

ME'OROS HA'TZADDIKIM

LIGHTS OF OUR RIGHTEOUS TZADDIKIM



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

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)

RE'EH

❧ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ❧

DOUBLE CHESSED IN A BLESSING AND A CURSE

"See, I am giving you today a blessing and a curse. The blessing: that you will listen to the commandments of Hashem your G-d, which I am commanding you today. And the curse: if you do not listen to the commandments of Hashem, your G-d..." (Devorim 11:26-28).

The holy Chasam Sofer asks the following question in *Toras Moshe*: Why, regarding the *beracha* (blessing), does the *pasuk* say *asher tishmeu* ("that you will listen"), yet regarding the *k'lola* (curse) the *pasuk* uses the words *im tishmeu* ("if you will listen")? Why doesn't the *pasuk* use the conditional "if" or *im* in Hebrew for both blessing and curse?

He answers that blessings are given to us to aid us in serving Hashem, by removing any obstacles we find in our way and clearing the path from anything hindering us from the Divine Service. Therefore, even *berachos* we receive in this world do not count as debits from our upcoming Heavenly rewards in the next world. The curses in this world, however, which may manifest as pain and suffering, actually do count as merits; they credit us for any pain and suffering or punishments for which we should have been liable in the next world.

This system is totally *lifnim mishuras hadin* (beyond the letter of the law). Really the opposite should be true: any blessing we get here in this world should be canceled out by any curses such as pain and suffering that we deserve; or vice versa – both should cancel each other out – but only in the next world. That curses or suffering here in this world should cancel out curses in the next world and *berachos* here should not debit our "account" and be considered a "withdrawal" from our future rewards – this is a great *chessed* Hashem is doing

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for us!

This then is the *pasuk's* true meaning: "See, I am giving you today a blessing and a curse." There is a great *chessed* found in both the blessing and in the curse as well, because "the *beracha* that you should hear," the blessings here in this world, come to allow you to hear and listen and serve *Hashem* without any interruptions or barriers – not as payment for the *mitzvos* you have done. You will not lose out on your future reward at all for blessings received here. However, the curse of "if you do not listen," means that you will be punished for past misdeeds, which is also a *chessed*, since it will credit you for anything you would have been liable for in the World to Come.



הילולא

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hebrew Tefilla for Lighting a Yahrzeit or Hilula Candle

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

הריני מדליק נר זה למנוחת ולעילוי נשמת אבי / אמי מורתי / הצדיק _____
בן/בת _____, יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלקינו ואלקי אבותינו, שתקבל ברחמים
וברצון כל מעשה הטוב שאני עושה, בין במחשבה, בין בדיבור, בין במעשה ויהיה הכל
לזכות ולמנוחת ולעילוי לנשמות עמך ישראל, ובפרט לנפש רוח ונשמה של אבי / אמי /
צדיק _____. יהי רצון שתהינה נפשותיהם צרורות בצרור החיים.

Translation:

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

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

4) Study some of his teaching or writings.

See more at: www.yeshshem.com/hilulah.htm



❁ GEDOLIM BE'MISASAM YOSER ❁



Yahrzeits Beginning Motzai Shabbos Reeh

http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim_yahrtzeit/Av/Elul

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

❧ 25th of Menachem Av ~ Begins Friday Night (Aug 14th)

- * **Rav Moshe Hager** of Antiniya, (5754/1994);
- * **Rav Yeshayohu Menachem** *ben* Rav Yitzchok of Cracow, the originator of the *Heter Iska*, (5359/1599);
- * **Rav Yaakov Meshulom Orenstein**, *Rav* of Lvov and *mechaber* of *Yeshuos Yaakov*, (5599/1839).

❧ 26th of Menachem Av ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Aug 15th)

- * **Rav Noach Naftoli** of Kobrin, (5649/1889);
- * **Rav Meir Ashkenazi**, *Rav* of Shanghai (1891–1954/5714), born in Tcherikov, in Russia's Pale of Settlement to Lubavitcher *Chassidim*. At the outbreak of the First World War, his family, together with many others, fled Russia to Manchuria. It was there, in the city of Harbin, that Rav Meir and Toiba Liba were married. Rav Ashkenazi and his family moved to the port-city of Vladivostok on the eastern coast of Russia. Not long afterward, in 1918, the community there appointed Rav Ashkenazi as their *Rav*. After seven years, he moved to assist the small Jewish community in Shanghai, China. Deteriorating conditions in Europe in the 1930s led to a slow stream of German, Austrian and Russian Jews into the Far East, which increased considerably at the outbreak of the Second World War. By the end of 1941, there were eighteen thousand Jewish refugees in Shanghai – ten times the number of Jews in Shanghai just ten years earlier, (5714/1954);
- * **Rav Yoel Teitelbaum** of Sighet, the Satmar *Rav* (1888–1979/5739). A descendant of the *Yismach Moshe* (Rav Moshe Teitelbaum of Ujhel), “Rav Yoilish” traced his ancestry to the *Maharsha* and the *Rema*. He received his early training from his father, Rav Yomtov Lipa Teitelbaum, *Rav* of Sighet and *mechaber* of *Kedushas Yom Tov*. He then became a *Chassid* of Rav Yechezkel Shraga Halberstam in Shinava (the *Divrei Yechezkel*). At the age of seventeen, he was appointed *Rav* of Musza in Czechoslovakia. After appointments at Orshova and Kroli, he became *Rav* of Satmar from 1935 to 1944. He was one of 1684 Hungarian Jews saved from the Nazi killing machine as a result of the negotiations of Rav Michoel Ber Weissmandl with Adolf Eichmann. In 1946, he arrived in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn and rebuilt the Satmar community. He authored *Vayoel Moshe* and *Divrei Yoel* and is buried in Monroe, New York, a hamlet in upstate New York that he founded and built, (5739/1979);
- * **Rav Eliyohu Boruch Goldschmidt** (1935–2000/5760). Rav Elya was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where his parents had moved in 1938, along with their three-year-old son, in flight from Nazi Germany. Rav Elya moved to Lakewood in 1960 and drew close to Rav Aharon Kotler. He spent twenty years at Lakewood, followed by another twenty years as

