

# MEOROS HATZADDIKIM

— Lights Of Our Righteous —

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

**Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)**

## Parshas Vayakhel & Parshas Pekudei & Shabbos Mevarchim Nissan & Parshas Hachodesh

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לזכר נשמת

ר' זכרי' שמעון הכהן בן יצחק

"Six Days Work May Be Done But On The Seventh Day  
It Is Shabbos" (Shemos 35:2)

## Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel of Apta Mezibuz

In *Sifsei Tzaddikim*, the *Apta Rav* is quoted asking the following question: We know that *Chazal* teach us that certain *mitzvos* are equivalent to all the other 613 *mitzvos*. For example, the *Medrash Tanchuma* (*Ki Sisa* 33) teaches us that keeping Shabbos is equivalent to the entire corpus of Torah, and similarly the *mitzva* of *tzitzis* and others are also considered equivalent to the whole Torah. But how can we expect any one person to fulfill such a *mitzva* with all its details and intricacies? Each *mitzva* has many details and together such *mitzvos* amount to myriad details and minutiae.

*Chazal* say (*Medrash Toras Kohanim Bechukosai* 26:8) that a single individual who does a *mitzva* cannot compare to many masses who do so. The reason for this, explains the *Apta Rav*, is that just as all the souls of the Jewish people all originate from one source, so do all the *Taryag mitzvos* come from one source. The *mitzvos* that are equivalent to the entire body of Torah come from that same source as well.

Since Jewish souls and the *mitzvos* all come from one shared origin, though it is impossible for one person to fulfill all the *mitzvos* with all their myriad varied details and minute aspects, there are individuals who perfect and keep the details of specific *mitzvos*. Some people are extremely careful in keeping Shabbos and others in fulfilling the *mitzva* of *tzitzis*; still others are extremely careful to fulfill and keep the *mitzvos* of *tefillin*, *sukkah* or *lulav*. When they all come together as one body and all keep Shabbos, together for example, then each one adds his own personal part that reflects his stringencies, *minhogim* and other aspects of the *mitzva*. Each person adds his light to the collective whole, causing the *mitzva* to be completely fulfilled.

The *Apta Rav* explains that this is why our *Parsha* begins with the *mitzva* of Shabbos. Although the *Parsha* deals primarily with the *Mishkon* and the safeguarding of Shabbos refers to abstention from the work involved in building the *Mishkon*, nonetheless the *kedusha* of Shabbos teaches us that the *mitzva* of Shabbos is one performed and kept together as a unified gathered body where no one of *Klal Yisrael* can be left out. Thus, no work for the *Mishkon* can override

Shabbos. *Chazal* say (*Berochos* 55a) that *Betzalel* knew how to combine the letters of the Hebrew alphabet through which heaven and earth were created, which means that his holy work helped fashion heaven and earth back so that they could exist as they once did - pristine before Odom's sin. After Odom HoRishon's sin, the land was cursed with thirty-nine curses and the handiwork of *Maasei Bereishis* was blemished. The thirty-nine categories of work in the *Mishkon* rectify the thirty-nine curses (*Tikkunei Zohar* 12a, Introduction). When we keep Shabbos and refrain from the thirty-nine categories of forbidden work, this is an even higher rectification and greater *tikkun* to the thirty-nine curses. Then we add a great spiritual light and transform the *lamed-tes* (thirty-nine) curses into *tes-lamed* or *Tal Berochos* - thirty-nine blessings - of spiritual dew! The *Zohar* (ibid.) teaches us how the *kedusha* of *Shabbos* creates the dew of redemption and resurrection called *Tal Techiya* and all manner of *shefa* (abundance) descends upon *Klal Yisrael* through keeping Shabbos. This is why the *pasuk* begins with *Moshe* gathering all of *Klal Yisrael* together and warning them to safeguard and keep Shabbos together. Only later does *Moshe* command them regarding the *Mishkon*, because the primary reward and delight of Shabbos comes from the same *tikkun* as the *Mishkon*. (*Sifsei Tzaddikim* Manuscript edition from *Rymanow Vayakhel*)

# Stories on the Parsha & Shabbos Mevarchim Nissan & Parshas HaChodesh



No Shalom, No Derasha

At age seven, he was already giving a public *derashah* in *shul* every Shabbos on the weekly *parshah*, which his father taught him. One week, a dispute broke out in Herimilov, and Rav Dov Berish's father, Rav Yekele, being the Rav of Hrimlov, was naturally involved in trying to help both sides come to some resolution. The Rav was so busy with the *machlokes* that he had no time that week to review the *parshah* or teach young Dov Berish any novel insight or *derush* to share in his upcoming weekly Shabbos *derasha*. That week, a totally unprepared Dov Beirish got up in *shul* and in front of the entire *kehillah* delivered the following message: "It says in the Chumash that Moshe spoke to all of the congregation saying, "Va'yomer Moshe el kol adas Bnei Yisrael." (Shemos 35:4) Why does it say *kol* - all of them? This teaches us that Moshe Rabbeinu was only able to speak words of Torah when *all* of them, *kol adas bnei Yisrael*, were united and there was no dispute among them. As long as the dispute in Hrimlov continues," explained Dov Beirish, "and as long as there is no peace or *shalom* among the Jews in this *kehillah*, I will be unable to say any new novel insights on the *parshah* either!"

## Gedolim Be'misasm Yoser



**Yahrzeits for the 25th of Adar ~ Begins Friday Night  
(03-14-2026)**



**Rav Yitzchok Shapira - Elef Hamogen (5471 / 1711 - 315th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Avrohom Gershon Ashkenazi of Kitov - Ohr Ki Tov (5521 / 1761 - 265th Yahrzeit)**

Rabbi Avrohom Gershon of Brody was probably born in or near Kutu, Poland around 1701 and died in Yerushalayim in 1761. He is best known as the *Baal Shem Tov's* brother-in-law. Both Avraham Gershon and his father Rav Ephraim of Brody served in one of the four *beis din* (Jewish Court) of Brody.



**Rav Yisroel Leifer of Kalish (5640 / 1880 - 146th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Yosef Aryeh Leibish Frishman of Tomishov (5676 / 1916 - 110th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Dovid Shaferber of Brazhrov - Afraksta D'Anyá (5722 / 1962 - 64th Yahrzeit)**



**Chacham Yitzchak Abuchatzeira - Baba Chaki (5730 / 1970 - 56th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Yitzchok, or *Baba Chaki*, served as chief Rav of Ramla and Lod. Born in Risani, Morocco, to Rav Massud, he was the grandson of the *Abir Yaakov* and brother of Rav Dovid and the *Baba Sali*.



**Rav Yisroel Yaakov Fisher (5763 / 2003 - 23rd Yahrzeit)**

Rav Fisher was born in Yerushalayim on the 21st of *Tamuz*. Rav Yaakov Yisrael learned at *Etz Chaim* under Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer, who became his *chavrusa*. In 1961, he was appointed *moreh hora'ah* in the *Eidah Hachareidis*, and in 1975 he joined its *beis din*. In 1963, he was appointed Rav of the *Zichron Moshe shul*, a position he kept for 40 years.



**Rebbetzin Zehava Braunstein (5765 / 2005 - 21st Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Yisroel Avrohom Portugal - Skulener Rebbe, Chessed L'Avrohom (5779 / 2019 - 7th Yahrzeit)**

### **Yahrzeits for the 26th of Adar ~ Begins Saturday Night ( 03-15-2026 )**



**Rav Aharon of Ostroh - Doctor Gordon (5570 / 1810 - 216th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Eliezer Lipa of Chmelnik - Orach Letzaddik (5573 / 1813 - 213th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Itamar HaKohen - Tzaddik Nistar of Tshizikov (5580 / 1820 - 206th Yahrzeit)**



**Rebbetzin Sara Schenirer (5695 / 1935 - 91st Yahrzeit)**

A Polish-Jewish schoolteacher born on July 15, 1883, Sara Schenirer became a pioneer of Jewish education for girls. Highly intelligent, with a strong desire to study, as a young girl, she was envious of her brothers' opportunity to learn and interpret the Torah and wished she had similar opportunities. Recognizing her interest in education, her father provided her with a steady stream of religious texts translated into Yiddish. Her situation was not unique as opportunities for women's education in those years were sparse. The assimilation of her girlfriends troubled her and in response to her efforts to stem the tide of assimilation, they began to call her "the little pious one." By 1939, there were more than 250 schools with an enrollment of more than 40,000 students in Bais Yaakov schools. Although she never had any children of her own, her students considered her their mother and greatly revered her.



**Rav Eliyohu Chaim Carlebach (5749 / 1989 - 37th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Elya and Rav Shlomo were born in Vienna in the late 1920s to a prominent and wealthy Rabbinic family. Their father, Rav Naftoli Carlebach, moved the family to Germany for the sake of his sons' education, but by the 1930s, they had immigrated to America, early enough to have escaped the war. He established his own *shul* in Staten Island. He became an expert on all types of *Chassidus* and published an encyclopedia of *Chassidus*, respected in many different *kehillos*.



**Rav Avrohom Chaim Brim of Yerushalayim - Shirah Chadasha (5762 / 2002 - 24th Yahrzeit)**

**Yahrzeits for the 27th of Adar ~ Begins Sunday Night  
(03-16-2026)**



**Tzidkiyahu - Last king of Yehuda (4321 / 561 - 1,465th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Yosef Shaul Nathanson of Lemberg - Shoel Umeishiv, Lemberger Rav (5635 / 1875 - 151st Yahrzeit)**

At age forty-nine in ת"ר"ט, after the death of his uncle Rabbi Yaakov Meshulam Orenstein, the author of *Yeshuos Yaakov*, Rav Yosef Shaul was appointed to succeed him as the AvBeisDin of Lwow (Lemberg). He served in the position for eighteen years, while never taking a salary, as his wealth allowed him to live comfortably and study and teach Torah. He was a great *ba'al tzedakah* who supported the poor. His greatness in Torah was well known and people wrote to him with their halachic queries from far and wide.



**Rav Yeshaya Shor - Rav of Yas, Klil Efraim (5639 / 1879 - 147th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Moshe Meir Rosenstein of Berditchev (5662 / 1902 - 124th Yahrzeit)**

Rabbi Moshe Meir Halevi Rosenstein of Berditchev, one of the great students of the Rabbi of Ruzin and author of the *Avodas Halevi*, on the *sefer Shaare Zedek* - the score book from the Divine Kabbalist, Rabbi Yosef Gictilia. In the third year of aliyah he immigrated to Eretz Yisrael and lived in Tzfas until his old age he moved to Teveria.



**Rav Moshe Neuschloss - Av Beis Din of Square (5662 / 1902 - 124th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Moshe Neuschloss, av beis din of New Square. New Square is the anglicized form of Skvira, a village in Ukraine, where the Skver Hasidim dynasty of Chasidism had its roots.



**Rav Yaakov Yosef Weiss of Spinka - Siach Yaakov (5676 / 1916 - 110th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Shlomo HaKohen Schwartz (5695 / 1935 - 91st Yahrzeit)**

Rav Sholom was the son of Rav Avrohom Yehuda HaKohen Schwartz of Bergsaz and Mad, *mechaber* of *Kol Arye*.



**Rav Chaim Sinwani of Yehud (5739 / 1979 - 47th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Chaim was born in Sinwan town (near the city of Taaz) on *Yom Kippur*. He received rabbinical ordination at the age of 17 by Rabbi Shlomo Ben Yosef Tabib and studied with him in *Kabbalah*. In 1910, after his rabbi's death, he was offered to serve as a rabbi of Sinwan and its environs, and he accepted the offer. Rabbi Sinwani immigrated in 1949 (1949) and refused to serve as rabbi. He lived in Yehud, where he became famous as a miracle (*Poel Yeshuot*) worker and taught students at his home.



**Rav Yisroel Bergstein (5758 / 1998 - 28th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Chaim Pinchos Scheinberg - Rosh Yeshivas Torah Ore Yerushalayim (5772 / 2012 - 14th Yahrzeit)**

Rabbi Scheinberg was born circa 1910 in Poland, the son of a tailor. In the 1960s, Rabbi Scheinberg relocated from the United States to Israel. He was popular among students at *yeshivas* geared towards American students due to his fluency in English and his familiarity with the issues faced by American Orthodox teenagers studying in Israel. Rav Scheinberg was the *Mora D'Asra* (akin to "Chief" Rabbi) of *Kiryat Mattersdorf*, and also a member of the *Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah*.

**Yahrzeits for the 28th of Adar ~ Begins Monday Night  
(03-17-2026)**



**Rav Moshe of Cracow (5448 / 1688 - 338th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Moshe was the son of Rav Yehoshua, *mechaber* of *Maginei Shlomo* of Cracow.



