path. With diplomacy, resolute leadership and a sharp focus on a common goal, he managed to persuade all the factions to unite for the common good. The Ponovezher *Rav* mobilized aid for all the needy, and the results of his efforts sustained the lives of countless individuals. He knew no rest until everyone was appropriately housed and fed. No matter what the needy person’s background, religious beliefs or allegiances, the Ponovezher *Rav* was there to provide assistance. He therefore gained the love and respect of all the Jews of Ponovezh. In fact, the *Rav*’s house became a focal point of the town, and the warmth that had glowed in his grandparents’ and parents’ homes radiated just as intensely in his hearth. Every day men and women flocked to Rav Kahaneman to ask a question, seek advice or to get some encouragement and/or comfort.

Rav Kahaneman also spearheaded the establishment of a high-quality hospital to serve all the residents of the region – Jew and non-Jew alike. He made sure that the finest medical staff was hired. According to the policy that he instituted, doctors were entitled to receive payment from those who could afford medical care, but the poor were to be treated free of

charge.

In the spirit of *Torah* law, the *Rav* insisted that the *tzedoka* funds be distributed to the needy in a respectful, dignified, and discreet manner. The recipients were always shielded from the providers, which meant employing a host of techniques to protect anonymity. A favorite method was to credit a bank account with funds that could not be traced. Most Jews in the town had relatives and friends who had immigrated to America and other lands; thus, a recipient could imagine that the money had been transferred from someone overseas, never imagining that it was of local origin. The *Rav* organized collections from the residents of the town, and even the very poor would make a contribution, for they did not want to lose an opportunity to do such an important *mitzva*. Since the *Rav* was careful to protect the privacy of each recipient, it often happened that the beneficiary of a collection would contribute to a cause without knowing that he was contributing to himself!

The *Rav* was also in charge of the *Pesach* fund, and each family was asked to give a specific amount, based on its income. One year, a wealthy man who owned a food production plant did not give the full amount that the *Rav* had set for him. The *Rav* had several conversations with the man and tried to persuade him to pay his full share. When the rich man still refused, the *Rav* warned him that if he did not give a proper contribution, the kosher certification for his food production plant would be withdrawn. The rich man did not believe that the *Rav* would publicly challenge him, and he decided to ignore the warning. The *Rav* then made a public announcement that the kosher certification was withdrawn. Shortly afterward, the man paid the full amount to the *Pesach* fund.

The rich man’s temporary rebellion was a rare event in Ponovezh, for the vast majority of the Jewish men and women of the town responded to the *Rav*’s call for

contributions with a loving and generous spirit. *Tzedoka* is a central pillar of Jewish tradition, and a major reason for the *Rav's* success was the respect that most members of the community had for Jewish tradition. This was true even among those who were no longer traditionally observant. For example, the Jewish stores in Ponovezh would be closed on *Shabbos*, and even those who were no longer keeping *Shabbos* in their homes would close their shops on this sacred day. In their public behavior, they showed respect for the *Shabbos* and other aspects of Jewish tradition.

There was one "capitalist" barber, however, who felt that making money was more important than honoring *Shabbos*. He therefore decided that his business would be open each day of the week, including *Shabbos*. The Ponovezher *Rav* understood that this public desecration of *Shabbos* would harm the spiritual atmosphere of the community, especially if some other merchants and store owners would be tempted to follow the example of this barber. For through keeping the *Shabbos*, the community acknowledges that the earth and all its resources – including the resources in our possession – belong to the Creator.

After several private appeals to the barber – which did not succeed – the *Rav* decided on a course of action. One Friday night, the *Rav* entered the barbershop and took a seat without saying a word. The few Jewish patrons who were there were too embarrassed to have their hair cut with the beloved *Rav* of the town sitting right there. The barbershop quickly emptied out, and no new customers dared enter. Defeated, the proprietor asked the *Rav* to leave so that he could close the shop, but the *Rav* was in no hurry to depart. Finally, with what appeared to be genuine contrition, the barber promised that he would never again publicly desecrate the *Shabbos*.

Before the full outbreak of World War II, the Lithuanian government was very unhappy that Jewish refugees were

entering Lithuania, and government leaders asked the Ponovezher *Rav* to travel to the United States and other countries in order to persuade these countries to issue visas to Jewish refugees. The *Rav* was given a special diplomatic passport, and the day arrived when the *Rav* had to part from his family, the *talmidim* at the *Yeshiva* he had established, and all the Jewish residents of Ponovezh. All the Jewish men, women and children of the town escorted their beloved *Rav* to the train station, and just as he was about to board, the children began to chant, "*Rebbe, Rebbe, nemt unz mit – Rebbe, Rebbe, take us along!*"

Soon the chant caught fire and everyone joined in the refrain. The *Rav* later said that this chant would stay with him forever. When the Germans invaded Lithuania, he was unable to return, and the Germans, with the help of many Lithuanians, murdered the Jews of the town, including the *Rav's* wife and children – with the exception of one son who survived.

But that is not the end of the story. The *Rav* managed to reach *Eretz Yisrael* during the war, and he immediately began to rebuild the institutions of *Torah* and *tzedoka* that were destroyed by the Germans. And when he rebuilt the Ponovezh *Yeshiva* in the city of Bnei Brak, he had the following *pasuk* carved into the front wall of the new building:

"On Mount Zion there will be a refuge, and it will be holy" (*Ovadia* 1:17)

The above stories can be found in the book *Builders* by Hanoch Teller (distributed by Feldheim: [www.feldheim.com](http://www.feldheim.com)).