Mashgiach Ruchani at *Yeshiva Gedola Zichron Moshe* of South Fallsburg. Rav Elya was suddenly *niftar* while working on a new *sefer* on *sholom bayis*, entitled *Dear Son*, planned as a counterpart to his best-selling *Dear Daughter* on the same subject, (5760/2000).

❖ 27th of Menachem Av ~ Begins Sunday Night (Aug 16th)

- ✳ **Rav Yehuda Fatiya** (Pethayya; Pettiyah; Fattiah; Patia) (1859–1942/5702), Iraqi *Godol* and *Mekubol* and the foremost *talmid* of the *Ben Ish Chai*, who said that he was the reincarnation of the *Noda B'Yehuda*. He said that he had to come back to the earth for although in his last lifetime, he was a *Tzaddik*, he did not fulfill his *Torah* obligation to study *Kabbola*. So in this life, the study of *Kabbola* was his main focus and *tikkun*. Born in Baghdad, he eventually moved to *Eretz Yisrael*, where he was *niftar*. He authored fifteen *seforim*; his most famous *sefer*, *Minchas Yehuda*, is one of the most revelatory works about demons, how they act and deceive people. He was an expert in exposing these demons and casting them out. He relates a story about *gilgulim* (reincarnation) that includes the soul of Shabsai Tzvi. He also authored *Bais Lechem Yehuda* and *Yayin HaRoke'ach*, (5702/1942);
- ✳ **Rav Yehoshua Charif** of Cracow, *mechaber* of *Maginei Shlomo*, an attempt to resolve the questions of the *Ba'alei Tosefos* against *Rashi*. He was the great-grandfather of the *Pnei Yehoshua*. Born in Vilna at end of the sixteenth century, he arrived in Cracow in 1640 as *Rosh Yeshiva*, replacing Rav Yoel Sirkis (the *Bach*) as *Rav* a few months later. He held the position until Rav Yom Tov Lipman Heller (*Tosefos Yom Tov*) became *Rav* in 1643. Among his *talmidim* was Rav Shabsai Cohen (the *Shach*), (5408/1648);
- ✳ **Rav Avrohom Mordechai Alter**, son of the *Chiddushei Harim* and father of the *Sfas Emes*, (5613/1853);
- ✳ **Rav Shmuel Tzvi Hirsch** *ben* Rav Avrohom Abish Horowitz of Spinka (1921–1997/5757), known as “Reb Hershele” of Spinka. He was the Spinka *Rebbe* of Williamsburg and grandson of Rav Yitzchok Weiss (1875–1944), who was the *mechaber* of *Chakal Yitzchok*, (5757/1997);
- ✳ **Rav Meshulom Feish HaLevi** *ben* Rav Mordechai Lowy, *Tosher Rebbe*, (5775/2015);
- ✳ **Rav Menachem Kohn** (1964–2006). Born to Mr. and Mrs. Yosef Yitzchok Eizik Kohn, both Holocaust survivors who had moved to Los Angeles after the war, he was the youngest of four brothers. A watershed in his life was his entry into the *Telshe Yeshiva* at the age of fourteen, following in the footsteps of his brothers who had also learned in *Telshe*. For the next twenty-eight years, his *neshoma* became bound to the *Yeshiva* of *Telshe*, its *Roshei Yeshiva* and *Talmidei Chachomim*. Throughout the years, Rav Menachem penned his own *chiddushei Torah*, and a number of years ago he published two *seforim*, one on *Maseches Beitza* and the second on *Maseches Mo'ed Koton*. He called the *seforim* *Ateres Avi*, in memory of his father. On the day before the accident that took his life, Rav Menachem went to Monroe to *daven* at the *tziyun* of the *Satmar Rebbe* on his *Yahrzeit*. He also went to visit the current *Satmar Rebbe*, (5766/2006).