**Chacham Tzemach HaKohen Kohen of Djerba (5573 / 1813 - 213th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Tzemach Kohen was born in 5499 (1739) in Djerba to Sayad and Chanina Kohen. His family is descended from Rabbi Yishmael Kohen Gadol and Ezra HaSofer therefore their last name was Kohen Avrish (Avrish is an acronym whose roshei teyvos stand for Ani Ben Rabbi Yishmael).

He studied under the wise sages of Chachmei Djerba especially under Rav Aharon Peretz (author of *Bigdei Aharon*, *Mishchas Aharon*) afterwards he moved away from Tunisia and upon his return he gathered around him students and disciples.



**Rav Shlomo Yurberger - Be'er Sheva (5581 / 1821 - 205th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Yaakov Greenwald - Av Beis Din of Chust (5583 / 1823 - 203rd Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Nachman Zev Auerbach (5615 / 1855 - 171st Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Mordechai Rosenblatt of Slonim - Hadras Mordechai (5676 / 1916 - 110th Yahrzeit)**

Rabbi Mordechai Veitzel Rosenblatt, or better known as Rabbi Mottele Oshminer was one of the greatest and most famous sages in the 19th and early twentieth century. Rabbi Mordechai Veitzel Rosenblatt was born in 1836 in the city of Antipolya (Antapoli) near Kobrin in the Grodno region. Rabbi Mordechai Rosenblatt was a great Talmudic scholar. At an early age he left Antapoli to study under Rabbi Isaac Tzvi Hirsch, the Rabbi of Siatitz, who enthusiastically gave him '*semicha*' at the tender age of fourteen.



**Rav Shimon Zev Ehrenreich (5725 / 1965 - 61st Yahrzeit)**

Rav Shimon Zev was a descendant of Rav Yaakov Ehrenreich. He served as Rav of Mishkoltz before the Second World War; after the War he founded the *Keses Shlomo* foundation in Yerushalayim to republish and distribute the *seforim* of his forebears.



**Rav Meir Rosenbaum of Moshulu (5761 / 2001 - 25th Yahrzeit)**

**Yahrzeits for the 29th of Adar ~ Begins Tuesday Night  
( 03-18-2026 )**



**Rav Yitzchok ben Rabbeinu Asher of Speyer (4956 / 1196 - 830th Yahrzeit)**

 **Rav Shlomo HaKohen Rabinowitz of Radomsk - Tiferes Shlomo (5626 / 1866 - 160th Yahrzeit)**

They called him the Tzaddik and author of the book "*Tiferes Shlomo*" of Radomsk. He is Grand Rabbi Shlomo Hakohen Rabinovitch of Radomsk (*Tiferes Shlomo*) - First Radomsker Rebbe. His book "*Tiferes Shlomo*" (1867-69) is considered one of the classic works of Chasidism and which is constantly being reprinted. He became Rov of Radomsk in 1842. Many wondrous stories are told about him.

 **Rav Avraham Shaag Zwebner of Kobelsdorf - Ohel Avrohom (5636 / 1876 - 150th Yahrzeit)**

Born on 4 *Iyar* 5561/1801 in Freistat, Hungary. His father, Harav Yehoshua Leib Zwebner, was one of the outstanding students of the *Noda B'Yehudah*. Rav Avraham himself was a *talmid* of the *Chasam Sofer*. He served as Rav of Czeszté and then in Kobelsdorf, one of the "seven communities" in Hungary. In 1873 at age 72, Reb Avraham Shaag decided to make *aliyah* to Eretz Yisrael. His closest *talmid*, Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, unable to part from his *Rebbe*, joined him.

 **Rav Chaim Shmuel Birnbaum - Maseh Choshev (5647 / 1887 - 139th Yahrzeit)**

 **Rav Pinchos Nosson Safrin of Rudik (5692 / 1932 - 94th Yahrzeit)**

 **Rav Chaim Welfried of Lodz (5702 / 1942 - 84th Yahrzeit)**

 **Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky - Iyunim B'Mikrah (5746 / 1986 - 40th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky (1891-1986) was born on the 21 *Adar*. On 11th Av 1937, he left for America. In 1945, he accepted the request of Reb Shraga Feivel Mendelovitz that he take up the position of *rosh yeshiva* in *Mesivta Torah Vodaas*, a position he kept for the rest of his life.

 **Dr. Joseph Kaminetzky (5759 / 1999 - 27th Yahrzeit)**

Dr. Joseph Kaminetsky (1911-1999). Born in Brooklyn, he attended Yeshiva Rabbi Chaim Berlin, and later Talmudical Academy High School on East Broadway. When he began his tenure at *Torah Umesorah*, the National Society for Hebrew Day Schools, in 1946, he set as his goal that every town and city with a Jewish population of at least 5,000 have a Jewish day school. In 1980, he retired and moved to Yerushalayim, to devote himself to full-time learning.



**Rav Mordechai Hager - Vizhnitz Monsey Rebbe (5778 / 2018 - 8th Yahrzeit)**

The *rebbe* was born on 18 *Tammuz* 5682, son of the fourth *rebbe* of *Vizhnitz*, Rav Chaim Meir Hager, *the Imrei Chaim*. Rav Mordechai, his wife, and family traveled to the United States, where he began serving as Rav of the *Vizhnitzer Chassidim* in America - first in Boro Park, and then in Williamsburg. In 5724 he moved to Monsey. The *rebbe's* brother was Rav Moshe Hager, the *Yeshuos Moshe zy" a*, the *Vizhnitzer Rebbe* of Bnei Brak. Rav Mordechai and his brother Rav Moshe Yehoshua assumed the mantle of leadership over 40 years ago with the passing of their father, the *Imrei Chaim*, with the *Yeshuos Moshe* leading the *kehillah* in Bnei Brak and Rav Mordechai leading the *kehillah* in Monsey, NY.

**Yahrzeits for the 1st of Nissan ~ Begins Wednesday Night  
(03-19-2026)**



**Nadav and Avihu (2450 / -1311 - 3,336th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Aryeh Leib - Rav of Belz & Horodna (5489 / 1729 - 297th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Aryeh Leib was the son-in-law of Rav Zecharia Mendel, *mechaber* of the *Ba'er Heiteiv*. He served as Rav in Belz from 5473 until 5478, and was later appointed as Rav of Horodna in 5480.



**Rav Yeshayahu Mordechai Bassan - Lachmei Todah (5499 / 1739 - 287th Yahrzeit)**

*(Some say the Yahrzeit is on the 2nd of Nissan)*

Rav Yeshayahu Mordechai Bassan, born in 5433 (1673) in Verona, Italy, was the son of Rav Yisroel Chizkiyahu and was best known as the *rebbe* of the *Ramchal*, Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzatto. He studied under Rav Moshe Zakut (known as the *Ramaz* after his *sefer*, *Ramaz HaRomez*) in Mantuba, then served as rav in Padua from 5475-5482 (1715-1722). When his father-in-law, the *Rabach*, was *niftar* on 17 *Teves* 5490, he was chosen as his successor to the position of *Av Bais Din* in Reggio.



**Rav Moshe of Vitebsk (5559 / 1799 - 227th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Shmuel HaLevi Kellin - Machazit Hashekel (5566 / 1806 - 220th Yahrzeit)**

Rabbi Shmuel HaLevi Kellin (1724 - 1806) was the son of Rav Nosson Notah HaLevi and a descendant of Rav Nosson Notah Spira.



**Rav Yosef of Zamotch - Mishnas Chachomim (5566 / 1806 - 220th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Yisroel of Barnov (5630 / 1870 - 156th Yahrzeit)**

 **Rav Elimelech Shapira of Grodzisk - Imrei Elimelech (5652 / 1892 - 134th Yahrzeit)**

Holy Rabbi Elimelech Shapira of Grodzisk (1824-1892), son of Rabbi Chaim Meir Yechiel the "Saraf [angel] of Moglintza" and grandson of Maggid of Koznitz and Rabbi Elimelech of Lizensk. Among greatest righteous Torah giants in Poland, whose impact was great throughout the country. His rabbi, Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin, directed him to serve as leader and receive *Kvitlach*.

 **Rav Chaim Zundel Maccoby - Makoff - Kamenitzer Maggid (5676 / 1916 - 110th Yahrzeit)**

 **Rav Moshe Yosef Hoffman - Rav & Av Beis Din of Pupa, Mei Be'er (5688 / 1928 - 98th Yahrzeit)**

R. Moshe Yosef Hoffman, dayan of Pupa (1843-1928), was a leading Torah scholar of Hungary and Yerushalayim. Son of Michael Hoffman, disciple of the Chasam Sofer. He was appointed *dayan* and *posek* of Pupa in 1882. In 1909, he immigrated to Yerushalayim, where he established his Beis Medrash and earned the reputation of one of the foremost rabbis in the city. He authored *Mei Be'er* and *Mayim Chaim*.

 **Rav Elya Svei (5769 / 2009 - 17th Yahrzeit)**

**Yahrzeits for the 2nd of Nissan ~ Begins Thursday Night  
( 03-20-2026 )**

 **Rabbeinu Baruch (5035 / 1275 - 751st Yahrzeit)**

 **Rav Binyomin of Lwow (5340 / 1580 - 446th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Binyomin was the son of Rav Moshe. It is known that he authored the *seforim Tavnis HaBayis* and *Ohel Shel Simcha*. However, they have been lost over time.

 **Rav Eliyahu Kalmankash - Rav of Lublin (5393 / 1633 - 393rd Yahrzeit)**

 **Rav Yeshayahu Mordechai Bassan - Lachmei Todah (5499 / 1739 - 287th Yahrzeit)**

*(Some say the Yahrzeit is on the 1st of Nissan)*

Rav Yeshayahu Mordechai Bassan, born in 5433 (1673) in Verona, Italy, was the son of Rav Yisroel Chizkiyahu and was best known as the *rebbe* of the *Ramchal*, Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzatto. He studied under Rav Moshe Zakut (known as the *Ramaz* after his *sefer, Ramaz HaRomez*) in Mantuba, then served as rav in Padua from 5475-5482 (1715-1722). When his father-in-law, the *Rabach*, was *niftar* on 17 Teves 5490, he was chosen as his successor to the position of *Av Bais Din* in Reggio.



**Rav Sholom DovBer Schneerson - Rebbe Rashab, Lubavitcher Rebbe (5680 / 1920 - 106th Yahrzeit)**

Rabbi Sholom-Dovber Schneerson [2 Nissan 5680], known as the *Rebbe Reshab*, was the fifth Rebbe of the Lubavitcher dynasty. He is the author of hundreds of major tracts in the exposition of Chassidic thought. In 1915, after 102 years of four Chabad rebbes living in Lubavitch, he transferred the center of the movement to Rostov-on-the-Don.



**Rav Yaakov Yosef Twersky of Skver (5728 / 1968 - 58th Yahrzeit)**

Rebbe Yaakov Yosef Twersky of Skver (1899-1968) was a leading Rebbe in the United States. Born in Skvyra, he served as Rebbe in Kalarash (Călărași, Romania). After the Holocaust, he reached New York, where he established his community in a distinctive neighborhood - New-Square, community reputed until this day for its conservative character, preserving authentic Chassidic Judaism like it was in the European Shtetls before the Holocaust.

# Biographies of the Tzaddikim



**Rav Avrohom Gershon Ashkenazi Ohr Ki Tov (Adar 25, 5521 / 1761 - 265th Yahrzeit)**



Rabbi Avrohom Gershon of Brody was probably born in or near Kutuy, Poland around 1701 and died in Yerushalayim in 1761. He is best known as the *Baal Shem Tov's* brother-in-

law.

A scion of a famous rabbinic family, Avraham Gershon is a descendant (possibly the grandson) of Shabsai Cohen ("the ShACh") (1625-1663).

Both Avraham Gershon and his father Rav Ephraim of Brody served in one of the four beis din (Jewish Court) of Brody. It was here that he and his father encountered Rabbi Yisrael "*Baal Shem Tov*". According to early Chasidic work *Shivchei haBesht*, his father gave his blessing of marriage for his sister Chana to the *Baal Shem Tov* on his deathbed. But once Ephraim died, Avraham Gershon was unaware of this secret betrothal until the *Baal Shem Tov* revealed the engagement contract.

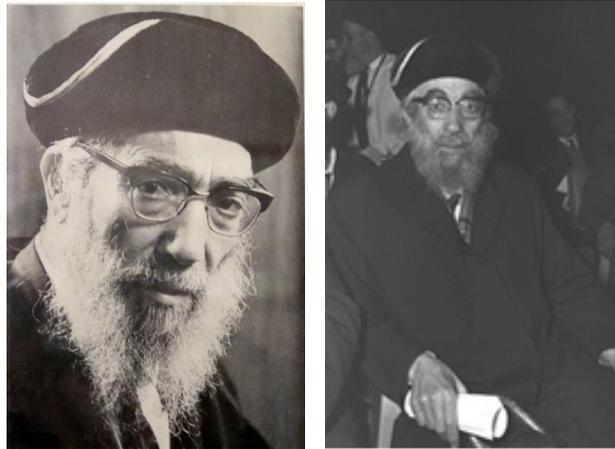
Avraham Gershon rose to a powerful position within the Jewish community of Brody.

