

ME'OROS HA'TZADDIKIM

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

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)



PARSHAS VAYEIRA



❖ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ❖

Reach Ever Higher

Rav Levi Yitzchok often spent considerable time raising money for charitable causes. He would journey from city to city and from village to village to collect donations large and small until he achieved the goal he had set for himself.

On one of his charitable travels, he was encountering very little success, and he began to feel discouraged. Here he was spending a great deal of time and effort that could have been invested into *Torah* and *tefilla*, and he had precious little to show for his efforts. Perhaps he would have been better off to have stayed at home. He had certainly made a tremendous effort, and if he had not yet succeeded, maybe it was time to go back to Berditchev.

These thoughts passed through his mind as he entered a small village, but the sounds of scuffles and angry shouts pulled him from his reverie. Two police officers were dragging a man through the village square. The police were raining blows down on the man's head and shoulders, and the man was screaming at them to let him go.

A crowd had gathered to watch, and one of the bystanders explained to Rav Levi Yitzchok that the man was a Jewish thief and that he had been caught red-handed by the police. Determined to make an example of him, the police proceeded to deliver a harsh thrashing to the thief in the village square in full view of all the villagers who had gathered to watch. They beat and kicked him mercilessly until he was covered with bruises, contusions and blood.

Then they dragged him into the constabulary and threw him into a cell.

It pained Rav Levi Yitzchok to witness the suffering of a fellow Jew, even a thief. As soon as the crowd dispersed, he went into the constabulary and asked to see the prisoner. Impressed by his distinguished appearance, the police granted his request and led him to the prisoner in his cell.

“Is there anything I can do for you?” asked Rav Levi Yitzchok.

“No,” said the thief. “It looks bad, but I’ll survive. Thank you anyway.”

“It hurts me just to look at you, my son. Think about it, you’ve brought all this upon yourself. If you didn’t steal other people’s property, this never would have happened to you. Anyway, I hope you’ve learned your lesson. It’s time you repented and turned away from your evil ways.”

The thief chuckled. “Not so fast, *Rav*. You’re getting ahead of yourself. I’m not quite ready to retire yet. Stealing is my livelihood, and I’m actually pretty good at it. Today, they caught me, and I had to suffer the consequences. Tomorrow, I’ll try again, and this time I’ll succeed.”

Rav Levi Yitzchok was stunned and astonished by the words of the thief. Although he had been caught and beaten mercilessly, he had not allowed himself to be deterred from his goal, which unfortunately was the theft of other people’s property. His resolve and determination remained undiminished. Certainly, thought Rav Levi Yitzchok, he should display the same attitude with regard to the *mitzva* he was performing, namely the collection of charitable funds. True, he had met with little success, but what right did he have to be discouraged and to accept defeat? The lesson to be learned from the thief was that he should redouble his efforts and feel confident that if he tried hard enough he would eventually be successful.



Dvar Torah

Just as Avrohom was about to offer up his son Yitzchok, the *malach* (angel) stopped him and delivered a message from *Hashem* (*Bereishis* 22:12): “Do not lay a hand on the youth, nor shall you do anything to him, for now I know that you fear the Lord and that you did not withhold your son, your only one, from Me.” The sentence concludes with the words “from Me”. These words do not appear, however, in the subsequent message (*ibid.* 22:16): “I have sworn by the word of God that because you have done this thing and not withheld your son, your only one ...” The words “from Me” are conspicuously missing. Why is this so?

A person should always strive, explains Rav Levi Yitzchok, to reach ever-higher levels of attachment to *Hashem*. He should learn *Torah* and perform *mitzvos* for the sake of *Hashem* and not for any personal motives. And after he has learned his *Torah* and performed his *mitzvos* with these thoughts in mind, he should not think to himself that he has properly fulfilled the will of *Hashem*, that he has done all he can do and that he has reached the highest levels of service he can possibly achieve. For indeed, there is no limit to how closely a person can approach *Hashem*.

It is as if a person has come into the palace of the king. He is bedazzled by the magnificent artwork and architecture of the vestibule, but if he steps into an antechamber, he will find

wonders even more dazzling. And so on, from chamber to inner chamber as he comes closer to the king. When a person enters the palace of the King of all kings, there is no limit to the number of chambers he will encounter as he draws closer to Him, and each chamber is more dazzling than the previous one.

Certain *mitzvos* lend themselves more easily to achieving this kind of attitude. For instance, when a person puts on *tefillin* or *tzitzis*, he has no material gain or pleasure from the act, and therefore, it is easier to do it purely for the sake of *Hashem*, to fulfill His will. It takes more effort, however, to have such an attitude when it comes to the performance of *mitzvos* that are enjoyable, such as eating delicious foods on *Shabbos*.

Avrohom reached the highest levels of *avoda* when he sought to sacrifice his son. He had no thought of his own needs or desires. His only thought was a single-minded determination to fulfill the will of *Hashem*. Therefore, when the *malach* spoke about the act of placing Yitzchok on the *mizbe'ach* (altar), he did not have to say the words "from Me", because it was obvious that Avrohom was acting solely for the sake of *Hashem*. He would derive no benefit from it. On the contrary, he was not only sacrificing his son but also his entire future as the patriarch of a great nation. But when the *malach* commanded him to desist and release Yitzchok from his bonds, he added the words "from Me" to indicate that just as Avrohom had bound Yitzchok for the sake of *Hashem* so too did he unbind him for the sake of *Hashem* and not for his personal gain. His entire focus was on the fulfillment of the Divine will.

Rav Levi Yitzchok would often present these ideas in the form of a *moshol* (parable) about a king who lived in a palace tower. A fool once came into the palace and climbed the stairway to the first landing, where he saw rooms full of fabulous treasures. He left the staircase and went into the treasure-filled rooms. But if he had been wiser, he would have realized that the stairway continued upward and that there must be more treasure chambers of greater magnificence as he climbed higher and higher and approached the tower.

Avrohom understood this concept. He was never satisfied with where he was and what he had achieved, because he always saw before his eyes the stairway leading upward, ever upward, ever closer to the Divine Presence.



http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim_yahrtzeits/MarCheshvan

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

✳ **20th of MarCheshvan ~ Begins Friday Night (Nov 6th)**

- ✳ **Rav Avrohom** ben Yitzchok of Narbonne, author of *Sefer HaEshkol*, father-in-law of the *Ravad*, Rav Avrohom ben Dovid, (4940/1179);
- ✳ **Rav Avrohom** ben Dovid (*Ravad* II) (1119–1198). Rav Avrohom lived at the time of *Rabbeinu Tam* and is mentioned a few times in the *Tosafos*. He had the merit of having Eliyohu *HaNovi* appear to him, as claimed by Rav Chaim Vital in his introduction to *Etz HaChaim*. His son was the *Tzaddik* Rav Yitzchok Sagi Nohor. According to *Yated* 2005, author of *Sefer HaEshkol*, (4959/1198);

- * **Rav Sholom** of Kaminka, (5612/1851);
- * **Rav Yechezkel**, the third *Rebbe* of Radomsk, known as the *K'nesses Yechezkel* of Radomsk, (5625–5671/1864–1910);
- * **Rav Moshe Lemberger**, the Makova *Rav* of Kfar Ata, (5743/1982);
- * **Rav Mordechai Sharabi** (1912–1984). Born in Taizi, Yemen to Rav Yehuda and Miriam Taizi, his father was *niftar* before he was born, and his mother passed away just four years later. He was raised by his grandfather, Rav Yefes Avrohom, Rav in Sharab. Rav Mordechai's other grandfather was Rav Sholom Sharabi, the *Rashash*. In 1931, shortly after he married, Rav Mordechai moved to *Eretz Yisrael* and settled in Yerushalayim. He later founded *Yeshivas Nahar Sholom* in the Machane Yehuda section of the city. Although they never had children, tens of boys of the neighborhood had their meals with them and grew to become *Roshei Yeshiva* and *Roshei Kollel*. It is related that in the week of Rav Mordechai's *petira*, the *Baba Sali* experienced a frightening premonition that much Jewish blood would be spilled, including children. He davened the entire day and fasted, despite being over ninety years of age. The next morning, he announced that the *gezeira* had been lifted, and that one of the *Tzaddikim* gave his life away for the generation. At the time, the *Baba Sali* was not aware that Rav Mordechai was ill. Indeed, the *Tzaddik* was *niftar* that week, (5745/1984);
- * **Rav Mordechai Leib Zuckerman**, author of *Meir Einei Yisrael* (1912–2003). Born in Samagron, a city near Vilna. In 1931, he moved to Radin to learn with the *Chofetz Chaim*. After the *petira* of the *Chofetz Chaim*, Rav Mordechai Leib stayed in Radin for eight more years. During the war, he arrived in the Kovna ghetto, where he acted as *Shamash* for Rav Avrohom Grodzinsky, the *Mashgiach* of Slabodka. As Rav Avrohom's *talmid muvhok*, he transcribed his mentor's discourses and studied with him privately *bechavrusa* when Rav Avrohom was hospitalized. Subsequently, the Nazis burned down that hospital and Rav Mordechai Leib was the last person to have seen Rav Avrohom alive. When the Nazis decided to liquidate the entire ghetto, Rav Mordechai Leib was saved by a miracle when he hid in a pit with a few others. In 1948, he moved to Yerushalayim. When he settled in *Givat Shaul*, he accepted the positions of *Rav* of the *Perushim shul* and the head of *Kollel Chevron* there. He occupied those positions for over fifty years, (5764/2003).
- * **21st of MarCheshvan ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Nov 7th)**
 - * **Rav Dovid ben Zimra**, the *Radbaz* (1480–1573). Arriving in Tzefas as a child after the Spanish expulsion, he immigrated to Egypt in 1514. Shortly thereafter, he was recognized as chief *Rav* of Egypt, a post he held for forty years. His income, however, came through business, from which he became quite wealthy. Among his *talmidim* in Cairo were Rav Yitzchok Luria (the *Ari*) and Rav Betzalel Ashkenazi, the *Shita Mekubetzes*. In 1553, he returned to *Eretz Yisrael*, settling in Tzefas, (5334/1573);
 - * **Rav Avrohom Azulai**, author of *Chessed L'Avrohom* (1569–1643), which is often quoted in the writings of the *Ari HaKodosh*. Rav Avrohom was the great-great-grandfather of the *Chida*. Born in Fez, Morocco, he eventually moved to Chevron in 1609 and became the holy city's Chief *Rav*. [according to some, his *yahrzeit* is the 24th of *Cheshvan*], (5404/1643);
 - * **Rav Yichya HaLevi Alshich**, head of Yemenite community, (5757/1996);
 - * **Rav Dovid Shlomo Eibshitz** of Soroka (1755–1813), author of *Levushei Serad* (on *halocha*) and *Arvei Nachal* (a *Torah* commentary with Chassidic philosophy). In 1809, he settled in Tzefas, where he died and is buried, (5574/1813);
 - * **Rav Yissochor Ber** of Podheitz, son of the *Pnei Yehoshua*, (5605/1844);
 - * **Rav Elozor HaKohen** of Poltusk, (5642/1881);