[www.shemayisrael.co.il/publicat/hazon/tzedaka/Tales\\_of\\_Tzedakah-5.html](http://www.shemayisrael.co.il/publicat/hazon/tzedaka/Tales_of_Tzedakah-5.html)



### **Parshas Vayishlach: The Ponovezher Rav's Escape in the New York Subway**

On a fund-raising trip to New York

City, the *Ponevezher Rav* was accosted by a gang of teenagers on the subway. In his quick thinking, the *Ponevezher Rav* quickly pulled out a piece of paper from his pocket and “naively” asked the leader of the gang if he knew at which stop to get off for this address. Realizing that once they got off the train they would have the *Ponevezher Rav* isolated and an easier victim, he smiled, and signaled to the gang to wait patiently and politely until they got off at the stop.

When they arrived at the stop the *Ponevezher Rav* let them go off first and lingered in the doorway. As the doors closed, he quickly made his way inside the train with the stunned gang standing embarrassed on the platform outwitted by the “old man”.

When the *Ponevezher Rav* told this story to a friend, he explained that the *Ramban* says that when dealing with Eisov for all future generations one would be wise to look into *Parshas Vayishlach* since *ma’asei avos siman labonim*. In this case, he related his circumstance to that of Yaakov whom Eisov offered to “escort” to Eisav’s “den” in Se’ir. Yaakov agreed, but suggested that Eisav go ahead, which allowed Yaakov to divert his route – and he still hasn’t quite arrived. May we be *zoche* to the ultimate arrival of Yaakov in Se’ir, as the *pasuk* says (*Ovadia 1:21*): *Volu moshi'im b'har Tzion lishpot es har Eisov!*

[www.revach.net/parshas-hashavua/story/Parshas-Vayishlach-The-Ponevezher-Rovs-Escape-In-The-New-York-Subway/4831](http://www.revach.net/parshas-hashavua/story/Parshas-Vayishlach-The-Ponevezher-Rovs-Escape-In-The-New-York-Subway/4831)



### **The Ponevezher Rav Teaches the Children How to Remember Their Names on Yom HaDin**



### **Rav Eliyohu (Elya) Lopian, 20<sup>th</sup> of Elul**

#### **The Greatest Mussar Figure in our Generation**

Three times a day we daven in the *Shemone Esrei* for *Hashem's* mercy to be

One time when the *Ponevezher Rav*, Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman, came to visit the children of the orphanage, as they all gathered around him he asked them if they know why we say a *pasuk* with the first and last letters of our names at the end of the *Shemone Esrei*. One child raised his hand and answered that the *Shela HaKodosh* says it will help us remember our names when they ask us on our *Yom HaDin* in *Shomayim*.

The *Ponevezher Rav* nodded his agreement and asked another question: If our friends and teachers call us tens of times a day by our names and we still won't remember it while standing in awe and fear on *Yom HaDin*, how can we expect to remember it because of a *pasuk* that we say only three times a day?

This the children could not answer. “Listen carefully”, said the *Ponevezher Rav*. “The fear of standing on *Yom HaDin* is so great that we will forget everything, even our own names. The only things we will remember are those etched into our hearts and minds for eternity, and that is only *Torah*. Even the *pesukim* that we say at the end of the *Shemone Esrei* is *Torah*. That will remain with us even during the mind-blowing ordeal of *Yom HaDin*.”

“During our lifetimes, when preparing for *Yom HaDin*, we should make sure to fill up our bags with things that will remain with us, such as *Torah*, even in the minutest pieces. Everything else will not survive the journey, no matter how tightly we hold onto it – even our own names.”

[www.revach.net/avodah/olam-hatorah/The-Ponevezher-Rov-Teaches-The-Children-How-To-Remember-Their-Name-On-Yom-HaDin/4091](http://www.revach.net/avodah/olam-hatorah/The-Ponevezher-Rov-Teaches-The-Children-How-To-Remember-Their-Name-On-Yom-HaDin/4091)

“upon the righteous, upon the pious, upon the elders of Your people, the House of Yisrael, and upon the remnant of their sages”. Have you ever asked yourself just

who are the “remnant of their sages”? These are the Sages – the Sages of the *Torah* – that *Hashem* left from former generations in order to tell us of their predecessors, and to reflect the character of *Torah* greats of previous generations. One of these Sages was Rav Eliyohu Lopian. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of *Ehul*, 5370 (1970), at the age of nearly a hundred, he passed away in *Eretz Yisrael* at the approach of *Rosh HaShana*.

Rav Eliyohu drank from the source of the “lions” of *Mussar*: Rav Yitzchok Blazer of Saint Petersburg, Rav Simcha Zissel Ziv of Kelm and Rav Naphtali Amsterdam, the main *talmidim* of Rav Yisrael Salanter, the father of the *Mussar* movement.

Rav Eliyohu was born to Rav Yaakov in the city of Graibe (near Lomza) around the year 5632 (1872). He studied in the Lomza *Yeshiva*, which was founded by Rav Eliezer Shulevitz, one of Rav Yisrael Salanter’s young *talmidim*.

Rav Eliyohu married the daughter of Rav Yitzchok Dovid Weinmacher (“the winemaker”), a famous *Tzaddik* from Lomza. Under the influence of his father-in-law and Rav Eliezer Shulevitz, Rav Eliyohu left for Kelm, the residence of Rav Simcha Zissel, the man of *Mussar* who founded the great *Talmud Torah* from which the most renowned *Mussar* figures of the previous generations emerged. He stayed many years in Kelm and devoted himself to the *Mussar* of his great *Rav*, which he spread everywhere he went. At first this was in the small city of Kelm, then in England, and finally in *Eretz Yisrael* during the latter part of his life.