In 1747, Avraham Gershon traveled to Yerushalayim, one of the first Chasidim to establish a presence in the holy land. There he embraced the *Rashash*, together with those who were students of Kabbalah. He lived in Chevron for six years. In 1753, he moved to Yerushalayim and was further associated with the (kabbalistic) Yeshivas Beit El. He died in 1761 and was buried on Har Hazeisim. After the Six Day War in 1967, his grave was rediscovered along with the grave of his second wife Bluma.

<https://www.geni.com/people/Rabbi-Abraham-Ashkenazi-of-Kitov/6000000002466244541>



**Chacham Yitzchak Abuchatzeira Baba Chaki (Adar 25, 5730 / 1970 - 56th Yahrzeit)**



Rav Yitzchok, or *Baba Chaki*, served as chief Rav of Ramla and Lod.

Born in Risani, Morocco, to Rav Massud, he was the grandson of the *Abir Yaakov* and brother of Rav Dovid and the *Baba Sali*.

In 1920, he and the *Baba Sali* escaped to Bodniv when Rav Dovid was murdered and the government issued decrees against the Jews.

In 1936, he moved to Arpud, where he lived under the French, ministering as Rav of the Jewish community.

In 1945, at the age of fifty, he left Morocco and moved to Algeria.

When the state of Israel was established, he and his family moved to Eretz Yisrael. When the *Rishon LeTzion*, Rav Tzion Chai Uzziel, heard of his arrival, he met with him, honoring him with the traditional turban of chief Rav, and appointed him as chief Rav of Ramla and Lod.

He served in this capacity beside the *Ashkenazi* chief Rav Yisrael Gelzer, for some twenty years, until, on the twenty-fifth of *Adar II* (April 2, 1970), he was killed in a car crash. Some twenty thousand participated in his *levaya* (funeral).

His son, Rav Avrohom, was the *Baba Sali's* son-in-law and also served as chief Rav of Ramla and Yavneh.

Every year, the *Baba Chaki* would celebrate the *Hilula* of his grandfather, the *Abir Yaakov*, with a special occasion in his home. One year, he called over a close friend and gave him the honored privilege of standing by the door and pouring each guest that came in a *l'chaim* from a two-liter tin can of Arak. "Please fill each guest's cup," the *Baba Chaki* asked his good friend.

The amazing thing was that the man stood at the door for some four hours and poured hundreds of cups of Arak for hundreds of guests, and the tin canister never seemed to empty! At the end of the *Hilula* celebration, the *Baba Chaki* gave his friend the canister as a present, saying, "Here, take this as a gift and you will never lack for Arak - ever!"

And so it was, that for some two years this canister poured Arak and they never lacked - until one day someone else borrowed it and the miracle ceased.

Rav Yitzchok, the *Baba Chaki*, welcomed everyone with a shining countenance and a smile. He was renowned for his *hachnossas orchim*. Once, one of his guests was loud, rude and violent. The man called Rav Yitzchok insulting names in front of everyone and even slapped him on the cheek. The other guests and family had a hard time holding back and asked Rav Yitzchok how he tolerated such outrageous behavior.

"Rav Yosef Shlush had a sign above his door that read: *Baruch HaBa Chutz Mikfuy Tova* - 'Welcome to all, except the ungrateful'. However, my version reads: 'Even the ungrateful are welcome'! Not only did he attack me for no reason, he is so ungrateful for I am the one who got him his job and have done him many favors! Now I say to you, if he cannot recognize a favor and even acts this ungratefully, surely he is sick and we should have mercy on him!"

(*Ma'aseh Nissim*, pages 237-240)



**Rav Yisroel Yaakov Fisher (Adar 25, 5763 / 2003 - 23rd Yahrzeit)**

Rav Yisroel Yaakov Fisher (1925-2003), head of the *Eidah HaHareidis* Rabbinical Court in Yerushalayim. Rav Fisher was born in Yerushalayim on the 21st of *Tamuz*, the day that Yisrael Yaakov Dehaan was killed in what many said was the first political assassination in modern Israeli history. Dehaan changed his lifestyle and became a chareidi Jew, and Rav Aharon Fisher named his newborn son Yaakov Yisrael after him. Rav Aharon's father was Rav Shlomo, *av beis din* of Karlsburg, Hungary, and author of *Neiros Shlomo* and *Korbanei lachmi*. Rav Yaakov Yisrael learned at *Etz Chaim* under Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer, who became his *chavrusa*. In 1961, he was appointed *moreh hora'ah* in the *Eidah Hachareidis*, and in 1975 he joined its beis din. In 1963, he was appointed Rav of the *Zichron Moshe shul*, a position he kept for 40 years.



**Rebbetzin Sara Schenirer (*Adar 26, 5695 / 1935 - 91st Yahrzeit*)**

A Polish-Jewish schoolteacher born on July 15, 1883, Sara Schenirer became a pioneer of Jewish education for girls. Highly intelligent, with a strong desire to study, as a young girl, she was envious of her brothers' opportunity to learn and interpret the Torah and wished she had similar opportunities. Recognizing her interest in education, her father provided her with a steady stream of religious texts translated into Yiddish.

Her situation was not unique as opportunities for women's education in those years were sparse. The assimilation of her girlfriends troubled her and in response to her efforts to stem the tide of assimilation, they began to call her "the little pious one."

Self-taught but keenly aware of the glorious role women had played in Jewish history, Sara decided to initiate some type of educational activity for the women of her community.

When a lecture series which she organized for adult women failed to improve the situation, Schenirer began to dream of establishing a school for young girls.

By 1939, there were more than 250 schools with an enrollment of more than 40,000 students in Bais Yaakov schools. Although she never had any children of her own, her students considered her their mother and greatly revered her.

Tragically, most of her students lost their lives in the Holocaust, but a few surviving students transplanted her mission and ideals in their new homes in the US and Eretz Yisroel. Her vision inspired not only her generation but each successive generation since and more than one million students have benefited from Sara's belief in the Jewish

woman.

<https://sarasch.com/history-of-sara-schenirer/>



**Rav Eliyohu Chaim Carlebach (Adar 26, 5749 / 1989 - 37th Yahrzeit)**



#### A Tribute To My First Rov

Many people know of Rav Elya's famous twin brother, Rav Shlomo Carlebach. In fact, I also found Rav Elya through Rav Shlomo's reputation, but it is Rav Elya whom I will always consider my first Rav.

Rav Elya and Rav Shlomo were born in Vienna in the late 1920s to a prominent and wealthy Rabbinic family. Their father, Rav Naftoli Carlebach, moved the family to Germany for the sake of his sons' education, but by the 1930s, they had immigrated to America, early enough to have escaped the war. Rav Naftoli Carlebach established a shul on West 79<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan, which is now run by his great-grandson, Rav Elya's grandson, Rav Naftoli Citron.

Rav Naftoli Carlebach was not *Chassidish*, but when his sons grew older, they became close to the *Lubavitcher Rebbe*. Rav Elya married the *Lubavitcher Rebbe's* first cousin, Hadassa, may Hashem bless her with a long and healthy life. They had children and he established his own shul in Staten Island. He became an expert on all types of *Chassidus* and published an encyclopedia of *Chassidus*, respected in many different *kehillos*. I like to

think that his *tefillos* helped bring me to my current point in life, a *Chassidista* of the *Stoliner Rebbe*.

Rav Shlomo, who was the elder twin, succeeded his father as Rav of the 79<sup>th</sup> Street shul, but at some point, the brothers began to run it jointly. They used to alternate Shabbosos; one Shabbos would be led by Rav Shlomo, the next by Rav Elya, and when Rav Shlomo was touring, Rav Elya led for many weeks in a row. Therefore, when I went to the *shul* looking for Rav Shlomo, I met Rav Elya “by accident”.

I had first heard of Rav Shlomo Carlebach in the East Village, of all places. Skipping over the details, I was a cosmically confused teenager, dabbling in leftist politics and astrology. I went to the shul at 79<sup>th</sup> Street, and had a memorable experience, but nothing that immediately changed my life. It wasn't until I'd spent a few years in college getting even more cosmically confused that I finally decided to go check out the *Carlebach shul* again.

I was surprised that Rav Shlomo wasn't there, but in many ways Rav Elya was even more welcoming. He heartily invited me to the *seuda*, and after it, the *Rebbetzin* told me I could stay upstairs and read for the afternoon. Unfortunately, I took the subway home that afternoon, but I liked the experience enough that I went back for another *Shabbos* shortly thereafter. Rav Elya welcomed me again, saying he was very happy to see me. So I kept going back, and as I got to know him better, I began to espouse some of the views I'd picked up in college and in political meetings. And the fact that I could do so is the greatest tribute to Rav Elya. No matter how far I had strayed, no matter what outrageous view came out of my mouth, Rav Elya Chaim always made me feel welcome and loved.

Rav Eliyohu Chaim Carlebach, may the memory of this *Tzaddik* be a blessing, left this world right before *Shabbos*, in March 1990. The congregation was gathered for Shabbos, waiting to see him, when they told us. That Shabbos, we sang his favorite songs, told over his teachings, and shared memories. It was a hard, but healing Shabbos. People broke down in tears at different times. I remember watching my own teardrops fall on the tablecloth while some stranger looked at me sympathetically. I must have been crying harder than I realized.

One phrase people attributed to Rav Elya in their stories was, “Just be normal.” He had never actually said that phrase to me, but it succinctly summed up the message he had

been conveying to me throughout the entire year of our acquaintance. Normalcy was a good value for me to strive for. It certainly wasn't a value in hippiedom or leftism, and after years of identification with both those worldviews, I certainly was not my normal self.

After the loss of a dear authority figure, it is very common that the young and bereft resolve to follow the path of the deceased more devotedly. How else can they connect with the *niftar*, the person who left this world? The person is gone in body, so the connection must be on a purely spiritual plane. I've been told that the *Tanya* says that a *Tzaddik* accomplishes more in this world when he leaves it because then he is not encumbered by physicality. I don't claim to understand how that works, but I think that the effect on the bereft that I described must be part of it. As Rav Shlomo used to say, "What do I know?"

May Rav Elya be a *meilitz yosher* for *Klal Yisrael*. Oh, how I miss him!

My father was a strong believer in everyone being master of himself. With *Hashem* guiding us, we have no excuse for stupidity or even depression. He believed that we can all reach the top. He often told us, "Just be smart." And, if anyone ever dared to hurt my feelings, he would say to me, "You let that cockroach crawling on the floor have control over you?"

He was a magnificent father and a terrific grandfather, too. Fortunately, he lived to see ten of the many grandchildren born. The stories are being relayed to the great grandchildren as well.

(Sheina Carlebach Berkowitz)



**Rav Yosef Shaul Nathanson Shoel Umeishiv, Lemberger Rav (Adar I 27, 5635 / 1875 - 151st Yahrzeit)**

(1808-1875 / 5568[70]-5635)

Born in Brezhan in 1808/5568 (others say 1810/5570) to Rav Aryeh Leibush, author of the sefer, *Bais E"l*.

He married Shifra Buna the daughter of Rav Yitzchok Aharon HaLevi Etinga of Lwow. Even as a young *chassan*, he was already recognized as an outstanding talmid chacham and a gaon who was master of all of *Shas* and *poskim*.

In his father-in-law's home, he became close with his new brother-in-law, Rav Mordechai Zev Etinga and the two studied together as partners for many years.

They collaborated to author the sefer, *Mefarshei HaYam*, a commentary on the sefer, *Yam HaTalmud* on Bava Kama. They also exchanged responsa and halachic queries with four great *geonim* of the generation: Rabbi Akiva Eiger of Posen, Rav Moshe Schreiber, the Chasam Sofer of Pressburg, Rav Mordechai Benet and Rav Hirsch Charif of Bonihad, and these are published there as well.

They also authored together works such as *Magen Gibborim* on Shulchan Aruch -- Orach Chaim, and *Meiras Aynaim* on treifos haReiya, *Maasei Alfes* on the Rif, *Yad Yosef* and *Yad Shaul* on Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah, as well as many other joint writings.

Alone, Rav Yosef Shaul authored fourteen volumes of *shu"t* (responsa) named *Shoel U'Mashiv* as well as *Toras Moshe* on the Rema's *Toras Chatas* and *Ner Maaravi* on the *Yerushalmi* among others.

