

# ME'OROS HA'TZADDIKIM

LIGHTS OF OUR RIGHTEOUS TZADDIKIM



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

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)

❖ **PARSHAS MIKEITZ** ❖

❖ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ❖

## The Benefit of the Doubt

Times were hard for the innkeeper. The inn he leased from the Polish landowner was exceedingly small, and the earnings it provided were barely enough to keep his family from starvation. Moreover, he had many daughters who would soon be of marriageable age, and he had no inkling of how he would afford the expenses of even the most economical weddings. He finally decided that he had no choice but to travel far from home to earn the money he needed for his family.

His best opportunity, it seemed to him, was to travel to outlying villages and offer his services as a *melamed*, a teacher of young children. In these small villages, there were no facilities for teaching the children, and therefore, an itinerant *melamed* would be in short supply and high demand. And this is exactly what he did. He was away from home for twelve long and lonely years. He did not earn quite as much money as he had dreamed he would, but he did manage to accumulate the respectable sum of nine hundred rubles, which would allow him to marry off his children and still live in relative comfort.

On his way home, the *melamed* passed through Berditchev and decided to stop over and see the holy and renowned Rav Levi Yitzchok. His first glimpse of Rav Levi Yitzchok came during *Shacharis*. The *melamed* watched spellbound as the great *Tzaddik* prayed with such joy and fervor that his body never stopped trembling. And when the *Tzaddik* turned and faced the people, his face radiated so much love and kindness that the *melamed* felt an unbreakable

bond with him, even though he had never seen him before nor spoken a word to him. After *Shacharis*, the *melamed* remained riveted to his seat, unable to take his eyes off the *Tzaddik*.

Rav Levi Yitzchok, seeing him sitting on the bench after everyone else had left, greeted him warmly and invited him for breakfast.

As they sat together, the *melamed* told Rav Levi Yitzchok his story.

"And now you are on your way home?" said Rav Levi Yitzchok.

"Yes."

"If you wish, I will tell you three stories before you go."

"I would be honored," said the *melamed*.

Rav Levi Yitzchok smiled at him. "It will cost you."

"Oh. All right, how much will it cost me?"

"Three hundred rubles for each story."

The *melamed* was shocked. Three hundred rubles! That was a vast sum of money for him. And if he paid for all three stories, it would cost him nine hundred rubles, the entire sum he had earned over the previous twelve years. He would go home as penniless as when he had left. But the *melamed* was so taken with Rav Levi Yitzchok that he put his full trust in him. Perhaps there were some important lessons in these stories, lessons that would change his life for the better. He could not believe that Rav Levi Yitzchok would allow him to do something that was not to his own benefit.

"Very well," he said with a sigh. "I will buy a story."

"I see," said Rav Levi Yitzchok. "You will buy one story at a time. That is fine. Here is the first story. If a person finds himself at a crossroads and doesn't know which way to turn he should always take the road to the right, as our Sages taught (*Yoma* 15b), 'All the turns you take should be to the right.'"

"That's the story?" said the *melamed*.

"That the story," said Rav Levi Yitzchok.

The *melamed* sighed and handed over three hundred rubles.

"Do you want to hear another story?" said Rav Levi Yitzchok. "If you do, it will cost you another three hundred rubles."

The *melamed's* heart was in his mouth, but his devotion to Rav Levi Yitzchok and his trust in him was so intense that he nodded his assent.

"An old man with a young wife is courting death," said Rav Levi Yitzchok.

"That's the story?" said the *melamed*.

"Yes."

The *melamed* reached into his pouch, counted out another three hundred rubles and gave them to Rav Levi Yitzchok.

"Do you want to hear the third story?" asked Rav Levi Yitzchok.

The *melamed* had gone this far. He had given Rav Levi Yitzchok most of the money he had earned over the previous twelve years, because he trusted him. He could not very well stop now. He did not understand what was happening, but he took the plunge. He placed his last

three hundred rubles on the table and nodded.

"Only believe what your own eyes see," said Rav Levi Yitzchok. "When you consider other people, give them the benefit of the doubt. But when you are examining your own deeds, of course, do not give yourself the benefit of the doubt. Now go in peace, and may your journey be successful."

The *melamed* left Berditchev in a daze. After twelve long years, he was returning home penniless. And what did he have for all those years of hard work and deprivation? Three stories that weren't even stories. But this was what the holy *Tzaddik* had apparently wanted him to do, and this was what he had done. He had no regrets, only a profound apprehension.

As the *melamed* trudged along the road, absorbed in his thoughts, he heard a lot of noise up ahead. He looked up and saw that he was approaching a crossroads where agitated people were milling about.

"Did you see the thieves that came through here?" they asked him. "They stole a great deal of money, and we must track them down."

Remembering Rav Levi Yitzchok's first story, the *melamed* pointed to the right. "They went that way," he said.

The trackers thanked him and ran off to the right in pursuit of the thieves. Shortly thereafter, they returned with the stolen property.

"You've earned yourself a reward," said one of the trackers as he handed the *melamed* a small bundle. "There are six hundred rubles there."

The *melamed* continued on his way, happy that his investment in Rav Levi Yitzchok's first story had paid off so handsomely. Darkness was falling, and he looked around for a place where he could spend the night. Up ahead, he saw an inn and hoped they would have a room available for him to rent. The owner of the inn turned out to be an old man with an outspoken young wife.

"Sure, I'll rent you a room," said the innkeeper. "We have one room to rent, and it is available."

"Absolutely not," said the young wife. "I won't hear of it."

The innkeeper looked at his young wife in puzzlement, and then he shrugged in resignation. "I guess the room is not available," he said. "You'll have to find other accommodations."

The *melamed* went off to find some other place, but there was nothing available. A light drizzle began to fall. He decided to return to try again at the inn, but when he came there, all the doors were barred and the windows shuttered. He knocked and knocked, but there was no answer.

It started to rain very heavily, and the *melamed* sought refuge under the eaves of the inn. He lay down on the ground and pressed himself against the wall of the inn under the protruding eaves so that only part of the rain fell on him. He shivered in misery until he dozed off.

Around midnight, he was awakened by the sound of a wagon approaching. The wagon pulled up in front of the inn, and a few rough men descended. One of them knocked lightly

on the door of the inn, and the innkeeper's wife almost instantly swung it open. They conversed briefly in low tones.

"Who is that?" the innkeeper's wife asked, as she caught sight of the "sleeping" *melamed*.

The man peered at the *melamed*. "Looks like a drunkard," he said. "He's sleeping it off under your eaves. A sober person wouldn't sleep outside in the pouring rain. Probably dead to the world."

"Go check him out," said the innkeeper's wife.

The *melamed* closed his eyes and feigned sleep. The man walked over to him, grabbed him by the shoulder and shook him. The *melamed* did not budge. The man shook him harder and harder until the *melamed* opened his eyes and looked about him with a bleary stare. Then he rolled his eyes back and collapsed back on the ground.

"Just a drunk," said the man with disgust. "He's nothing."

"Good," said the innkeeper's wife. "Now go upstairs and put that old husband of mine to death while he sleeps, and then we'll break open his strongbox and see what he has there."

The *melamed* realized that Rav Levi Yitzchok's second story was unfolding right in front of him. He jumped to his feet and started shouting at the top of his lungs. The commotion woke the innkeeper, who grabbed a sword he kept under his bed and came out to investigate. Realizing that their plot had been foiled, the robbers fled, together with the innkeeper's wife. The *melamed* then reported to the innkeeper everything he had heard.

"I'm shocked," said the innkeeper, "but not very surprised. You've saved my life. How can I repay you? Ask for anything, and if it's within my power, I'll give it to you."

The *melamed* thought for a moment. "Three hundred rubles would be perfect," he said.

The innkeeper gave him the money gladly. The next morning, the *melamed* continued on his journey, content that his pouch had been refilled.

When he arrived in his town, he stopped at an inn to ask about his family. After an absence of twelve years, the people in the inn did not recognize him, and they spoke freely about his wife and children.

"The husband is gone," one man said. "No one knows where he is or even if he is alive or dead. And his wife ..." The man gave him a knowing wink. "She has young men come to the inn in the dead of night. Not exactly how you would expect a modest Jewish woman to behave."

The *melamed* was very upset, but remembering Rav Levi Yitzchok's third story, he decided to give his wife the benefit of the doubt for the time being. He would only believe what his own eyes saw.

That evening, he visited his own inn in such a good disguise that no one recognized him, not even his wife and children. He pretended to fall into a drunken stupor and pass out under the table, where he was left to sleep it off overnight. In the middle of the night, he saw a handsome young man enter the inn stealthily. He saw his wife lead the young man into a private room and close the door. The young man did not leave until dawn. What was he to make of this? he wondered. Should he believe that this was indeed what it appeared to be? Would the holy Berditchever *Rav* consider this something he had seen with his own eyes?

There had to be a final test.

The *melamed* stood up and shed his disguise.

His wife's hands flew to her face. "My husband!" she shrieked. "You're back. Come, children! Your father is back!"

"My dear wife," said the *melamed*, "I pretended to be drunk and slept under the table, because I wanted to see how things were with my own eyes. You see, I heard things ..."

"Stop," she said. "Don't say another word. Let me explain. When you left so many years ago, we still owed a lot of money to the Polish landowner, and he was concerned that the debt would never be repaid. So he took our young son hostage. Our son grew up in the household of the landowner, but he never lost contact with his family. For all these years, he's been sneaking away most nights and coming here to the inn. We talk, and I feed him kosher food. And I teach him. I taught him how to read from the *siddur*, and a little *Chumash* and some of the laws, as much as I know. I suppose you didn't get such a good look at him from under the table. You'll get a better look at him tonight."

That night, when the young man came again, the *melamed* was waiting for him. He took one look at his face and instantly recognized in the grown man the young boy he had left behind. With a song of joy in his heart, the *melamed* embraced his son.

In the ensuing days, the *melamed* paid off his debt to the landowner and redeemed his son. He also set aside some of the money he had earned for the weddings of his children and lived comfortably on the rest of it together with his wife for the remainder of his life.



## Dvar Torah

After Yosef accused his brothers of espionage, he said to them (*Bereishis* 42:18-20):

Do this and you shall live, I fear the Lord. If you are truthful people, let one of your brothers be imprisoned in your place of confinement, while you go and bring provisions for the hunger of your households. Then bring your youngest brother to me so that your words will be verified and you will not die."

And the *Torah* informs us that "they did so".

Shouldn't Yosef have begun his statement with the words "I fear the Lord"? And don't the words "they did so" imply that they did exactly as Yosef had demanded when, in fact, they did not return until their food had almost run out?

The best way to guide people, explains Rav Levi Yitzchok, is to judge them kindly and favorably, always to give them the benefit of the doubt and to assume that they are acting out of good motives, out of fear of Heaven. Then they will come to you, because their hearts are drawn to you, and they will be receptive to your message.