❖ 28th of Menachem Av ~ Begins Monday Night (Aug 17th)

- ✳ The birthday of the *Maggid* of *Mezritch*;
- ✳ **Rav Yitzchok Akrish**, *mechaber* of the *sefer Kiryas Arba*, (5648/1888);
- ✳ **Rav Naftoli Tzvi Yehuda Berlin**, the *Netziv*, (1817–1893/5653), *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Volozhin*. He authored *Ha'amek Dovor*, a commentary on the *Chumash*; *Meromei Sodeh* on the *Talmud*; *Ha'amek Sh'eila*, on the *She'eltos* of Rav Achai Gaon; and *Meishiv Dovor*, a

collection of his responsa. He was born in Mir, and became the son-in-law of Rav Yitzchok, son of Rav Chaim of Volozhin (1749–1821) when he was fourteen years old. In 1849, upon the *petira* of Rav Yitzchok, his father-in-law, Rav Yitzchok's older son-in-law, Rav Eliezer Yitzchok, was appointed to succeed him. However, he passed away five years later, and the *Netziv* was appointed *Rosh Yeshiva*, a position he held for forty years. Volozhin was forcibly closed by the Russians in 1893. Rav Naftoli Tzvi was a foremost luminary of his time. Among his children were Rav Chaim Berlin and Rav Meir Bar-Ilan [born to two different mothers], (5653/1893);

- ✳ **Rav Avrohom Chaim Ades** (1848–1925), born in Halab (Aram Soba), Syria, among the most ancient Jewish communities in the world. According to tradition, Jews lived there even before the destruction of the first *Bais HaMikdosh*. As a youngster, Rav Avrohom studied under Rav Mordechai Abadi and Rav Ezra Tawill *HaKohen*. At the age of twenty, he married the daughter of Rav Moshe Swed, *Rav* of Aram Soba. In 1896, Rav Avrohom immigrated to *Eretz Yisrael* and settled in Yerushalayim. Soon after his arrival, he learned at *Rehovos HaNohor*, a *Kabbola Yeshiva* in the Bucharian neighborhood. Among his *talmidim* were Rav Yosef Yedid *HaLevi*, Rav Shlomo Refoel Laniado, Rav Ezra Chamawi, Rav Ezra Attia (later to become *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Poras Yosef*), and Rav Yaakov Katzin, (5685/1925);
- ✳ **Rav Avrohom Yaakov HaKohen Pam**, *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Torah V'Daas* (1913–2001/5761). Rav Pam's father, Rav Meir, was a product of Solobodka and Radin. As a child, Rav Pam studied in Kovna. His family later moved to the United States, where his father was appointed to the faculty of *Rabbeinu Chaim Berlin Yeshiva*. The thirteen-year-old began to study in *Torah V'Daas*. He became very close with the *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Dovid Leibowitz, and Shraga Feivel Mendelowitz. After his marriage, he taught at *Torah V'Daas* for sixty years. After the *petira* of Rav Moshe Feinstein, he was appointed president of *Chinuch Atzmai* in the United States. He was also a member of the presidium of the largest *Torah* organization in America, *Torah Umesorah*. He founded the Shuvu organization for the *chinuch* of Russian children in *Eretz Yisrael*. He was loved by all. He is buried in Mount Judah Cemetery in Queens, New York, (5761/2001);
- ✳ **Rav Moshe Finkel**, born in Mir to Rav Eliezer Yehuda Finkel. He grew up with his great-grandfather, Rav Boruch Kamai, the *Rav* of Mir. He learned at Slobodka under his grandfather, Rav Nosson Zvi Finkel, the *Alter* of Slobodka, then at Kelm, where he learned *bechavrusa* with Rav Povarsky, then at Baranovitch, under Rav Elchonon Wasserman and Rav Shlomo Heiman. Shortly before World War II, he immigrated to Yerushalayim and married the daughter of Rav Mordechai Dovid Levin, *mechaber* of *Darchei Dovid*. There, he worked diligently under his father for the *Mir Yeshiva*, (5669/1909–5764/2004).

29th of Menachem Av ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Aug 18th)

- ✳ This day is considered *Yom Kippur Kotton*. Some have the *minhag* to fast and say *selichos* (even if they do not do this in other months), to give additional *tzedoka*, and to study an additional amount.
- ✳ **Rav Shmuel ben Rav Tzvi Salant**, *Rav* of Yerushalayim (1816–1909/5669). Born in Bialystok, Russia, his father passed away soon after his birth, and he was sent to study in Salant, Lithuania, where it had already been arranged that he would eventually marry Toiba, the eldest daughter of Rav Yosef Zundel of Salant, from whom Rav Shmuel took his surname. Soon after his marriage, Rav Shmuel moved to Volozhin, where he was appointed

Maggid Shiur. He moved to *Eretz Yisrael* in 1841. From 1848 to 1851, Rav Shmuel served the Yerushalayim community as a *meshulach*. In 1878, he was voted in as chief *Ashkenazi Rav* of Yerushalayim to replace Rav Meir Auerbach who had just passed away. Rav Shmuel Salant managed to unify the many groups of *Azhkenazim* of Yerushalayim, and to lead them successfully for fifty years, (5669/1909);