At age forty-nine in ת"ר"ט, after the death of his uncle Rabbi Yaakov Meshulam Orenstein, the author of *Yeshuos Yaakov*, Rav Yosef Shaul was appointed to succeed him as the AvBeisDin of Lwow (Lemberg). He served in the position for eighteen years, while never taking a salary, as his wealth allowed him to live comfortably and study and teach Torah. He was a great *ba'al tzedakah* who supported the poor. He founded a soup kitchen and could even be found from time to time sitting and eating his meal together with those whom he supported.

The *Shoel U'Meshiv* also took an active role and interest in communal affairs. He was involved in the great rabbinic decisions and debates in his region and generation. His greatness in Torah was well known and people wrote to him with their halachic queries from far and wide.

He passed on 27 Adar I, 5635.



**Rav Moshe Meir Rosenstein (Adar 27, 5662 / 1902 - 124th Yahrzeit)**



Rabbi Moshe Meir Halevi Rosenstein of Berditchev, one of the great students of the Rabbi of Ruzin and author of the *Avodas Halevi*, on the *sefer Shaare Zedek* - the score book from the Divine Kabbalist, Rabbi Yosef Gictilia. In the third year of aliyah he immigrated to Eretz Yisrael and lived in Tzfas until his old age he moved to Teveria.

<https://il.bidspirit.com/ui/lotPage/source/catalog/auction/8421/lot/134726/Signature-of-Rabbi-Moshe-Meir?lang=en>



**Rav Moshe Neuschloss Av Beis Din of Square (Adar 27, 5662 / 1902 - 124th Yahrzeit)**



Rav Moshe Neuschloss, av beis din of New Square. New Square is the anglicized form of Skvira, a village in Ukraine, where the Skver Hasidim dynasty of Chasidism had its roots. The community began in 1954, when twenty Skver families moved from Williamsburg to a 130 acre farm north of Spring Valley, under the leadership of their Rebbe Rav Yakov Yosef Twersky. In 1961 New Square became the first village in New York state to be governed by a religious group. Over the years annexations have increased its size. Its population increased 78% between 1990 and 2000.

<https://matzav.com/todays-yahrtzeits-and-history-27-adar-3/>



**Rav Shlomo Schwartz (Adar I 27, 5695 / 1935 - 91st Yahrzeit)**

Rav Sholom was the son of Rav Avrohom Yehuda HaKohen Schwartz of Bergsaz and Mad, *mechaber* of *Kol Arye*.



**Rav Chaim Sinwani (Adar 27, 5739 / 1979 - 47th Yahrzeit)**



Born in Sinwan town (near the city of Taaz) on *Yom Kippur*. He studied with his father and later in the town of Jabel Zabar. He received rabbinical ordination at the age of 17 by Rabbi Shlomo Ben Yosef Tabib and studied with him in *Kabbalah*.

At the age of eighteen, he married a woman, and shortly afterward his *Rabbis's* offered him to serve as *Dayan*, but he refused acceptance. In 1910, after his rabbis' death, he was offered to serve as a rabbi of Sinwan and its environs, and he accepted the offer.

As rabbi of the Sharab district, he used to roam the towns and villages to teach and supervise the *dayanim* and slaughterers. Composed poems and books. After suffering from a rift, he could no longer roam among the communities in the district and so moved to Aden. The rabbis of the city, Rabbi Salem Yaakov Menachem and Rabbi Yahya Abraham appointed him a member of the tribunal there. During his stay there he underwent fracture surgery.

Rabbi Sinwani immigrated in 1949 (1949) and refused to serve as rabbi. He lived in Yehud, where he became famous as a miracle (*Poel Yeshuot*) worker and taught students at his home.

Avraham Levy writes that Rabbi Sinwani believed that the State of Israel was burdened

with the grief of the *Shechinah* and therefore refused to visit Jerusalem. And also banned participation in Israeli elections. Also in the leaflet published after his passing, his name appears to oppose participation in elections, including the local authorities. In contrast, Rabbi Yitzchak Dadon, who interviewed his son, daughter, son-in-law, grandson, and more, writes on their behalf that he was a Zionist, treated the state positively, and even celebrated Independence Day every year, including the saying of Hallel. They also said that he greatly respected Rabbi Kook and Rabbi Shlomo Goren.

After the *Yom Kippur* War, he asked for the names of the fallen, prayed for each of them, and wept, asking what we would receive for them.

In one of his poems, he praises the departure of the exile and the aliyah to *Eretz Yisrael*, and even anticipates that the day of redemption is approaching.

He died on May 31 in *Adar* 5739 and was buried in the Jewish cemetery. His grave reads: "Israel's defense attorney."

May the merit of the *tzadik* Rabbi Chaim Sinwani protect us all. Amen

[dailyzohar.com](http://dailyzohar.com)



**Rav Chaim Pinchos Scheinberg Rosh Yeshivas Torah Ore Yerushalayim (*Adar* 27, 5772 / 2012 - 14th *Yahrzeit*)**



The author receiving a blessing from Rabbi Scheinberg, zt'l



Rabbi Scheinberg was born circa 1910 in Poland, the son of a tailor. He moved to America at the age of nine and he attended public school, afterwards he left to attend the Rabbi Jacob Joseph yeshiva (RJJ) until the age of fourteen. He then studied in Rabbi Yehuda Levenberg's *Bais Medrash LeRabbonim Yeshiva* (at the time located in New Haven, Connecticut). At seventeen Rabbi Scheinberg progressed to the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, now affiliated with Yeshiva University. There he learned under Rabbis Shlomo Polachek - known as the "*Meitcheter Illui*", Moshe Soloveichik and Shimon Shkop (who lived in New York for a short period). Rav Scheinberg received *semicha* from Rabbi Borch Ber (*Bemechitzosom* book by R. Shlomo Lorincz Z"L).

After marrying the daughter of Rabbi Yaakov Yosef Herman at the age of 19, the couple embarked for the *Mir Yeshiva* in what was then Poland (and is now Belarus), where he studied for 5 years. The *Mir* had very few American students, although his brother Shmuel Scheinberg and others such as Rabbi Shachne Zohn and Rabbi Nosson Wachtfogel (future *Mashgiach* of the Lakewood Yeshiva) also learnt there.

While studying in *Mir*, Rabbi Scheinberg once visited a leader of Ashkenazi Jewry at the time, the *Chofetz Chaim*. When informed of a group of students who had travelled all the way from America in order to learn *Torah*, the *Chofetz Chaim* was not overly impressed. He quipped, "If G-d came down all the way from heaven to earth in order to give us the *Torah*, a student can be expected to travel from America to Europe in order to learn His *Torah*".

Upon returning to the USA, Rabbi Scheinberg became a faculty member of his alma mater, the New Haven Yeshiva, which ultimately closed in 1938. He then became the *Mashgiach* at the *Yeshiva Chofetz Chaim* founded by Rabbi Dovid Leibowitz.

In the 1960s, Rabbi Scheinberg relocated from the United States to Eretz Yisrael. Among other things, he was famous for wearing many layers (numbering perhaps near one hundred) of *tzitzis* at the same time. Although he never publicly revealed the reason, one conjecture is that he does this to satisfy diverging rabbinical opinions as to exactly how this *mitzvah* must be fulfilled. Another is that he took on this practice while his daughter was ill so that he took the wearing of the multitude of *tzitzis* upon himself as a vow, resulting in increasing *mitzvos* being performed in her merit.

He was popular among students at *yeshivas* geared towards American students due to his fluency in English and his familiarity with the issues faced by American Orthodox teenagers studying in Israel. Rav Scheinberg was the *Mora D'Asra* (akin to "Chief" Rabbi) of *Kiryat Mattersdorf*, and also a member of the *Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah*.

His son-in-law was Rabbi Nisson Alpert.

On October 21, 2009, Rabbi Scheinberg's wife Basya died after a marriage of 80 years, one of the longest on record.

geni.com



**Rav Moshe (Adar I 28, 5448 / 1688 - 338th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Moshe was the son of Rav Yehoshua, *mechaber* of *Maginei Shlomo* of Cracow. He married Chava, the daughter of Rav Mordechai Parnas of Cracow.

They had a son who became known as Rav Mordechai of Cracow, and a daughter who married Rav Naftoli Hertzka of Tzuzmir, who was also a cousin, the son of her paternal uncle, Rav Avrohom. Their third child was a daughter, Teivel, who married Rav Shmuel Shmelke Margolis, *Av Bais Din* of Elkish; their son was Rav Elozor Roke'ach of Brody and Rav of Amsterdam, *mechaber* of *Maasei Roke'ach*. Their fourth child was Sora, the wife of Rav Shmuel Shmelke HaLevi Horowitz, *Av Bais Din* of Tarnow.

Rav Moshe published his father's responsa as *Shu"t Pnei Yehoshua*.



## Chacham Tzemach Kohen (Adar II 28, 5573 / 1813 - 213th Yahrzeit)



Rav Tzemach Kohen was born in 5499 (1739) in Djerba to Sayad and Chanina Kohen. His family is descended from Rabbi Yishmael Kohen Gadol and Ezra HaSofer therefore their last name was Kohen Avrish (Avrish is an acronym whose roshei teyvos stand for Ani Ben Rabbi Yishmael).

He studied under the wise sages of Chachmei Djerba especially under Rav Aharon Peretz (author of *Bigdei Aharon*, *Mishchas Aharon*) afterwards he moved away from Tunisia and upon his return he gathered around him students and disciples.

He passed away on 28 Adar II 5573 (1813)

On 10 Cheshvan his bones were reinterred and he was laid to rest in Moshav Eitan in the *ohel haMekubalim* alongside Rav Avrohom Kohen, Rav Khalifa Kohen, Rav Moshe Kohen, Rav Raphael Jami and Rav Shaul Kohen.

His Seforim include *Midrash Haggadah* on the Pesach Haggadah, *Binyan Avos* on Pirkei Avos, <http://hebrewbooks.org/21279> *Cholas Ahavah* on Torah and Five Megillos, *Terumas haDashen* 6 volumes of chiddushim on Shas and *Tzafnas Paneach* on Rashi, *Torei Zahav* on Shir HaShirin.



**Rav Mordechai Rosenblatt Hadrass Mordechai (Adar 28, 5676 / 1916 - 110th Yahrzeit)**



Rabbi Mordechai Veitzel Rosenblatt, or better known as Rabbi Mottele Oshminer was one of the greatest and most famous sages in the 19th and early twentieth century. It was said that three pictures hung on the wall of every Jewish home in Lithuania; the photo of Rabbi Nochum of Horodna, Rabbi Yitzchok Elchonon Spector, and Rabbi Mottele Oshminer.

Rabbi Mordechai Veitzel Rosenblatt was born in 1836 in the city of Antipolya (Antapoli) near Kobrin in the Grodno region. Although his father Rabbi Avrohom Menachem Mendel had rabbinical ordination and was invited to serve as Rabbi in various cities, he preferred to make a living by engaging in the business of grinding wheat kernels, as his ancestors before him. This branch of the Rosenblatt family was therefore nicknamed "Veitzel", which in Yiddish means kernel of wheat.

Rabbi Mordechai Rosenblatt was a great Talmudic scholar. At an early age he left Antapoli to study under Rabbi Isaac Tzvi Hirsch, the Rabbi of Siatitz, who enthusiastically gave him '*semicha*' at the tender age of fourteen. After his marriage to Chaya, the daughter of Rabbi Shimon Velvel of Antapoli, Rabbi Mordechai moved to Pinsk and studied under the renowned Rabbi of Pinsk, Mordechai Zakheim who ordained him as a Rabbi. In Pinsk he developed a close relationship with the sage Rabbi Shmuel Avigdor of Karlin. After receiving rabbinical ordination from these two great rabbis he returned home in 1864 to Antipolia. He wanted to continue his studies quietly and unobtrusively,

but his fame soon spread and he was invited to become assistant to the chief Rabbi of Antapoli, Pinchas Michoel Rokeach Grosleit, author of "*Leket Hakotzrim*", and "*Divrei Pinchas*", who cherished and dearly loved Rabbi Mordechai Rosenblatt as a son. It was during these years that Rabbi Mordechai Rosenblatt dedicated a part of his day to study Kabbalah. In 1870 Rabbi Mordechai Rosenblatt was appointed Chief Rabbi of Boten (Butten) near Grodno, a position he held for eighteen years. There he led a totally ascetic and abstinent lifestyle, and soon became known as a pious and sagacious Tzaddik, and Miracle Worker whose blessings were fulfilled. His fame grew and multitudes of people, Jew and non-Jew alike, including the nobility, flocked to him from near and far, to seek advice and receive a blessing. His photo hung in many homes throughout Lithuania as a Talisman. This was a remarkable and unique phenomenon, since Lithuanian Jewry was not as carried away by the concept of "miracle workers" as were the Polish, Russian, and Hungarian Chasidim. He was also very involved in doing acts of kindness to the townspeople and founded '*Chevras Malbish Arumim*', to provide clothing for the city's poor and destitute, and '*Hachnasas Orchim*' to provide lodging for itinerant wanderers as well as travelers. Sadly, his wife Chaya passed away in 1881, leaving him alone with a household of young orphans to bring up. In 1887 Rabbi Mordechai Rosenblatt was appointed chief Rabbi of Korelitz (Pinsk District) when the previous chief Rabbi Eliyahu Boruch Kammai moved away. Four years later, in 1891, he was appointed Chief Rabbi of Ashmina, a city near Vilna. In Ashmina he remarried; his second wife was the daughter of Rabbi Avraham Greenberg of Ashmina. Rabbi Mordechai wrote numerous rabbinical decisions in response to halachic questions which were sent to him for his legal opinion. Huge numbers of petitioners travelled to Ashmina from all over to receive a blessing and for his sagacious advice. Although in 1940 he moved to Slonim to serve as their Chief Rabbi, he is remembered best as Chief Rabbi of Ashmina.