This is what Yosef was saying to them. "Do this and live" because you will ascribe good motives to me. You will believe that I fear the Lord and that I am not asking you to bring your younger brother because I intend to do him any harm. And the brothers "did so". They accepted that Yosef meant well and that he was acting out of fear of Heaven. And once they judged him favorably, their hearts opened and they were able to admit, (*Bereishis* 42:21) "We are at fault and guilty concerning our brother."





## ❁ GEDOLIM BE'MISASAM YOSER ❁



Yahrzeits for week beginning Parshas Mikeitz

[http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim\\_yahrtzeits/Teves](http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim_yahrtzeits/Teves)

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

### \* 4<sup>th</sup> of Teves ~ Begins Friday Night (Dec 19<sup>th</sup>)

- \* **Rav Moshe Zev** of Bialystock, author of *Maros HaTzovos* and *Agudas Aizov*. He was the founder of *Gemilas Chassodim Bais Medrash*, Bialystock's most prominent *Torah* center, where Rav Meir Simcha of Dvinsk learned after his marriage. [NOTE: Rav Ze'ev Nachum of Bendin, the father of Rav Avrohom Borenstein of Sochatchov, also authored a *sefer* called *Agudas Eizov*], (5490/1729);
- \* **Rav Yehoshua Eizel Charif** of Slonim (1801–1872), born in Glovanka, near Minsk. After many years of learning with the enthusiastic support of his father-in-law, Rav Yitzchok Fein, he became *Ravof* Kalavaria, then Kutno, and finally Slonim (near Grodno). He was *mechaber* of many *seforim*, including *Emek Yehoshua*, *Nachlas Yehoshua*, *Noam Yerushalmi*, *Sefas HaNachal* and *Atzas Yehoshua*, (5633/1872);
- \* **Rav Gershon Henoch Leiner** of Radzin (1839–1891), the *Ba'al HaTecheiles*. His grandfather was Rav Mordechai Yosef Leiner of Ishbitz, founder of *Ishbitz Chassidus*, after leading a group of *talmidim* from the court of Rav Menachem Mendel of Kotzk. He replaced his father as *Rebbe* of Ishbitz after the former's *petira* in 1878. Rav Gershon Henoch traveled from Radzin to Italy in search of the *chilozon*, the marine source from which the dye was obtained. The *chilozon* carried the dye in a special sac located in its pharynx. In the famed aquarium at Naples he saw the *chilozon* and studied the way in which the dye was removed and prepared. He discovered that it was used by artists in their paintings because it would never fade, (5652/1891);
- \* **Rav Yaakov Shaul Katzin**, head of New York Aleppo community (1900–1994). Born in Yerushalayim, he learned at *Yeshiva Ohel Mo'ed* and at *Yeshiva Porat Yosef*. In the midst of World War I, Yaakov's father and sister passed away of typhoid fever. His mother passed away soon after, and Yaakov was an orphan at sixteen. At eighteen, he married Mazal, the daughter of Rav Sholom Hedaya, a noted *mekubol* and *Talmudic* scholar, and was appointed *Rosh Yeshiva* in the then-newly erected *Yeshiva Porat Yosef* building. During the course of his life, Yaakov wrote several books on the science of *Kabbola*. In 1925, he published *Ohr HaLevona*, which consisted of three parts – *Ohr HaLevona*, *Ohr Chodosh* and *Ohr HaChaim* – a commentary with *chiddushim* from the teachings of the *Rashash*. He also wrote *Yesod Ho'Emuna*, which included arguments that dispelled doubts about the authenticity of *Kabbola*, as well as responsa. In 1931, he published *Pri Eitz HaGan*, which included biographies of prominent *Tzaddikim* and discussions of their ethical teachings, solutions to problems posed by the *Gaon* Rav Yosef Chaim of Baghdad and the order of *tefillos* for *Rosh HaShana*, along with explanations. From 1928 to the end of 1932, Rav Yaakov served as a *Dayan* in the Supreme *Bais Din* of the *Sephardi* Community of Yerushalayim. In 1933, Rav Yaakov accepted an offer from *Mogen Dovid* Congregation of Brooklyn, New York, as Chief *Rav* and Chief *Dayan*. On August 10, 1933, Yaakov, Mazal and their first four children –Shaul, Shulamis (Charlotte), Avrohom, and Yitzchok–came to

New York. (They had nine children who reached adulthood.) Shaul became Chief *Rav* of the Brooklyn community after the *petira* of his father, (5755/1994);

✳ **Rav Chaim Shaul Dveik**, *Rosh Yeshiva HaMekubolim* of Yerushalayim and *mechaber* of *Eifo Shleima*, (5694/1933);

✳ **Rav Shalom Roke'ach**, *Rav* of Skohl, (5722/1961);

✳ **Mr. Yitzchok Meir (Irving) Bunim** (1901–1981). Born in Volozhin, Lithuania, to Rav Moshe and Esther Mina Buminowitz, Irving moved to the Lower East Side of New York with most of his family in 1910. (His father moved in 1905.) He and his two brothers were enrolled in *Yeshiva Yaakov Yosef*, and his father joined the family of *Torah Vodaas*. As a youth, he joined the fledgling Young Israel movement and made significant inroads from within. In the 1940s, he accepted the presidency of *Yeshiva Yaakov Yosef*, a position he held for thirty years. He threw himself into the founding of *Bais Medrash Govoha* and *Kollel* in Lakewood. He also devoted much time and energy to *Chinuch Atzmai* and *Torah U'Mesorah*. He and his wife, Blanche, raised three children, Rav Amos, Chana, and Judith, (5742/1981);

✳ **Rebbetzin Recha Schwab** (1908–2003). Married in 1931, she moved with Rav Schwab to the United States in 1936, and settled in Washington Heights in 1958. She left this world with one hundred and eighty descendants, all *Torah*-observant, (5764/2003).

#### ✳ **5<sup>th</sup> of Teves ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Dec 20<sup>th</sup>)**

✳ **Rav Mordechai Pinchas Teitz**, *Rav* of Elizabeth, New Jersey (1908–1995). Born in Latvia; arrived in USA in 1934 [*Hamodia* 2005: 4<sup>th</sup> of *Teves*], (5756/1995);

✳ **Rav Shlomo Molcho** (1500–1532). Born in Lisbon, Portugal, a descendant of Portuguese Marranos. He published twenty-two essays on the topic of redemption according to the secrets of *Kabbola*, in his work, *Sefer HaMefo'ar*. He met with the Pope and asked him to stop the campaign against the *Marranos*. He also met Rav Yosef Karo in Tzefas and the *mekubol* Rav Yosef Taitzik of Salonica, who taught Rav Molcho *Kabbola*. His speeches inspired many *Marranos* to publicly return to their faith. Arrested by the officers of the Inquisition, he recited *Shema* with great joy, as he was burned at the stake by Roman Emperor Charles V in Mantua, Italy, (5293/1532);

✳ **Rav Aharon** of Titiov, grandson of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, (5589/1828);

✳ **Rav Avrohom Yaakov** of Sadiger (1884–1961), named for his grandfather, the first Sadigerer *Rebbe*. When Reb Avrohom Yaakov turned eighteen, he married Bluma Raizel, the daughter of the Kapischnitzer *Rebbe*, Rav Yitzchok Meir Heschel. With the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the *Rebbe* fled to Vienna, Austria, and lived there for twenty-four years. When the Nazis entered Vienna in 1938, the *Rebbe* was seized and forced to sweep the streets clean, to the amusement of the onlooking Germans. After World War II, he lived in Tel Aviv, where he continued the Sadigerer line. He authored *Abir Yaakov*, (5722/1961);

✳ **Rav Yerachmiel Tzvi Rabinowitz**, the Biala-Peshis'cha *Rebbe*. He was born in 1923, the firstborn son of the previous Biala *Rebbe*, the *Chelkas Yehoshua*. He became *Rebbe* after his father was *niftar* in 1982 and opened his *Bais Medrash* in the *Har Nof* section of Yerushalayim, (5764/2003).

#### ✳ **6<sup>th</sup> of Teves ~ Begins Sunday Night (Dec 21<sup>st</sup>)**

✳ **Rav Yaakov Reischer**, *mechaber* of *Minchas Yaakov*, *Chok Yaakov*, *Iyun Yaakov* (*peirush* on *Ein Yaakov*), and *Shevus Yaakov* (1661–1733). Born in Prague, he served as *Rav* in Reische, Worms, and Metz [9<sup>th</sup> of *Shevat*, according to *Yated* 2007, 2008], (5494/1733);

- ✱ **Rav Yechezkel Shraga Halberstam**, the *Shinover Rav* (1815–1899). He was born in Rudnick, Galicia, eldest son of Rav Chaim of Sanz. He was an ardent follower of Rav Osher of Ropshitz, and a *Chassid* of Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Rymanov, Rav Shalom of Belz and Rav Meir of Premishlan. Tragically, he was married and widowed five times. His first wife was the granddaughter of the *Yismach Moshe*, Rav Moshe Teitelbaum of Muehly, Hungary. He is known as the *Divrei Yechezkel*, (5660/1899);
- ✱ **Rav Chaim Shlomo** of Koson, (5680/1919);
- ✱ **Rav Alter Yisrael Shimon Perlow** of Novominsk (1873–1933), *mechaber* of *Tiferes Ish*. Scion of the dynasties of Ustila, Koidanov, Lehovitch, Karlin, Apt, Czernobyl and Berditchev, Rav Alter Yisrael Shimon settled in Warsaw in 1917. He knew the whole *Mishna* by heart and to the end of his life reviewed eighteen chapters every day, (5694/1933);
- ✱ **Rav Chaim Meidanik**, *Rav* in Chicago and *mechaber* of *Mazkeres Chaim* and *Hegyonei Chaim*, (5715/1954);
- ✱ **Rebbetzin Beila Morgenstern** (1908–2006). First-born daughter of the *Admor* of Ozerov-Chenchen, Rav Moshe Yechiel Epstein, *mechaber* of *Aish Dos* and *Be'er Moshe*. She married Rav Tzvi Hershel Morgenstern, a descendant of the Kotzker *Rebbe*. Her husband served as a principal of the Bronx *Bais Yaakov*. She always recited the entire *Sefer Tehillim* on the *Yahrzeit* of every one of her noble forefathers and asked *Hashem* that their merit should protect all of *Klal Yisrael*. Among her grandchildren are Rav Dovid Altusky and Rav Yechiel Altusky, (5767/2006).