Rav Eliyohu founded a *Yeshiva* in Kelm for the young, and there he educated many *talmidim* in *Torah* and *Mussar*. Even until today, his remaining *talmidim* evoke his name with great reverence. One of his first *talmidim*, who is now an elderly man, recounted that to this day the melody of his *Rav*’s voice still echoes in his ears when he sings the *pasuk* “By Dovid, a *michtam*,

when he fled from Shaul in the cave” (*Tehillim* 57:1). *Pesukim* such as these from the Book of *Tehillim*, which Rav Eliyohu recited with sighs and tears, have accompanied him his entire life.

For various reasons, Rav Eliyohu left Kelm and went to live in England. He founded *Etz Chaim Yeshiva* in London and there, as in Kelm, he never ceased his study of *Mussar*. He strived with all his might to educate a generation of youngsters in England according to his approach. Jews who came to the British capital would often visit the *Yeshiva*, but when their feet crossed its threshold they forgot all the commotion that rang out from the great city, and instead felt that they were in Kelm. In London, as in Kelm, Rav Eliyohu’s home was open to all who wished to enter. The *talmidim* of the *Yeshiva* often ate at his table, to the extent that they stayed in the presence of their *Rav*’s shadow for a large part of the day. Rav Eliyohu remained in England for twenty-four years, educating an amazing generation in *Torah* and *Mussar*.

Near the end of his life, Rav Eliyohu departed for *Eretz Yisrael*, where he spent the remainder of his days in the *Knesses Chizkiyohu Yeshiva* in the rural city of *Kfar Chassidim*. There he accomplished amazing things, taking special care to get closer to those youngsters who were far from his path and approach. He devoted himself intensely to the *Tzabarim*, who spoke Hebrew and wore knitted *kippos*, and exerted a great influence on them through the purity of his mind and his method of *Mussar*. Many of these youngsters left their lives of comfort in their parents’ homes to follow their elderly *Rav* and warm themselves by the light of his *Torah*. The *Tzabarim* became attached to him with every fiber of their beings and cherished him heart and soul. Even near the end of his life, he was sensitive to every individual *talmid*, discerning what bothered each of them, recognizing which

ones truly feared *Hashem*, knowing who elevated themselves in the rungs of holiness, and worrying over each like he was his own son.

One story has it that a young *talmid* from a *Yeshiva* in Yerushalayim came to visit him in *Kfar Chassidim*. After *tefillos* he approached Rav Eliyohu and said, “*Shalom Aleichem*.” In the ensuing conversation the young man explained to Rav Eliyohu that he had come from Yerushalayim with the intention of staying until Thursday. On Friday morning as Rav Eliyohu went to *daven*, he saw that the young man was still at the *Yeshiva*. He invited him to his home, and there he asked him what his intentions were with respect to *Shabbos*. The young man replied, “I made some friends here and found the atmosphere very enjoyable, so I’ve decided to stay until after *Shabbos*.” Upon hearing this, Rav Eliyohu got up, went toward his closet, and took out a clean, white undershirt. He then said to him, “You didn’t plan on staying for *Shabbos*, so you certainly didn’t bring a change of clothes with you. Take this undershirt and some undergarments for *Shabbos*.”

Another story has it that Rav Eliyohu once went to see the *Gaon* Rav Yitzchok Zev of Brisk in Yerushalayim. He sat down and gazed into the Brisker *Rav*’s face, with the Brisker *Rav* looking at him as well, and they exchanged a few words. When Rav Eliyohu left, the *Gaon* of Brisk said to his sons and *talmidim*, “Did you see him? That was Rav Yisrael Salanter’s intention when he founded the *Mussar* movement.”

When Rav Eliyohu traveled to the United States, all the *Yeshivos* invited him to speak to their *talmidim*. His words made a profound impression on them, for they emanated from a pure heart and thus entered the hearts of his listeners. He was a dynamic speaker who knew how to inspire his audiences.

Rav Eliyohu lived almost a hundred years. Multitudes of Jews followed his funeral procession, and the greatest *Roshei Yeshiva* of *Eretz Yisrael* gave eulogies for him. His grave was dug at the summit of the Mount of Olives in Yerushalayim. With the passing of Rav Eliyohu, a powerful figure disappeared from our ranks, the last of his kind in our generation.

Rav Eliyohu left behind sons who became great in *Torah*, men who have served as *Roshei Yeshiva* in a variety of places. He saw his grandchildren and great-grandchildren all walking in the ways of *Hashem*, and in their lives they perpetuated his ways.

[www.hevratpinto.org/tzadikim\\_eng/002\\_rabbi\\_eliyahu\\_lopian.html](http://www.hevratpinto.org/tzadikim_eng/002_rabbi_eliyahu_lopian.html)



### **A Man and his Money**

Rav Elya Lopian (*Lev Eliyohu Parshas Tzav*) says that when *Chazal* warn us that even on our dying day the *Yetzer Hora* will not leave us alone, they meant it, literally. He relates the following true story:

A respected man with many fine traits was lying on his deathbed. This fine person’s only weakness was his desire for money. When it came to money, he left his respectability behind.

When his friends came to part with him for the very last time, they saw him whispering something with his last drop of strength. They realized that he was trying to tell them something, so they bent over closely to listen. “I want to tell you something so that you can learn a lesson from me,” he said to them. “I feel that I am close to my end and very soon I will leave this world. Despite my plight, if someone were to offer me money now, I would stretch my hand out and take it and put it under my pillow. This is the extent that my desire for money rules over me even now. Listen to me and learn!”