In the memoirs of a resident of Ashmina, the writer remarks that there were many mystical stories with Rabbi Mordechai. He tells one of these as follows as he heard from townspeople who hosted a woman with a deaf and dumb child: It happened that a woman came to the Rabbi with a child about two years old in her arms. Since the Rabbi was still in the Synagogue, the woman entered a neighboring house to rest there until the Rabbi returned. The woman told her hosts that she has been married to a man for many years but did not bear any children. Remarkably, two years ago she gave birth to the child in her arms. The little boy looked beautiful, but could not speak at all. The doctors claimed that he was a 'mute' and would never speak. When she heard this medical diagnosis she

came to Ashmina to beg the Rabbi to bless her child and restore her speech. The Rabbi came home and the woman and her child left their belongings with the host and were led into the Rabbis home. Shortly after that, the woman ran out of the Rabbis house in great haste, her face wet with tears. She rushed back to get her belongings and then left town in a great hurry. It later became known that when the woman told the Rabbi about her child, he said: Perhaps it is preferable that the child not speak. The woman cried and said that the boy was an only child and her only consolation in life. How could he stay a mute all his life? The Rabbi responded once again once more asked: Perhaps it is preferable that the child not speak. When the woman was insistent that the Rabbi bless the boy with speech, the Rabbi turned to the boy and asked: My son, why do you not speak? The child was silent. The Rabbi addressed the boy once more: My son, I ask you, why do you not speak? Then a miracle occurred. The child opened his mouth and said: Rabbi, what shall I say, that I am a bastard? The woman burst out into deep weeping and cried out: Rabbi, let him be silent, it's much better that he be silent all his life than speak! With that she ran from the Rabbis home.

Rabbi Mordechai Veitzel Rosenblatt had two sons and two daughters. His oldest born Rabbi Asher Veitzel Rosenblatt was the Rabbi of Drohichyn, and one of the Rabbinical Board Members of Yeshiva Etz Chaim in Yerushalayim which was established by Rabbi Shmuel Salant in 1841, shortly after Rabbi Salant arrived in Jerusalem. Rabbi Mordechai Rosenblatts second son, Rabbi Shmuel Yoshua Veitzel Rosenblatt was a great scholar who rejected all rabbinical offers, and instead engaged in business in Slonim. Rabbi Mordechai Rosenblatts sons-in-law were also great rabbis; one was the Chief Rabbi of the Goldlieve Congregation (Sobelsk District), and the other was Rabbi Eliyahu David Epstein, chief Rabbi of Boten (Grodno District). He was an older brother of Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Epstein, the famed Rosh Yeshiva of Slobodka-Hebron. Rabbi Mordechai Rosenblatt wrote hundreds of brilliant halachic decisions which were published by his students in 1899 under the name Hadrass Mordechai. Many of the great pre-war rabbis were either his students, or had received their rabbinical ordination from him. Rabbi Mordechai Veitzel Rosenblatt corresponded frequently with Rabbi Shmuel Salant, the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem, and was instrumental in ensuring that the funds collected on behalf of Rabbi Meir Baal Haneis Salant reached their destination. In 1902 Rabbi Mordechai Rosenblatt wrote a very powerful and enthusiastic letter on behalf of Rabbi Meir Baal Haneis Salant which was printed in '*Gvul Olam*' Yerushalayim 1903. Rabbi Mordechai Veitzel Rosenblatt passed away in 1916 on the 28th of the first *Adar* at the age of 76. The titles that were

engraved on Rabbi Mordechai Rosenblatt's gravestone speak volumes of the reverence and awe that he commanded. It reads: "Here Lies the Holy Ark, the Prince of Torah, the Storehouse of Fear of G-D, the Teacher & Light of Israel" Rabbi Yisroel Meir Hacoheh of Radin, the Chofetz Chaim, said "Who is so great as to merit being with him in Gan Eden"! May the memory of this great Gaon & Tzaddik be a blessing to all.

<https://www.rabbimeirbaalhaneis.com/Rabbi%20Mordechai%20Rosenblatt.asp>



**Rav Shimon Zev Ehrenreich (Adar I 28, 5725 / 1965 - 61st Yahrzeit)**

Rav Shimon Zev was a descendant of Rav Yaakov Ehrenreich, who in turn was a scion of the *Shefa Tal*, who was the son-in-law of the *Kol Arye* of Bergsaz and Mad.

He served as Rav of Mishkoltz before the Second World War; after the War he founded the *Keses Shlomo* foundation in Yerushalayim to republish and distribute the *seforim* of his forebears.



**Rav Shlomo Rabinowitz Tiferes Shlomo (Adar 29, 5626 / 1866 - 160th Yahrzeit)**

They called him the Tzaddik and author of the book "*Tiferes Shlomo*" of Radomsk. He is Grand Rabbi Shlomo Hakohen Rabinovitch of Radomsk (Tiferes Shlomo) - First Radomsker Rebbe. His book "*Tiferes Shlomo*" (1867-69) is considered one of the classic works of Chasidism and which is constantly being reprinted. He became Rov of Radomsk in 1842. Many wondrous stories are told about him.

Grand Rabbi Shlomo Hakohen Rabinovitch of Radomsk (*Tiferes Shlomo*) - First Radomsker Rebbe The second Rebbe of Radomsk was Harav Avrohom Yissochor ZT"L, the *Chesed L' Avrohom* (1843 - 1892) . The third Rebbe of Radomsk was the Harav Yechezkel ZT"L, the *Knesses Yechezkel* (1864 - 1910).

geni.com



**Rav Avraham Shaag Zwebner Ohel Avrohom (Adar 29, 5636 / 1876 - 150th Yahrzeit)**



Born on 4 *Iyar* 5561/1801 in Freistat, Hungary. His father, Harav Yehoshua Leib Zwebner, was one of the outstanding students of the *Noda B'Yehudah*. Tradition has it that the family name changed due to a remark made by the *Noda B'Yehudah*: "When words of Torah roar, from Reb Yehoshua Leib's mouth, the world shakes." From then on, he was known as Reb Leib Shaag, based on the *pasuk*, "*Aryeh shaag, mi lo yira* — A lion has roared, who isn't frightened?" (*Amos* 3:8)

Rav Avraham himself was a *talmid* of the *Chasam Sofer*. Orphaned from his father at a young age his mother sent him to Pressburg. At age 18, the *Chasam Sofer* made his *shidduch* with Leah, the orphaned daughter of Rav Avraham Ha'Levi Shpitz, of Prossitz, Moravia.

He served as Rav of Czeszté and then in Kobelsdorf, one of the "seven communities" in Hungary. In 1873 at age 72, Reb Avraham Shaag decided to make *aliyah* to Eretz Yisrael. His closest *talmid*, Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, unable to part from his *Rebbe*, joined him. He passed away Shabbos, 29 *Adar* 5636/1876, 3 years later and was laid to rest on Har HaZeisim.

He authored the following *seforim* *Ohel Avraham* (1881) responsa, and his *Derashot ha-Rosh* (1904) .



**Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky Iyunim B'Mikrah (Adar 29, 5746 / 1986 - 40th Yahrzeit)**



Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky (1891-1986). Born on the 21 *Adar*, in Dolhinov, he left for Minsk at the age of 11. Among his friends there were the future Rav Reuven Grozovsky, and the young Aaron Kotler. Shortly after *Pesach* in 1905, Reb Yaakov and Reb Aaron traveled to Slobodka to learn under the supervision of the *Alter of Slobodka*. Reb Yaakov also learned in Slutzk. During World War I he took refuge in Lomza in the *yeshiva* of Reb Yechiel Michel Gordon. On 22 *Sivan* 1919, he married the Rebbetzin Ita Ettl. On 11th Av 1937, he left for America. In 1945, he accepted the request of Reb Shraga Feivel Mendelovitz that he take up the position of *rosh yeshiva* in *Mesivta Torah Vodaas*, a position he kept for the rest of his life. His *chidushim* were printed in his *seforim Emes LeYaakov*, on Torah and on *Shas*. As he requested, he was buried in Brooklyn, since he pointed out that most of his family live in America and would not always be able to travel to his *kever* in Eretz Yisrael. From this, his last request we learn yet another chapter of his feelings for others.



**Dr. Joseph Kaminetzky (Adar 29, 5759 / 1999 - 27th Yahrzeit)**

Dr. Joseph Kaminetsky (1911-1999). Born in Brooklyn, he attended Yeshiva Rabbi Chaim Berlin, and later Talmudical Academy High School on East Broadway. After high school, he became a member of the very first class of Yeshiva College, from which he graduated magna cum laude in 1932. He later earned his doctorate in education from Teachers

College at Columbia University. When he began his tenure at *Torah Umesorah*, the National Society for Hebrew Day Schools, in 1946, he set as his goal that every town and city with a Jewish population of at least 5,000 have a Jewish day school. In those days, there was only a handful of *yeshivos* and day schools; there are now 600 such schools with 170,000 students all over the United States. In 1980, he retired and moved to Yerushalayim, to devote himself to full-time learning.



**Rav Mordechai Hager Vizhnitz Monsey Rebbe (Adar 29, 5778 / 2018 - 8th Yahrzeit)**



The *rebbe* was born on 18 *Tammuz* 5682, son of the fourth *rebbe* of *Vizhnitz*, Rav Chaim Meir Hager, *the Imrei Chaim*.

As a child he was very close to his grandfather, the *Saba Kadisha* “*Ahavas Yisrael*” of *Vizhnitz*. In 5702, he went to study under Rav Yoel of Satmar, whose views against zionism and the *medina* he adopted and followed zealously, and then for two years by Rav Yosef Greenwald of Pupa (the *Vayechi Yosef*). Throughout his life, he would consider them as his primary *rebbe*s.

In 5704, as the world closed in on Hungarian Jewry, Rav Mordechai escaped to Bucharest, Romania, where he stayed for the duration of the war. Every year, Rav Mordechai celebrated *Lamed Dalet* of the *Omer*, the day on which he escaped and was saved.

He married Feiga Malka, the daughter of Rabbi Yaakov Yosef Twersky, the *Skverer Rebbe* in 5705. After she passed away without children, in 5706 he married her younger sister Sima Mirel.

Rav Mordechai, his wife, and family traveled to the United States, where he began serving

as Rav of the *Vizhnitzer Chassidim* in America - first in Boro Park, and then in Williamsburg. In 5724 he moved to Monsey.

The *rebbe's* brother was Rav Moshe Hager, the *Yeshuos Moshe zy" a*, the *Vizhnitzer Rebbe* of Bnei Brak, father of the present *rebbe*s of *Vizhnitz Bnei Brak*. Rav Mordechai and his brother Rav Moshe Yehoshua assumed the mantle of leadership over 40 years ago with the passing of their father, the *Imrei Chaim*, with the *Yeshuos Moshe* leading the *kehillah* in Bnei Brak and Rav Mordechai leading the *kehillah* in Monsey, NY.

He passed away on 29 *Adar* 5778. The *rebbe* left behind 14 children, 8 sons and 6 daughters. All his sons assumed positions as *rebbe* in their respective communities worldwide.



**Rav Aryeh Leib Rav of Belz & Horodna (*Nissan 1, 5489 / 1729 - 297th Yahrzeit*)**

Rav Arye Leib was the son-in-law of Rav Zecharia Mendel, *mechaber* of the *Ba'er Heiteiv*.

He served as Rav in Belz from 5473 until 5478, and was later appointed as Rav of Horodna in 5480. His *talmid* Rav Arye Leib Epstein, *mechaber* of *Sefer Hapardes*, testified that he studied Torah all day and night and, although his deeds were secret, he testified that all the days of the week he never undressed himself at night (to put on pajamas and go to sleep in his bed). Rather, his best sleep was through the naps he took while sitting and learning, studying Torah in his chair. He passed away *Rosh Chodesh Nissan* 5489/1729.