✱ **7<sup>th</sup> of Teves ~ Begins Monday Night (Dec 22<sup>nd</sup>)**

- ✱ **Rav Moshe Dovid Walli** (Vally; Vali) (1697–1777). The foremost *talmid* of the *Ramchal* in Padua, Italy, he practiced as a physician in Padova. When the *Ramchal* was forced to leave Italy, Rav Moshe Dovid was appointed head of his academy in Padua. Also known as the *Rama'd Vali*, he wrote a commentary on *Chumash* (*Ohr Olam* on *Bereishis*; *Bris Olam* on *Shemos*; *Avodas HaKodesh* on *Vayikra*; *Shivtei Kah* on *Bamidbar*; *Mishneh LaMelech* on *Devorim*), *Nach* and *Likkutim*, (5538/1777);
- ✱ **Rav Tzvi Hirsch**, son of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, (5540/1779);
- ✱ **Rav Rephoel Shlomo Laniado** (1740–1793). Originating from Spain through their progenitor, Rav Shmuel, the Laniado family was among the most famous and well established in the Syrian city of Chaleb. Rav Refoel Shlomo Laniado was a prolific writer, and is well known for several *halachic* works: *HaMaalos LeShlomo*, *Bais Dino Shel Shlomo*, *Lechem Shlomo* and *Kisei Shlomo*, (5554/1793);
- ✱ **Rav Mordechai Yosef Leiner** of Izhbitz (1800–1854 [1878, according to *Yated* 2007]), founder of the *Chassidic* Court at Izhbitz, after leading a group of *talmidim* from the court of Rav Menachem Mendel of Kotzk. Born in Tomashov, Poland, in 1800, he was a childhood friend of Rav Menachem Mendel Morgenstern, later to become the Kotzker *Rebbe*, and they studied together in the school of the *Chassidic* Master, Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshis'cha. His *sefer Mei HaShilo'ach*, is considered a fundamental work of Izhbitz and Radziner *Chassidus*. Among his *talmidim* were Rav Tzodok *HaKohen MiLublin* and Rav Leibel Eiger, (5615/1854);
- ✱ **Rav Sholom Yosef Friedman** of Husyatin (1879 [1851, according to *Yated* 2007]). Son of the first *Rebbe* of Husyatin, Rav Mordechai Shraga (the youngest son of the Rizhiner *Rebbe*, who had moved to Husyatin in 1865 and was *niftar* in 1894. He was the father of Rav Moshe of Boyan-Cracow ("Reb Moshenyu"), (5640/1879);



- ✳ **Rav Yosef Elyashiyov.** Born in the former Soviet Union to Rav Tzion, who was killed by the authorities for his efforts to promote Judaism, he moved from Samarkand to Tashkent after marrying; there, he and his wife raised their seven children. While living in Tashkent he had to spend seven years away from home — four years in custody on suspicion of underground religious activity and three years hiding from the KGB, who had him under surveillance for his activities to promote Judaism. In 1971, he managed to secure an exit visa and left his home and his family, traveling to *Eretz Yisrael*. He opened the first *Shaarei Tzion* institutions in 1980, naming them after his father. He then started a *kollel*, with the goal of drawing *avreichim* from Bukharan families, as well as a school in Kiryat Ono for Bukharan immigrants. Today, a total of 4,500 students, from kindergartners to *avreichim*, study at *Shaarei Tzion* institutions, (5768/2007).

### ✳ **8<sup>th</sup> of Teves ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Dec 23<sup>rd</sup>)**

- ✳ **Rav Yosef Dov HaKohen Lieberman.** Rav Lieberman was a well-known figure in Williamsburg as the *Menahel* of *Torah Vodaas* and *Tzeilemer Yeshivos*. His *Daf Yomi Shiur* is still remembered by many. He was *niftar* at the age of ninety-four in 1986 after delivering his regular *shiur* on Friday morning, (5747/1986);
- ✳ **Rav Boruch Tzvi HaKohen Moskowitz.** Rav Moskowitz was the post-World War II *Rav* and *Rosh Yeshiva* of Paksh. He was a close *talmid* of the *Keren L'Dovid*. He is the *mechaber* of many *seforim*, including *Tenuvos Boruch* on *Sugyos*, *Mishmeres Tzvi Al HaTorah* and *Nishbah L'Avosecha* on *Pirkei Avos*. He left many *talmidim* in America, *Eretz Yisrael* and England, (5711/1950).
- ✳ **History:** A *taanis tzibbur* (communal fast) was declared to commemorate the translation of the *Torah* to a foreign language (Greek) under King Ptolemy (*Shulchon Aruch Orach Chaim* 580:2).

### ✳ **9<sup>th</sup> of Teves ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Dec 24<sup>th</sup>)**

- ✳ **Ezra Hasofer** and **Nechemya** (313 BCE or 320 BCE);
- ✳ **Rav Ezra** of Gerona, the Ramban's teacher in Kabbalah. He himself learned Kabbalah from Rav Yitzchak Sagi-Nahor, son of the Ravad III (1227);
- ✳ **Rabbeinu Yosef**, son of Rav Shmuel HaNaggid, and son-in-law of Rav Nissim Gaon of Kirouan. He was murdered in an Arab pogrom with another 1500 Jews in Spain (1067);
- ✳ **Rav Yehudah** ("Reb Yiddel") Weber, *Rosh Yeshiva* of the newly established Pupa Yeshiva, first located in Queens, then in Ossining, in Westchester County (1920-2006).

### ✳ **10<sup>th</sup> of Teves ~ Begins Thursday Night (Dec 25<sup>th</sup>)**

- ✳ **Zecharia ben Berechya ben Ido HaNovi** (320 or 313 BCE);
- ✳ **Malachi HaNovi** (320 or 313 BCE). His *petira* ended the era of prophecy;
- ✳ **Rav Yehuda Eilenberg**, *mechaber* of *Minchas Yehuda*, (5371/1610);
- ✳ **Rav Nosson Sternhartz** (or Sternberg) of Breslov, *mechaber* of *Likutei Halochos*. As a young man, he lived in Nemirov, nine miles north of Breslov. Despite family opposition, Nosson became the *talmid* who recorded Rav Nachman's thoughts, edited his writings and wrote the early history of the Breslover *Chassidim*, (5605/1844);
- ✳ **Rav Meir Sholom Rabinowitz** of Kalushin (1851–1901). Born to Rav Yehoshua Osher of Zelichov, the son of the *Yid HaKodosh* of Peshis'cha, he became a son-in-law of his older brother, Rav Yaakov Tzvi of Porisov, *mechaber* of *Atara Lerosh Tzaddik*. He served as *Rav* of the *kehillos* of Porisov, Gravlin and Kalushin. He became *Rebbe* after the *petira* of his brother in 1889. Many of his ideas in *Torah* and *Chassidus* were recorded by his son and successor, Yehoshua Alter, in the *sefer Nahar Sholom*, (5662/1901);

- ✧ **Rav Noach** of Hordishitz, (5664/1903);
- ✧ **Rav Refoel Wexelbaum**, *Rosh Yeshiva* of Itri;
- ✧ **Rav Yechezkel Halshtuk**, the Ostrovitzer *Rebbe* (1887–1942), born to Rav Meir Yechiel, founder of the court of Ostrovitz (Ostrowiec), a town that lies along the Kamienna River, a tributary of the Vistula, and which is situated in the Polish highlands just north of the Swietokrzyskie Mountains. At eighteen, Rav Yechezkel married Rebbetzin Baila Mirel, daughter of Rav Naftoli of Meilitz, who was a grandson of Rav Naftoli of Ropshitz. In 1911, he was appointed *Rav* of the town of Inovlod; and ten years later, he was appointed *Rav* of Nashelsk. He succeeded his father as *Rebbe* after the latter's *petira* in 1928. He founded a *Yeshiva* named *Bais Meir*, in honor of his father. He and twenty of his *Chassidim* were murdered by the Nazis during *davening* on the night of *Assora BeTeves*. His *Rebbetzin*, seven sons and one son-in-law were all murdered by the Nazis. Some of his writings were published after the war under the name *Kodshei Yechezkel*, (8<sup>th</sup> of *Teves*, according to *Yated* 2006 and *Yated* 2007), (5703/1942);
- ✧ **Rav Shabsai Yogel**, born in Piask, Russia (1875–1957). After studying in Eishishock as a youngster, he learned in Volozhin until it was closed by the Russian authorities, at which time he returned to Piask until he married Liba Kletzkin from Slonim. He then moved to Slonim and learned in one of the Novardok *kollelim*. In 1906, he was asked to head the Slonim *Yeshiva*, founded by Rav Shlomo Zalman Kahana in 1816. The *Yeshiva's* first *Rosh Yeshiva* was Rav Avrohom Weinberg, who later became the founder of the Slonimer *Chassidic* dynasty. In 1929, Rav Shabsai visited *Eretz Yisrael* for the first time; two months later, his son Shlomo perished in the Chevron massacres. During the early years of World War II, Rav Shabsai and his family moved to *Eretz Yisrael*. Since the *Yeshiva* in Slonim had been destroyed by the Nazis, he rebuilt it. He decided to do so in Ramat Gan, which at that time was a spiritual wasteland, (5718/1957).
- ✧ **Rav Avrohom Abba Leifer**, the Pittsburgher *Rebbe*, the *Admor* of Petersburg-Ashdod. *Mechaber* of *Emunas Avrohom*, son of Rav Yosef (*Tzidkas Yosef*), and son-in-law of Rebbe Issomor of Nadvorna. His son, Mordechai Yissochor Dov Ber Leifer of Pittsburgh, is *mechaber* of *Pisgomei Orais*, (5750/1989).



## ✧ GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM ✧

### STORIES & ANECDOTES

#### Rav Gershon Henoah Leiner of Radzin, 4<sup>th</sup> of Teves

The *Ba'al HaTecheiles* (1839-1891)

#### **What is the Color of Techeiles?**

When Rav Gershon Henoah came up with his new formula for reintroducing the *techeiles* to dye the wool of *tzitzis*, he created a huge stir. He went from *Rebbe* to *Rebbe* trying to get their approval for his method.

Among those he approached was Rav Yehoshua of Belz, who turned him down and refused to approve of his dye. "Let me explain my refusal," Rav Yehoshua said. "If you wish to argue with me using your *Talmudic* skills and erudition, you will surely defeat me because your intellectual

prowess in *Torah* is certainly superior to mine! However, I will tell you a story why I simply cannot agree with you.

“Once, my saintly father, the *Tzaddik*, the *Sar Sholom* of Belz, woke me early at dawn and asked me to come outside with him. He pointed upward to

the heavens and showed them to me, saying, 'Do you see the color of the sky? This,' he pointed, 'is the color of *techeiles*.' Now, unfortunately, the color you show me here does not match the color my father showed me.” (*Otzar Yisrael* in the name of Mordechai Hirsch p.119)



## Rav Avrohom Yaakov Ben Yisrael Friedman of Sadigur, 5<sup>th</sup> of Teves

The *Abir Yaakov*

### Such a Nusach HaTefilla

A *bochur* once came before Rav Avrohom Yaaakov of Sadigur, the *Abir Yaakov*, and asked the *Rebbe* for help, because he was having difficulty concentrating during *davening* and felt that he did not *daven* properly. “How can anyone have problems concentrating during *davening*,” wondered the *Tzaddik* rhetorically, “when *Chazal* composed a unique *nusach hatefilla*? It’s practically impossible to have any extraneous and foreign thoughts when you *daven*!”