- ✳ **Rav Menachem Mendel Alter** of Pavinitz. He went to his death in Treblinka with *yishuv hada'as*, *tzidkus* and *prishus*. He was a son of the *Sfas Emes*, Rav Yehuda Aryeh Leib, (5702/1942);
- ✳ **Rav Eliezer Zusia ben Rav Yisrael Avrohom Portugal**, the Skulener *Rebbe* (1897–1982/5742), from a small town, Sculeni (Skulen), in what was then northeastern Romania (now Ukraine). He was a *talmid* of the Stefanishter *Rebbe*. Just eighteen years of age when his father passed away, he became *Rav* of the town, a position he held for twenty years. The Sadigerer *Rebbe* persuaded the *Rebbe* to relocate to the large Jewish center of Czernovitz, home to a Jewish population numbering many thousands, to oversee Jewish education there. Toward the end of World War II, in March of 1945, he found himself, along with other Holocaust survivors and displaced persons, in the Russian-governed town of Czernovitz, Bukovina. Rav Portugal was particularly known for his work on behalf of Holocaust orphans and for his spiritual resistance against Romania's communist government. In 1962, he launched the crowning glory of his life's work – the *Torah* network of *Chesed L'Avrohom* in *Eretz Yisrael*, which eventually expanded to four *Chessed* homes and schools for hundreds of children from various tragic backgrounds, as well as a countrywide network of afternoon programs for children in public schools. More than fifty thousand children have gone through its ranks. He is buried in the Vizhnitzer Cemetery in Monsey, New York. His son, Rav Yisrael Avrohom, the present Skulener *Rebbe*, is one of the most respected *Tzaddikim* today, (5742/1982);
- ✳ **Rav Yosef Meir Twersky** of Makhnovka, son of Rav Avrohom Yehoshua Geshel from Skvira. Makhnovka is located in western Ukraine, thirteen miles SSE of Berditchev and ninety-six miles SW of Kiev. It is situated along the west bank of the Gnilopyat River, within the “Pale of Settlement” of the Russian Empire. In the census of 1897, the village of Makhnovka had 2,435 Jews out of a total population of 5,343 (about 45 percent). In 1939, the Jewish population of Makhnovka was 843. The Germans captured the town on July 14, 1941 and on the 9th of September executed 835 Jews in the Zhezhlevsk forest. A ghetto was then set up for the few hundred Jews still in the area. They were all murdered in a number of “Aktions” in 1942, (5617/1857);
- ✳ **Rav Shmuel Sperber** (1905–1985), born in Brasov, Transylvania, where his father, Rav Dovid, was the *Rav*. As a youth, Shmuel studied in the *Yeshivos* of Oyber-Visheve, Hungary, under the tutelage of Rav Eliezer Dovid Gruenwald and Rav Mendel Hager. After receiving *semicha* and marrying, Rav Sperber lived in Iasi, Romania. In 1931, after being attacked by anti-Semites, he decided to leave Romania and settle in England. There, he enrolled in law school at the University of London and also founded a *Yeshiva, Ohr Torah*. With the arrival in England of the large transports of German-Jewish children on the eve of the Holocaust, Rav Sperber became actively involved in comforting and educating them. At this same time, Rav Sperber became active in the Mizrachi movement, and he opened a camp in North Wales to prepare approximately two hundred children for life on a kibbutz. Later he moved to Manchester, where he continued to work with youth, and then back to London to become an adjunct professor at the University of London. In 1971, Rav Sperber settled in *Eretz Yisrael*. One of his sons is the *mechaber* of a multi-volume work on the history of

minhogim/customs and of unusual ritual objects, (5745/1985).

✧ 30th of Menachem Av ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Aug 19th)

- ✧ **Rav Yehuda Leib Eibschutz**, Rav of Lvov, (5333/1573);
- ✧ **Rav Yisrael Friedman** of Boyan-Leipzig, (5711/1951);
- ✧ **Rav Dovid HaNoggid ben Rav Avrohom ben HaRambam**, (5060/1300);
- ✧ **Rav Chanoch Henoch Dov** of Alesk *ben* Rav Shmuel (5644/1884), known as the *Lev Some'ach* (Happy Heart). Rav Chanoch married Frieda Roke'ach, daughter of the first Belzer *Rebbe*, the *Sar Sholom* of Belz, in his first marriage. In his second marriage he was a son-in-law of Rav Meir *ben* Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev.

✧ 1st of Elul ~ Begins Thursday Night (Aug 20th)

- ✧ **Rav Yitzchok ben Rav Avrohom Shlomo**, head of the *Bais Din* in Gadid, (5680/1920);
- ✧ **Rav Yaacov Mizrachi**, *Sefardi* sage with the title *HaTorah B'Yisrael* (the *Torah* in *Yisrael*), (5740/1980);
- ✧ **Rav Yehoshua Zeitlin** of Shklov, (5582/1822).



✧ HILLULA DE'TZADDIKA ✧

WHAT'S BEHIND YAHREIT MEANINGS & CUSTOMS

The *Rebbe Reb Melech* in *Noam Elimelech* explains the reason why when we mention a *Tzaddik* who has passed on we say: *Zechuso Yogen Oleinu* (may his merit shield us). The *Noam Elimelech* asks: why would the *Tzaddik* give away his merit to someone else to shield him? Perhaps he would keep that merit for his own benefit in the next world! He answers that *zechuso* should not be translated as "merit" rather as *zach venoki* – "pure and refined". When we say *Zechuso Yogen Oleinu*, we are asking that the purity and refinement that the *Tzaddik* underwent through his *Torah* study, sincerely motivated *lishma* – which refined him; this light should be drawn down over us all and stand by his generation to shield and protect us all. (*Parshas Bo*).