**Rav Yeshayahu Mordechai Bassan Lachmei Todah (*Nissan 1, 5499 / 1739 - 287th Yahrzeit*)**

*(Some say the Yahrzeit is on the 2nd of Nissan)*

Rav Yeshaya Mordechai was born in Verona in 5433, the son of Rav Yisrael Chizkiya. He studied under Rav Moshe Zakuth (*Ramaz*) in Mantuba and became the *Rebbe* of the *Ramchal*.

After his father was *niftar* in Padova in 5444, he remained there studying and teaching Torah. He also opened a Yeshiva there.

Eventually, he moved to Mantuba and studied in the *Ramaz's Yeshiva* for three years between 5455 and 5458. During this time, he received *semicha* from the *Rabbonim* in Mantuba. After the *Ramaz* was *niftar*, during *Sukkos* of 5458, he moved to Rav Yehuda Briel's Yeshiva. Eventually, he returned to his birthplace in Verona, where he studied under Rav Mordechai Bassan. Rav Mordechai added his own *semicha* as *posek* and *moreh horo'a*, as well as in *dinei momonos* - monetary matters - to his beloved *talmid* in addition to the *semicha* he had received back in Mantuba.

In 5461 he married Yocheved, the daughter of Rav Binyomin Kohen Vitaly of Reggio, and settled there to live near his father-in-law. In 5462 His son Rav Yisrael Binyomin was born.

Between 5475 and 5482, he returned to teach Torah in Padova. Among his *talmidim* there was the famed Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzatto, the *Ramchal*, *mechaber* of *Mesillas Yeshorim*, as well as Rav Yitzchok Marini and Rav Yeshaya Romanin. In 5483 his father-in-law requested that he come back to Reggio. Due to his age and failing health he needed his help running the *kehilla* and teaching Torah.

When his father-in-law, the *Rabach*, was *niftar* on 17 *Teves* 5490, he was chosen as his successor to the position of *Av Bais Din* in Reggio.

During the strife from Rav Chagiz and the *Rabbonim* of Venice against the *Ramchal*, he stood by his beloved *talmid* and defended him from the accusations as best he could.

He grew ill in 5497 and went to seek medical attention in Verona. After he returned to Reggio he was *niftar* on 2 *Nissan* 5499, just a short time after his return.

Rav Yeshaya Mordechai is the *mechaber* of *Toras Shlomim*, *Lachmei Toda*, *Eglei Dol*, *Imrei Yosher* and *Kur Zohov*.

He was *niftar* in the middle of writing the final *teshuva* in *Shu"t Lachmei Toda*, regarding a *Sefer Torah* full of strangely shaped letters. The last word he wrote was *kosher* when he

collapsed.

His son and successor, Rav Yisrael Binyomin, who published his father's *sefer*, completed the *teshuva, paskening* that the *Sefer Torah* was kosher to use because such letters have a genuine tradition.



**Rav Shmuel Kellin Machazit Hashekel (Nissan 1, 5566 / 1806 - 220th Yahrzeit)**

Rabbi Shmuel HaLevi Kellin (1724 - 1806) was the son of Rav Nosson Notah HaLevi and a descendant of Rav Nosson Notah Spira, author of *Megaleh Amukos*. He was a renowned and holy Talmudist with followers numbering in the thousands. He authored *Machatzis Hashekel* on *Magen Avraham, Orach Chaim*; a *sefer* which has opened the gates to understanding the *Magen Avraham*.



**Rav Elimelech Shapira Imrei Elimelech (Nissan 1, 5652 / 1892 - 134th Yahrzeit)**

Holy Rabbi Elimelech Shapira of Grodzisk (1824-1892), son of Rabbi Chaim Meir Yechiel the "Saraf [angel] of Moglintza" and grandson of Maggid of Koznitz and Rabbi Elimelech of Lizensk. Among greatest righteous Torah giants in Poland, whose impact was great throughout the country. His rabbi, Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin, directed him to serve as leader and receive *Kvitlach*. [Eventually, he sent a lengthy letter to author of *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz regarding great holiness of Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin and his righteous sons].

In his old age when he was already grandfather to many grandsons (many of which served in the leadership, such as Rabbi Yisrael of Grodzisk and Rabbi Yisrael Perlow, the "Yenuka" [baby] of Karlin), he remarried to daughter of Rebbe of Chantshin, who bore him two sons in his old age; Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman of Piaseczno (author of *Chovas HaTalmidim*) and Rabbi Yishayahu Shapira (The *Admor HaChalutz*). After his demise, his wife Rabbanit Chana Bracha, served in the leadership; she received *Kvitlach* and even wore a four-cornered garment (Encyclopedia of Chassidism, p. 627). Was blessed with longevity and passed away in 1939. Many of the Polish Rebbes were among his disciples; most famous of them is Rabbi Yechiel Meir HaLevi, rebbe of Austrovtza. Authored *Imrei Elimelech* and *Divrei Elimelech*.

<https://www.kedem-auctions.com/en/content/mikdash-melech-%E2%80%93-signatures-and-stamps-rebbe-rabbi-elimelech-shapira-grodzisk-and-sons>



**Rav Moshe Yosef Hoffman Rav & Av Beis Din of Pupa, Mei Be'er (Nissan 1, 5688 / 1928 - 98th Yahrzeit)**



R. Moshe Yosef Hoffman, dayan of Pupa (1843-1928), was a leading Torah scholar of Hungary and Yerushalayim. Son of Michael Hoffman, disciple of the *Chasam Sofer*. He was appointed *dayan* and *posek* of Pupa in 1882. In 1909, he immigrated to Yerushalayim, where he established his Beis Medrash and earned the reputation of one of the foremost rabbis in the city. He authored *Mei Be'er* and *Mayim Chaim*.

<https://www.kedem-auctions.com/en/content/sefer-yetzirah-%E2%80%93-warsaw-1884-%E2%80%93-signature-rabbi-moshe-yosef-hoffman-dayan-pupa>



**Rav Elya Svei (Nissan 1, 5769 / 2009 - 17th Yahrzeit)**



Rav Elya Svei was the Rosh Yeshiva of the Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia together with Rav Shmuel Kamenetsky, and was world renowned known for his incisive, brilliant and clear shiurim, and his ability to offer sage advice to thousands of Jews worldwide. He was a primary *talmid* of Rav Aharon Kotler. He was married to the daughter of Rav Avraham Kalmanowitz the founder of the American branch of the Mir Yeshivah. Until his illness in the period before his death, he was regarded as one of the leaders of Charedi Jewry, and was a member of the *Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah* and chairman of the Rabbinic Administrative Board of Torah Umesorah. A sefer, *Ruach Eliyahu* was published based on recordings, culled from cassettes of *shmuessim* that he delivered in Yeshiva as well as those that he delivered in other various venues. Some recordings of his *shmuessim* and shiurim can be heard or downloaded [here](https://torahdownloads.com/s-195-rabbi-elya-svei.html) <https://torahdownloads.com/s-195-rabbi-elya-svei.html>.



**Rav Binyomin (Nissan 2, 5340 / 1580 - 446th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Binyomin was the son of Rav Moshe.

It is known that he authored the *seforim Tavnis HaBayis* and *Ohel Shel Simcha*. However, they have been lost over time.

On his *matzeiva* was inscribed: "He was the *Sar HaTorah*, a *Gaon Yaakov*, very much praised as he plunged down into the depths of *Halocha*, and a master and *boki* in the rooms of Torah. Even when he grew old and lost his vision, he would study with sharp *pilpul* in *Talmud* in the *Yeshiva*, and all the *Gedolim* relied on his *teshuvos*. When they

questioned him, it was like asking of the word of G-d.”



**Rav Yeshayahu Mordechai Bassan Lachmei Todah (Nissan 2, 5499 / 1739 - 287th Yahrzeit)**

*(Some say the Yahrzeit is on the 1st of Nissan)*

Rav Yeshaya Mordechai was born in Verona in 5433, the son of Rav Yisrael Chizkiya. He studied under Rav Moshe Zakuth (*Ramaz*) in Mantuba and became the *Rebbe* of the *Ramchal*.

After his father was *niftar* in Padova in 5444, he remained there studying and teaching Torah. He also opened a Yeshiva there.

Eventually, he moved to Mantuba and studied in the *Ramaz's Yeshiva* for three years between 5455 and 5458. During this time, he received *semicha* from the *Rabbonim* in Mantuba. After the *Ramaz* was *niftar*, during *Sukkos* of 5458, he moved to Rav Yehuda Briel's Yeshiva. Eventually, he returned to his birthplace in Verona, where he studied under Rav Mordechai Bassan. Rav Mordechai added his own *semicha* as *posek* and *moreh horo'a*, as well as in *dinei momonos* - monetary matters - to his beloved *talmid* in addition to the *semicha* he had received back in Mantuba.

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Rav Yeshaya Mordechai is the *mechaber* of *Toras Shlomim*, *Lachmei Toda*, *Eglei Dol*, *Imrei Yosher* and *Kur Zohov*.

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His son and successor, Rav Yisrael Binyomin, who published his father's *sefer*, completed the *teshuva*, *paskening* that the *Sefer Torah* was kosher to use because such letters have a genuine tradition.



**Rav Sholom DovBer Schneerson Rebbe Rashab, Lubavitcher Rebbe (Nissan 2, 5680 / 1920 - 106th Yahrzeit)**



Rabbi Sholom-Dovber Schneerson [2 *Nissan* 5680], known as the *Rebbe Reshab*, was the fifth Rebbe of the Lubavitcher dynasty. He is the author of hundreds of major tracts in the exposition of Chassidic thought. In 1915, after 102 years of four Chabad rebbes living in Lubavitch, he transferred the center of the movement to Rostov-on-the-Don.



**Rav Yaakov Yosef Twersky (Nissan 2, 5728 / 1968 - 58th Yahrzeit)**

Rebbe Yaakov Yosef Twersky of Skver (1899-1968) was a leading Rebbe in the United States. Born in Skvyra, he served as Rebbe in Kalarash (Călărași, Romania). After the Holocaust, he reached New York, where he established his community in a distinctive neighborhood - New-Square, community reputed until this day for its conservative character, preserving authentic Chassidic Judaism like it was in the European Shtetls before the Holocaust.

<https://www.kedem-auctions.com/en/content/tehillim-printed-slavita-%E2%80%93-copy-rebbe-yaakov-yosef-skver>

# Gedolim Be'Masayhem



## Stories & Anecdotes

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### **Rav Avrohom Gershon Ashkenazi Ohr Ki Tov (Adar 25)**

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#### **MEETING THE OHR HACHAIM**

There are various traditions regarding how and when the *Ba'al Shem Tov's* brother-in-law met Rav Chaim ben Attar, *mechaber* of the *Ohr HaChaim*, in Eretz Yisrael:

After the printing of the *chumashim Ohr HaChaim* in Venice in the year *tov-kuf-bais*, they reached the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, who greatly rejoiced in them. He found in them an author

whose heart and soul were filled with emotion and excitement for *Avodas Hashem*. He sent his brother-in-law, Rav Gershon of Kitov, to Yerushalayim to visit Rav Chaim ben Attar's *Yeshiva*. He told Rav Gershon that Rav Chaim ben Attar had two *Yeshivos*, one where they studied *nigle* (the revealed Torah) and one where they studied the hidden secrets of *Toras HaKabbola*. The *Ba'al Shem* warned Rav Gershon to try to attend the *Yeshiva* for *nistar* and not to reveal to the *Ohr HaChaim* who he was, hiding his identity until the *Ohr HaChaim* would feel it and understand for himself.

When Rav Gershon arrived he requested permission to hear a *derosha* from the *Ohr haChaim*. Permission was granted and he studied in *Yeshivas HaNigle* for about a week. Afterward, he requested admission to the other *Yeshiva* for *Kabbola*.

"Who revealed to you that I have a *Yeshiva* for *nistar*?"

He answered that his brother-in-law, the *Ba'al Shem*, had told him. The *Ohr HaChaim* did not know him, but he scrutinized Rav Gershon from head to toe and declared him fit and ready to study *Kabbola*. After studying there for three days, the *Ohr HaChaim* gave word to prevent him from coming back and Rav Gershon found his way blocked from entry. When Rav Gershon approached the Rav's house to find out why he had been banned, the *Ohr HaChaim* saw him and said, "I am angry at you. Why didn't you say your brother-in-law was the *Ba'al Shem Tov*? You just said, 'Rav Yisrael Ba'al Shem!' I don't know any Rav Yisrael Ba'al Shem, but I know who the *Ba'al Shem Tov* is! I know him from seeing him in the supernal worlds!" and he no longer allowed Rav Gershon access to the *Yeshiva*, explaining that he needed no other Rebbe or Rav if he already had the *Ba'al Shem Tov*. (*Doresh Tov Tshortkov, Acharon Shel Pesach* p. 194)

### **KIRUV RECHOKIM**

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

Rav Gershon of Kitov met the *Ohr HaChaim* in *Eretz Yisrael* and told him about his brother-in-law the *Ba'al Shem Tov*. The *Ohr HaChaim* replied that he had heard of him and that his name was Yisrael. Rav Gershon Kitover also asked the *Ohr HaChaim* why he kept a certain *talmid* in his *Yeshiva* whom Rav Gershon had seen behaving improperly, unbecoming for a *Yeshiva* student. "This is our way," answered the *Ohr HaChaim*. "We

draw closer those who are distant - we are *mekarev rechokim*.” (Zichron Tov p. 16 #8)

When Rav Gershon of Kitov traveled to Eretz Yisrael, the *Ba'al Shem Tov* told him to meet with the *Ohr HaChaim*. “If he doesn't know of his greatness, send him regards from me and tell him I see him in *Moshiach Heichal* - the supernal palace, where *Moshiach* sits on a throne and studies the *Ohr HaChaim*.”