### Learn Out Loud

When another *bochur* complained to the *Tzaddik* that he had issues learning *Torah* and was not successful, the *Rebbe* wondered aloud, “How can such a thing be? Why don’t you try and study out loud? When I was a youngster,” explained the *Abir Yaakov*, “my brother and I studied in a *Bais Medrash* approximately three houses away from my home and we studied with such loud voices that my parents could hear us from a distance, and when we came home, we could tell by looking at my father’s facial expression whether we had studied well that day or not!”



### The Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh

Once, when some of his *Chassidim*

came from the *kloiz* in Haifa, they told the *Rebbe* that every *Shabbos* night they study the *sefer Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* together. However, when they reached *Parshas Vayikra* and tried to study his holy words and commentary, they ran into problems – they had difficulty understanding it. They wanted to know if instead they could switch to studying the commentary of the *Ramban*. The *Rebbe*’s answer was harsh. “Do you mean to tell me if you study *Gemora* and reach a difficult point or *sugya* that you cease learning?!” Under the *Rebbe*’s guidance the *kloiz* persisted in its custom and the weekly *Shabbos* night *shiur* in *Ohr HaChaim* continued, as well as in the *sefer Toldos Yaakov Yosef*.



### Gimmel Cheshvan – the Rizhiner’s Yahrzeit Tisch

There was once a *Chassid* whose daughter’s *chasuna* was planned for *Gimmel Cheshvan*, the same date as the *Yahrzeit* of the *heilige* Rizhiner, the forebear of the *Abir Yaakov* of Sadigur.

On that holy date, the *Abir Yaakov* conducted a festive *tisch* and always spoke highly of the importance and greatness attributed to participation on such an auspicious occasion. The *Chassid* was therefore thoroughly downcast and decided that perhaps he should leave the wedding

in the middle and join the *Rebbe's tisch*. When he presented this ingenious solution to the *Rebbe*, he was met with emphatic opposition; the *Rebbe* would not agree at all. Instead, the *Rebbe* told the *Chassid* the following: "I have received a tradition from my forebear, the great *Maggid* of Mezritch, that when Jews sit together and one of them thinks the proper thoughts, the entire group is considered to be at a *farbrengen* or (*Chassidish* gathering). When you sit down to the wedding meal together with everyone and concentrate your thoughts on *Gimmel Cheshvan*, your entire *chasuna seuda* will be transformed and considered to be a *Gimmel Cheshvan seuda!*" and he opposed the idea that the *Chassid* should leave the wedding.



### **Which is Greater?**

After the *Abir Yaakov* visited Yerushalayim for the first time and was preparing to leave, the *Chassidim* requested from the *Rebbe* a coin to purchase *mashke – lechaim*. The *Rebbe* inquired whether they gathered together and sat for *Chassidish* gatherings [to relate stories of *Tzaddikim*, encourage each other and offer *chizuk* and sing].

The *Rebbe* then told them the following story:

Once, as the *Chassidim* sat together in the *kloiz*, suddenly, my *Zeide*, the *heilige Rizhiner* entered and asked them, "Which is more important, traveling to the *Rebbe* or traveling to *Chassidim*?"

To the astonishment of all assembled, one of those present answered, "Traveling to *Chassidim*!"

When the *Rizhiner* asked him to explain himself, he did. "Once, the evil inclination tempted me to sin, and I had a very difficult test. I thought to myself as follows: Let's say I fail the test and sin, how

will I ever face the *Rebbe*? Surely he will recognize my failure and see the sin etched on my face. And so I decided I would travel instead to a *Rebbe* of lesser stature, someone who lacked such spiritual prowess – surely he would not have the ability to know my wrongdoings! However, immediately I realized that, even if I could exchange my *Rebbe* and find another one, where would I ever find such good friends as the *Chassidim* with whom I sit and *farbreng*? And this thought is what saved me from transgression!"



### **Thoughts Loftier Than Deeds**

A *Chassid* once came to spend *Shabbos* with the *Rebbe*, and on *Erev Shabbos* he hurried off to immerse in the *mikve*. To his dismay, although he had rushed to be on time, when he arrived it was too late and he found the *mikve* locked. When the *Chassid* related this to the *Abir Yaakov*, he responded with a story:

One of the *talmidim* of the *Ba'al Shem Tov* had to work very, very hard to build a *mikve* in his hometown. Finally, after he had succeeded, he needed to exert tremendous efforts to build a ladder, and finally, when that was done and the *mikve* was ready, the ladder broke! When he poured out his sorrows before the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, the *Tzaddik* answered him that even though he lacked the act itself of having performed the *mitzva* corresponding to the exterior of the *mitzva*, he had at least succeeded in fulfilling the intention behind the *mitzva*, which succeeded with no ulterior motives whatsoever, because there was no act involved. And so, in a certain way, his *mitzva* of *mikve* was loftier than had he actually succeeded in performing the deed itself! (*Abir Yaakov* p. 313–315)





## Rav Yechezkel Shraga Ben Chaim Halberstam of Shinova, 6<sup>th</sup> of Teves

### The Ropshitzer's Miracle Oil

The Shinover *Rav*, *mechaber* of *Divrei Yechezkel*, did not refrain from saying *Tachanun* on the *Yahrzeits* of various *Tzaddikim*. Similarly, he did not have the custom to visit the gravesites of *Tzaddikim*. There was one exception to both rules: the *Yahrzeit* and the *tziun* of the *heilige* Ropshitzer *Rav*, *mechaber* of *Zera Kodesh*, to whom the Shinover *Rav* felt he owed his very life. And this is the story why:

When Rav Yechezkel Shraga was but a seven-year-old boy, his young life was almost cut short by a terrible accident. Rav Yechezkel Shraga's uncle, Rav Avigdor of Dukla, was in town visiting his own brother, Rav Chaim of Sanz in Rudnick, where they lived at the time. At the end of the visit, when Rav Avigdor entered his carriage to leave, he realized that he had forgotten something back in the house and sent young Yechezkel Shraga on an errand to fetch the forgotten object.

In his haste and zeal to help his uncle, the young lad dashed across the street. A passing wagon carrying a heavy load of lumber came careening down the road at high speed, hit the young boy and ran him over! The heavy wheels crushed his body; when the doctors and surgeons rushed to examine his mangled body, they shook their heads in dismay and despaired for his life, for they determined that the wheel had sliced his liver in half!

Hearing this dire diagnosis, Rav Avigdor raised his hands heavenward and cried, "*Ribbono Shel Olam* – Master of the World, if I am destined to have a son, I would gladly exchange him so that this young man's life be spared." And so it was that Rav Avigdor never had any sons born to him, only daughters.

His holy father, the *Divrei Chaim*, examined his broken body and in each limb

he touched, the bones grew back together, knitted themselves and straightened themselves out! Even later, in his old age, all would remark – especially the physicians – what a stately, straight, tall stature the Shinover *Rav* had!

The *Divrei Chaim* feared for his young child's life, as his internal organs had been damaged beyond natural repair! He sent word with one of the *Chassidim* to his own *Rebbe*, the great *Tzaddik*, Rav Naftoli Ropshitzer, to *daven* for his son's life. The *Rebbe* did this and more, he sent back a flask of pure olive oil with instructions to anoint and massage the child's body. In a short while, miraculously, the child was healed and healthy again. In his old age, the Shinover *Rav* was weak and would recount his miraculous salvation and how he was healed. He told how at the time that he was massaged and anointed with the oil he could feel how his bones repaired themselves, how his organs reformed, regrew and regenerated, his limbs straightened themselves, and his body became healed and whole. He would then sigh plaintively and remark sadly with longing, "From where could we get such pure, holy oil today if we needed it?" (*Divrei Yechezkel* p. 2–3)



### The Journey to Eretz HaKodesh

When the *Tzaddik*, the Shinover *Rav*, reached the age of sixty-four, he went into self-imposed exile. He decided to undertake the long, arduous journey to the Holy Land, and thereby to warn the *Kohanim* not to defile themselves with ritual impurity by visiting *Kivrei Tzaddikim*, a mission he saw fit for himself as a master of *Halocha*.

The *Divrei Yechezkel* spent some twelve months on his journey and set out in the summer of the year *tov-reish-kaf-tes*.

Before he climbed the gangplank to enter the boat, which had docked at the port in Constantinople, he received a letter from his father, the *Divrei Chaim*. Knowing his father's misgivings and displeasure at his journey, and fearing that the letter contained a missive that would prevent his trip outright with a command of *Kibbud Av* against his setting out, he tucked the letter away unopened to be read at some later time.

While on his voyage he received the accolades of one of the wealthy seamen, who recognized the *Tzaddik's* holiness and stature and wrote him a letter of recommendation to give to others to help support him and his cause, since the Shinover was a stranger. However, when he felt his *tefillos* were compromised and that his thoughts bothered him and interrupted his prayers, he tossed the seaman's letter into the sea, attributing his lack of devotion and concentration to relying upon human help instead of trusting with *bitochon* in *Hashem* alone. A similar incident occurred when one of his wealthy supporters gave him a valuable promissory note, which could be cashed against the debt owed for a hefty sum. This too was discarded and burned when the *Divrei Yechezkel* felt that its material grossness interrupted his spiritual devotions.

Upon arrival, the *Tzaddik* traveled to our *Avos* in Chevron. While he was there, a letter arrived from Rav Elozor Mendel of Lelov. The emissary who brought the letter was astonished to see that it was written with seemingly no order, just random letters of the *alef-bais*, but the Shinover *Rav* read the letter and remarked that if a *Tzaddik* can compose such a wondrous letter, he must meet him in Yerushalayim without delay. And so the very next day he left Chevron and set out for Yerushalayim.

That year, a plague was decimating the population, but as soon as the Shinover *Rav* entered the city's holy gates, the

plague ceased. The Shinover stayed with Rav Elozor Mendel of Lelov in his home and together they visited the great *Mekubolim* and *Tzaddikim* of Yerushalayim, especially the *Tzaddik* and *mechaber* of *Shemen Sasson* on the *Zohar*.

While he was in Chevron, he greatly wished to *daven* at *Meoras Hamachpela*, but the Muslims prevented him. In order to bypass them, the Shinover and the Lelover disguised themselves as Arab Muslims and in their costumes, attempted to blend in and evade detection. It almost worked; they entered the *Meora* unhindered, but were seized with such fear and awe that they ran away immediately.