Those *Tzaddikim* who, during their lifetimes, awakened and roused the hearts and souls of the Jewish people, continue to do so even after they have passed on from this world. (*Atzei Chaim – Mishpotim*).



The *Tzaddikim* who reside in the world of truth are called *Melitzei Yosher*, for during their lifetimes they advocated on behalf of the Jewish people to protect them from all manner of prosecution, and they continue to plead our case and advocate on our behalf in the next world, just as *Chazal* teach us regarding *Moshe* (*Sota* 13b) that "Moshe passed away there" (*Devorim* 34:5) and yet it says in *Shemos* (34:28) that he was there with *Hashem*? The *Gemora* answers the contradiction by saying that just as in the first place he stood and served before *Hashem*, so does he now still stand and serve before *Hashem* till this day, advocating on our behalf before *Hashem* just as he did in his lifetime – and so do all the *Tzaddikim* of each generation in the upper realms. (*Bais Yaakov – Zechor Bris*).



❁ GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM ❁

STORIES & ANECDOTES

Rav Yaakov Meshulom Orenstein, 25th of Menachem Av

The Yeshuos Yaakov

Rav Yaakov Meshulom served as the head of Lwów's Rabbinical court for some thirty-five years and authored the famed work *Yeshuos Yaakov* on the *Shulchon Aruch* and another *peirush* (commentary) on the *Chumash* by the same title.

The following three tales should illustrate to us some of the greatness of the *Yeshuos Yaakov*, the Lemberger *Rav*, Rav Yaakov Orenstein:

Similar to Rav Yosef Shaul Natanson, Rav Yaakov Orenstein was also not predisposed to agree with the *Chassidic* movement, yet he was not among its open opponents. The Klausenberger *Rebbe* used to tell how he had heard from the chief *Rav* of Nasoyd, who had himself heard from the Klausenberger's great uncle, the Shinover *Rav*, how much the *Yeshuos Yaakov* honored the *talmidim* of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*. Once, he was visited by the Apter *Rav*, Rav Avrohom Yehoshua Heschel, and in honor of his guest he asked that his *Rebbetzin* should prepare something. The *Rebbetzin* made a swift batch of *milchig* pancakes and they were served to the Apter. As he took his fork and knife to cut the pancakes, something happened and suddenly he was seen pushing the plate away.

"Please tell me, Lemberger *Rav*," asked the Apter *Rav*, "from where did these pancakes come?" The host paled and asked what was wrong. When the assembled saw that the Apter was not eating, they stood waiting to see what would happen next. They soon heard the *Rebbetzin* calling out, "Don't serve the pancakes! Don't eat the pancakes!"

When she was told that in fact her

guest had refrained, she explained that in her haste to prepare the pancakes, she had made the milky buttery batter herself and asked one of the maid girls in the kitchen to fry them up. The girl, not realizing that the pancakes were full of milk, had accidentally fried them on a pan used for meat dishes. Seeing what seemed to be an open display of supernatural insight, the *Yeshuos Yaakov* turned to his guest for an explanation. The Apter *Rav* calmly explained why he had pushed his plate away: "When I cut the pancake, the milk and butter squirted into my eye! Seeing that this food had such *chutzpa* I knew it must not be kosher! Kosher food just does not behave that way!" Although the Apter *Rav* was, of course, jesting, the Klausenberger said nonetheless the idea illustrates that even regarding inanimate objects there is a difference between purity or sanctity and impurity or profanity.

In another story, the well-known *talmid* of Rav Mendele, the Kotzker *Rebbe*, known by the title of his work, the *Chiddushei HaRim*, and later the first Gerrer *Rebbe*, visited Lemberg. He wished to be granted an audience with the Lemberger *Rav*, Rav Yaakov Orenstein, to explain the ways of Kotzker *Chassidus* to him and to quell the false rumors spread about them. Rav Yaakov's son, Rav Mordechai Ze'ev, who would also one day serve as the chief *Rav* of Lwów (Lemberg) greeted the *Chiddushei HaRim* and discussed many matters with him. Seeing that his guest from Warsaw was a great *Torah* scholar, who professed to be a Kotzker *Chassid*, no less, Rav Mordechai Ze'ev was confused. He began to ask about many of the nasty rumors that he had

heard about the *Chassidim* and their strange ways and antics, but the *Chiddushei HaRim* waved them away as slanderous lies. Later that evening, Rav Mordechai Ze'ev took the *Chiddushei HaRim* to meet with his father, Rav Yaakov, the Lemberger Rav. Upon entering his study, the *Yeshuos Yaakov* was seen meeting with a merchant who had come to ask a question regarding a matter in Jewish law. "*Vos machstu?*" asked the Lemberger Rav.

Understanding the question to mean in its plainest sense, "How do you do?" the merchant answered, "Thank G-d, I am well in health and regarding wealth, there is work, *Boruch Hashem...*"

The Lemberger Rav cut him off impatiently, asking once more, "I asked you '*Vos Machstu?*'"

Temporarily confused, the merchant began again to say the same thing. Then the Lemberger Rav thundered back, "But I asked you, '*Vos Machstu?*'"

"I beg your pardon, Rav," said the flustered merchant, but I have already attempted to answer the same question posed to me now almost three times."