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

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

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

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### **Rebbetzin Sara Schenirer (Adar 26)**

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#### **REBBETZIN SARA SCHENIRER: THE MOTHER OF GENERATIONS**

A seamstress in Cracow, she became keenly aware of the spiritual poverty of the growing generations of girls, so she created a school, and clothed the naked souls of generations to come, by Joseph Friedenson (with additions by Chaim Shapiro).

(This article originally appeared in the Jewish Observer and is also available in book form in the ArtScroll/Mesorah Publications Judaiscope Series. It is reprinted here with permission.

She did not lecture as insistently regarding devotion to her fellow's needs, but her personal conduct was more eloquent than any lecture. Rav Binyomin Zusman tells:

It was late one evening. Sora Schenirer came into my house, apologizing a thousand times. It was urgent, she said. She knows a young, married man who needs help badly, and here it was - two weeks before *Pesach!* Giving him charity openly would insult him terribly. She therefore asked me, since I *daven* next to him in *shul*, to slip fifty zlotys into his coat pocket. Fifty zlotys was a lot of money, but I had to fulfill her wish. I did exactly as she said, and I then watched the young man put on his coat after *davening*, place his hands into his pocket - and I watched his eyes light up to the heavens.

No wonder she was called "the female version of the *Chofetz Chaim*".

When she took ill and was admitted to the hospital for an operation, she wrote: For the first time in twenty-three years I did not *daven be'tzibbur*, and did not spend Shabbos with my girls.

She was only fifty-two when she passed away on the 26th of *Adar*, 5695 (1935), but she enjoyed the great satisfaction of seeing the widespread success of her revolution *Leshem Shomayim* (for the sake of Heaven). She was not blessed with children of her own. And yet she was a mother. In fact, one could rightly say that no mother in our generation had as many children as she did.

When she departed this life in 1935, hundreds of Jewish girls walked behind her aron, toward the Cracow cemetery, and wept with heartrending cries, as one does for one's own departed mother. And when news of her *petira* became known throughout the cities and towns of Jewish Poland, thousands of Jewish girls tore *kria* and sat *shiva* as if for a mother. The very same year, hundreds of young Jewish mothers named their new-born daughters Sora, after a woman, who - two decades earlier - was still an unknown Jewish seamstress, but who had since become Rebbetzin Sora Schenirer, the legendary mother of a new Torah-true generation of Jewish women in pre-war Eastern Europe.

By: Zygmunt Put, Ami Magazine

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## Rav Mordechai Rosenblatt Hadrass Mordechai (Adar 28)

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### SMALL STEPS

Rav Mordechai taught us that the *Novi* says, “Return to Me [says Hashem], and I will return to you” (*Malachi* 3:7). There was once a prince who was captured by a band of cutthroat thieves, and they took him so far away from his father, the king, that had he tried to walk home, it would take him ages to arrive. The king sent messengers to tell his son, the prince, that he was awaiting his return.

“If you do not begin your journey,” he wrote, “then the king cannot draw closer to you either.”

The prince had to take the first step and set out on the journey, even though his steps might have seemed small and insignificant, and it might have seemed that he was not getting anywhere. But if he started out, then the king would come toward him, taking long, powerful strides, and then surely they would be reunited very soon.

This is what the *pasuk* means: “Return to Me,” even if it means taking small steps, “and I will return to you” — I will return with abundant mercy. (*Toras Avos*)

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## Rav Shlomo Rabinowitz Tiferes Shlomo (Adar 29)

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### L’CHAIM HASHEM, GOOD NIGHT

Once Rav Yosef of Neustadt came to visit the *Tiferes Shlomo* in Radomsk. As the two *tzaddikim* sat side by side enjoying each other’s company, Rav Yosef asked if the *Tiferes Shlomo* could share an anecdote from his *rebbe*, Rav Fishel of Strikov since the *Tiferes Shlomo* was one of his disciples. The *Tiferes Shlomo* related how strong was Rav Fishel’s *emuna* (faith) in *hashgacha pratis* (Divine Providence). “He always believed that anything and everything that happened was directly related to him and specifically for his sake.

For example, when the weather turned cold, the frost would make immersion in the *mikvah* a formidable ordeal. He would say: “I believe with full faith - *b’emuna sheleima* that this a test from Hashem whether I will immerse despite the cold and discomfort; but

know, you Evil one, *yetzer hara* that you will not dissuade me nor block me from serving Hashem!”

Another story the *Tiferes Shlomo* shared was that before retiring to bed each night, Rav Fishel would take a *glezzeleh bronfen* (a glass of brandy or liquor) in hand and wish Hashem, “*L’Chaim! L’Chaim Ribono Shel Olam sheAta MeKor HaChaim veChai HaChaim - a gitte Nacht! L’Chaim, L’Chaim* Master of the World; You are the source of all life; I wish you a good night!”

He wished Hashem *L’Chaim* and a good night in Yiddish.

Rav Fishel even once explained the reason behind this unusual *minhag* (custom) of his:

“You must know that there are sick Jews everywhere in the world, and oftentimes it is at night that suffering intensifies. I attempt to bring some relief to them with my *L’Chaim* to Hashem based on the principle that He suffers in our suffering. I wish Hashem a good night, if He wants a peaceful night free of pain and distress, He must heal all the Jews’ suffering first! And so, I drink to Hashem and wish Him a good night - *Gitte Nacht!*” (*Siach Sarfei Kodesh*)

#### **YOUTHFUL PAST TRANSFORMED INTO MERIT THROUGH THE OHR HACHAIM**

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

Rav Chaim Dovid answered the *Tiferes Shlomo*, “I do not wish them to fall away and be forgotten. Rather, I wish to do *teshuva* out of love! Then all my intentional transgressions will be transformed into merits! And in the merit of studying the *sefer Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* on a weekly basis and memorizing it, surely they will all become *zechuyos* (merits)!” (*Kodesh Hillulim* p. 75)

#### **ELIYOHU HANOVI'S GIFT**

The *Tiferes Shlomo* was a *talmid* of Rav Yeshaya of Peshedburz (Przedbórz), a *talmid* of

the *Chozeh*. Once, the *Tiferes Shlomo* was there for *Shabbos* and Rav Yeshaya was not feeling well; as a result, all the *tefillos* and *seudos* were conducted in the *Rebbe's* room, with a small gathering of a *minyán* of students and *talmidim*. The *Tiferes Shlomo* was among them, as was also a Rav who was envious of the honor and affection that Rav Yeshaya bestowed upon the *Tiferes Shlomo*. At the *tisch*, knowing that the *Tiferes Shlomo* would be honored to sing *zemiros*, he began to sing through all the *zemiros* so that the *Tiferes Shlomo* would not have any chance to sing at all. On *Motzo'ei Shabbos*, Rav Yeshaya honored the *Tiferes Shlomo* with singing after *Havdola*, and he sang *HaMavdil* with sweet *dveikus*. Rav Yeshaya was so pleased that he reached his holy hand into the inner pocket of his *Shabbos bekesheh* and pulled out a golden *rendel*. He handed it to the *Tiferes Shlomo*, saying, "Now, how does a golden coin come into the pocket of my *Shabbos kaftan*? Since I finished studying *Hilchos Shabbos* in my youth I have never yet transgressed its laws, even *beshogeg* (by accident), so we must conclude that *Eliyohu HaNovi* placed this coin in there just for you!"

(*Otzar Yisrael* #3)

#### **THE KEY TO PARNOSSA**

The *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz used to say that the key to *parnossa* lies in the hands of the *Tiferes Shlomo*.

(*Otzar Yisrael* #13)

#### **BLESSINGS DISGUISED WITHIN HOLY CURSES**

The *Tiferes Shlomo* was also a *talmid* of Rav Meir of Apta, the *mechaber* of *Ohr LaShomayim*. He said that his custom to curse others and thereby bring about a *yeshua* (a salvation) is a tradition he learned and received from the *Ohr LaShomayim*, who received it as a tradition going back all the way to Avrohom Avinu. As it says regarding Avrohom - *umevorchecha avarech umekalelcha a'or* - usually translated as: "I shall bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you". However, the *pasuk* does not say *umekalelcha akalel* - it says *a'or* - *ohr* means "light". Thus we can translate these words as: "those whom you curse I shall enlighten" - *der leichten* we can use [disguised blessings as] curses to shine a bright light on *yiddishe neshomos* and do them favors.

It is well known how the *Tiferes Shlomo* used his powers to curse and strike, thereby

saving others. Once, when he returned from the *mikve* on *Erev Shabbos*, he grew angry and cursed and yelled at the simple *shamoshim* who cleaned the *mikve*, "There was a mess and there were not enough towels!" They cowered in fright and tried to run away.

The next week they made sure there were plenty of towels and everything was in order. "Why is everything in order? Why are there enough towels?" raged the *Tzaddik*. "Why, oh why did you take away any reason for me to be angry - and why didn't you leave me cause to curse and rage?!!!"

Once, he yelled and screamed at the *Chassidim*, "Why do you come here? Go! Go home, even now, even on *Shabbos*! That's right! I give you permission to leave! Right now! Why do you sin by coming and wasting my time?!" One of the *Chassidim* packed his bags and, taking his suitcase in hand, he was ready to leave then and there. "Fool! You don't understand what I am doing!" said the *Tiferes Shlomo*.

(*Otzar Yisrael* #15-17)

#### **WINNING THE LOTTERY**

Once, the *Tiferes Shlomo* chased the *Chassidim* with a towel and began hitting them; one of the *Chassidim* couldn't run away fast enough and he received a whipping from the towel that the *Rebbe* was wielding.

The *Chassid* was saddened and distraught by the blow he had received, and he thought to himself, "Woe is me! What will be with me this year, now that the *Rebbe* hit me? When he got home, he was so distressed that he fell ill in bed. The *Chassidim* approached the *Rebbe* and told the *Tiferes Shlomo* how the *Chassid* was in bed, suffering because of the *Rebbe's* blow. "Call that *batlan*, the lazy good-for-nothing, and bring him here to me so I can give him forty lashes - then the fool will win the lottery!" said the *Tzaddik*. And so it was - the *Chassid* won the lottery of forty thousand silver rubles!

(*Otzar Yisrael* #18)

#### **TIFERES SHLOMO ON THE SEDER**

The symbolism of the *kittel*, as perceived by the *Tiferes Shlomo*, Rav Shlomo of Radomsk, is most striking and powerful. Rav Shlomo, as he donned his *kittel* before the *Seder* would

pause and begin to cry, “*Heilige Bashefer* (Holy Creator), may all the *neshomos* that join us here tonight find the proper *tikkun* (rectification) for their needs.” (Touched by the Seder, by Rav Yechezkel Spero, Mesorah Publications) The symbolism of the *kittel*, as perceived by the *Tiferes Shlomo*, Rav Shlomo of Radomsk, is most striking and powerful. Rav Shlomo, as he donned his *kittel* before the *Seder* would pause and begin to cry, “*Heilige Bashefer* (Holy Creator), may all the *neshomos* that join us here tonight find the proper *tikkun* (rectification) for their needs.” (Touched by the Seder, by Rav Yechezkel Spero, Mesorah Publications)

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## Rav Avraham Shaag Zwebner Ohel Avrohom (Adar 29)

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### HIS BERACHAH FULFILLED

An elderly woman from the city of Kleinvardein arrived in Yerushalayim asking where the *kever* of Rav Shaag was? When asked why she had come all this way just to *daven* at his *kever*, she told the following story:

“My mother was our holy Rav’s maid almost one hundred years ago, and at that time the Rav Shaag was entrusted with a large sum of money to safeguard and look after. Since he was so deeply engrossed in studying Torah, he accidentally left this money in the *sefer* he was learning from at the time. Later on, when he finished studying he closed the *sefer* and replaced it back on the shelf.