From Yerushalayim, the Shinover made his way to Tzefas where the *Tzaddik* and *Chassid*, Rav Shmuel Heller, a descendant of the *Tosafos Yom Tov*, served as chief *Rav*. The Shinover slept near Teverya and continued on his way toward Tzefas. All the city came out to greet him, but waited very long hours in disappointment until later that evening before sunset, when they finally arrived. When asked what had held them up, the caravan drivers told how the Shinover *Rav* stopped by one of the tall hills and went to *daven* there. He was in such a state of *dveikus* that he remained there, enraptured with his Maker in prayer for many hours. Rav Shmuel Heller then revealed and explained what attraction that hill had had for the Shinover *Rav*:

On that hill, tradition has it that the *efer pora* – the ashes of the red heifer used to ritually purify the *Kohanim* for *Avodas HaMikdosh* – is hidden. They tell how once an Arab dug there in the earth and discovered a golden pot filled with ashes. He coveted the treasure and took it home. That night a magnificent vision appeared in his dream, as a tall, fearsome-looking Jew ordered him to return the vessel to its proper place. "This golden pot is full of the holy ashes of the *pora aduma*. You must rebury it," he commanded. The Arab took

no heed even after the dream recurred several times. Finally, the Jew warned that the Arab's children would die one by one as long as the pot remained in his possession. Again, the Arab paid no heed until the last of his children mysteriously died. Then the Arab himself fell sick and with his last ounces of strength, he reburied the ashes and tried to keep the gold pot. Only when he felt he would die did he reinter the golden pot with the ashes of the *pora aduma* there on that hill. And that is where the *Tzaddik* was drawn; he felt its vibrations and this is where he *davened*!

Another tradition has it that while in Tzefas, the Shinover encountered one of the thirty-six hidden *Tzaddikim*. When he was in the *mikve* on *Erev Shabbos*, he noticed that this person had a unique manner of immersing himself. He tried to follow him, but the Jew was quick and soon he was out of sight. Even when the Shinover enquired after his address, he discovered that the *lamed-vovnik* had escaped! He had packed up his family and possessions that very day and moved to nearby Biriya. Even when the *Divrei Yechezkel* attempted to follow him there on *Motzo'ei Shabbos*, when he arrived he was too late – the hidden *Tzaddik* had run away and the Shinover never found him or discovered who he was!

Once in *Eretz Yisrael*, the Shinover

opened the letter from his father and discovered that he had commanded him to not visit Meron (which was *hashgocha protis* since a band of highwaymen and robbers lay in waiting to capture and ransom him on his way from Tzefas to Meron on *Lag BaOmer*). In the summer of *tov-reish-lamed* he traveled again to Yerushalayim and stayed there until the date of the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh's Yahrzeit*, in order to *daven* at his *tziun*. Afterward, he returned to Tzefas, whereupon he was told from *Shomayim* to return, and so he went to the port at Yaffo to board a ship home.

Upon his return, he found a group of *Chassidim* sitting in discussion. When asked what they were talking about, they admitted to discussing how and why the Shinover worked so hard to have the *sefer Ohr HaChama* printed. This *sefer*, which the Shinover had discovered in a handwritten manuscript while in Yerushalayim, was written by the *Mekubol Rav Avrohom Azulai*, chief *Rav* of Chevron and one of the forebears of the *Chida*. "Yes," remarked the *Tzaddik*, "printing that *sefer* was one achievement of mine during that journey, but my real reasons for going...well, let's just say that they will be revealed only with the arrival of *Moshiach*." (*Divrei Yechezkel* p. 10–12)



## **Rav Avrohom Abba Leifer, 10<sup>th</sup> of Teves**

Pittsburgher *Rebbe*

### **Saved By A Prayer**

Of the three brothers learning in European *Yeshivos*, only Rav Avrohom Abba survived the Holocaust. The Nazis in charge of Czernowitz ordered all Jews to sew a yellow badge on their coats and to shave their beards. The Pittsburgher *Rebbe* did not shave his beard, and he once went outside to accompany a visitor home

without remembering to put on his coat, on which the yellow badge was sewn. When the Nazi officials saw him, they arrested him and brought him to a large courtyard where thousands of Jews had been rounded up for deportation.

Though most of the captured Jews spoke bleakly about their fate, Rav Leifer displayed strong *emuna* (faith in *Hashem*)

and immersed himself in heartfelt prayer. Two days later, when the men were being led into cattle cars, an SS officer instructed Rav Leifer to stand to the side. After the transport left, the officer said to him, "You should know that in the past few days, I observed all of you, and I heard everyone talking with despair in their voices, except for you. You were busy praying to your God, so know that your God has heard your prayers and you are free to go." The *Rebbe* ran back to his father-in-law's house, where his family was already mourning his demise. He recounted this story of his personal redemption at every *Pesach Seder*.



### A Holy Messenger

In 1970, the *Rebbe* decided to move to *Eretz Yisrael*. He chose the coastal city of Ashdod for his new base, though at the time the city had very few religious Jews and almost no *Chassidim*. The reason why he chose this city was based on a dream he had, in which a man who identified himself as Chasdai *ibn* Shaprut (the foreign minister of the caliph of Córdoba some one thousand years earlier) appeared to him and asked him to establish his court in Ashdod, promising him success.



### The Niggun That Celebrated the Broken Engagement

The Pittsburger *Rebbe's* talent for composing heart-rending melodies sung worldwide is well known. Here is the story behind the *niggun Yismechu HaShomayim*:

The *Rebbe* was always involved in the fight against assimilation and when a Jew from Florida appeared before the Pittsburger *Rebbe* and cried that his daughter was engaged to be married to a *goy*, the *Rebbe* was so moved and distressed by his plight that he pledged to stop at nothing to rescind the harsh decree. He flew to Florida and against all odds fought and used all his ways and means until succeeded, in an almost supernatural manner, to cancel the marriage and avert the decree.

When the *Rebbe* returned to Ashdod, he thanked *Hashem* for his successful endeavor and that his efforts to cancel the intermarriage had borne fruit. As a thanksgiving, he composed the well-known *niggun* for *Yismechu HaShomayim*, which is still sung to this day among Pittsburger *Chassidim* and others who appreciate heartfelt *Yiddish gezangen*. (*Avrohom Bechoro* p. 33)



לזכר נשמת אמנו החשובה, נפש יקרה ועדינה  
אשה יראת ה' ובעלת מדות טובות מרת זיסל ז"ל  
בת הרה"ח מו"ה מאיר זאב הכהן כ"ץ ע"ה הי"ד מעיר נירעדהאז יע"א  
ונכדת הרה"ק רבי אהרן צבי טערקלמייז זי"ע מבריד  
אשת הרה"ח מו"ה אברהם חיים ע"ה גאלדענבערג  
(מתוך אמונה טהורה) בדרך המסורה (והתנהגה כאשה כשרה) לכל משפחתה,  
היא הודה היא הדרה - נקיה וטהורה היוצר וצר צורה (וקיבלה הגזירה)  
נפטרה בש"ט בת תשעים שנה  
ביום כ"ד לחודש כסלו (ערב חנוכה) שנת תשע"ח לפ"ק  
תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה  
ותקים לתחיה לקץ הימין מהרה ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'





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## CHANUKAH

# Sparks of Fervor

**D**eep in the heart of the Ukraine lies the town of Medzhibozh, in which the Baal Shem Tov lived and from which he spread his influence throughout the entire Jewish world. After his passing, his grandson, the Rebbe Reb Baruch, upheld the beacon of Chassidus from Medzhibozh. Rav Baruch was one of the greatest *tzaddikim* of his generation, and numerous leading lights of the Chassidic world frequented his doorstep to derive knowledge and inspiration from him. Among them was Rav Moshele of Zhvill, the son of Rav Yechiel Michel of Zlotchov.

On Friday night, the distinguished guests gathered around Rav Baruch's table to sing the songs of Shabbos and hear exalted words of Torah. One of the guests was Reb Yakovka of Mohilev, a lively man with twinkling eyes. Reb Yakovka stood up and began to entertain the *rebbe* and his people. His mobile features could be contorted into countless shapes and expressions so comical that no one could resist laughing. Or at least a smile.

He took his place in the open area in front of the Rav Baruch's table, and he began to shake back and forth as if in prayer. His movements became so fast and violent that he fell to the ground and rolled around until he found himself under the table. The people roared with laughter, but the best Rav Moshele could muster was a smile. The scene was somewhat comical, but he could not understand the point of the performance and why everyone considered it so hilariously funny.

Presently, Reb Yakovka stopped his antics, and slowly, the waves of laughter subsided.

"What is so funny?" Rav Moshele asked the man sitting next to him.

"You didn't think it was funny?" the man replied. "Have you ever seen a better impersonation of Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev? That Yakovka is so talented. Did you see how he twists his features so that he looks almost exactly like Rav Levi Yitzchak?"

Rav Moshele was aghast. How could Rav Baruch and his guests make such a mockery of a man as great and as holy as Rav Levi Yitzchak? He had indeed once heard that Rav Baruch did not approve of Rav Levi Yitzchak's demonstrative excesses when he was praying, but it was one thing to disapprove and quite another to mock mercilessly.

There was an excited stir in the crowd, and Rav Moshele looked up to see what had caused it. To his dismay, Reb Yakovka was standing once again in the front of Rav Baruch's table. Another performance was about to begin.

Reb Yakovka went through a pantomime that was obviously meant to represent Rav Levi Yitzchak setting up his *menorah* and preparing the Chanukah lamps. When the candles were all set up, he took a make-believe candle in his hand, and he immediately began trembling. He struck a make-believe match and tried to light the make-believe candle, but his fervor and trembling were so intense that he could not touch the match to the wick of the candle. Try as he might, again and again, he could not light the candle. The scene was indeed comical, and the people crowded around Rav Baruch's table laughed uproariously until tears ran down their cheeks.

Rav Moshele was upset beyond words. He turned his head away from the spectacle, and put his hands over his ears so that he would not hear the offensive laughter. Although he had been planning to spend a week in Medzhibozh, he decided right then and there that he would leave right away.

On Sunday morning, he went in to Rav Baruch to bid him farewell.

"So soon?" said Rav Baruch. "I thought you would be staying with us for the rest of the week."

"There has been a change," said Rav Moshele. "I have to go right away."

"I see. And what was the change?"

Rav Moshele could not contain himself any longer. "How can I stay here and watch as the holy Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev is ridiculed? How can I sit still when all around people are laughing at his holy *avodah*?"

Rav Baruch nodded. "I understand, but you have no idea of what is actually happening here. Let me explain it to you. Rav Levi Yitzchak is an extremely holy man. I am full of admiration for him. In fact, he has reached levels of *avodah* that hardly anyone else ever has, certainly in our times. In Heaven, Satan claims that since we have Rav Levi Yitzchak, we don't need anything else, not Eretz Yisrael, not a Beis Hamikdash, not a Kohen Gadol. We don't need anything, because the highest spiritual levels are within our reach in the person of Rav Levi Yitzchak. Therefore, we mock and belittle him. Our derision nullifies Satan's prosecution and hastens the redemption. But have no doubt, we know the truth. We recognize the greatness of Rav Levi Yitzchak."