Only fifteen minutes later the man

returned his *neshoma* to his Creator and left the material world, separated from money forever.

[www.revach.net/avodah/middos/Rav-Elya-Lopian-Until-Death-Do-Us-Part/5280](http://www.revach.net/avodah/middos/Rav-Elya-Lopian-Until-Death-Do-Us-Part/5280)



### **Rav Eliyohu Lopian Feeds the Cat**

One day in *Yeshiva Kfar Chassidim*, the *almona* of the late *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Noach Shimanovich, went down to the storage room together with one of the *bochurim* to bring up some supplies for the kitchen. While they were in the storage room, they heard suspicious noises. When Rebbetzin Shimanovich asked the *bochur* what the source of the scurrying noises were, he told her that the *bochurim* had spotted mice on several occasions. Rebbetzin Shimanovich was aghast at this news, and asked the *bochurim* to find a solution to the problem. The *bochurim* located a cat that would hopefully take care of the burgeoning mice population in the *Yeshiva*.

A few weeks late, the *Gaon* Rav Eliyohu Lopian was walking around the *Yeshiva* building on his daily walk accompanied by a *bochur*. They were discussing words of *Torah* when they suddenly ran into the *Yeshiva* cat. Rav Eliyohu was surprised – this was the first time he had seen a cat on the *Yeshiva* grounds.

“Whose cat is this?” inquired Rav Lopian. The *bochur* explained that the cat had been brought to the *Yeshiva* to curtail the mice problem.

Rav Lopian inquired further, “And who feeds her?”

The *bochur* answered, “What do you mean? She has plenty of food – she eats the mice. We don’t need to bring her food.”

Rav Lopian answered, “I don’t understand. If she does her job well, and scares off the mice, she won’t have anything left to eat! We surely have to

provide her with food.”

Rav Lopian then entered his apartment and brought out a bowl of milk. He said to the *bochur*, “When you want one of *Hashem’s* creations to serve you and work for you, you need to provide it with food. This is an explicit *mitzva* in the *Torah*: “And I will put grass in your fields for your cattle – and you will eat...” (*Le’orom Neileich*)

[www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/Rav-Eliyahu-Lopian-Feeds-The-Cat/3915](http://www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/Rav-Eliyahu-Lopian-Feeds-The-Cat/3915)



### **Rav Eliyohu Lopian’s Strange Conversation with Rebbetzin Kook**

Rav Elya used to visit Teverya regularly during a certain period when he was involved in establishing a *Yeshiva* there. From time to time, he would visit Rav Refoel Kook, the *Rav* of Teverya.

On one occasion, Rav Lopian came to visit Rav Kook; the *Rebbetzin* answered the door and apologized that Rav Kook was not at home. Despite this, Rav Lopian entered the house and engaged the *Rebbetzin* in a lengthy conversation about the *Assora Harugei Malchus* (ten Jewish martyrs, murdered by the Romans). The *Rebbetzin* was quite surprised that Rav Lopian was sitting and talking with her, and could not understand why he was specifically discussing the *Assora Harugei Malchus*.

A short time later, her husband, Rav Refoel, passed away, and the *Rebbetzin* became an *almona* (widow). Sadly, her mourning was compounded shortly after when her son and his family were involved in a terrible car accident. Her son, Rav Shlomo, his wife, and three of their children were killed in this horrible tragedy.

During the *shiva*, the *Rebbetzin* suddenly remembered the conversation with Rav Lopian on the *Assora Harugei Malchus*. Unfortunately, she now

understood the reason for this topic, but she also gleaned strength from Rav Lopian's words to overcome her great sorrow. She sadly murmured, "You have comforted me, Rav Eliyohu, you have

comforted me." (She'al Avicha Veyaged'cha)

www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/Rav-Eliyahu-Lopians-Strange-Conversation-With-Rebbitzen-Kook/2886



Say it (especially with your children) at least once a day:

Based on *Chovos HaLevavos* - Duties of the Heart ~ *Sha'ar HaBitachon* - the Gate of Trust

There are 7 qualities that *Hashem* has that can strengthen our trust in Him:

1. *Hashem* loves me.
2. *Hashem* is with me, wherever I may be. And He is always ready to help me.
3. *Hashem* is stronger and cleverer than anyone in the world. And He can find solutions to any problem there is – even if it may seem impossible.
4. *Hashem* knows what is best for me, better even than I myself can know.
5. Just as He has helped me already numerous times on the path I travel, He shall help me again.
6. No one can do anything at all to help me or harm me, besides *Hashem* who controls everything over the entire world.

The Master of the World desires and searches for ways to act with *chesed* – loving kindness more than the nicest, kindest person you could ever imagine.



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

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

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

(מתוך אמונה טהורה) בדרך המסורה (והתנהגה כאשה כשרה) לכל משפחתה,  
היא הודה היא הדרה - נקיה וטהורה היוצר וצר צורה (וקיבלה הגזירה)  
נפטרה בש"ט בת תשעים שנה ביום כ"ד לחודש כסלו (ערב חנוכה)  
שנת תשע"ח לפ"ק

תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה ותקים לתחייה לקץ הימין מהרה תנצ"ב'ה'

# Zera Shimshon



## Ki Seitzei

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

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

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

The following is his passionate request to learn his works.

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

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

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

לזכר נשמת

רבינו שמשון חיים בן רב נחמן מיכאל זצ"ל

בעל הזרע שמשון זיע"א

ויה"ר שיתקיימו בנו ברכותיו של אותו צדיק

למען ייטב לך והארכת ימים (כב' ז')

*So that it will be good for you and you will prolong your days (22:7)*

The Gemara says (Kiddushin 39b), that R' Yaakov explains this passuk to be referring to reward in the world that is entirely good and forever long, meaning, that reward for keeping the mitzvos does not garner reward in this world only the next.