- * **Rav Moshe** of Shitchelnik, (5673/1912);
- * **Rav Betzalel Stern**, author of *Teshuvos B'Tzel HaChochma*, and brother of Rav Moshe Stern, (5749/1988).
- * **22nd of MarCheshvan ~ Begins Sunday Night (Nov 8th)**
 - * **Rav Yissochor Dov Roke'ach**, the third Belzer *Rebbe*, (5615–5687/1854–1926);
 - * **Rav Moshe Lima**, author of *Chelkas Mechokek*. Early in the seventeenth century, he was hired by the city of Slonim to be its first *Rav*. While there, he was considered the highest authority in *halocha* in all of Lithuania. He later served as *Rav* in Brisk and Vilna, (5427/1666);
 - * **Rav Ezriel HaLevi Horowitz**, the "*Eizener Kop*" of Lublin. Opposed the *Chozeh* when the latter arrived in Lublin, (5579/1818);
 - * **Rav Uriel Dovid**. The fourteenth of fourteen children, nine of whom died in childhood (while three others died in early adulthood). His mother, Serach, "demanded" a healthy son, who would be a *talmid chochom*. Rav Uriel had a photographic memory and great analytic ability, despite having had only four years of structured schooling. He lived with and learned from sheikhs, which helped later during the Iranian Revolution. Rav Uriel lost his father when he was seventeen, and married his first cousin at eighteen. He became an expert in *Tanach* and *Medrash*, and wrote a Hebrew-Persian dictionary. He became a *mohel* and a *shochet* and then a teacher. He had a large library and owned one of only three sets of *Shas* in Iran. Rav Uriel moved to Tehran and became one of the two main *Rabbonim* of the city. He was personally responsible for keeping shops closed on *Shabbos* and provided kosher food for Jews in the army. When he escaped Iran in 1994, two thousand *seforim* had to be left behind; only his *Torah Temima* was taken to *Eretz Yisrael*, (5766/2005).
- * **23rd of Cheshvan ~ Begins Monday Night (Nov 10th)**
 - * **Rav Aharon Katzenellenbogen** of Brisk, author of *Minchas Aharon*, (5615/1854);
 - * **Rav Moshe Midner** (Minder) of Slonim-Baranowitz, a grandson of the *Yesod Ha'Avoda* and a *talmid* of Rav Chaim Brisker Soloveitchik. He was *Mashgiach* of *Yeshiva Toras Chessed*. The *Chassidim* of Slonim used to say of him, "From Moshe of Midian up until Moshe Midner, there was none like Moshe", (5690/1929);
 - * **Rav Yehosef Rottenberg** of Kosson, (5673/1912).
- * **24th of Cheshvan ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Nov 11th)**
 - * **Binyomin ben Yaakov Ovinu**, buried near Kfar Saba;
 - * **Rav Avrohom Azulai** (1670–1744). Born in Fez to Rav Mordechai Azulai, in 1700, he fulfilled his life's dream and boarded a ship for *Eretz Yisrael*. The only possessions he took him were the many manuscripts of his *chiddushim*. These were all lost at sea during a storm. In Chevron, Rav Avrohom wrote his major work on *Kabbola*, entitled *Kiryat Arba*. It is based on the teachings of the four great *Mekubolim*: the *Ramak*, the *Arizal*, Rav Chaim Vital and Rav Avrohom Galanti. Later, in Aza (Gaza), Rav Avrohom wrote three more *seforim*: *Ba'alei Bris Avrohom*, a commentary on the twenty-four books of the *Tanach* and *Chessed l'Avrohom*, which contains kabbalistic *derashos*. In addition to this, he wrote *Kanaf Renanim*, a summary of the *kavonos* of the *tefillos* according to the *Arizal*; *Ma'aseh Chosheiv*, a summary of the *kavonos* of the *Arizal* on the *mitzvos*; *Ahava BaTa'anugim* on the *Mishna*, and *Hagahos l'Sefer HaLevush* on the *Shulchon Aruch*. His great-grandson was Rav Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai, the *Chida*. [According to *Hamodia* 2006, he was born in 1570 and was *niftar* on this date in 1643, and his grandfather, Rav Avrohom Azulai *HaZoken* settled in Fez after being expelled from Castille, Spain, in

1492.], (5505/1744);

✳ **Rav Gedaliah** of Zalkaa, (5524/1763);

✳ **Rav Rephoel Kohen** of Hamburg (1722–1803). *Rosh Yeshiva* in Minsk at the age of nineteen, Rav Rephoel became *Rav* of Pinsk in 1763. In 1776, he became *Rav* of the joint community of Altuna, Hamburg, and Wandsbek (AHU). He is the author of *Toras Yekusiel*, (5564/1803);

✳ **Rav Chaim Yosef Brukstein** of Pistin, (5625/1864);

✳ **Rav Dovid Twersky** of Makarov. Makarov is located in Kievskaya, twenty-eight kilometers from Kiev. The earliest known Jewish community was in 1765. In 1897, the Chassidic population (census) was 3953. The Twersky Chassidic dynasty began in Makarov with Nachum Twersky (1805–1851). Decimated in the Holocaust, Makarov is an offshoot of the Chernobyl dynasty, (5663/1902);

✳ **Rav Hillel Moshe Meshel Gelbstein** (1834–1904 or 1907). Born in Bialystok, his mother was a twelfth-generation descendant of the *Shla HaKodosh*. At the age of fifteen, he traveled to Kotzk and became a *Chassid* of the Kotzker *Rebbe*. After the Kotzker passed away, Rav Meshel adopted the *Chiddushei HaRim* as his *Rebbe*. On the 23rd of *Adar* of 1867, the *Chiddushei HaRim* was *niftar*, and on the 13th of *Nissan* that same year, the *Tzemach Tzedek* was *niftar*. Considering himself orphaned, Rav Meshel moved to *Eretz Yisrael* and settled in Yerushalayim – he would never again sleep outside the walls of the city. His *seforim* include *Mishkenos Le'abir Yaakov*, *Ohr LaYeshorim*, and *Ohr Zorua LaTzaddik*, (5665 or 5668/1904 or 1907);

✳ **Rav Rephoel Dovid Auerbach**, *Rosh Yeshiva* of Sha'ar Shomayim, (5630–5706/1869–1945);

✳ **Rav Gedalya Moshe Goldman** of Zvhil (1888–1949), son of Rav Shlomo (Reb Shlomke) of Zvhil. When the Soviets rose to power, he was sent to Siberia and after eight years of exile managed, in 1936, to flee to *Eretz Yisrael*, where he concealed his greatness. He served as an *Admor* for only five years, for he was *niftar* when he was just sixty-one, (5710/1949);

✳ **Rav Nachum Dov HaKohen Kreisman** (1923–2004). Born in the town of Rakishok in Lithuania's Ponovezh District from a famous line of *Rabbonim* who served in the Rakishok Rabbinate for nine consecutive generations, ending with Rav Betzalel Yalovetzky. As a *bochur* he went to *Yeshivas Telz*, where he studied under Rav Eliyohu Meir Bloch. He settled in Baltimore and enrolled at *Ner Yisrael*, where he studied under Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Ruderman. When Rav Aharon Kotler came to Baltimore, Rav Ruderman sent two *bochurim* to the train station to meet him: Nachum Dov and Shmuel Kamenetsky. Noting the high caliber of the two young men, Rav Kotler took them back with him to New York in preparation for starting *Yeshivas Lakewood*. In 1954, Rav Kreisman moved to *Eretz Yisrael* and married, and in 1967, he was chosen to serve as a *Dayan* by Rav Yosef Sholom Elyashiv, Rav Betzalel Zolti, the *Rav* of Yerushalayim, and Rav Shlomo Shimshon Karelitz, (2004/5765).

✳ **25th of Cheshvan ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Nov 12th)**

✳ **Rav Avrohom**, brother of the Vilna Gaon, author of *Maalos HaTorah*, (5568/1807);

✳ **Rav Mordechai Roke'ach**, *Rav* of Bilgoria (Bilgoraya). The son of the third *Admor* of Belz, Rav Yissochor Ber Roke'ach, and father of the fifth and current *Rebbe*, Rav Yissochor Ber Roke'ach, (5710/1949);

✳ **Rav Elya Yurkanski** (1908–2005). Born in Minsk, he and two brothers were smuggled

over the border to Poland, on a recommendation by the Chofetz Chaim; Rav Elya was not yet a bar mitzva and would never again see his parents. He spent almost ten years in Baranovich with Rav Elchonon Wasserman before leaving for Mir in 1929. He traveled with the Yeshiva to Shanghai and eventually joined the Yeshiva in New York, where he remained his entire life. He was a Rosh Yeshiva with Mir for over fifty-five years, (5766/2005).

✧ **26th of Cheshvan ~ Begins Thursday Night (Nov 13th)**

- ✧ **Rav Shlomo Segal**, *Av Bais Din* Polna'ah and Lvov, *mechaber* of *Mibais Levi*, [*Hamodia* 2007 lists Rav Shlomo Charif, *Rav* of Lvov, 1637], (5399/1638);
- ✧ **Rav Refoel HaKohen Katz** of Hamburg (1723–1803). Born in Liphland to Rav Yekusiel Ziskind, the *Rav* of the town, Rav Refoel was taken to learn with the *Shaagas Arye*, a relative, in Minsk, at the age of twelve. At the age of nineteen, Rav Refoel replaced his *Rebbe* as *Rosh Yeshiva* in Minsk. Four years later, he was chosen as *Rav* of Rakow, and later of Smilowitz. In 1763, he became *Rav* in Pinsk. There he wrote *Toras Yekusiel* on *Yoreh De'ah*, with an appendix of *Halochoh* pertaining to *agunos*. Later he became *Rav* in Posen, and in 1776 of the three *kehillos* of Atuna, Hamburg and Wandsbeck (AH"U). He also authored *Sheilos HaKohanim Torah* on the *avoda* of the *Kohanim*, *Shu"t Veshav HaKohen*, *Mapei Lahon* on the *issur* of *loshon hora*, and *Daas Kedoshim*, (5564/1803);
- ✧ **Rav Simcha Soloveitchik**, son of the *Bais HaLevi*, (5702/1941);
- ✧ **Rav Aryeh Mordechai Halberstam** of Shinova, (5691/1930);
- ✧ **Rav Mordechai Zimmerman**, renowned *mohel* (1913–2005). Born in New York to Rav Yosef Yehoshua and Shaina Rochel Zimmerman, he attended *Torah Vodaas*, which his father helped found. He and his two brothers were sent to Mir and Grodna in Europe. While in Europe, he met with the *Chofetz Chaim*. He received his *ksav semicha* (Rabbinical ordination) from Rav Shimon Shkop. After his marriage, he lived in Dubuque, Iowa, for five years, and then settled in the Bronx. In the mid-1980s, he moved to Boro Park, where he became a prominent member of the *Mirrers minyan*. He was survived by two sons, a daughter and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, (5766/2005).