\* \* \* \* \*

It is customary to say Veyehi Noam after lighting the Chanukah candles. What is the reasoning behind this custom? The key lies in the final words when we speak about "the work of our hands" being successful.

All the miracles that happened to the Jewish people in Egypt came through *is'arusa d'le'eila*; they were triggered entirely from above. There was no involvement by the people to whom the miracles occurred. On Chanukah, however, there was an *is'arusa d'lesata*, a stimulus that was sparked by the actions of the people in the world below, and the Almighty delivered success into their hands. Therefore, we sing about the success of our handiwork.

## *MeOros Ramchal Chanukah*

The *Chanukah* candles light up the light of the *Shechina* to take us out of *galus*.

"O house of Yaakov, come and let us go in the light of *Hashem*." (*Yeshaya* 2:5)

The *Ramchal* explains that there are two types of *Shechinah* – *illa* and *tata*, higher and lower, correspondingly Leah is the embodiment of the supernal higher *Shechinah illa* and Rachel embodies the lower *Shechinah tata*. . .

The *Ramchal* then teaches us that the *kavanah* we must have in mind when lighting *Chanukah* candles is that the candle or *Ner* in Hebrew corresponds to Leah and when we light this candle it illuminates Rachel as she descends down to the worlds of *biy"ra* (*beriah, yetzira, assiyah*).

The *menorah* [of the *bais hamikdash*] had seven branches which correspond to the seven lower *sefiros* of *Atik*. When we light our *menorah* it corresponds to the *menorah* that was in the *bais hamikdash* which had seven branches, and then we cause Leah to illuminate Rachel as she descends to *biy"ra*.

Then this awakens the seven lower *sefiros* of *Atik* to draw them up and bring them, along with us, out of the exile of *galus* where we now we transform all evil into good as is the secret of the supernal *yichud* - unity.

This is what the *pasuk* means when it says "let us walk in the light of *Hashem*," (*Yeshaya* 2:5) when you go down to *beriyah* in order to unite and send down *shefa* upon us then we must have in mind to repair Leah [*Shechinah illa*] so she can in turn repair Rachel [*Shechinah tata*] through the *Ner Chanukah* as we explained.

**Why did the Yavanim - Greeks decree against *Bris Milah* and why does Eliyahu come to every *bris milah*?**

**"Behold I am hereby sending you Eliyahu *HaNavi*," (*Malachi* 3:23)**

There was a time when *Bnei Yisroel* failed to circumcise because they lacked the healing of the North wind. Due to this failure the Greeks came and decreed against circumcision.



Vayeishev  
December 19<sup>th</sup> 2020  
4<sup>th</sup> of Tevet 5781

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6 - Rabbi Sasson son of Mordechai  
Shandach, author of 'Kol Sasson'

7 - Rabbi Tzvi, talmid of Rabbi  
Yisrael Ba'al Shem Tov

8 - Rabbi Ma'atuk Atugi Kohen, author  
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9 - Rabbi Chizkiyah HaKohen Rabin,  
Chief Rabbi of Buchara

10 - Rabbi Massoud ben Massoud  
Assaraf, Av Beit Din Yemen

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

## One who Lives in Peace Lives with a Great Light

**"It happened at the end of two years to the day:  
Pharaoh was dreaming"** (Bereishit 41:1)

The Midrash tells us, "This is the meaning of, 'He sets a limit to the darkness' (Iyov 28:3). A portion of time was fixed for Yosef Hatzadik, how many years he would spend in darkness and obscurity in prison. Since that time limit expired, without any delay 'Pharaoh was dreaming'."

One can explain this idea by saying that when there is unfounded hatred and man behaves with hostility towards his fellow man, seeking his detriment and condemning him, this is a form of darkness and obscurity. For when he comes face to face with this fellow, a type of darkness springs up since his hatred makes it hard for him to be in his presence. But once he reconciles and restores the peace, the light immediately returns and shines inside him. He is able to rejoice in his friend's happiness and judges him favorably, and peace is thereby restored.

This is the meaning of the above Midrash that tells us that now the darkness of hatred that was present between the holy brothers, came to an end. For until this moment, the brothers hated Yosef Hatzadik because of the dreams that he had about them. But now, despite Yosef not yet revealing himself to them, certainly the hatred was a thing of the past, and they began longing to see him and considering where he might be, out of genuine concern for his welfare.

The truth is that Yosef Hatzadik on his part, also forgave them for their deeds, for he understood that 'All that the Merciful One does is for the best'. In this Parsha, their hearts had already drawn closer, and that is why it says, "He sets a limit to the darkness". Until now, due to the hatred, they were shrouded in darkness, but once peace was on the horizon, the light was revealed and the darkness of hatred and division that stood between them, departed.

This is the implication of the verse (Bereishit 1:5), "And there was evening and there was morning". Chazal say, "The word 'וַיְהִי', there was, always denotes anguish". What was the distress here in this verse? The darkness of hatred between man and his fellow. The word 'ערב', evening, can be re-arranged to spell 'בער', senseless, as David Hamelech said (Tehillim 73:22), "And I was senseless and unknowing". This implies that if one feels hatred towards another, it is as if he is living in the darkness of evening and he is considered 'senseless' and lacking wisdom. One can also say that the word 'ערב', evening, is derived from the term 'ערבות', guarantee, referring to the fact that 'All Yisrael are accountable and responsible for one another'. But when this responsibility is blemished and man does not like his friend or even, G-d forbid, hates him, he is enveloped in the darkness of evening.

But in contrast, when a person makes an effort to ensure peace and intensifies unconditional love between him and his brothers, this is the concept of 'וַיְהִי בֹקֶר', 'and there was morning' for dawn breaks and brightens the day for him. According to this, it is appropriate that the word 'בֹקֶר', morning, contains the same letters as the word 'קָרִיב', close, for one who feels close to and united with his friend, for him everything shines. He is always in a state of 'morning', for he is surrounded by the great light of peace and unity.

It follows that hatred transforms light into darkness, while in contrast, loving one's friend and as much as possible doing acts of kindness for him and trying to benefit him, intensifies the light which prevails over the darkness, even transforming it into a great light. And even when night falls, his soul still shines with a powerful light, the light of the Shechina. This is why even when we lie down to sleep we recite Kriyat Shema and accept the yoke of Heaven upon ourselves. For when reciting the verse, "Hear, O Israel: Hashem is our G-d, Hashem, the One and Only", we must also have in mind to fulfill the positive commandment of "Love your fellow as yourself". This means that whoever wholeheartedly loves others, even when he goes to sleep at night, for him it is day and the light shines for him.

Therefore, the wise person will take heart when reciting the bedtime Shema, when he recites the words "I hereby forgive anyone who angered or antagonized me", that these words should not be lip-service and really deep in his heart he still hates his friend, for if so his words and his heart are not one and his mouth is lying. Rather, he should forgive his friend with his entire heart, judge him favorably and love him sincerely, and then Hashem will light up his way, for when he loves his friend and removes hatred from his heart, he is fulfilling the verse, "He sets a limit to the darkness", and this unconditional love inserts a life of light and brightness in a person's heart and eliminates the darkness from him.

And so we find in the Gemara (Berachot 9b), "From what time can one recite the morning Shema? Some say from the time a person can recognize his friend at a distance of four amot." The Mussar contemporaries zt"l expound on this that only since a person feels love for his friend, and when he notices him even from afar he recognizes him and already wants to benefit him, this is the person who can recite the Shema and accept upon himself the yoke of Heaven. For without loving one's friend and fulfilling the mitzvah of "Love your fellow as yourself", he cannot accept the yoke of Heaven.

May it be His will that Hashem merits us to see the attributes of our friends and not their faults, and in this way, we will intensify the light of Torah and holiness inside us, Amen v'Amen.



## Walking in their Ways

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

### A Kiddush Hashem from Kiddush

I was asked to be present at the sickbed of Mr. Moshe Ben-Naim, in the hospital. He was unconscious and dying due to a severe brain disease. His family and friends stood around his bed and many seemed far removed from a Torah lifestyle. As I entered, I heard hostile murmurings: "Why did the Rav come here? Does he really think he can do something?"

In the face of their antagonism, I prayed with all my heart to Hashem and asked Him to perform a miracle. This would bring glory to His Name, and all the non-believers surrounding the sick man would clearly see that there is a Creator and start to believe in Him.

I ended my prayer and took a glass of water in my hand. I walked over to the comatose man and called out to him, "Moshe, get up and make Kiddush. You surely remember how you used to make Kiddush every Friday night, if so do this now!"

In a most stupendous way, the sick man opened his eyes. He took the glass and recited the entire Kiddush from start to finish. When he reached the words of the blessing, "Who creates the fruit of the vine," I instructed him to replace it with the blessing over water, for the cup in his hand was filled with water and not wine, as he was accustomed on Shabbat.

He took a few sips and then immediately lost consciousness once again. Shortly afterward, his soul ascended heavenward.

During these few moments, an enormous kiddush Hashem took place and all those present were inspired to believe in a Creator despite their previous convictions. The miracle tore down all barriers between themselves and their Creator.

To this day, Mr. Ben-Naim's daughter and her husband, Mr. Ben-Gigi of Paris, recount this wonderful tale. Each time anew they are moved by the miracle that occurred to their father before his death.

Many attempts were made to bring his coffin from France to Morocco. It finally reached its destination late on a Friday afternoon and he was buried close to the arrival of Shabbat in the cemetery of Casablanca.

Upon reflection, I saw a direct connection between the Kiddush this man recited and the time of his burial, for his reciting Kiddush had caused a great kiddush Hashem.

## The Haftarah

"Shlomo awoke" (Melachim I, 3-4)

The connection to the Parsha: The Haftarah speaks about Shlomo Hamelech's dream and his tremendous wisdom in ruling the case of two women who claimed one living baby. The Parsha too speaks about Pharaoh's dream and Yosef Hatzadik's wisdom in interpreting it.

## Guard Your Tongue

It is forbidden to speak negatively about someone even if it is clear to the speaker that the person being spoken about does not mind.

As we have already explained, actually speaking negatively about one's friend is considered as lashon hara, even without taking into consideration the feelings of the person being spoken about. Speaking lashon hara stands in direct conflict to the elevated status of man who is the only creation that was created in the image of G-d. This concept is binding and cannot be altered by receiving 'permission' to speak negatively.