The Zera Shimshon asks (Avos 4:19), that the Torah in numerous places promises physical reward for the fulfillment of Hashem's commandments (Parshas Bechukosai, Eikev). As well, the Gemara says (Gittin 12a), that only a master can tell his slave that he has to work without compensation. However, the Jewish people, when they learn Torah, are referred to as free people (Avos 6:2), therefore, they should have the right to expect reward, even in this world, as numerous other pessukim seem to imply? Another Gemara (Kesubos 50a), clearly says that according to the Sages, based on one's good deeds, a person can merit a longer life in this world? This would mean the R' Yaakov's interpretation of the passuk argues on the general opinion of the Sages regarding receiving reward in this world and therefore, the halacha should follow the opinion of the Sages?

The Zera Shimshon explains that in all the places that the Jewish people are promised reward in return for fulfilling the mitzvos, in reality, it is not reward that they are being promised, it is Hashem acting as a father would - giving His children extras, just to make them happy. Thus, when Hashem says that He will give us good in return for our keeping of His mitzvos, it is like a father who is happy with his son, and gives him extras to show him how happy he is with him, but it is not reward.

According to this, R' Yaakov and the Sages are not arguing. R' Yaakov is talking about the ultimate reward for the mitzvos which will only be awarded in the world to come and the Sages are referring to when a person does what Hashem wants, he can merit gifts of love from Hashem in this world, but not actual reward.

The difference between the two would be that actual reward is owed to a person. Therefore, even if he were to sin after doing mitzvos, he would still have a right to his reward. And if Hashem were to reward one in this world for his deeds, regardless of one's sins, he would still be deserving of his reward in this world. However, if Hashem does not pay one back in this world for his deeds (as is in fact the case), rather, when someone fulfills Hashem wishes and acts as a son would towards his father, Hashem in return, 'acts' in the same way. He gifts His son with bonuses out of love. If this person were to sin, then he would forfeit these extra gifts, since they are not reward that one is due for his mitzvos but are actually extras given to reciprocate Hashem's happiness to one who acts as His child. Therefore, unlike earned reward, sinning would make one lose this status and in turn, lose these extras.

With this, the Toldos Shimshon offers a new explanation to the Gemara that says (Sota 21a), that a sin can extinguish a mitzva. The Gemara does not mean that when one sins, he loses the reward for the mitzvos he did. What the Gemara means is that by sinning, one forfeits the perks he would have received for acting as a son to Hashem, since by sinning he loses that status. But the actual reward for his mitzvos he will not lose even if he sins.

הוקדש לעילוי נשמת מלכה בת הרב נחום ישראל ע"ה

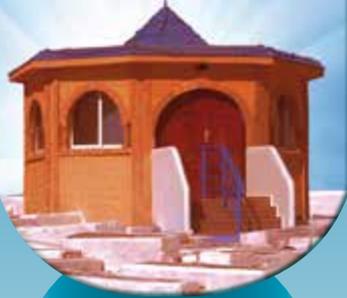
**Do not read on Shabbos:** In honor of the Zera Shimshon's 240th Yortzeit, we have published a (English) Sefer, 'Zera Shimshon on the Torah' (almost 400 pages), **including an unprecedented biography on the Zera Shimshon**. Available at Lulu.com by the title above. For those that cannot access the web, call 1844.212.0689 and ask for 'Zera Shimshon on the Torah', ISBN 978-0-359-85606-0.

לזכות חיים דוד בן מייבא חוה להצלחה  
וסייעתא דשמיא בכל מעשה ידיו וכל  
הענינים  
לרפואה שלימה חיים שאול בן רחל לאה  
לזכות זיווג הגון בקרוב לאה בת שרה  
חנה, רינה ברכה בת שרה חנה  
לרפואה שלימה יוסף יהושע בן קרעסיל  
הענא בתוך שאר חולים  
לזכות טובי אשר דוד בן שרה וגאלדא  
בת שרה צפורה וחיים בן גאלדא וכל  
משפחתם לכל מילי דמיטב. לזכות  
טובי יעקב בן אברהם

Ki Teitzei

September 14<sup>th</sup> 2019  
14<sup>th</sup> of Elul 5779

817



Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

# Pachad David

Published by Mosdot "Orot Chaim U'Moshe" in Israel

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

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



MASKIL LEDAVID

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

## When a Man and Woman Merit – the Shechina Rests Between Them

**"Remember what Amalek did to you, on the way, when you were leaving Egypt"** (Devarim 25:17)

Why did the Torah command us to remember the deeds of Amalek and annihilate them? What is the reason for the great anger against them? This command also includes many expressions of remembering, "Remember what Amalek did to you" and several verses later it repeats "you shall not forget!" This is something that we don't find with other mitzvot.

To understand this, we will digress to discuss marital harmony. To our great distress, from time to time we hear about Jewish homes where harmony is, unfortunately, a long-forgotten concept and in place, arguments and disagreements are their daily lot. From the frequency of these situations, it unfortunately, seems to be a natural part of life, as if we can say that there are couples that get on well and others that are not so suitable...

However, if we give the matter the correct consideration, it seems that this strife and baseless hatred that sometimes rest in a person's home, does not really have any justification, since when they first became acquainted with each other, there were definite positive feelings between them, and when they stood under the chuppah, the chatan considered his kallah as being the epitome of all good qualities and perfection and the kallah, in turn, looked at her chatan as an upright person, crowned with all good traits. So how did the wheel suddenly turn with hatred taking the place of love and instead of peace, friction and distance stand between them to the extent that each one wishes for the other's disgrace r"l? How does this come about?