The Lemberger Rav explained, "Yes, but you are not answering my question; you are telling me about your physical state of being, but I asked you, '*Vos Machstu?*' I meant how are YOU doing: spiritually, how are you? Do you have times set aside for the study of *Torah* and for *tefilla*? Do you make an accounting of your charitable work and so forth? That is YOUR true state of affairs." The *Chiddushei HaRim* was greatly impressed by the Lemberger Rav's ways.

When he had answered the merchant's questions, the Lemberger Rav turned to his guest and immediately began asking him questions in learning and difficult contradictions in *Gemora*. The two began to swim through the sea of *Talmudic* logic. Rav Yaakov was of course testing his guest, who his son claimed was a true scholar, despite being a *Chassid*. The study

and learning grew so intense that after several hours had passed, the two dueling *Rabbonim* sat in deep concentration alone (for everyone else had already left) with wet towels wrapped across their foreheads to keep their minds cool, and prevent their brains from overheating! Seeing that his guest was indeed a *Talmid Chochom*, Rav Yaakov proceeded to ask him about the rumors he too had heard.

"Vicious slander and lies!" exclaimed the *Chiddushei HaRim*. Having seen a clear demonstration of his guest's *Talmudic* acumen, the Lemberger Rav was ready to hear and accept his explanations and was later no longer counted among the opponents of Kotzk.

Finally, it is told that one day before Rav Yaakov Orenstein had renounced his opposition to *Chassidus*, he was seized with a great desire to meet with and learn from one of the *talmidim* of the *Ba'al Shem Tov* to see if their way was indeed false. That night, a *Tzaddik* appeared to him in a vision, in his dream. "You are mistaken in your opposition," the *Tzaddik* claimed.

"But why do they *daven* so late, even after the required time for the recitation of the *Shema*?" he asked.

The *Tzaddik* replied, "Even if their preparations cause the time for the *Shema* to have passed, still they truly recite the *Shema*, which, as the *pasuk* says, must be recited "with all your heart and soul", whereas many *misnagdim*, our opponents, fulfill the dictum to recite the *Shema* on time, but whatever it is that they are saying, it is not the *Shema*, for they do not say it with all their heart and soul."

When the Lemberger Rav awoke, he remembered the strange dream. Soon afterward, the holy Ropshitzer visited, and when the Lemberger Rav met him, he was astonished to see the *Tzaddik* from his dream.

"Nu, Lemberger Rav," quipped Rav Naftoli Ropshitzer, "is the question still bothering you or has it been resolved?"

Rav Noach Naftoli of Kobrin, 26th of Menachem Av

Rav Noach Naftoli, born in 5596/1836, was the son of Rav Yisrael Yaakov, who was the son of the famed Rav Moshe of Kobrin. He was the son-in-law of his uncle, Rav Boruch Chaim Levin, a son-in-law of Rav Moshe of Kobrin.

Following the *petira* of his grandfather, Rav Moshe of Kobrin, on the twenty-ninth of *Nissan* 5618/1858, Rav Noach Naftoli was appointed *Rebbe* by a group of his grandfather's *Chassidim*. (Most of the *Chassidim* accepted Rav Avrohom of Slonim as their *Rebbe*.)

Rav Noach Naftoli was known as an outstanding *Talmid Chochom*. His

appearance was regal.

On the twenty-sixth of *Av* 5649/1889, at the age of sixty-three, Rav Noach Naftoli was *niftar* in Komin, while cutting the bread at his table.

His sons, Rav Dovid Shlomo of Kobrin and Rav Aharon Levi of Diamatsheve, succeeded him as *Rebbe*.

Many of Rav Noach Naftoli's *Divrei Torah* were printed in the *sefer* of his grandfather, *Amoros Tehoros*, under the title *Maamorim Tehorim*.

Zechuso yogen oleinu.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-26-avaugust-22/



Rav Yoel Teitelbaum, 26th of Menachem Av

The Satmar *Rav*

One *Motzo'ei Shabbos Kodesh*, *parshas Eikev*, the Tosher *Rebbe* sat at *Melave Malka* with his *Chassidim* and related:

This upcoming twenty-sixth of *Av* is the *Yahrzeit* of the holy Satmar *Rav*. Even before he was born, the Sanzer *Rav*, *mechaber* of *Divrei Chaim*, testified as to his upcoming greatness. Rav Yoel's father, the *mechaber* of *Kedushas YomTov*, was childless for many years and when he came before his *Rebbe*, the Sanzer *Rav*, the *Divrei Chaim* promised him in a letter that he would have children blessed by *Hashem*. His prophetic words were, of course, fulfilled:

the *Kedushas Yom Tov* had two luminaries, his sons Rav Yoel of Satmar and Rav Yoel's brother, the holy *mechaber* of the *Atzei Chaim* of Sighet, as well as several daughters.



From the sanctity and righteousness of

these two brothers alone, we see that the Sanzer *Rav*'s blessings were fulfilled and that the *Kedushas Yom Tov* merited children blessed by *Hashem*. The *Kedushas Yom Tov*'s grandfather, the *Yetev Lev* of Sighet, was similarly blessed at his wedding by Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Rymanow that he, too, would merit children, generations blessed by *Hashem*. Obviously the Satmar *Rav* was one of the blessed descendants of this *berocha*.