## In Our Father's Path

### The Tzadik who Eulogized the Donkey

**"G-d has uncovered the sin of your servants"** (Bereishit 44:16)

The sefer 'Lehitaneig B'taanugim' relates the following story: A Rav found himself in a certain town and wished to learn its true nature so he could advise its citizens of the correct way to conduct themselves. He approached one of the townspeople and asked him, "Please tell me, my friend, what is the state of the townspeople with regard to Torah and mitzvah observance? He replied, "Rabbi, about us the verse was said, (Yeshaya 60:21), 'Your people will all be righteous'. We do not have even one bandit or thief among us, neither a murderer nor one with corrupt middot." The Rav thanked him and continued on his way. He met someone else and asked him the same question, to which he replied, "Rabbi, 'They are all beloved; they are all flawless'. Not one person will offer false testimony about his friend, nor covet his friend's money, nor raise his hand against his brother. Were all of the Jewish people like us, Mashiach would have come long ago." The Rav was impressed and asked him, "Please tell me, what about mitzvah observance- prayer, Tefillin, Shabbat, Chagim?" The man grew slightly uncomfortable and replied, "Why indict, Rabbi? It is enough to say that we desist from sins as much as we are able, we are pleasant to others and modest in our way of life. Why demand more than this?"

The Rav understood that townspeople followed the outlook of being satisfied by desisting from evil deeds, but when it came to the 'do good', to the positive commandments of mitzvah observance, they were deficient.

He tried to think of a way to prove to them that 'turn from evil' is not enough on its own.

He continued walking and was suddenly assaulted by a strong stench. He looked around and noticed the corpse of a donkey lying on the wayside. He immediately turned to his attendant and asked him to go and purchase a piece of black cloth. The attendant did as he was told and came back with the cloth, which the Rav used to cover the donkey. He then told his attendant, "Go and announce that we found a 'met mitzvah' on the outskirts of the town and all must go out and accompany him to his final resting place since burying a 'met

mitzvah' takes precedence to all the mitzvot in the Torah. All the men should close their businesses and the woman too should leave their homes."

The attendant went and made the announcement. The Jewish residents quickly gathered in their multitudes; storekeepers closed their stores, merchants paused their business, and housewives left their homes. All came to accord the 'met mitzvah' his last honor. "Who was killed? Who was struck by the attribute of judgement?" they wished to know. The Rav began to speak in a trembling voice: "Dear Jewish brothers listen well. When a corpse is found on the ground and we do not know who struck it, the nearest townspeople are obligated to bring an 'eglah arufah' and declare, "Our hands have not spilt this blood", we have no part in this tragedy. All the more so when the deceased is a holy tzadik. He never uttered a word of lashon hara or rechilut. Moreover, throughout his life, he abstained from speech altogether."

The Rav did not give them much time to think and continued his eulogy: "The deceased lying before us was among those who are insulted and do not insult, they hear their disgrace and do not reply. Not only this, but several times he was hit forcefully yet suffered in silence. He did not partake of meat or drink wine his entire life. He constantly suffered from the cold and made do with thin clothing. He never slept in a bed, at night he would simply lie down on the ground. Woe to us, who can replace his worth."

The people wept bitterly and the foremost question in the minds of all, was: "Who is this man? We did not know that we had such a tzadik among us". The Rav called out loudly, "The deceased lies here before us, and we are obligated to ask his forgiveness for not appreciating him sufficiently." As he was speaking, he went over to the covered body, took hold of the edge of the cloth and pulled it away. The stench of the donkey's corpse made them all step back instantly, and they began murmuring, "We were misled!"

The Rav retorted, "Why are you complaining? Every word that I said is the absolute truth. The donkey suffered and lived a life of self-denial. He personally fulfilled staying far from evil to the last letter. Yet with all this, he was a donkey and remains a donkey. To be a human being and not a donkey, it is not enough to observe 'Turn from evil', one must also adopt the second section of the verse, 'and do good', by elevating oneself spiritually and studying Torah, through sanctifying oneself and observing the mitzvot. And now, townspeople, be wise enough to grasp the moral."





## Pearls of the Parsha

### One is Only Explicit About Something Good

*"Yosef said to Pharaoh, 'The dream of Pharaoh is a single one; what G-d is about to do, He has told to Pharaoh:'" (Bereishit 41:25)*

When speaking about the interpretation concerning the seven good cows, Yosef said, "He (Hashem) has told to Pharaoh", while concerning the interpretation of the seven bad cows Yosef said, "He (Hashem) has shown to Pharaoh".

Why did Yosef change the terminology?

Rabbi Shlomo Kluger zt"l explains that the reason is that the Gemara tells us (beg. Pesachim), that a good thing one mentions explicitly, while a bad thing one only alludes to or shows with one's hand. Indeed, Chazal say, "Hashem does not signalize His Name for something evil".

Due to this, concerning the dream of the good cows Yosef said, "What G-d is about to do, He has told to Pharaoh", as if Hashem Himself said it, whereas with the dream of the bad cows which symbolized years of famine, Yosef only said, "He has shown to Pharaoh".

### The Mask Hid Yosef's Face

*"Yosef recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him" (Bereishit 42:8)*

Why did Yosef's brothers not recognize him?

Rashi says, "'Yosef recognized': because when he left them they were already bearded. 'But they did not recognize him': because he was beardless when they parted and now he had grown a beard."

Yosef was a young lad when he was sold and now when they met him, he was already a mature man with a beard. Because his appearance was different, they did not recognize him. In contrast, at the time of the sale, the brothers had already grown beards and their appearance did not change drastically from then until they met in Egypt.

The sefer 'Doresh Tzion' writes that when Yosef met the brothers he was wearing a mask on his face since that was the way of kings at the time. Due to protocols of honor for royalty, officers and laymen were not allowed to gaze directly at the king's face.

We also find this idea in Megillat Esther (1:14) where it says, "the seven officers of Persia and Media, who had access to the king (lit. who saw the face of the king)". What is the meaning of the expression, "who saw the face of the king"?

The explanation is that all the regular officers were not allowed to look at the king's face, besides these seven chosen officers who were allowed to look at him without a mask. It was the same with Yosef Hatzadik who wore a mask, which is why the brothers could not recognize him.

### The True Test: Shabbat Observance

*"They had left the city, had not gone far" (Bereishit 44:4)*

Harav Shalom Shapira zt"l in his sefer 'Ohev Shalom' explains that Yosef observed Shabbat even before it was given to Am Yisrael at Har Sinai and due to this, he commanded the one appointed over his home to prepare the food while it was still day, meaning on Friday and not on Shabbat.

According to this calculation, it follows that the brothers who were sent away from Yosef's house the next day, set out on Shabbat day, with the goblet hidden in Binyamin's sack.

Yosef, who planned to pursue them, was afraid that maybe the delay that this will cause them, will endanger the lives of their families in Canaan, for the brothers had come down to Egypt to purchase food and not luxuries.

Due to this, he specifically sent them away on Shabbat, while keeping tabs on them and observing their conduct. If there would be a question of danger to life from starvation, Yosef knew that his brothers would be forced to profane the Shabbat and walk more than two thousand amot on Shabbat (forbidden in the absence of an eiruv). But if they do not do this, this proves that a delay will not pose a threat to their family's welfare, for it could not be that they were literally starving for bread, and therefore Yosef could delay them on account of the goblet.

This is why the verse says, "They had left the city, had not gone far". Yosef's messengers told him that the brothers had not walked a distance of more than two thousand amot from Egypt, and thereby Yosef knew that their families were not in danger of starvation, so he immediately said, "Get up, chase after the men; when you overtake them, you are to say to them, 'Why do you repay evil for good? Is this not the one from which my master drinks?'"

## Treasures

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



### Emunah Preserves Clarity of Mind

Yosef Hatzadik merited achieving the lofty levels of 'a righteous one, the foundation of the world', despite all the hardships and troubles that surrounded him, because faith in Hashem was implanted deep in his heart. He trusted in Hashem completely and understood that all suffering and troubles that he endured were all for the good because 'All that the Merciful One does is for the good'. With the power of this faith, he succeeded in safely enduring all the crises and maintaining his clarity of mind and spiritual level. Regardless of his difficult circumstances, he did not become dejected and did not despair, despite his brothers renouncing him and feeling terrible hatred for him, to the extent that they wished to kill him. Despite all this, he never uttered a word of complaint against Heaven r"l.

Furthermore, he did not hold a grudge against his brothers for he knew that everything emanated from Hashem Yitbarach and all is for the good. It follows that not only did he not fall spiritually from all that he went through, but on the contrary, these challenges toughened him and strengthened his spirit, enhancing his faith and trust in Hashem. This spiritual level is what helped him maintain his holiness and purity even when in a foreign land.

This is also the reason why Yosef did not forget the Torah that he studied with his father. Even though twenty-two years had passed from the time of their separation, he still remembered his learning, even alluding to this by sending his father wagons, to remind him that they took leave of each other while they were studying the section of 'eglah arufah' (Rashi 45:27).

This is a major feat, for one who is in a state of pain and aggravation often loses his mind and forgets his learning, as Chazal say, (Temurah 16a), "Rav Yehuda said, Shmuel said, three thousand laws were forgotten in the days of mourning for Moshe". In contrast, Yosef Hatzadik, despite all the trials and hardships that he passed through, did not forget his learning and remained righteous and innocent, for he understood that the matter emanated from Hashem and he understood that it was all for the best. That is how he was able to persist despite all the calamities that he suffered and preserve his Torah.

Yosef transmitted this holiness as an inheritance to his holy offspring, and they too rose to lofty levels in Egypt, achieving the level of the holy tribes.



## A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA

**T**he Ramchal, in his sefer 'Daat Tevunot', brings a wonderful principle. He writes that every force that Hashem wishes to bestow on man or the world, this good only comes from the depth of hidden counsel, therefore he will suffer pain prior to receiving it. As Chazal say (Berachot 5a), "Hashem gave Yisrael three gifts and all were given only through suffering".

These words, the Maggid Hagaon Rabbi Elimelech Biderman shlita explains, touch every Jewish soul, each person with his personal afflictions and pains. We cannot understand the ways of G-d, but one thing we must know: The concealment and torment are a preface to the good; they train a person to receive the good, and everything comes to be through His word.

Rabbi Ya'akov Shayish relates the following story: In a town adjacent to Bnei Brak, one of the residents began extensive renovations on his home, fulfilling the verse, "You shall spread out powerfully westward, eastward, northward and southward". The construction disturbed his neighbors, however, they bore it in silence and did not mention anything to him.

At the end of that year, one of the neighbors who lived on an upper floor decided to extend his apartment because his home had become too small for his growing family. Although he wished to go about the matter peacefully, the

downstairs neighbor, the one who had just completed extensive renovations, began hounding him. Day and night, he gave him no rest with his complaints and demands. Moreover, several times he stopped the construction midway. All in all, the upstairs neighbor was only building on his own private property, unlike the downstairs neighbor whose extension had exploited public property. He wished to protest: "Is this the way to repay a kindness? Did you forget that just a short time ago your own building plans made a tremendous racket and disturbed all of us greatly? But we allowed you to go ahead at all times." However, drawing on tremendous reservoirs of strength, he restrained himself. He remained quiet and kept his retorts to himself.