In order to explain this, we will quote the Chazal (Yebamot 62b): "Rabbanan said, one who loves his wife as his own self and honors her more than himself, the verse says about him "Then you will call and Hashem will respond; you will cry out and He will say, 'Here I am!'" (Yeshaya 58:9)

However, there are those who are mistaken in their understanding of the definition of "loving her as his own self". In their innocence, they assume that the wife has to behave like as they do, and just as they neglect taking care of themselves and their outer appearance is unkempt and not respectable and they don't pay attention that the way they dress should be presentable, clean and tidy – so too they imagine that their wives should also behave as they do and manage with a few inexpensive and plain clothes. They see no need for her to adorn herself and make herself look pleasant for her husband. Due to this, he is stingy with her requirements and does not give her what she requests. This husband must realize that it is a terrible mistake and he is not acting in accordance with the Torah. This was not the Torah's intention when laying down the commandment, "love her as yourself". The opposite is, in fact, true – it is

the husband's obligation to consider his wife's feelings, for it is natural for a woman to take care of herself and wish to appear pleasant for her husband. She appreciates an organized and tidy home, therefore her husband must understand this need and make sure that she has whatever she needs, and buy her respectable and nice clothing to the extent that he can afford so that she can look good. On the contrary – it is the husband's obligation to behave in this way too. He should also dress respectably and pleasantly and take care that he looks tidy and put together so that his wife should be happy with him and not have complaints. If he takes care of himself, she will look at him as an honorable person who respects himself and, in this way, peace will reign in their home.

We find that several of the Gedolim of previous generations would dress in a most distinguished manner and they also owned beautiful homes. When one of the great Ashkenazic Rabbis came to visit the Chief Rabbi of Turkey, Rabbeinu Chaim Palag'i zya"á, he was disturbed by elaborate décor of his home. Do not Chazal compare this world to a corridor? Where is the justification for investing in a temporary and passing world? How is it permissible for such a great talmid chacham to behave with a show of honor?! Rabbeinu Chaim Palag'i explained his view: "Chazal tell us that if a man and woman merit, the Shechina rests between them. This being the case, my private home is a resting place for the Holy Shechina, therefore how can I not adorn and glorify Hashem's house as is fitting for a king's palace?"

This should serve as a lesson for us to take care of the way we present ourselves. Our clothing should be clean and respectable and we shouldn't dress in a negligent and unkempt manner. When a wife is faced with virtuous conduct and good manners, she will certainly rejoice with her husband and respect him. Harmony will reign between them and the Shechina will rest in their home.

Now we can understand why the Torah was so stringent with Amalek and demands of us to annihilate all their descendants. The reason why we are commanded never to forget their despicable ways is since Amalek tried to disturb the marital harmony that was present between Yisrael and their Father in Heaven. He wished to cool off the love and warmth that was planted in the Jewish people's hearts towards Hashem, and as if put a barrier between the chatan – Hashem, and the kallah – Knesset Yisrael. The marital bond that was constantly renewed between them was cooled off and weakened because of the war of Amalek. This danger continues for all future generations, until the coming of Mashiach, when the love and closeness that we enjoyed with Hashem, as we experienced when standing by Har Sinai, will once again return.

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## Hilula

14 – Rabbi Mordechai Bardugo

15 – Rabbi Amram Ben Divan

16 – Rabbi Moshe Pardo

17 – Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Perlow

18 – Rabbi Abdallah Somech

19 – Rabbi Bechor Ahron Alnakaveh

20 – Rabbi Eliyahu Lapian



## Walking in their Ways

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

### An Inspiring Vacation

The word vacation did not exist in the home of Moreinu's parents in Mogador, Morocco. People would often frequent this resort town for relaxation, but Rabbi David's father, the holy tzaddik Rabbi Moshe Aharon Pinto zy" a, never spoke about going on vacation. Only after thirty years, when the children were grown, did the concept of vacation enter their lexicon.

At the end of one year, which had proven extremely stressful to Moreinu shlita on account of his numerous public commitments, he was very exhausted. His friends and relatives recommended a break from his holy work. A vacation in Montreal was planned for Moreinu and his family.

Moreinu flew to Montreal for a vacation, but Hashem had other plans for him. Even there, he continued in his holy mission of encouraging others in their Avodat Hashem. Although the Rav was meant to relax and recharge his batteries, as soon as the Jewish community in Montreal heard about his coming, they invited him to speak and inspire the public. The pre-arranged rest of three weeks morphed into three weeks crowded with speaking engagements, one-on-one audiences, and lectures throughout Canada.

But Hashem protects the steps of His devout ones. During his visit to Montreal, Moreinu himself was greatly inspired.

He felt energized by witnessing how his speeches had influenced the community so positively. Many Jews undertook to observe Shabbat and wear tzitzit, and women accepted upon themselves taharat hamishpachah. A huge wave of teshuvah washed over the community.

Many residents of Montreal hail from Morocco. They still remember the tzaddik, Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zy" a, Moreinu's grandfather. They were able to retell stories of his greatness, which helped reinforce the atmosphere of faith in Montreal.

After Moreinu returned to his home and his daily obligations, he had the following afterthought to relate: Never had he experienced such relaxation in his entire life. True relaxation which was entirely spiritual elevation! When a person feels his spirit connecting to the Ribbono Shel Olam, it is the greatest possible pleasure for both body and soul.