✧ GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM ✧

STORIES & ANECDOTES

Rav Mordechai Sharabi, 20th of MarCheshvan

Rav Mordechai Sharabi loved to sit outside in the yard of his house and enjoy the sunshine. His house was located right next to the Yeshiva Nahar Sholom and until today, you can take a look at those buildings.

One day, a seven floor building was being built next to his facilities and the sunshine didn't reach the yard of the Rav anymore. Rav Sharabi was so upset that he

cursed the new building. Other say that he cursed the new building because it was much higher than his shul behind it.

The building was supposed to be an office and shopping center but what happened was that in the course of all those years, the majority of the shops went bankrupt. There are some private people renting apartments and some branches of Yerushalayim's municipality have their

offices inside. However, on the ground floor, all shops never made it but only one: A bakery!

Why the bakery?

It is said that before the bakery moved in, the father of the owner took away the Sharaby curse. Rav Alon used to be a famous Kurdish Rav in Yerushalayim and he was the father of Chezi Alon, the owner of the bakery.

Curse or not? Fact is that no shop

has ever made it in the building and the bakery is making plenty of money! By the way, Rav Sharabi's students buy their products and no one speaks about the curse anymore. Nevertheless, the building is unofficially called the "haunted building" and a tourist attraction among Israeli visitors.

www.shearim.blogspot.com/2010/10/yahrzeit-of-rabbi-mordechai-sharabi.html



Rav Sholom Kaminker, 20th of Cheshvan

Talmid HaBa'al Shem Tov HaKodosh

Righteous and Wicked Matzos

Rav Sholom of Kaminka had a unique custom before *Pesach*: he would inspect each *matza* individually to decide if it was fit for consumption. He accomplished this wondrous feat by taking each *matza* in hand and turning it round and round, inspecting every nook and cranny until he was either satisfied or dissatisfied. Before him stood two piles of *matzos*; onto the reject pile went each *matza* that Rav Sholom rejected with a cry of, "*Rosha!* – Wicked one!" and he would discard those *matzos* he had found unfit. Somehow, he had seen how it had been kneaded, rolled out and baked by someone whom he deemed a *Rosha*. Those *matzos* prepared and baked by someone whom Rav Sholom held in high regard were accepted and added to the pile of *matzos* known as *Tzaddikim*.

This wondrous work was watched by a throng of amazed *Chassidim*. But no one was as amazed as Rav Yehoshiele, Rav Sholom Kaminker's son. This was because he knew who had in fact kneaded, rolled and baked the *matzos* that his holy father was even now inspecting, rejecting or accepting, and he was dumbfounded by his father's obvious *Ruach HaKodesh* (divine insight). For he, Rav Yehoshiele, had

marked those *matzos* that were baked by someone highly regarded in the community as a righteous figure, with a small triangular indentation. This man was held in high esteem by all and was known to be a man of stature who engaged in fasts, *hisbodedus* (seclusion and isolation) and was always taking upon himself some penance or stricture – in short he was well known as a *frummer*, a highly pious and religious individual, yet his *matzos* were summarily rejected as Rav Sholom pronounced on each of them, "*Rosha!*" and heaped them onto the pile of rejects.

Those *matzos*, however, baked by some happy-go-lucky friendly, smiling, congenial guy, who well known as a light-headed individual and a so-called good-for-nothing, always seen befriending everyone and "wasting his time" – those *matzos* Rav Yehoshiele had marked with a circular impression, and here his father pronounced each one a *Tzaddik*, and sorted them onto the pile of *matzos* he would personally eat during *Pesach*! This is how he saw his father's true *Ruach HaKodesh* manifest and why his father rejected the so-called *frummers*, whose dark, depressed ways he despised over the *simcha* of the *poshut Yidden* whose *derech* he approved of.

(*Ohev Sholom* p. 114)

Rav Yissochor Dov Roke'ach of Belz, 22th of Cheshvan

The Air of the Holy Land

Rav Boruch Hendeler was a *talmid* of the Chuster Rav, *mechaber* of *Arugas HaBosem*. He once related how he traveled together with his *Rebbe* to visit the holy Rav Yissochor Dov of Belz. When they reached the courtyard of the *Bais Medrash* the *Arugas HaBosem* breathed in deeply and exclaimed, "Ahhhh, the air of *Eretz Yisrael*!"

When they entered Rav Yissochor Dov's room the Belzer Rav said, "Chuster Rav! When my grandfather, the *Sar Sholom*, built this *shul* and *Bais Medrash* he declared that from here to *Eretz Yisrael* going in a straight line, nothing impure stands in the way! If so, naturally the pure holy air of *Eretz Yisrael* reaches all the way here!"



I Heard That One Already – Stories of Tzaddikim

Afterward, the Belzer Rav said in his humility, "Chuster Rav, you are a *masmid*; you sit and study *Torah* day and night, whereas I am the son of holy forebears. I am just a *Rebbe* – all I do is tell stories about *Tzaddikim*. Does that bother you?"

"Not at all," answered the *Arugas HaBosem*, "for that too is considered learning and *Torah* study, as it says in the *pasuk*: "*Achas diber Elokim, shtayim zu shamati* – Hashem spoke once, I heard it twice". *Achas* – refers to *achdus* – unity. Telling stories of *Tzaddikim* brings *achdus*, whereas *shtayim* – two – refers to disparity, strife and lack of unity, where there are two arguing opinions. This occurs when people say, "*Zu shamati* – I heard this one already," when they forego listening to tales of *Tzaddikim* with the excuse, "I heard that one already." That is *machlokes*." (Siach Z'keirim VI p. 91)

Hold It Straight

Rav Nachum Aharon, the son of the Magrover Rav, had a crooked finger. From time to time the Magrover Rav would ask the *Tzaddik*, Rav Yissochor Dov of Belz, to pray for his son's recovery.

Once before *Kiddush*, Rav Yissochor Dov honored Rav Nachum with lifting up the *Kiddush* cup and placing it in the *Rebbe's* hands. However, because his finger was crooked, Rav Nachum could not hold the cup straight. Seeing this, the Belzer Rav ordered him, "Hold your finger straight!" and so he did, and from then on, his finger was crooked no more! It straightened itself out and was healed. The Belzer explained that the Magrover's descendants would one day greet *Melech HaMoshiach*, and "how would it look if they were blemished? They don't allow *ba'alei mum*."

(Kuntres Bechatzros Kodshecha Belz page 23)



My Hand Was in the Mikve This Morning

Once when Rav Yissochor Dov was in the Marienbad resort, he was hosted by Rav Binyomin Leitner. In honor of his important guest Rav Binyomin purchased new cutlery and fine dishes. Unaccustomed to the ways of the Belzer Rav and other *Tzaddikim*, he was therefore dismayed to see the Belzer Rav eating with his hands. Mistakenly thinking that this custom was in fact a stricture, and that perhaps the Belzer Rav was worried about the *kashrus* of the utensils, he assured the *Tzaddik* that he himself had seen to it that the new cutlery was immersed in the *mikve*. "Why, I *toiveled* the *keilim* myself just yesterday!" he explained.

"Fine, fine; however, my hand was *toiveled* in the *mikve* just this very morning!" (Seudosa DeMalka Belz Chap. 1)

Emuna is Greater

Once during the Belzer Rav's *Seder*, Rav Yissochor Dov sent out one of the children to open the door for Eliyohu *HaNovi* during *Shefoch Chamos'cha*. When the child returned, the Belzer Rav asked the boy, "Nu, did you see Eliyohu *HaNovi*?"

When the child replied in the negative, Rav Yissochor Dov's son-in-law turned to him and asked his father-in-law, "Is it truly possible to see Eliyohu?"

The Belzer Rav answered him, "You can see him, you can see...but he who sees not – his *emuna* is on a much higher level!" (*Siach Zekenim* II p186)



The Litvishe Fish

Once during the nine days before *Tisha B'Av*, Rav Yissochor Dov of Belz was in Marienbad with Rav Sholom of Apt. There, as is the custom in many *Chassidic* circles, they intentionally finished a *Masechta* of *Talmud*, and made a *Siyum Maseches seuda*. The festive meal was replete with fish, meat and wine. After *bensching*, the Belzer Rav rested and dictated a letter to his brother, Rav Aharon in Krenitz, which his son, Rav Sholom, wrote down.

A few sentences stood out. "We made a *Siyum Maseches*, and we ate meat and drank wine to display the honor and love of the *Torah*. A pity though that he was such a *Litvak* and such a cold *Misnagged* (an opponent of *Chassidus*), for he made the false claim that all year long we *Chassidim* don't study *Torah*, and only now during the nine days, suddenly we finish a *Masechta* and make a festive meal for a *Siyum Maseches*, and he did not even wish to attend."

Rav Sholom was puzzled – what he had written down made no sense. Who was his father referring to? What *Misnagged*? What *Litvak*? He turned to one of the *Chassidim* who sat closer to his father, the

Belzer Rav, and asked him if he had perhaps misheard, misconstrued or missed some point of dictation.

The latter shrugged him off, saying he had heard correctly. "I will explain this matter to you. You see, it was I whom the Belzer Rav sent to buy the fish for the *seuda*. When I got to the fish store the owner went to catch a large, live fish from the tank for the meal. However, this fish gave him no end of trouble. It kept leaping out of his hands and jumping back into the water again and again, over and over! After this happened three times we realized that this fish had the *gilgul* (reincarnated soul) of a *Misnagged* in him, and that was why he was resisting; he simply did not want to be rectified and be part of the *seuda*! That is who your father meant in the dictation of the letter!" (*Yud Gimel Oros* II p. 307)



The Soldier's Dance

Once during the *mitzva tantz* at a wedding where the Belzer Rav was dancing, a Jewish soldier dressed in uniform joined the dance. Some of those dancing tried to remove the soldier but the Belzer Rav prevented them. After stopping them he explained his reasons for allowing the soldier (many soldiers no longer kept *Shabbos* or any of the *mitzvos* or any semblance of *Yiddishkeit* after their forced conscription) to join the circle of dancers:

It says in the *pasuk*: *Vayisa Yaakov raglov* – "Yaakov raised his feet" – this refers to dancing. *Vayeilech artza Bnei Kedem* – "He went to the land of the Children of the East" – this refers to the belief that our ancestors come down from Heaven and join us during the *mitzva tantz*." The holy *Tzaddik* concluded, "Nu, let them come down from *Shomayim* and see what has been done to their children! [Let them see how Jews have been forced into the army and forced to abandon *Yiddishkeit* perhaps they will beg for divine Mercy for their children!]"