(The Tosher *Rebbe*, *Shlit"a* related the story of the *Yetev Lev*'s *chassuna* in greater detail on *Motzo'ei Shabbos Parshas Toldos* in the context of Rav Hirschel of Rymanow's *Yahrzeit*.)

Rav Hirsch of Rymanow was a *Kohen* and had the *minhag* to bless *Klal Yisrael*, bestowing abundant *berochos* and goodness upon them. Whatever he said was fulfilled. When he was younger, before he became well known, he still had great power to dispense *berochos*, as I heard from my grandfather about the *chassuna* of the *Yetev Lev* of Sighet and this is the story he told me (here the Tosher *Rebbe*, *Shlit"a*

retold the story heard from his grandfather):

When the *Yetev Lev* married the daughter of Rav Moshe Dovid Ashkenazi, the *Av Bais Din* of Taltsheva, the grandfather, the *mechaber* of *Yismach Moshe*, gave his son, Rav Elozor Nissan (the father of the *chosson*) a certain amount of money to distribute as *tzedoka* to the poor who were present at the *chassuna*. Amongst the poor there was one particular pauper who, having received the allotted amount of *tzedoka* which Rav Elozor Nissan distributed to each one, insisted that he add more money to the amount and asked for a certain very large sum, so large that Rav Elozor Nissan kindly told him that the money was not his and he could not use his discretion to give one pauper such a princely sum.

He turned and went to his father, the *Yismach Moshe*, related the pauper's request and asked him what to do.

"I wish to see this pauper," said the *Yismach Moshe*, and from his room the crowd parted so as to allow him to peer through the door and see the face of the anonymous pauper who had requested such a sum of *tzedoka*. When the *Yismach Moshe* saw who it was, he turned to his son, Rav Elozor Nissan, and told him to give the poor man the entire sum of *tzedoka* he had requested, without arguing.

When the pauper received the money, he blessed Rav Elozor Nissan and the *chosson*, the *Yetev Lev*, with a great *berocha*, promising them that from this marriage would come forth generations of holy, righteous descendants. Afterward, he vanished without a trace.



Many years later, when the *kalla's*

father, the Taltsheca *Rav*, prepared to move to *Eretz Yisrael*, his son-in-law, the *Yetev Lev*, accompanied him to visit many *Rebbes* and *Tzaddikim*, among them Rav Hirsch Rymanower. The *Yetev Lev* immediately recognized his face – it was the pauper who had attended his wedding so many years before, who had blessed him with descendants who would be *Tzaddikim*. Among those descendants was the Satmar *Rav*.

When the Satmar *Rav* was a six-year-old lad, he merited visiting the holy sanctuary of Rav Mordechai'leh of Nadworna. Rav Mordechai'leh asked the young child what he was studying in *cheder*. Rav Yoel answered that he studied *Chumash* with *Rashi's* commentary. Rav Mordechai'leh *farhered* (tested) him and was pleased to see he knew the material well. He then told him to be very diligent in studying *Chumash* with *Rashi* every week, saying, "Mordechai'leh knew several great men, who, in their older years, they did not know where *HaKodosh Boruch Hu* dwells, because they were not diligent in studying *Chumash* with *Rashi*." He promised the young Rav Yoel that if he would diligently study *Chumash Rashi* week by week, he would rise to very high levels.

The holy Satmar *Rav* fulfilled these words all his life. The words of Rav Mordechai'leh were very precious to him: every day after *davening*, while still adorned in *tallis* and *tefillin*, the Satmar *Rav* studied *Chumash* and *Rashi*; even in his old age when this practice was difficult and taxing for him, he never gave it up.

The Satmar *Rav's* *kochos* in *tzedoka* were very great. He would give out huge sums to the poor and destitute, looking after their needs and helping to care for them.

When he was *Rav* in Kroli in his younger years, the Satmar *Rav* asked his *gabbai* to invite the wealthy Rav Chaim Shtern of Pest and explain that he had an urgent and important matter of business to

discuss with him. When Rav Shtern arrived in Kroli, Rav Yoel explained the reason for his summons: “You should know that in Pest, there are approximately forty families I know of who are so destitute that they cannot even put bread on their tables. I am asking you to please see to it that at least their needs for *Shabbos* are taken care of.”

Rav Chaim answered Rav Yoel, “Surely I will fulfill what the *Rav* is asking of me, on one condition – that the *Rav* does not make me a *Chassid*!”

Rav Yoel smiled and answered sweetly, “*Mein tei’ere kind* (My precious child)! Why, if you fulfill my request and take care of fulfilling the needs of the poor, I will be *your Chassid*!”

(Based on *Avodas Avoda Sichos Kodesh* II)



Teaching Us To Stand Tall In America

The Tchebiner *Rav* would marvel at the Brisker *Rav*’s depth in learning and the Brisker *Rav* would marvel at the Tchebiner *Rav*’s breadth of *Torah* knowledge. Both of them were in awe of the Satmar *Rav*’s breadth and depth of *Torah* wisdom. So the story goes. Not only was the Satmar *Rav* the architect of *Chassidishe* life in post-war America, but he was one of the generation’s greatest *Torah* scholars and *poskim*. He was truly a living legend.