## The Haftarah

"Sing out, O barren one who has not given birth" (Yeshaya 54)

The connection to Shabbat: This Haftarah is the fifth of the seven special 'Haftarot of Comfort' that are read starting with the Shabbat following Tisha B'Av. They are chapters of comfort for the Jewish people.



## Guard Your Tongue

### Losing One's Job

If a person knows that by not revealing someone's secret, he will suffer a great loss, for example, he is a hired worker and if he keeps quiet he will be fired from his job and will no longer have a source of income with which to support his family, nevertheless it is forbidden for him to divulge the information. As with all other transgressions, a person is required to give up everything rather than transgress.



## Words of our Sages

### Who Qualifies as a Suitable Teacher?

**"...who does not hearken to the voice of his father and the voice of his mother"** (Devarim 21:18)

The Gaon Rabbi Eliyahu Abba Shaul shlita, says that his father, Chacham Ben Zion zya" a, would often repeat that with regards to chinuch, sometimes one must behave in a soft manner and at other times with firmness. He would say that "the left pushes away and the right brings closer" will only be successful if parents and educators remember that in addition to being your children or students, they are the children of Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov and are thus deserving of special treatment! Therefore, it is of paramount importance to discover and develop each child's natural strengths and assign him responsibilities that he enjoys. One must encourage the child, believe in him and help him develop his potential, whether in a soft or firm manner.

Believing in a child is very successful if the parent or teacher constantly keeps in mind that this child is not simply the son of so and so, but he is the only child of Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov. With this way of thinking his entire approach and way of looking at the child will change, and the same things that he would do for him without much thought, he will now perform with awe and extra special success.

"I am often approached for advice by the menahelim of Talmudei Torah and Yeshivot Ketanot, that were established by my esteemed father Hagaon Rabbi Ben Zion zt"l, and I try to advise and guide them about choosing a maggid shiur or Rebbi. They wish to know if it is important to look for someone who excels in presenting a shiur and has exceptional talent in clarifying ideas. I tell them an important foundation that I heard from my father zt"l: In Kriyat Shema we say, "And these matters that I command you today shall be upon your heart. You shall teach them thoroughly to your children and you shall speak of them while you sit in your home, while you walk on the way, when you retire and when you arise" (Devarim 6:6-7). There seems to be a difficulty here- what is the connection between "You shall teach

them thoroughly to your children", from where we derive the commandment to teach our students Torah, to the continuation of the verse that talks about "while you walk on the way, when you retire and when you arise"?

From here we can learn an important lesson: When it comes to choosing a Rebbi to teach students Torah, one's emphasis should not be on clear rhetoric, or on one who is known for his novel Torah insights, but instead one should look for an individual who personifies, "And these matters that I command you today shall be upon your heart...and you shall speak of them while you sit in your home, while you walk on the way..." One who is a true example of this commandment is someone fitting to be a Rav.



## Pearls of the Parshah

### The Task of a Jew; Battle - Not Victory

*"When you will go out to war" (Devarim 21:10)*

There is a story told about a Jew who went to visit the "Tiferet Shlomo' zt"l, for he felt that he had reached his limits and no longer had the strength to continue fighting against his evil inclination. "Just yesterday", he explained, "I exerted myself to rise to the challenge and Hashem helped me to overcome him, yet once again, today, he ensnared me in his net.

The 'Tiferet Shlomo' responded with an important foundation that we are obligated to repeat to ourselves constantly:

The verse does not say "when you will go out to be victorious", but "when you will go out to war". The reason is that Hashem desires not victory- but battle, even if this means that one stands up in confrontation one's entire life!

### The Segulah of Tzitzit

*"You shall make for yourselves twisted threads on the four corners of your garment with which you cover yourself" (Devarim 22:12)*

The sefer 'Zechira' quotes several fascinating ideas concerning the mitzvah of tzitzit.

The word 'ציצית' (tzitzit) is an acronym for 'צדיק יפריד ציציותיו תמיד' (a righteous person takes care that his tzitzit strings stay separated) and this separation is meaningful according to sod (the secrets of the Torah).

The mitzvah of tzitzit requires great caution since a severe punishment awaits one who is negligent in this commandment.

When a person recites the blessing, 'להתעטף בציצית' ("to wrap ourselves in tzitzit"), he should have in mind that the first letter of each word (לב) has the numerical value of thirty-two corresponding to the thirty-two strings of the tzitzit, and this is a segulah that one's teeth should not hurt him (a person has thirty-two teeth).

One must be careful not to cut the tzitzit with a knife, rather one should cut them with ones' teeth, for a person has thirty-two teeth.

It is told in the name of the Arizal that one who passes the tzitzit in front of his eyes when reciting Kriyat Shema, is promised that he will not become blind, and one who constantly looks at his tzitzit will merit receiving the Shechina. It is also beneficial for achieving great revelations and brings one to fear of G-d.

Looking at the corner of the tzitzit is also good for removing anger – 'כנף' (corner) has the same numerical value as 'כעס' (anger).

Due to the above reasons, once a child reaches three years of age, he starts to wear tzitzit for this causes a holy spirit to rest on him.

### Hashem Walks In front of Us

*"So that He will not see a shameful thing among you and turn away from behind you" (Devarim 23:15)*

When one shows a guest to the table, one walks in front of him to show him to his place.

When taking an offender to prison, the guard walks behind him, to prevent him from escaping.

If so, writes Rabbi Shaul Natanson, when Am Yisrael follow in the way of Hashem, Hashem walks in front of them.

But when they sin, He walks behind them, therefore we are warned "so that He will not see a shameful thing among you and turn away from behind you" – we should not cause Hashem Yitbarach to walk behind us.