Rav Ezriel HaLevi Horowitz, 22nd of Cheshvan

The “Eizener Kop” of Lublin

The Tisch: Crossing Swords with an Iron Head

The holy Rav Yaakov Yitzchok HaLevi Horowitz (1745–1815), commonly known as the *Chozeh* (Seer) of Lublin, was the first *Chassidic* master to serve in a major city, albeit in a suburb. He was an extremely popular leader, and can be considered one of the fathers of Polish *Chassidus*.

While many of his fellow *Chassidic* masters crossed swords with the *Misnagdim*, the Rabbinic opposition to the nascent *Chassidic* movement, the *Chozeh* came into direct contact with a leading *Misnaged* in Lublin: one of the renowned *Talmidei Chachomim* of his era, Rav Ezriel HaLevi Horowitz (*niftar* 1818). Though the two adversaries shared the same surname, they were apparently unrelated.

Rav Ezriel was known by the Yiddish moniker “*Eizener Kop*” (iron head), for his *Talmudic* acumen. While the *Eizener Kop* did not publish his writings, in 1969 a compilation of his *chiddushim* and responsa was published under the Hebrew title *Rosh Barzel* (iron head).

Despite the reputation of a sharp mind, in *Chassidic* lore he is portrayed – as could be expected – in a rather different light. The *Eizener Kop* is remembered for the disdain he felt toward the unlearned. He despised *Chassidus*, especially its local representative, the *Chozeh* of Lublin.

Seeing the *Chozeh*’s popularity wax, the *Eizener Kop* called the *Chozeh* to his office and said to him, “We both know that you are not a scholar, and hence the respect accorded to you is entirely misplaced. It is time to remedy the situation. On *Shabbos*, I want you to announce to all that you are nothing more than an ignoramus, unworthy of attention, and people should stop treating you with such deference.”

The *Chozeh* readily agreed to the *Eizener Kop*’s suggestion and carried out the plan. Unfortunately for the *Eizener Kop*, the cunning plan backfired; seeing the *Chozeh*’s humility, people felt even more admiration for the master, and his popularity continued to grow.

The *Eizener Kop* called the *Chozeh* once more, this time with a new demand: “Clearly our plan failed; we need a different solution. This *Shabbos* I want you to publicly announce that you are the most learned scholar in town and are worthy of being treated with the highest esteem.”

The *Chozeh* demurred, “I readily agreed to your initial suggestion to declare that I am unlearned. But to get up and publicly lie – I am not willing!”

Years later, the *Eizener Kop* approached one of the *Chozeh*’s prime *talmidim* – who incidentally had the same first name as his master – Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Rabinowitz (ca. 1766–1813), known as the *Yid HaKodosh* of Peshis’cha, the holy Jew from Przysucha. The *Eizener Kop* said to the *Yid HaKodosh*: “I hear that your master, the *Chozeh*, takes extra combs with him whenever he goes to the bathhouse. He offers these combs to others, so that he is able to do acts of loving-kindness, even in a place where *Torah* study is forbidden. While the *Chozeh*’s intention is indeed laudable, his solution would appear to contradict the *Talmud*!” The *Eizener Kop* cited the passage in the *Gemora* (*Menochos* 43b) recounting that when Dovid HaMelech entered the bathhouse, he bemoaned that he was naked of *mitzvos*. When he noticed his *bris mila*, he realized that he always carried a *mitzva* with him, and his mind was put at ease.

The *Eizener Kop* wondered, “Why didn’t Dovid simply take combs with him to distribute, rather than feeling naked

without *mitzvos*?”

The *Yid HaKodosh* replied, “I am surprised that a scholar like you would forget a *Mishna*! The *Mishna* states that a king should not be seen naked, and no one should go into the bathhouse with him (*Sanhedrin* 2:5). Moreover, a king may not forgo the honor that he is to be accorded (*Kesubos* 17a). To whom could Dovid *HaMelech* have given combs in the bathhouse?”

The writer is on the faculty of Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies and is a *Rav* in Tzur Hadassa.

www.jpost.com/Magazine/Judaism/The-Tisch-Crossing-swords-with-an-Iron-Head



Once, on *Erev Yom Kippur*, the *Eizener Kop* met the *Chozeh* on the way to the *mikve*. The *Chozeh* remarked to the

Eizener Kop, “You have a lot more *teshuva* to do on *Yom Kippur* than I do.”

When the *Eizener Kop* asked why that was so, the *Chozeh* stated, “I might have issued a lenient ruling regarding the *kashrus* of questionable meat that was brought by a woman for a *sha’aila*. It’s possible that the meat was not *mehadrin* in line with all the *poskim*, and for that I’ll have to ask *Hashem* for forgiveness for my rulings. You, however, were very strict in your rulings, and it’s very possible a *sha’aila* that was brought before you was deemed *treif* – when in fact it might have been *kosher l’mehadrin*. That means a Jewish family had monetary damages due to your rulings – and for that, *Yom Kippur* does not cleanse.”

[Interestingly enough, the *Chozeh* was extremely stringent with himself in matters of *shechita*.]



Rav Avrohom Azulai, 24th of MarCheshvan

The Fallen Sword of the Sultan

In the early 1640s, the sultan of the Ottoman Empire made a journey from his seat of government in far-off Turkey to places of importance in his domains.

He made his way to the Cave of Machpela in Chevron. He entered, adorned in his traditional ruling garb, including the golden sword, studded with diamonds and precious stones, which hung at his side. The sultan wandered from room to room, finally entering the huge hall named after Yitzchok *Ovinu*.

The center of attraction in the Yitzchok *Ovinu* Hall is a small circular hole in the floor, near the wall shared with the smaller Avrohom *Ovinu* Hall. The hole is perhaps the most sacred spot in the entire illustrious structure above the burial caves of the *Ovos* (Patriarchs) and *Imohos* (Matriarchs), for it leads down into the

caves themselves. Pilgrims from all over the world journey for weeks and months just to have the opportunity to stand by this small, dark, circular opening, leading into the cave, which, according to tradition, was excavated by Adam *HoRishon*.

The sultan leaned over the revered aperture, peering down into it. As he bent over, his precious sword fell from his side, down into the cavity in the ground. Hearing the clang of metal hitting the ground, the sultan realized that his sword lay in the caves underneath. The sultan called the officer of the guard and ordered him to lower a soldier through the hole into the caves below, to retrieve his sword.

Quick to respond to the sultan’s order, the officer selected a soldier nearby. Another soldier wrapped a rope around his waist and lowered the soldier into the underground cavern. No sooner had they done so when, without warning, piercing

screams penetrated from inside the hole below. Quickly they pulled up the soldier, but he was dead. The sultan ordered that another soldier be lowered into the caves. So it was, and his fate was precisely as his predecessor's.

The sultan continued to send soldiers into the caves, until it became apparent that all who enter the caves do not exit alive. The sultan turned to his hosts and exclaimed, "Who will return to me my sword?"

The Arabs, looking at one another, answered without hesitating. "Why not send down a Jew? If he dies, none of us would care, and if not, you will have your precious saber back." So the Jews were ordered, on pain of death, to supply a volunteer to be lowered into the caves to return the sultan's sword to him.

The Jews of Chevron heard what had happened to the sultan's soldiers. How could they send one of their own to his death? They prayed and fasted, hoping to avert the decree. Realizing that they had no choice, they looked at one another. Who would dare to enter the sacred caves of the *Ovos*?

The elderly *Rav* of the community, the *Mekubol* and *Talmid Chochom*, Rav Avrohom Azulai, author of *Chessed L'Avrohom*, solved the dilemma. "I will enter the holy caves. Have no fear."

And so it was. After davening and pleading before the G-d of Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov, Rav Avrohom Azulai immersed himself in the *mikve* and dressed in white garments, the traditional dress of the dead. He set forth to the Cave of Machpela.

With a rope tied around his waist,

Rav Azulai was lowered into the cave. When his feet hit the ground, Rav Azulai looked around him and found, standing by his side, three bearded men. "We are your forefathers," they told him, "Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov." Rav Azulai was dumbfounded. Finally, he said to them, "Why should I leave here and go back above? I am elderly, and here I have found my forefathers. I desire only to stay here with you."

The *Ovos* insisted, "You must return the sword to the sultan. If not, the entire Jewish community of Chevron is liable to be wiped out. But have no fear. In another seven days you will return here, to be with us."

So the saintly *Rav* returned to the Yitzchok *Ovinu* Hall, above the cave of the *Ovos*, and with him was the sultan's sword. The sultan was pleased. Upon seeing their beloved *Rav* return alive, the Jews of Chevron declared the day a holiday. Rav Avrohom Azulai spent the next week with his students, training them in all the esoteric teachings of the *Torah*. Day and night he learned with them, instructing them, imparting to them all that he knew.

Seven days after being lowered into the Cave of Machpela, Rav Avrohom Azulai returned his soul to his Maker, passing away peacefully in his home. He was brought to rest in the ancient Jewish cemetery in Chevron, overlooking the final resting place of his beloved forefathers, Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov.

Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from hebron.co.il

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www.chabad.org/kabbalah/article_cdo/aid/1321931/jewish/The-Fallen-Sword-of-the-Sultan.htm



גוט שבת

כי שמע אלקים אל קול הנער באשר הוא שם (כא' יז')

For Hashem has heard the voice of the lad as he is (21:17)

Rashi explains that although the angels were trying to have Yishma'el die in his illness on account of his future actions, namely that his descendants would torture the Jews to death (see Rashi for details), Hashem countered their claim and said that since at this point he is still righteous, he is judged as he is at this point in time.

This we find happened as well when the Jewish people left Egypt, although Hashem knew that the Jewish people would sin and worship the golden calf, Hashem did not hesitate to redeem and give them the very gold that would eventually be used to create the golden calf since Hashem deals with the people based on their deeds at the present time even though He knows that they will eventually sin.

The Medrash adds (Shemos Rabba 1:36), that although Hashem knew the Jews would sin with the golden calf, He also knew that they would proclaim נעשה ונשמע, "We will do and we will accept", when asked if they want to accept the Torah. On this the Prashas Derachim writes (Derech Mitzrayim §4) that from here we see the extent of Hashem's kindness for although the Jews would do good (נעשה ונשמע) and also bad (the golden calf), nevertheless, Hashem does not hold back the good for their future actions (taking the Jews out of Egypt on account of their accepting the Torah) in face of their future sins (the golden calf).

The Zera Shimshon asks - that since Hashem is entirely just, if strict justice dictates that a person is judged based on his present actions, and his future bad deeds never affects how the person is dealt with today, why then does Hashem take into account the future good actions? There should be no difference between the two. The bad deeds of tomorrow do not make a difference in today's occurrences, neither should the good deeds of tomorrow make a difference today?