After a some time, the owner of the money came asking for it, but the Rav couldn’t find it. The Rav began to suspect that perhaps his maid had taken it, so he repaid the owner from his own pocket.

When the *Yom Tov* of *Pesach* approached, the Rav was cleaning the pages of his *seforim* looking for crumbs of *chametz*, and he found the money in the *sefer* that he had been studying.

Upon discovering his error, Rav Shaag realized that he had suspected his innocent maid. He called her and explained the whole story, asking her to forgive him, as tears streamed down his face. He added that he was willing to grant whatever she asked for.

My mother, on her part, told him that she was *moichel* him completely, and that she would only ask for one thing - his *berachah*. She had been married already fifteen years, but didn't have any children. Our *rebbe bentshed* her and saying, 'This year you shall have a child.' "

The elderly woman continued: "I am that child born of his *berachah*. All her life my mother yearned to come to the Holy Land and *daven* by the *kever* of that *tzaddik*. Now, Hashem, has given me the opportunity to come and fulfill my mother's wish." (*Ha'Ish Al Ha'Choma*)

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### **Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky Iyunim B'Mikrah (Adar 29)**

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#### **REB YAAKOV KAMENETSKY IN HONOR OF HIS YAHRTZEIT, 29 ADAR**

by D. Rachelson

In Koloshova, the family of R' Binyomin Kamenetsky was not particularly distinguished. A Torah-observant home where the father worked and earned a respectable livelihood, things would have remained just the same had Heaven not ordained otherwise. In an interesting twist of fate, the father of Reb Binyomin, a timber-dealer and owner of a large flour mill, lost all his business in one night due to the decree of the Russian Tzar.

Thus, after the birth of their son Yaakov on 21 *Adar*, Reb Binyomin moved to a tiny hamlet by the name of Dolhinov. Reb Yaakov later pointed out that had it not been for this move, he would probably have grown up an ordinary businessman and would never have absorbed the unquenchable love of Torah that was prevalent in this small village.

His father would take him on Friday night at two in the morning to the *beis medrash* where the place hummed with learning as though it was midday. The hall was full of people studying *Torah*, each one according to his level: one learned a *shiur* on *Alshich*, another on *gemora*, and yet another a *shiur iyun*.

In the cheder of this village the hours were long, so long that Reb Yaakov's mother would pack together with his lunch an oil lamp to be used when darkness fell and the boys continued learning.

At the age of eleven, he left home to learn in the *yeshiva* of Minsk. After he passed the entry exam of the *rosh yeshiva*, HaRav Shlomo Glovenchitz, the latter still doubted whether he should accept him, due to his youth. "You are not even *bar mitzvah* yet."

With childish innocence, the young Yaakov replied, "Well, I came here to learn, not to be the tenth man of a *minyan*."

After a time, the Kamenetsky household moved to Minsk where they hosted the friends of Reb Yaakov, amongst others the future Rav Grozovsky, *zt"l*, and the young Aaron Kotler, *zt"l*.

Shortly after *Pesach* in 5665 (1905), Reb Yaakov and Reb Aaron traveled to Slobodke to learn under the supervision of the *Alter of Slobodke zt"l*. Reb Yaakov also learned in the *Yeshivos* of Slutzk, Krinik and Moltsh.

During World War I he took refuge in Lomza in the *yeshiva* of Reb Yechiel Michel Gordon *zt"l*. On 22 *Sivan*, 5679 (1919), he married the Rebbetzin Ita Ettel, daughter of the *Mashgiach* Reb Ber Hirsch Heller, *zt"l*, known in Slobodke as "*Der Yunger Mashgiach*."

From 5681 to 5686, he learned in a *kollel* in Slobodke that was known for its distinguished members and subsequently he took on the Rabbinate in various places.

On 11th *Av* 5697 (1937) he left for America. His plan was to collect money for the Slobodke *Kollel* and to cover the debts he incurred from his years as *rov* in Zitivian, but in fact his future lay in being the "*manhig hador*" and *Hashgocho* forced him to stay in America, where he was appointed *rov* in Toronto. In 5705 (1945), he accepted the request of Reb Shraga Feivel Mendelovitz, *zt"l*, that he take up the position of *rosh yeshiva* in *Mesivta Torah Vodaas*. From this standpoint he disseminated Torah for the rest of his life, standing as a sentry on duty for the Torah's ideals.

Reb Yaakov merited to live a long life, his mind lucid and clear till the very end. His *chidushim* were printed in his *seforim Emes LeYaakov*, on *Torah* and on *Shas*.

On 29th *Adar* 5746 (1986), his pure soul left this world. As he requested, he was buried in Brooklyn, since he pointed out that most of his family live in America and would not

always be able to travel to his *kever* in Eretz Yisroel. From this, his last request we learn yet another chapter of his feelings for others.

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The words of Chazal in *Pirkei Ovos* "*Ohev es habrios umekarvon laTorah*" were the guides and practice of Reb Yaakov throughout his life. Not differentiating between young and old, elderly and even little children, or those who didn't live according to the Torah way of life, Reb Yaakov loved them all.

"Loving your fellow Jew is a mitzvah in the Torah, and in addition it's a *segulah* that if the love is given according to the Torah it will bring its recipients closer to Torah and to Hashem." So said Reb Yaakov and so did he.

Reb Yaakov was once in the waiting room of a doctor's surgery. Waiting together with him was a young Jewish boy from a totally nonobservant home. Reb Yaakov took a ball and began playing with the child. The *talmid* accompanying Reb Yaakov was astonished, and pointed out to Reb Yaakov his wonder at the *Rov's* behavior. "This child will think that a religious rabbi sits and plays ball instead of learning -- or at least he should talk to the boy, convince him to become a *baal teshuvah*."

Reb Yaakov explained, "I saw that with this boy, it is impossible to talk about *Yiddishkeit* or *mitzvos*. He comes from a family so far removed from anything Jewish. I just wanted that his picture of a *frum* Jew should remain one of a pleasant person, so I played ball with him. Who knows, perhaps this impression will one day have an effect on him and he will come closer to Torah and mitzvos."

"Once, after my regular study session in my father's home," recounted his son Reb Avrohom, "my father told me that a man and his daughter would soon be coming and requested that I remain in the room when he received the guests. Naturally, I fulfilled his request, but I was quite surprised, for usually when people came to my father I would leave the room and allow them to discuss matters in privacy. When the two of them entered, Reb Yaakov chatted with them, enquiring as to their welfare, occupation, where the father works, which school the daughter goes to, what she learns and more general questions. During the conversation, my father patted me affectionately on the shoulder,

and introduced me. 'This is my little baby Avrohom,' and continued the conversation. A few minutes later the visit was over and the two of them left the house."

Reb Avrohom continued his story, "I was incredulous, wondering what this was all about. I was at the time nearing the end of my 40s and never had I heard my father referring to me as 'my little baby.' My father turned to me and explained, 'Listen, my son, to what took place here. This father and his daughter, who is the youngest of the family, had a wonderful relationship. He brought her up and educated her in the Torah way, and she accepted and absorbed everything he taught. All was fine, until one day, the father introduced her to a friend of his, saying, 'And this is my little baby.' Feeling humiliated by the expression, the daughter was deeply hurt and refused to talk to her father. The latter was broken, since he had not meant to degrade her and his expression was just one of affection for his youngest daughter. She, however, would not be reconciled, and slowly began to cut off all contact with her father.'

"Near despair, the father turned to Reb Yaakov knowing that he was the one to turn to. Indeed, Reb Yaakov felt the father's pain, fearing that the girl may perhaps even rebel against her father and her Torah upbringing, *chas vesholom*, and advised him to bring his daughter to his house on Wednesday. 'For that is when I have a *shiur* with my youngest son, Avrohom. Tell your daughter you have an appointment with me and, if she likes, she may join you.' The daughter was delighted at the privilege of being allowed to go to Reb Yaakov and she arrived together with her father. Some time later, the father contacted Reb Yaakov, thanking him profusely for his wise help and told him that as they left the Rabbi's house, the girl turned to her father. 'I see Daddy, that even Reb Yaakov called his son his baby even in front of strangers although he is already a grandfather. Apparently, it's an expression of love of a father to his child,' she enthused. Peace had returned to the household of the man."

Engraved on the heart of all his young students are the words spoken by Reb Yaakov at the end of the summer holidays. During the long vacation, Reb Yaakov would travel to Camp Ohr Shraga and learn with the young bochorim as chavrusos. During these sessions of learning in partnership he would not allow any disturbance although his "*chavrusoh*" was many years younger, so that the young boy would not be hurt.

When the summer days were over, Reb Yaakov would turn to his "*chavrusos*" and say,

"*Yom Kippur* is soon upon us and it's time to make a reckoning. When two people learn together it is very possible that one can unintentionally not treat the other with due respect. I therefore beg your *mechiloh* in case I slighted you at all in any way."

One of his *talmidim* retells that he was present when Reb Yaakov was writing a letter in the name of the *gedolim* of America to Reb Yechezkel Abramsky concerning the problem of autopsies. For five long minutes, Reb Yaakov sat, pondering how to acknowledge Reb Yechezkel's Rebbetzin in the letter, who had been the widow of R' Yechiel Michel Gordon, since this was not a private letter, but represented many *gedolim* and *roshei yeshivos*. After considerable thought he was pleased to find the right phrase "and we send our *brochah* to all who are present in the shadow of *Rabbeinu* and his Torah," implying the *talmidim* as well as the Rebbetzin.

Reb Yaakov was relieved by this flash of inspiration as he turned to his *talmid*, "when the letter arrives, R' Yechezkel will probably call his Rebbetzin and show her that she is still remembered in America, thus we will have the *mitzvoh* of gladdening the heart of an *almonoh*."

<http://www.chareidi.org/archives5761/vayakhel/features2.htm>

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## **Rav Sholom DovBer Schneerson Rebbe Rashab, Lubavitcher Rebbe (Nissan 2)**

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### **THREE CUSTOMS**

The *Rebbe Rashab* of Lubavitch taught and commanded his son, the *Rebbe Rayatz*, to fulfill three practices, one of which was that he should study *Chumash* with *Rashi* and the commentary of the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh*. (*Shivchei Ohr HaChaim*)

### **NOT AN IMPOSTER**

When the *Rebbe Rashab* began his tenure as *Rebbe*, his brother, the *Raza*, was asked if he thought that his brother the *Rashab* was worthy of being a *Rebbe*. The *Raza* answered, "All things have a middle ground between their two extremes. For example, between a pauper and wealthy man is the middle class. Between the two extremes of a cruel and kind man there is also a middle path. But between a normal person and a *Rebbe* there is no "in-between"! Either he is a *Rebbe* or an imposter - and my brother is no imposter!"

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## Rav Yaakov Yosef Twersky (Nissan 2)

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### HIS APPRECIATION OF THE OHR HACHAIM

From when he was just six years old Rav Yaakov Yosef of Skver studied the entire commentary of the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* on the weekly *Parsha*, all by himself. He would constantly speak about how important the study of the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* is and once remarked: “*Ich veis nisht viazoy ich valt gekent a’durech di letzteh fiftzig yohr ohn Ohr HaChaim* – I don’t know how I would have survived the last fifty years of my life without the *Ohr HaChaim!*” (*Toldos Yaakov Yosef Skver* p. 22)

Rav Yaakov Yosef of Skver used to say, “The first *Chassidische sefer* is the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh.*” (*Be’or HaChaim* p. 241)

Rav Yaakov Yosef of Skver used to say that every word in the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* is an entire body of *Yiddishkeit* and that there is almost no *Chassidus* of which the *Ohr HaChaim* is not the bread and butter of its basis to the extent that one can fully and truly say that the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* is the one *sefer* that has been most widely accepted by the most Chassidim (*Nachlas Tzvi Kovetz* 7 p. 52)

### WITHOUT THE OHR HACHAIM HOW CAN YOU BE A JEW?

Rav Yaakov Yosef of Skver used to say that every word of the *Ohr HaChaim* is like a whole Torah in and of itself. He even said, “One cannot be a full-fledged Jew without studying this holy *sefer!*”

If ever a *bochur* suffered a downturn in his *Yiras Shomayim*, the *Rebbe* ordered him to study the *Ohr HaChaim* even on non-*mussar* topics, because he said that studying his holy words was a *segula* to work on the soul.

### SIMCHAS TORAH IN SKVER

Rav Neta Freund once told how every year on *Simchas Torah*, Rav Yaakov Yosef of Skver would complete the *Ohr HaChaim* and then begin studying it anew from *Bereishis*. He then danced with the *sefer Ohr HaChaim* in hand like we dance with a *Sefer Torah*.

Whoever witnessed this event can begin to understand the profound connection that Skverer Chassidus has with the *Ohr HaChaim*.

(Sources: *Hillula Kadisha* p. 317-318)

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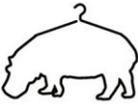
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