## Treasures

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



### A Jew is Obligated to Study All Sections of Torah

"If a man will have a wayward and rebellious son, who does not hearken to the voice of his father and the voice of his mother" (Devarim 21:18)

The Gemara tells us (Sanhedrin 71a): "There never was a rebellious son and there never will be. So why is this section included in the Torah? So that we can be rewarded for delving into the matter."

This Gemara is most perplexing as our Holy Torah is wider than the sea, containing numerous sections and even if a person would live for a thousand years, this will not suffice for him to study the entire Torah. If so, we do not need to delve into an additional section to receive a reward as there is no lack of what to study within the Torah.

A possible explanation could be that as we know, there are two goals in learning Torah. One is to study Torah so that we will be able to fulfill, to learn about the commandments and laws in order to know how to behave. A second purpose is that the actual studying of Torah is a mitzvah and even if one would be familiar with the entire Torah, one would still be obligated to study Torah.

In answer to our question, there are sections in the Torah that are not possible for a person to fulfill. Even if one is not a Rav, this is not an exemption from studying the laws of Gittin and Kiddushin (laws relating to marriage and divorce), or the laws concerning Kohanim if one is not a Kohen. Every person is obligated to learn all sections of the Torah, for a person has 248 limbs corresponding to the number of positive commandments. Even though a person who is missing one finger or limb can still live, nevertheless, he is considered a ba'al mum since he is not perfect.

So too with Torah, even if a person learns all the laws that are applicable to him and are possible for him to actually fulfill, nevertheless if he leaves out certain sections of the Torah he is considered as being a spiritual ba'al mum. This section of the rebellious son comes to teach us this lesson. It was not included in the Torah for practical application, but simply for the goal of delving into it and receiving reward for this study. This lesson applies to the entire Torah; we are obligated to study both the sections that apply to our lives and also those that are not relevant.



# "LET HER BE PRAISED"

Portrayal of the True 'Eshet Chayil'  
In memory of Rabbanit Mazal Madeleine Pinto

**קָמוּ בָנֶיהָ וַיְאָשְׁרוּהָ בְעֵלָהּ וַיְהַלְלָהּ**

**"Her children have risen and praised her; her husband and he extolled her"**

From the hesped that Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, Hagaon Hat-zaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto shlita gave for his late mother, the Rabbanit a"h, it was apparent that her utter sacrifice for the sake of Torah learning and her children's chinuch was like a scarlet thread woven throughout her remarkable life. "Indeed, "Her husband's heart relies on her" and "her light was not snuffed out by night". She shouldered the entire burden of the home, from beginning to end, including raising her children in the path of Torah and taking care of all their needs. In this way, our father zt"l was left undisturbed to dedicate himself to serving Hashem, free of the burden of material worries which would necessitate him having a connection with the material world."

Moreinu shlita quoted from the parsha of that week, where it says, "Behold! I send an angel before you to protect you on the way, and to bring you to the place that I have made ready" (Shemot 23:20). This is a description of what happens when a person arrives in the Next world – he is afraid that all kinds of prosecutors will come and grab his merits and prevent him from reaching the chupah that was built for him with the good deeds that he performed in this world. Therefore, Hashem says to us- don't worry! "Behold! I send an angel before you to protect you on the way", I will send an angel to walk in front of you, to protect you from the prosecutors, and he will take care "to bring you to the place that I have made ready", to the place that you prepared for yourself in the World of Truth from the power of your good deeds.

"This angel most certainly accompanied our pious mother, our dear Ima who was so devoted to us, who raised us and took care of us, who instilled in us good middot and derech erez, Ima who sacrificed herself for the sake of our Torah education by taking leave of us and sending us far away to a foreign land, young boys all alone, separated by borders and oceans. The reason was not a shortage of food in our home or other material lack, for we had everything that we needed and we were happy.

It was simply her deep desire and love for Torah that gave her the strength to do this so that we should merit growing in Torah and yirat shamayim."

The verse "Her children have risen and praised her" is an apt description of the late Rabbanit a"h, as she clearly merited. Indeed, "She merited an enormous amount, she merited seeing children and grandchildren following in the path of Torah and mitzvot and establishing institutions of Torah and chessed in all corners of the globe. Her offspring are praised by all and this is her "crown of a good name that surpasses (all the three crowns)".

"Her husband and he extolled her"

The Gaon Rabbi Moshe Shteinman shlita tells over about his mother Rabbanit Tamar a"h, that from the day she arrived in Eretz Yisrael, she no longer agreed to continue teaching students as she did in chutz la'aretz, despite being highly sought after. What was her reason? It seems that she decided that here in this Land her role was to stand at her husband's side!

"Did I ever disturb his learning? Prevent him from giving over his shiurim? Never!"

This was a rare personal testimony from the Rabbanit a"h. Indeed, her family all knew that she never disturbed the schedule or shiurim of the Rosh Yeshiva, Maran Harav Ahron Yehuda Leib Shteinman zt"l. Not only this, but she never asked him to go to the store or other errands, she took care of everything so that his learning should not be interrupted.

One afternoon, she fell at home and broke her leg. Despite being in extreme pain, she nevertheless continued lying on the floor without letting a sound out of her mouth. Why this self-control? The Rosh Yeshiva's Chumash shiur was about to start and if the participants would become aware of her serious condition, this would certainly disturb the shiur. Only once the shiur came to an end did she allow herself to cry out for help!

Even when she was in a precarious state of health, she allowed Maran the Rosh Yeshiva to go abroad with sacrificial devotion, to give encouragement to the French diaspora and act on behalf of the Torah institutions and yeshivot in that country.

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