The Zera Shimshon explains that strict justice in fact dictates that a person is dealt with according to his present actions. However, every individual has a mission in this world to rectify something that no one else can rectify. When a person accomplishes this mission it is irreversible - the rectification that he did in the higher worlds exists forever. On top of this, once this rectification is done, Mashiach is now one step closer. When a person sins however, with repentance, the sin can be erased as if it was never done.

Therefore, regarding the future good that a person will do, since it is everlasting, Hashem is willing to take it into account even today. Whereas the bad actions are not everlasting and can be erased with teshuva, they therefore are only dealt with when they actually happen.

זכות רבינו יעמוד לר' חיים דוד בן טויבא חוה וכל משפחתו

להצלחה ברכה שפע רב וסייעתא דשמיא מרובה בכל מעשה ידי ובכל הענינים

The (English) Sefer, 'Zera Shimshon on the Torah' with an unprecedented biography on the Zera Shimshon is available at Lulu.com or by calling 1844.212.0689 and ask for 'Zera Shimshon on the Torah', ISBN 978-0-359-85606-0.

Zera Shimshon Vayeira

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

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

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

The following is his passionate request to learn his works.

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

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

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

לזכר נשמת

רבינו שמשון חיים בן רב נחמן מיכאל זצ"ל

בעל הזרע שמשון זיע"א

ויה"ר שיתקיימו בנו ברכותיו של אותו צדיק

לזכות רבקה נכון בת חנה ואברהם

יוסף בן חנה לרפואה שלימה ולזיווג

הגון בקרוב ממש ולשנה מבורכת

עם כל הברכות הכתובות בתורה

לעילוי נשמת הרב חיים שאול בן

בנציון זצ"ל

לזכות זיווג הגון בקרוב ממש

לשושנה נחמה בת חנה פעסא

ורקבה רוזא בת פייגא

יוכבד בת דבורה לרפואה שלימה

MeOros Ramchal VaYitze

The Deeper Meaning Behind Yaakov's Vow

“And Yaakov took a vow,” (Bereishis 28:20) And Yaakov uttered a vow, saying, “If Hashem will be with me, and He will guard me on this way, upon which I am going, and He will give me bread to eat and a garment to wear;”

Our sages taught (*Yerushalmi Berachos* 4:4) that all the ways we travel are considered dangerous.

The *Ramchal* explained that the secret behind this statement is that the way or path known as a *derech* alludes to the attribute of *Malchus* – Royalty, from which there is great danger since the forces of darkness known as the other side – *sitra achra* have a firm grasp and hold onto it.

The way to repair and rectify this matter is to shine the light of *tikkun* of the illumination of the supernal Mother – *Ima*. Therefore, Yaakov did just that, when he needed to travel on the road and go on the *derech*, the path of *Malchus*, he drew down an illumination from *Ima*. This is the secret of the vow that Yaakov took when he made a *neder* – because the vow – *neder* is associated with *Ima* – the supernal Mother. This is why our sages said (see *Midrash Rabba Bereishis* 70:1) that “it is a *mitzvah* to take vows and make a *neder* during a time of danger or trouble – an *es tzara*,” the *es tzara* is also associated with *Malchus* since many danger and troubles are brewing there, therefore Yaakov rectified the matter by an illumination from *Ima* with his *neder*.

This also explains the language used by Yaakov in his *neder* – he used the name *Elokim* which corresponds to the attribute of *Ima*, and vowed saying “If *Elokim* watches over me and protects me on the *derech*,” since *Ima* watches over and protects us on journeys through the *derachim* – pathways associated with *Malchus* as we explained, “and gives me bread to eat and clothing to wear,” Yaakov asked for these two things specifically – bread and clothing.

This is because the desires of *tzaddikim*, even for seemingly mundane ordinary worldly things such as food and clothes, are actually to repair and rectify the higher worlds and supernal Divine attributes – *tikkun haMeOros* – the *tikkun* of the *sefiros* depends on bread and garments.

This is because the secret of the *madreigas haKedusha* is divided by *Ramchal* into two categories – *penimiyus* and *chitzoniyus* – inside and outside – the inner depth and the outer facade.

Bread is the nourishment that feeds and sustains us from within. It feeds both our body and sustains our soul. Similarly, on High *shefa* nourishes and sustains the Divine attributes and this is just like bread. This is the secret why *Lechem* has the same *gematria* as three times 26 = the Divine four letter name *YH”VH*. Since the inner depth sustaining the *sefiros* is the name *Havayah*.

Garments clothe us from the outside and protect us from harm shielding us from the destructive *klippos*.

Vayeira
November 7th 2020
20th of Cheshvan 5781
876



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Hilula

20 - Rabbi Mordechai Sharabi, one of the elderly Kabbalists of Yerushalayim

21 - Rabbi Aryeh Leib Binah, Rosh Yeshiva of 'Netiv Meir'

22 - Rabbi Amram ben Rabbi Massoud Anakaveh

23 - Rabbi Yosef Rafael Chazan, author of 'Chakrei Lev'

24 - Rabbi Avraham Azoulai, author of 'Chessed L'Avraham'

25 - Rabbi Mordechai Rokeach of Bilugrei

26 - Rabbi Eliyahu Abba Shaul

19 - Rabbi Sassi Me'atok Cohen

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

Pachad David

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

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



MASKIL LEDAVID

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

May You Mercifully Remember Today the Akeidah of Yitzchak

"Please take your son, your only one, whom you love"

(Bereishit 22:2)

With the Akeidat Yitzchak, Avraham Avinu revealed the extent of his love for Hashem Yitbarach. Even though he could have turned to Hashem and asked, "Master of the World, You promised me, 'since through Yitzchak will offspring be considered yours', so how can I offer him on the Altar?" However, Avraham did not ask questions and even arose early in the morning, hurrying to perform his Creator's will, as it says, "So Avraham woke up early in the morning". Yitzchak his son went together with him with the same purity of intentions and holy thoughts, as it says "and the two of them went together".

When Avraham took the knife to slaughter his son, even the Heavenly angels were moved and cried when they saw the extent of his self-sacrifice and the enormity of his love for Hashem Yitbarach, and how he performed His will with his entire heart, with joy and delight. Even when Hashem sent an angel who commanded him, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad", Avraham did not easily surrender and begged, "If I cannot slaughter him, at least allow me to make a small cut". But the angel replied, "nor do anything to him for now I know that you are a G-d fearing man".

This requires clarification. Was it only at that moment that it became clear to Hashem that Avraham Avinu a"h was "a G-d fearing man"? Were all the previous tests, with which he proved his great love for Hashem, not enough of a proof? If so, why only after the test of the Akeidah did Hashem say to him, "for now I know that you are a G-d fearing man"?

The Gemarah says (Berachot 61a), "When Rabbi Akiva was taken out to be killed, it was the exact time of reciting Kriyat Shema... They combed his flesh with iron combs while he accepted upon himself the yoke of Heaven. His students said to him, "Rabbeinu, to this extent?" He replied: All my days I was distressed over the verse, "You shall love Hashem...with all your soul", meaning even if He takes your soul. I said, when will I have a chance to fulfil this verse? And now that the opportunity has arrived, I should not fulfill it?! And he drew out his recital of the word 'echad' until his soul departed."

With siyata dishmaya I would like to explain the intention behind Rabbi Akiva's words. He wished to explain to his talmidim that although it is true that throughout his life he proclaimed with full conviction that he loves Hashem with all his heart and soul, and even publicly declared that he is prepared to sacrifice his life for the sake of fulfilling Hashem's commandments, however there was always the suspicion that maybe his intention was not one hundred percent sincere, and it could be that his words will not withstand the test of reality. If he would actually be faced with the challenge of sacrificing his life, he might not pass the test and then it would follow that all his declarations concerning his love for Hashem

were only lip-service. This is what Rabbi Akiva was afraid of and this was his intention in saying, "All my days I was distressed...when will I have a chance to fulfil this verse". He wished to be put to the test so as to examine if true love for Hashem burns in his heart, or maybe it is only mere words.

When Rabbi Akiva was faced with the fact that he was rejoicing and delighting in sacrificing his soul for the sake of Hashem's honor, and indeed was courageously withstanding the test with a heart that was truly imbued with a burning love for Hashem, he then came to the realization that his ways were genuine. It was only at that moment that he was given the opportunity of coming face to face with the true extent of his love for Hashem Yitbarach.

So it was with Avraham Avinu. Although it is true that Avraham already passed many tests, these cannot be compared to the test of the Akeidah. It is unequivocally difficult to take one's son and slaughter him, all the more so when it is an only son who was born to his father at the age of one hundred and his mother at the age of ninety...

Throughout his life, Avraham Avinu searched for an opportunity to prove his great love for Hashem, just like Rabbi Akiva did many years later. And while it is true that Avraham Avinu would constantly publicize Hashem's Name to all mankind and his love for Hashem was deeply implanted in his heart, this nevertheless does not necessarily prove that he would be prepared to give up his heart and soul for His sake. Avraham Avinu was afraid that maybe he will not be able to muster up the courage to withstand this kind of test. Now Hashem was putting him to the test with an enormous challenge. Seeing that he was withstanding the test and performing Hashem's will with joy, despite the enormous difficulty, was a great source of joy for Avraham since it proved the extent of his love for Hashem. And this is why only now did Hashem say to him, "for now I know that you are a G-d fearing man". Now it was clear to all that Avraham was consumed with a burning love for Hashem and he is genuinely prepared to give up all that he has for the sake of fulfilling Hashem's command.

If Hashem testifies about Avraham that he is "G-d fearing", this amounts to a solemn promise that Avraham will always cleave to Hashem and fear of G-d will pervade him. This is the reason why Chazal said that Hashem created the world in Avraham's merit, as it says (Bereishit 2:4), "These are the products of the heaven and the earth when they were created". The word 'סִמְרָתָם', when they were created, can be rewritten to spell 'סִמְרָתָב' with Avraham. Since Hashem saw the pure and lofty level that was an integral part of Avraham's entire life, He, therefore, created the world in his merit.

If we strengthen ourselves in the ways that our forefathers instilled in us, we are promised that love for Hashem will always be ingrained in our hearts and we will not reject the true path throughout our lives, Amen v'Amen.



Walking in their Ways

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

Out of Habit

A notable Talmid Chacham with whom I have been acquainted for a long time once came to me with a surprising request:

"Esteemed Rav, please help me strengthen my emunah in Hashem Yitbarach"...

I wondered what lay behind this and asked him, "You observe mitzvot and diligently study Torah, if so, where is the problem with your faith in Hashem?"

This was his reply: "Although it is true that I study Torah with diligence, and indeed until today I innocently thought that I do possess strong faith but to my dismay, I discovered that all my Torah study is only done as a conditioned routine and only because this is what I was trained to do from my youth. All those around me study Torah, so I too study Torah. But I do not possess the clear, inner feeling and knowledge that this is the correct path. And now that life's tribulations have begun to beset me, I, unfortunately, discovered that even my faith in Hashem is dubious and not compelling enough and this makes it hard for me to cope with my challenges."