One day, the upstairs neighbor's phone rang and on the other end of the line was a staff member from a famous yeshiva in Bnei Brak. They were looking to hire an administrator for their Yeshiva and wished to inquire about the nature of this downstairs neighbor (who for the last half-year had no source of income). His immediate desire was to slander and sully the name of this neighbor who had unjustifiably been relentlessly bothering him day and night. But once again he overcame the temptation and replied: "Right now I am busy, but you can call me back in an hour".

For the next hour, a battle waged between his mind and heart, between his Yetzer Hatov and Yetzer Hara. One claimed that in the name of honesty he must save the Yeshiva from this fellow. On the other hand, this neighbor has been struggling without a livelihood for half a year already, and who knows, maybe

that is why he is hounding him. Besides, his inherent talents do make him suitable for this administrative position.

An hour later they called him back. He began extolling and recommending this neighbor. With good taste, he enumerated his positive qualities and declared that the Yeshiva will benefit greatly from his administrative talents. Indeed, this neighbor was elected as administrator, a position that afforded him a respectable wage.

There is an astounding end to this story: The 'advocate's' wife had also been looking for a job for an entire year. She had sent her resume to several institutions but each time she received the same reply: At the moment we do not have an opening.

What did Hashem do? At the exact time that the upstairs neighbor prevailed over his negative feelings, one of the distinguished institutions turned to his wife, telling her to come down for an interview. On the spot, she received a respectable job and was repaid by Hashem. They gained so much more than they suffered, for one who forgoes never loses out.

The same thing happened with Yosef, who at first placed his trust in the Chamberlain of the Cupbearers and was punished for this. But the Creator immediately prepared his salvation and that is why Pharaoh dreamt the same dream for exactly two years, every single night so that as soon as Yosef would strengthen his trust in Hashem, his salvation will be ready. He will immediately be freed from his imprisonment and appointed as the ruler over Egypt.



## פרקי תהלים לומר בכל לילה

צי: ויהי נעם א' אלקינו עלינו ומעשה ידינו כוננה עלינו ומעשה ידינו כוננהו (ח' פעמים)

פרק קלג  
פרק לג  
נשמת כל חי



The Chasam Sofer says when you cry in front of the candles you can be sure your tefilos are answered.

אנא בכח  
פרק ל



The Ben Ish Chai teaches that this perek is a segula to remove fears, anxiety and emotional sickness.

פרק ס"ז



The Chida teaches that saying this perek in front of the Menorah is as if you lit the Menorah in the Beis HaMikdash. It is also a segula for protection.

פרק צ"א  
(ח' פעמים)



The Ben Ish Chai teaches that this is the perek the Chashmonaim said before going out to war against the Yevanim.

בס"ד

### More ideas from the Ben Ish Chai:



Gaze at the candles and draw from their hidden light.



After completing the tefilos upon lighting the candles, it is an enormously auspicious time to daven for healing, shidduchim, good livelihood, and all types of salvation. The first night, the eighth night and Rosh Chodesh have an even stronger Koach HaTefilah.



It is proper to serve festive meals on Chanukah and to sing songs of praise. To commemorate the dairy feast that Yehudis prepared for the Greek ruler which brought about his downfall.

Other ideas:



Every day after the lighting of the candles, there is a powerful segula for women to remain a half hour next to the lit candles, not to do any work, to gaze at the candles and to daven.



Give Tzedaka everynight before lighting the Menorah.

The Ruzhiner Rebbe taught: The very act that the greatest Tzadkim of the generation cannot perform at Ne'eliah of Yom Kippur, any simple Jew can do through the tears that he sheds in front of the Chanukah candles.



When we light the Menorah we express thanks and praise to Hashem for the miracles of the past on both a national and individual level.

### From Rabbi Pinson's book on Chanukah:



#### 1st night:

"Think about all the love you have ever received. " Think about all the gifts that Hashem can offer.



#### 2nd night:

Daven for healing, clarity and vision



#### 3rd night:

Meditate : "Your soul is a flame of the One Fire, the One Source; in the deepest recesses of yourself, you are always connected as one with the All-Pervasive Light. Ein od mi'Lvado: These is nothing but One.



#### 4th night:

Be present, daven to Hashem to live in the present, in His presence.



#### 5th night:

Daven for unity within oneself, and all of Am Yisrael. "To behold this deepest unity is to dissolve inner strife and live a life of harmony".



#### 6th night:

Ask yourself : "Do I have a clear sense/ an acute awareness of my purpose in this world? Do I know what I should be doing I norder to live out my full potential and purpose? Ask the questions and beckon the answers to come to the surface, for the answers are within you. Sit with the honest answers to these penetrating question. With acceptance of your life's current reality, be open!"



#### 7th night:

Ask yourself "Ayekah? Where am I in the life's journey? Is my inner tzadik shining forth?"



#### 8th night:

"The flames of the Menorah gently whisper to us to turn our attention inward and behold the luminous potential of our souls... we will rediscover a place of Hidden Light deep within us, a light that has always been there!"



# סגולות ליום זאת חנוכה

## זאת חנוכה

הם"ק מרז"ן זי"ע אומר: מה שהלדיקים יכולים לפעול מהשי"ת בראש השנה ויוה"כ, יכול יהודי פשוט לפעול מהשי"ת בזאת חנוכה.

אזיר יעקב (זאת חנוכה עמ' כג:).

הבעל שם טוב הקדוש זצ"ל אמר שביום השמיני של חנוכה שנקרא "זאת חנוכה" (הלילה) יש את החתימה של כל הימים הנוראים! הימים שהתחילו בראש חודש אלול, והמשיכו לראש השנה ויום הכיפורים ואחר כך סוכות. הושענא רבה, ושמחת תורה, הכל נגמר היום! הלילה כל אחד מקבל חתימה אחרונה איך יהיו החיים שלו עד ראש השנה הבא, לכן חשוב מאוד להרבות היום בלילה בתפילות לה', בלימוד תורה, חשבון נפש, ולקבל קבלה טובה!

סגולה נפלאה להתפלל בחנוכה לזכות בזרע של קיימא, בנים זכרים, כי ימי החנוכה מסוגלים לפקידת עקרים ועקריות. ועיקר הסגולה הוא ביום השמיני של חנוכה הנקרא "זאת חנוכה" (בני יששכר, מאמר חודש כסלו, מערכה ב אות י).

הגאון מוילנא כותב שיום "זאת חנוכה" הוא כקדושת יום הכיפורים.

מובא בבני יששכר שיש בשבמים כמין תבנית יד פתוחה מראש השנה עד יום אחרון של חנוכה, לקבל את כל מי שרוצה לשוב בתשובה ומתחרט על מעשיו. למעשה, "זאת חנוכה" היא גמר וסיום של הימים הנוראים. מי שזהיר במצוות הדלקת נרות חנוכה, יזכה לחכמה, וינצל מאויבים, ויזכה לקום בתחיית המתים, וינצל מדינה של גיהנם. (סגולות ישראל מערכת ח אות מא). וכן יזכה לאריכות ימים, והרמז בדברי הגמרא (שבת כג,א): "הנחה עושה מצוה" – הנחה בגימטריא חיים (68)

The 8th day of Chanukah is known as "Zos Chanukah" (in earlier times it was called "Chanukas Hamiz'beach") named for the Torah portion we read. The day is mesugal for one to daven for; barren women to have children, for a Refuah Sheleimah, and for one to be blessed with increased Parnassah.

Zos Chanukah has the Kedusha of the past 7 days of chanukah built up. The sefarim hakedoshim bring down how its a very mesugaldik time to daven your heart out infront of the candles. Your own words. It is especially true with zivigum. Daven for anything and everything you need.

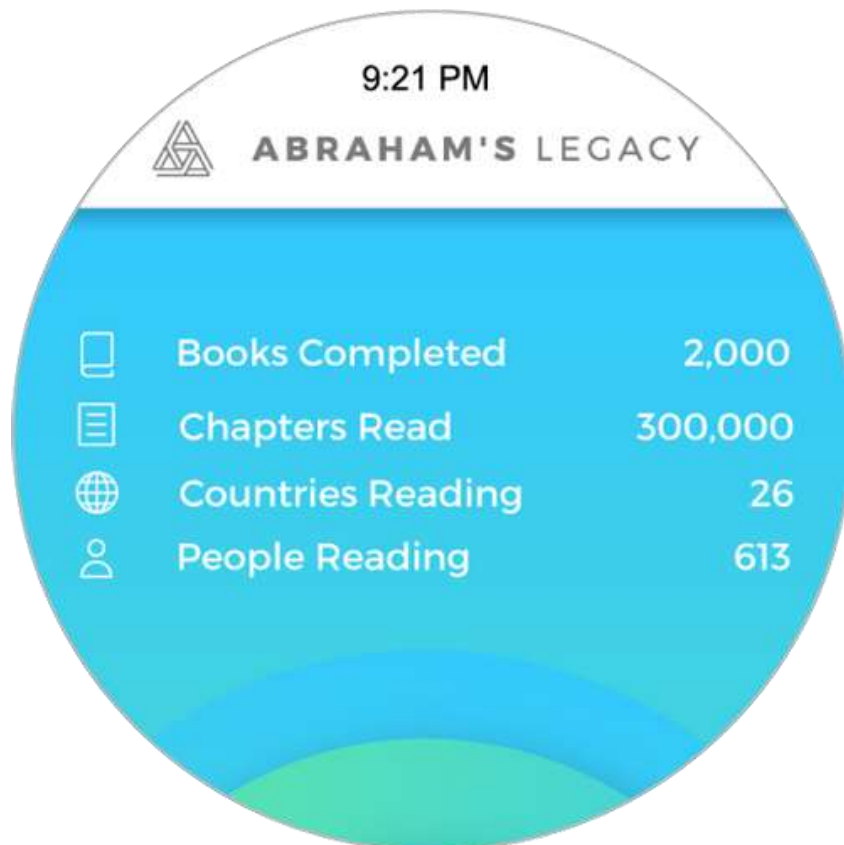
\*The day is mesugal for one to daven for; barren women to have children, for a Refuah Sheleimah, and for one to be blessed with increased Parnassah.

\*It is said in the name of the holy Rebbe, Rav Yisroel Rhiziner zechuso yagen aleinu that "what the tzaddikim of the generation accomplish through their lofty Neilah prayers on Yom Kippur, a simple Jew can ask and accomplish with his prayers on Zos Chanukah, the eighth day of Chanukah".

\*The Bnei Yisschar brings down that for barren women it is a special time during Channuka and especially Zos Chanuka (The Gemara in Shabbas(23B) itself brings down a segula of having children who are talmidim chachmim by lighting as Rashi brings down from Mishlei(6) ner mitzva v'Torah ohr, ner mitvah = Shabbas and Chanukah = Torah ohr.

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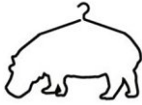
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