I immediately got up and kissed him on his forehead for being so honest and courageously agreeing to expose to me the very fibers of his being and in appreciation of his strong desire to seek a cure and remedy for his ailment. Of course, I strengthened his faith and convinced him, illuminating for him the correct path in life...

Even though he was a learned Talmid Chacham, he did not realize that he had slipped off the path of life and even innocently thought that he was treading on the correct path that leads to spiritual ascent. It was only years later, to his astonishment, that he discovered that he was still far from the truth and faith in Hashem. This happened because he started out without a clear vision and simply did everything out of habit, as one who is accustomed to performing mitzvot.

The Haftarah

"One woman from among the wives of the prophets' disciples" (Melachim II, 4)

The connection to the Parsha: The Haftarah tells us how Elisha the Navi blessed the Shunamit that she would have a child, and about the fulfillment of that promise when she gave birth to a son at the exact time that he prophesied. In the Parsha, the angels announced to Avraham that at this time next year a son will be born to him.

Guard Your Tongue

In Line with the Person's level

Some things are considered as lashon hara when said about a certain person, while considered as praise when said about someone else. For example, if one says about a businessman that he studies Torah for five hours a day, this is certainly a praiseworthy declaration. On the other hand, the same thing said about a Kollel avreich who is supposed to dedicate his entire day to toiling in Torah, has a negative connotation. Similarly, it is forbidden to say that someone donated a certain amount to charity if this is an acceptable sum only for someone who is struggling financially.

In certain situations, it is also forbidden to relate something even if it is clear that it is praise. For example, those who give much to charity, in the main do not wish for the matter to become public knowledge.



In Our Father's Path

Why Did Harav Chaim Kanievsky Cancel the Bein Hazmanim Excursion?

Maran Harav Shach zt"l, whose hilula falls this week, offers a wonderful explanation on a difficulty that Rashi discusses at the beginning of the Parsha (Bereishit 18:2). The verse says, "He lifted his eyes and saw: And behold! three men were standing over him. He saw, so he ran toward them". The obvious question is, why does the verse repeat the expression 'he saw'; isn't the second 'He saw' superfluous?

Maran Harav Shach explains that the Torah wishes to teach us that the mitzvah of tzedakah is not merely a matter of giving charity to a needy person who reaches out but also includes searching for those who require assistance. The first 'he saw' is understood in the literal sense, while the second 'He saw' implies 'He perceived'. To teach us that Avraham contemplated the matter and considered whether the guests who were approaching required hospitality and charity; he did not wait to see if they would knock on his door and ask for charity, but the moment he lifted his eyes 'and saw' three men, he immediately considered (the implication of the second 'he saw') whether they require food and drink and then immediately "He saw, so he ran toward them".

This serves as a lesson for us that if so much sensitivity is necessary when contemplating another's benefit, all the more so is great contemplation required so as not to inflict harm and pain on another. How much thought must one invest to take care that our actions do not cause harm to our fellow Jew. Even just being vigilant in some small way will already be beneficial for us and others as we go through life.

All who merited recognizing the greatness of Maran Harav Shach zt"l, can testify that he was a living example of this lesson that he taught. He showed extraordinary caution in taking someone else into consideration, whether it was a case of offering his assistance or being meticulous not to offend another.

Harav Avraham Tzvi Taub shlita, who had a close relationship with Maran Harav Shach zt"l, related that he is aware of the reason why Maran Hagaon Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky shlita cancelled his regular bein hazmanim visit to the holy city of Tzefat.

Several years ago, just before the summer bein hazmanim, Harav Taub paid a visit to Maran Hagaon Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky shlita and told him: "I once asked Maran Harav Shach, why do you never take a vacation during bein hazmanim, when you anyway don't have to give shiur in the yeshiva?"

Maran replied, "People are suffering from so many troubles. I sit in my house and sometimes people come to me to ask for help and advice. Some of them I can help, and many others I cannot help, but nevertheless, just the fact that they have where to pour out their hearts, comforts them and is of benefit to them. If I go away on vacation, people will come and won't find me at home, and they will be left to deal with their oppressive feelings on their own... How can I do this to them?"

When Maran Harav Chaim shlita heard this, he too declared, "If so, from now on we will no longer travel during bein hazmanim. We will stay here to help people bear their burdens when they come knocking on our door".



Pearls of the Chag

A Natural Result or Self-perfection?

"Behold! Three men were standing over him" (Bereishit 18:2)

Rashi explains why three men came. "One to announce the news to Sarah, one to overturn Sodom, and one to heal Avraham". The Maharal in his sefer 'Gur Aryeh' questions why the angel who was sent to overturn Sodom had to pass through Avraham's home? His mission had no connection to Avraham?

In the sefer 'Chazon Yechezkel', Rabbi Yechezkel Abramski zt"l explains that that angel found it hard to carry out his mission of overturning the city. He claimed that the behavior of the Sodomites was a natural result of a person having an evil inclination, as the angels claimed before the creation of man: "What is frail man that You should remember him, and the son of mortal man that You should be mindful of him?"

So Hashem answered that angel: Come and I will show you my beloved Avraham and you will see to what extent a person is capable of elevating himself and overcoming his evil inclination!

This is the meaning of the continuation of the verse, "So the men got up from there, and gazed down toward Sodom". After seeing Avraham's merit, how he was able to overcome his inclination, they no longer hesitated to do justice with the people of Sodom.

The Picture Aroused Fear

"And he said, 'Hurry! Three se'ahs of meal, fine flour! Knead and make cakes!'" (Bereishit 18:6)

In the Gemara (Baba Metzia 87a) Chazal expound, "It is written 'meal' and it is written 'fine flour', from here we learn that a woman is stingier with guests than a man". This assumes that Avraham repeated the word flour, the second time using a word meaning fine flour, implying that Avraham was insisting on fine flour whereas Sarah was prepared to use regular flour, (meal). This is how the Gemara learns that women are stingier with guests than men. However, there is an opinion contrary to this which says that Sarah was the one who took 'fine flour' which is a better quality flour than 'regular flour'.

The Holy Ba'al Shem Tov clarifies this with a mashal. A lion once called his cubs and told them: You should know my children, you are the most power-

ful creatures in the world and have nothing to be afraid of. All creatures are afraid of you.

One day the cubs went to tour the world and arrived at palace ruins, where they discovered many paintings. One of them depicted Shimshon the Mighty killing a lion and ripping it apart as one might rip a kid goat. In alarm, the lions ran back to their father and exclaimed: How could you say that we are the most powerful in the world? We saw a painting of a man ripping apart a lion.

The lion answered them: On the contrary, this picture is proof of the matter. If man ripping apart a lion was a natural phenomenon, the painting wouldn't be showcased. Only because it was a one-off act and not a regular occurrence, was it a reason to display this kind of picture.

This is the meaning of the above Chazal. The Torah is publicizing Sarah's generosity, for Avraham said take 'meal' while Sarah took 'fine flour'. This is proof that Sarah Imeinu was exceptional, for the natural way is for women to be stingier with their guests than men.

Taking Care with Mixing Foods

"He took cream and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed these before them; he stood over them beneath the tree and they ate" (Bereishit 18:8)

Rabbeinu Yosef Chaim of Bavel zya"a, in his sefer 'Ben Yehoyada' on masechet Yoma, explains the meaning of the verse, "He took cream and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed these before them; he stood over them". Since according to Jewish law one must not place meat and milk products on the same table, even though it is permissible to eat the milk products first and after rinsing and cleaning one's mouth, one may then eat meat, it is a decree in case one will come to eat from them both at the same time. However, if there is someone watching over the person, one does not suspect him. It follows that since Avraham put milk and meat before them, it was necessary to stand over them under the tree to guard them. This is the meaning of the Chazal, "Avraham Avinu a"h observed the mitzvah of not mixing foods (meat and milk)", meaning he resolved even a suspicion of mixing foods of opposite categories that have been placed on one table, by standing over the men (angels) to guard them.

Treasures

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



Parents' Behavior Shapes their Children's Education

"For I have loved him, because he commands his children and his household after him that they keep the way of Hashem, doing charity and justice" (Bereishit 18:19)

Hashem Yitbarach, the One who knows thoughts and feelings, testified about Avraham Avinu a"h, "For I have loved him". And why do I love him? "Because he commands his children" to guard My ways and commandments. Hashem was saying, I know that Avraham will bequeath to his offspring his holiness, his Torah and his entire way in Avodat Hashem.

It is necessary to understand how it is possible to bequeath something spiritual to one's child. One can bequeath money, possessions and assets, but how can one bequeath faith in Hashem and love for mitzvah observance? At most, one can educate one's child and try and guide him in the correct path, but of course the matter is still dependent on the child himself, on whether he possesses the willingness to accept his father's direction. Fortunate is the person who merits children who are prepared to follow the correct path with which they were educated.

So, if Hashem testified that Avraham's offspring will go in his ways, this means that there is agreement from both sides, both from the father to bequeath all his Avodat Hashem to his children and from the children to accept his ways. It is worth contemplating how one merits this.

It seems to be that the most important requirement is 'personal example'. A basic foundation of education is the fact that parents, by their conduct, serve as personal examples for their children. The parents must be people who are consistent and controlled in their conduct and behavior. Their communication with others should be pleasant and gentle, and they must be honest in their dealings and faithful to their declarations, no should be no and yes, yes. They should be meticulous with observing minor mitzvot just as with major mitzvot, and their behavior even in private should be modest. Of course, they are also people who meticulously observe the laws of derech eretz as apply to eating, drinking and similar matters. Without a doubt, positive and dignified behavior on the part of the parents has a more decisive effect in forming the spiritual core of the child, than any other measures.

On the other hand, conduct that contradicts what the parents preach, is not only a negative example concerning all those matters where the parents are deficient but also confuses the child and teaches him that it is possible to preach while not observe and who can perceive the result of this poor-quality approach?

Avraham Avinu a"h and his righteous wife Sarah, were indeed a living mussar sefer for their son Yitzchak. From his earliest days, Yitzchak observed the ways of his holy parents who served as a personal example, and his soul longed to imitate them. Their holy conduct was etched in his tender soul and is what enabled him to elevate himself in holiness and purity.

IN HONOR OF THE HILULA OF THE FAMOUS TZADDIK, THE HOLY AND PIOUS MIRACLE WORKER OF DISTINGUISHED LINEAGE, THE ESTEEMED MARAN RABBEINU CHAIM PINTO ZYA"A



The Power of a Tzaddik on His Hilula

Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, shlita, often talks about the extraordinary powers granted to a tzaddik on the day of his hilula. Rabbi Yehuda Leib Raskin, zt"l, who served as a Rabbi in Morocco, would constantly emphasize this point when seeing the tremendous crowd gathered to pray at the grave of the tzaddik on the twenty-sixth of Elul each year.

On the hilula, one perceives the simple faith of all the participants. Educated, rich, and respectable people, whose lives are filled with materialism, attend the hilula. Yet, when they stand at the gravesite they become entirely spiritual. They are totally humbled when praying by the tomb and somehow turn into different people. This proves that they are truly worthy individuals.

When a person stands facing the tomb and sees the grave, he realizes the ultimate destiny of every person. Consequently, he lessens the importance he attaches to the physical and concentrates on the spiritual. Following the event, when the hilula is over and everyone returns home, he aspires to achieve greater levels of spirituality.

However, the Yetzer Hara quickly sets to work, trying to get him to forget all the spiritual achievements he attained at the hilula. It is man's task to defeat the Yetzer Hara, as it says, "When you will go out to war against your enemies, and Hashem, your G-d, will deliver him into your hand, and you will capture its captives." This indicates that one should try to capture the enemy before the enemy captures you. It is possible to defeat the Yetzer Hara only with Torah. The Yetzer Hara knows this and therefore constantly attempts to sway the person.

This is what is hinted in the words "And you will capture its captives." One must continue to battle the Yetzer Hara continuously, not only for a limited time. The Yetzer Hara knows that after a while the inspiration will wear off, and then the spiritual elevation will diminish. Then, at an opportune moment, the Yetzer Hara will strike. Therefore, one should always strive to achieve higher levels and reinforce the inspiration that one experiences at the hilula of the tzaddik.

One must maintain this lofty level attained by being spending time at the gravesite, particularly after several days of growing in Torah and mitzvot and hearing stories of tzaddikim. This holiness must become a permanent presence and we should constantly progress, as it says, "A fire, continually, shall remain aflame on the Altar; you shall not extinguish it."

However, this is very difficult. One needs much Divine assistance to succeed since otherwise, it is impossible to overcome the Yetzer Hara who attempts to trap a person in its snare. This is why it says, "And Hashem, your G-d, will deliver him into your hand," since only with Divine assistance can one retain his spiritual attainments and continue advancing spiritually.

Thank Only the Master of the World

Torah scholars in every generation, whose fear of Hashem is even greater than their wisdom and who are meticulous in performing His will, resemble Kohanim, who were the guardians of the Sanctuary. Since they are so beloved by Hashem, He protects them and shields them in every perilous situation. They can cancel harsh and terrible decrees that endanger Bnei Yisrael, as it says, "A tzaddik decrees and Hashem fulfills his wish."

Rabbi Chaim Hakatan's door was open to everyone, without exception. During all hours of the day and night, people would come to his house pleading for assistance, requesting advice, blessings, and deliverance.

Many people would visit Rabbi Chaim's house so that he would pray for them and bless them. Those who merited salvation following his blessings returned to his house to thank him. But he would immediately set the record straight by stating simply, "Thank only the Master of the World."

Restoring Sensation

One night, when Rabbi Chaim Hakatan arrived at the Beit Hakeneset to recite the tikkun chatzot as usual, he stumbled over a man sitting on the steps of the entrance in the dark.

"What are you doing here at this hour?" Rabbi Chaim asked him.

"All my limbs are paralyzed!" the man answered. Tearfully, he pleaded before the tzaddik, "I came here especially for the Rav to notice me and take pity. I beg the honorable Rav to pray for me and beseech that in the merit of his holy forefathers, I should be healed from the terrible illness that has stricken me."

Rabbi Chaim helped him into a prone position, and while holding him, brought him into the Beit Hakeneset to join him in reciting the tikkun chatzot. Afterward, Rabbi Chaim called to a few of the congregants and asked them to take the paralyzed man to the old cemetery where his grandfather, the holy tzaddik and mekubal, Rabbi Chaim Hagadol, was buried.

When they came to the cemetery, Rabbi Chaim approached the grave of his holy grandfather and cried out, "Grandfather, Grandfather, pray to Hashem that He should have mercy upon this man. Neither I nor he will budge from this place until he is healed from his illness."

An unbelievable miracle occurred. The moment that Rabbi Chaim concluded his prayers, the paralyzed man began to experience sensation in all his limbs. A few minutes later, he was able to stand on his feet normally.

Eventually, the man married a righteous wife and they had many children. He made sure to relate to all his descendants the story of Rabbi Chaim Hakatan's greatness and the extraordinary merits of his holy grandfather, Rabbi Chaim Hagadol. (Heard from Rav Hillel Ben Chaim, who lives in Be'er Sheva and was the shamash of the Beit Hakeneset of Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hakatan.)

Running on Beer

Mr. Avraham Ali's son told Moreinu v'Rabbeinu that once his father was traveling with Rabbi Chaim Hakatan on a bus. Suddenly, in the middle of the way, the engine stalled. After two hours of waiting, Rabbi Chaim asked, "Why are we standing still and not moving?"

"By mistake, the gas tank was filled

with beer instead of fuel. That is why the engine is not functioning," the passengers explained.

Rabbi Chaim did not seem troubled by the turn of events. He handed his cane to Avraham Ali and told him, "Tap the engine with my cane, and everything will be in order."

Avraham fulfilled the tzaddik's request with unquestioning faith. He tapped the engine of the bus with Rabbi Chaim's cane and to the amazement of all the passengers, the engine immediately sputtered back to life.

The Chase

One of the members of the Ochana family hid a large sum of money in his car since it was illegal to possess large sums of money. He stashed the money under a layer of wax to hide it. His non-Jewish neighbors, who envied his business success, reported him to the government officials. Thus, one sunny day, the police stopped him and demanded that he open his car so that they could search it.

Mr. Ochana quickly grabbed the money and began to run. The police were at an advantage, chasing him with top of the line French cars that sped at 110 km/h, whereas, Mr. Ochana was fleeing on foot, weighed down with gold and silver coins. Nevertheless, he managed to escape and avoid being caught. The police officers were mystified by the fact that they had not succeeded in catching him.

The next day, when the police met him (of course, without the money on him), they asked him, "Tell us, how did you succeed in escaping us? Which Rabbi did you call on to assist you?"

"I prayed in the merit of Rabbi Chaim Pinto to be saved!" he answered simply. When the police heard this, they understood how he had managed to elude them. In the end, they dropped all charges against him.

What Does Your Husband Do?

The blessings of Rabbi Chaim Hakatan were renowned throughout Morocco. Amram Zenou's mother relates that her father worked as a fisherman for his livelihood. There was a period of time when he could not catch any fish and he had no income. In his intense grief, he fell ill.

Imbued with faith, his wife went to Rabbi Chaim to request his blessings for success in their livelihood. Rabbi Chaim

asked her, "What does your husband do?" She answered, "He is a fisherman."

Rabbi Chaim blessed her that within the week, her husband would succeed in catching more fish than he had ever caught in his life. This is exactly what happened. Precisely in the place where he began to fish he managed to catch a large amount, while his fellow fishermen had no luck. In this way, he became considerably wealthy.

From the Straits I called and He Answered Me

The challenging period that we are currently facing in light of the coronavirus pandemic has shaken every single one of us. The clear Divine Intervention has proved itself to all that the hand of G-d rules over mankind and has demonstrated the extent to which man can plan but the Hashem's counsel is what will prevail. We received a letter from a precious individual who merited coming closer to his Creator and feeling Hashem's closeness in these confusing times when financial security has been torn asunder and almost vanished. When he called out to Hashem from the straits, in the merit of the lofty tzaddikim, he merited experiencing salvation, as it says, "G-d answered me with expansiveness".

This is his story:

When we began observing a religious lifestyle in the merit of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, the Admor Rabbi David Pinto, may Hashem bless him, every morning we would listen to his shiur by video, through which we strengthened our emunah. One story impressed us greatly. It is printed in the sefer 'Walking in Their Ways', and we will quote it here word for word. This is what the Rav shlita related:

When I was a young boy, my parents sent me to yeshiva in England to learn under the guidance of the esteemed Rabbi Chaim Shmuel Lopian, zt"l, Rabbi Shammai Zahn, zy"a, Rabbi Binyomin Zev Kaufman, shlita, and Rabbi Yisrael Melul, shlita.

In Elul 1966 I was about sixteen years old when a longing for my father and mother and homesickness for my family overwhelmed me. It had been six years since I last saw them.

Those were the years that Father, zy"a, was secluded in his house, by order of his father, Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zy"a. I found out that Father had suddenly ceased this

practice and traveled to the graves of the tzaddikim in Eretz Yisrael. On his way home to Morocco, he had scheduled a one-day stopover in France.

I decided to ask permission from the Rosh Yeshiva to travel to France and spend some time with my beloved father whom I sorely missed. There was only one hitch in this plan. My Moroccan passport would expire within the next few days. If I intended to travel to France, I would have to spend some time there, renewing my passport at the Moroccan embassy.

I spent a long time trying to reach a decision. Should I remain in the yeshiva and forego the opportunity of seeing my father in the near future? Or should I take the trip, and with it, the risk of spending an unforeseeable amount of time renewing my passport?

With the wisdom of hindsight, I now realize that it was the Satan who lured me to travel to France. The deep longing for my father, coupled with the excitement of a boat ride, a train ride, and a tour of France, were far more attractive than staying where I belonged, in the yeshiva. However, the Satan convinced me that I was fulfilling the mitzvah of honoring my father by taking the time to visit him. Who could know when the next opportunity would present itself?

Had I been more firmly anchored to my Torah studies, I could easily have overcome my inclination. Father had not asked me to come and see him. He certainly would have preferred that I remain in the safe walls of the yeshiva, and not waste time and money on this superfluous expedition. I was also faced by the issue of my passport. It would likely be a good few days until I was issued a new one, especially since I had to go through a lot of bureaucracy to obtain it.

The Roshei Yeshiva did not compel me to remain in the yeshiva, seeing my great homesickness. I did not hint about my passport. They allowed me to go. I packed nearly all of my clothes, proof that I did not expect to return too soon, and set on my way.

The trip to France passed pleasantly enough. Before I knew it, I was in my father's warm embrace. But we were together for only one day. That evening, he was scheduled to return to Morocco. In contrast, I decided to spend some time in France. I even considered staying there for the Yamim Nora'im using the oppor-

tunity for renewing my passport.

I was invited to the home of Rabbi David Busseau, shlita, son-in-law of the Baba Sali, zy"a, and a highly respected man of great kindness. He heard I was a grandson of Rabbi Chaim Pinto and happily allowed me to stay with his family during my stay in France.

Father had given me some money for my needs, but I foolishly squandered it all on nonsense. When I went to pick up my luggage, which was at the left-luggage in the train station, I suddenly realized that I had not one franc left to my name. It was the day before Rosh Hashanah and I was understandably nervous. Everything I needed for the upcoming holiday was packed in my suitcase which I had no way of redeeming. As I was too ashamed to ask my host for the money, I decided to turn to Hashem in prayer, asking that He allow me to find a fellow Jew to help me out of my predicament or maybe I would even find the money in the street. I took a walk down Rue des Rosiers in Paris which was a Jewish center in those days, and tried my luck.

It was Erev Rosh Hashanah and countless Jews were making their holiday purchases. I lifted my eyes heavenward and poured my heart out to Hashem once again, arousing the merit of my fathers so that I should feel no shame on the holiday.

It was then that feelings of regret began to settle in. I remembered the Yamim Nora'im in the yeshiva. They would be spent in prayer which touched the soul. Rabbi Shammai Zahn, especially, had everyone moved by his emotional Musaf prayer. Suddenly, the glimmer of Paris was dulled and I felt I wanted to be sheltered in the shadows of the yeshiva, if even for one hour. I knew I had no one to blame for my pathetic predicament but myself. A sense of remorse overtook me. What was I doing here altogether?

Suddenly, my host approached me. "David, did you get your luggage from the train station yet?" he asked.

"I'll take care of it," I quickly replied, "don't worry about it." I was too ashamed to let on that I had wasted all my money on frivolous articles. Afterwards, I felt terribly bad about my misdeeds but fortified myself with faith in Hashem. Although deep down I knew that only an open miracle could turn around my sorrowful fate for the good.

The streets began emptying and I prayed fervently for some direction. I spoke to Hashem from a broken heart and keenly felt the fulfillment of the verse (Tehillim 27:10), "Though my father and mother have forsaken me, Hashem will gather me in." My relatives were all abroad and I was but a sixteen-year-old in a foreign country needing help.

I decided to enter a clothing store and buy the clothes I needed for the holiday. I gathered what I needed: a suit, shirts, shoes, etc. The salesman was very eager to help me, seeing the large purchase I was about to make and he was happy that I did not argue over the prices. I put on a calm expression as though I had the money in my pocket. But in reality, I was broken in spirit and downhearted, knowing I had no way to pay for these things.

I made my way to the counter, quaking inside. The man added up the bill, which amounted to five hundred francs. I told him, "If it's okay with you, give me half an hour to bring you the money. Don't close the shop – I'll be back!" The man saw my sincerity and even said, "If you return earlier, I'll give you a reduction of fifty francs."

I left the store and immediately started begging Hashem to send me an angel of deliverance. I looked around; maybe I would find a familiar Jew who would gladly lend me the money. I looked down; maybe I would find money on the ground. But I couldn't find anything, aside from fallen leaves and litter.

Make A Miracle for Me

Half an hour was almost up and I was dreadfully tense. I turned to Hashem once again and said, "Ribbono Shel Olam, is it difficult for You to give me five hundred francs for expenses for Yom Tov, which You have given us? Am I asking to wear these clothes for personal enjoyment? I want them to honor Your holy days, Hashem, which we are commanded to honor and enjoy with nice clothes. I have sinned before You. Please forgive me, and I will never forget Your kindness. Make a miracle for me which I will never forget."

Suddenly, I heard someone calling, "David! David!" I looked around and found a short man wearing a green shirt and sporting a kippah. He gave me a big smile and said, "Aren't you David Pinto, son of the tzaddik, Rabbi Moshe Aharon?" I affirmed his assumption.

"What in the world are you doing here?" he asked.

"I came to France to visit my father, who passed through on his way home from Eretz Yisrael. I got stuck here since I have to renew my passport after the holidays."

"And where will you be spending Rosh Hashanah?" he continued.

I told him the name of my host in Paris.

He gave me a huge smile and confided, "Listen, I have an envelope with five hundred francs which your host lent me a number of years ago when I was in Eretz Yisrael. If it's not too hard for you, would you pass it on to him, with my warm regards?"

The man gave me the envelope with my host's name written on it, wished me a good new year, kissed me on the forehead, and was gone, without leaving his name or address. I was left very confused by what had just transpired. I had not asked a thing about this man, who came at just the right time to bring me the money I needed for my purchases.

I took a look at the envelope which contained my host's name and address and looked up to see the man, but he had gone as quickly as he had come. I glanced at my watch and saw that the half an hour had passed. I rushed back to the store with the envelope in hand. The man was about to close shop, but as he saw me he reopened the shop. I paid for my purchases and went toward my host's house in good spirits. The entire way, I murmured praises to Hashem for the great kindness He did with me.

Throughout the holiday, I did not breathe a word regarding my rendezvous with the green-shirted man. Only afterwards, when a messenger from Morocco came with money from my parents, did I place five hundred francs in the empty envelope. I brought it to my host and spilled out the entire story.

I begged his forgiveness for the delay in handing over the money and not giving it to him before the Chag, besides asking him to pardon me for using his money in this time of stress without his permission. When he heard my tale, he was visibly shaken and said, "I cannot take the money from you. I have never been in Eretz Yisrael and have never lent such a huge sum of money to anyone. This being so, the money is not mine."

However, I would not give in. "Look!" I said. "Your name and address are written on the envelope, therefore the money is yours. Moreover, the man I spoke to knows who you are."

My host took the envelope and entered his room, trembling in fear. A few moments later, he emerged. "I tried to recall when I could have lent someone this sum of money and I came to the conclusion that this could never have happened. Either your holy grandfather descended from the World of Truth to help you in your time of despair or it was Eliyahu Hanavi. In any event, I cannot take the money from you." He insisted on leaving the money with me.

Years later, when I told Father the whole story, he asked, "Where's the suit?"

"I outgrew it and got rid of it."

"What a shame!" Father said in anguish. "You should know that you got that suit directly from Heaven, sent by an angel on High!"

I Waited with Impatience for the Live Broadcast

This is the story that Moreinu Harav shlita related. And now we will tell you our personal tale that happened to us in light of the above story.

We live in Ra'anana and own a small Hi-tech company in town. When the 'corona crisis' began, our business too suffered like everyone else, but every month, with Hashem's help, we still had enough to cover our living expenses. However, we were very concerned about the month of the Chagim, when the expenses are immeasurable. According to our calculation, we were in need of 8,000 dollars to cover these expenses.

At the end of Elul, the hilula of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Pinto took place in Morocco and like most of our congregation, we too prepared a festive meal and lit candles with our children to honor his memory. We felt such distress for what was facing us that my wife and I said to each other: 'Maybe we too should do as Rabbi David did before that Rosh Hashanah when he asked Rabbi Chaim to come to his aid. We too will pray to Hashem for salvation in the merit of the tzaddik and with Hashem's help we too will receive an envelope.' As we celebrated the hilula, we told our children the story that happened to Rabbi David in his youth in Paris, a story

that helped reinforce our emunah.

After the festive meal, my wife and children went to sleep, while I waited with impatience for the live broadcast of the hilula from Essaouira in Morocco. Late at night, the broadcast began and it was a most moving occasion. I saw Rabbi David who was in Essaouira and also the gravesite of Rabbi Chaim. At that opportune moment, I prayed with all my strength and asked the tzaddik to come to our aid in our difficult financial situation.

In my prayer, I begged Hashem for salvation and added, "Rabbi Chaim, help us, for we now need your help more than ever. Send us someone who will lend us \$8,000, or those that owe us money should pay their debts today." The hilula finished at one in the morning and I was extremely tired.

The next day we returned to routine, even though I did not receive the amount that I had hoped to get. I thought to myself: 'I am not worried; I know that Rabbi Chaim will perform a miracle for us.'

I Have a Surprise

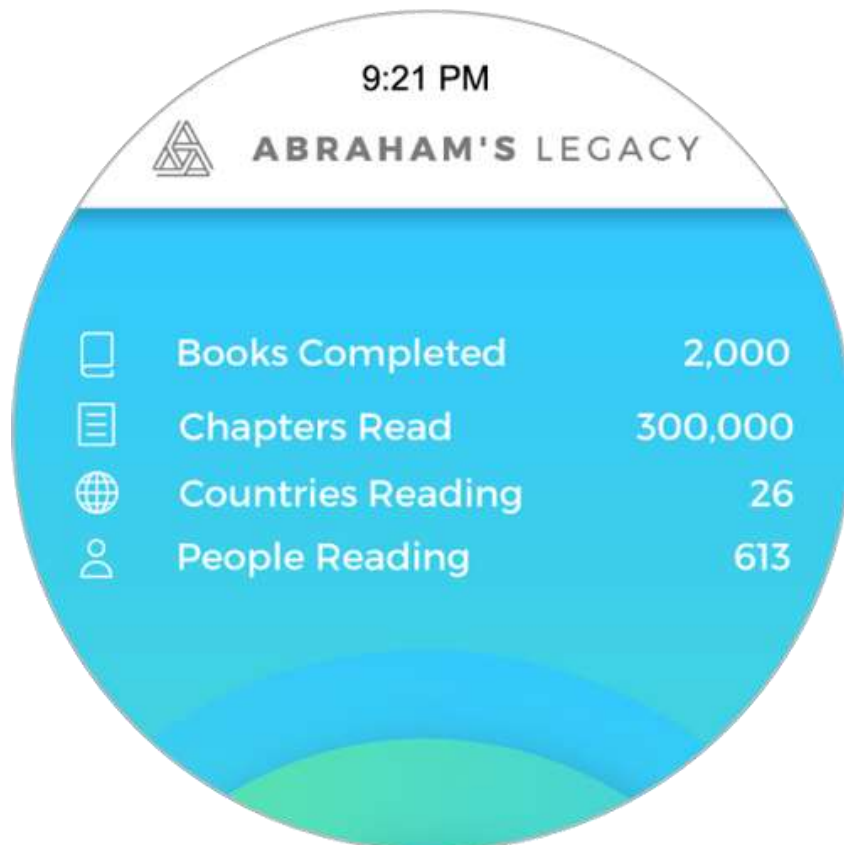
At one in the afternoon, my wife called me and said: "I have a surprise!" I thought that she was going to say that our clients had finally paid us. But she related something else entirely, something unfathomable. She had called her previous bank in Europe, where she had an account five years ago before we made Aliyah. She wished to put forward a request for a credit card. However, knowing that the account had been dormant for five years, she did not have much hope that they would approve her request.

To her surprise, the customer service representative said to her, "Madam, you have 8,000 dollars in your account. What do you want to do with it?" My wife worked in an investment bank for fifteen years and knew exactly how much should be in that account, so she tried to clarify the matter and discovered that indeed this amount showed in her account. Unbelievable! She tried to uncover where the money had come from, but without success. No source was discovered.

When she called me with the news, I told her, "My dear wife, it is Rabbi Chaim! Last night at the hilula I asked him to help us obtain \$8,000 and here it is, praised be Hashem!

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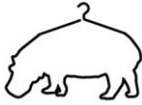
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