Rav Yoel Teitelbaum was born on the eighteenth of *Teves* 5647/1887 to his father Rav Chananya Yom Tov Lipa, the *Rebbe* in the Hungarian town of Sighet. He was a direct descendant of the *Yismach Moshe* and the *Yetev Lev*. After being childless for many years, the *Kedushas Yom Tov* had two sons: Rav Chaim Tzvi, the *Atzei Chaim* of Sighet, and Rav Yoel. Rav Yoel or Yoilish as he was called, was a wonder child. His *bar mitzva derosha* kept the crowd spellbound and was the big news the next day in the newspapers. In a practice that lasted through his life, Rav Yoel often did not sleep in a bed, instead

learning through the night by forcing himself awake by placing his feet in bucket of freezing cold water.



Rav Yoel got married at the age of seventeen to Chava Horowitz, the daughter of the *Plancher Rebbe*. His gravely ill father was *Mesader Kiddushin* and was *niftar* two weeks later. After the *petira* of the *Kedushas Yom Tov*, Rav Yoel’s older brother, the *Atzei Chaim*, became *Rebbe* and *Rav* of Sighet. Rav Yoel quietly moved to the neighboring town of Satmar, where he hoped to grow in *Torah* away from the limelight and his father’s *Chassidim*. Things didn’t work out that way, and within a year, due to pressure from his many admirers, Rav Yoel was leading his own *Kehilla* and *Chassidim*.

Rav Yoel’s first official position was as *Rav* of Orishiva, Czechoslovakia, which he accepted in 1911 at the age of twenty-four. It was there that he gained a reputation as a fearless *kano’i*, padlocking a wedding hall and not letting the *seuda* proceed, after the *ba’alei simcha* (hosts) violated his warning against mixed dancing. It was during his years in Orishiva after opening a *Yeshiva* that Rav Yoel’s *halachic psak* became sought after, with *shailos* pouring in from all over Hungary. In 1924, after Rav Yoel felt he had brought Orishiva to the level of *Yiddishkeit* required, he accepted a similar position in Kroli. The ten years he spent in Kroli was, in his opinion, some of the best years of his life, learning and teaching *Torah*. Due to pressure upon the vacancy of the position of the *Rav* of Satmar, in 1934 he acceded and moved back to his adopted town of many years before. By this time he was already recognized by the likes of Rav Boruch Ber Leibowitz as the leader of

Hungarian Jewry and one of the *Gedolei HaDor*.

From the outbreak of World War II until the Nazi beasts invaded Hungary, the *Rebbe* did not sit still. He was actively involved in the rescue efforts of his Polish brethren. When the Nazis invaded, Rav Yoel was fortunate to be awarded a seat on the famous Kastner train, after Rudolf Kastner's mother appeared to him in a dream and told him that if the Satmar *Rav* was not on the train, all its passengers would not survive. The Kastner train was a trainload of people who were to be taken out of Nazi-occupied territory to freedom in Switzerland as part of a deal between the Zionist leader in Hungary, Rudolf Kastner, and the Nazi hierarchy. Although originally intended for important Hungarian Zionist members and their families, many members of the *Chareidi* community were also able to get on. The train did not initially go to Switzerland as promised, but after a detour and a four-month layover in the infamous Bergen-Belsen death camp (albeit in a special section), they were finally sent on their way.

After the war, Rav Yoel moved to *Eretz Yisrael*. However, shortly thereafter, through *Hashgoch a Protis*, he embarked on a fundraising trip to New York and ended up settling there. While Rav Aharon Kotler and Rav Moshe Feinstein rebuilt non-*Chassidishe* Jewry, Rav Yoel laid the foundations for *Chassidishe* America. Rav Yoel knew exactly what he wanted and built it according to the script he wrote.

While he was often at odds *halachically* and *hashkafically* with Rav Aharon and Rav Moshe, they all had the



greatest mutual respect and admiration, so much so that when Rav Aharon asked the Satmar *Rav* not to drive his car after *Shekia* (sunset) on Friday, which the Satmar *Rav* held was permitted until a later *zman*, he obeyed without question.

The Satmar *Rav* built Williamsburg into a bastion of Satmar *Chassidus* and founded *Kiryas Yoel* with many *Mosdos* of *Chinuch*, a great deal of *Torah* learning, and their enviable *Chessed* network, which reaches Jews from all walks of life, regardless of affiliation and background. But more than just building Satmar, he was a "*Rebbe's Rebbe*", in his fatherly way guiding many other transplanted *Chassidishe* courts and helping them rebuild and firmly plant their roots on the once-*treife* soil of America. The *Rebbe* taught us how to stand tall in America and be proud Jews just like we were in the *shtetlach* of Europe. For this all of American Jewry and even world Jewry has a great amount of respect and gratitude. The Satmar *Rav* was *niftar* on the twenty-sixth of *Av* 5639/1979. *Yehi Zichro Boruch*.

www.revach.net/stories/gedolim-biographies/The-Satmar-Rav-Rav-

Yoel-Teitelbaum-Teaching-Us-To-Stand-Tall-In-America/4007

www.Ravshimon.com/tzadikim/showz.php?p=satmar.htm



Rav Yitzchok Hutner, *Ra"m* of Chaim Berlin and *mechaber* of *Pachad Yitzchok*, used to say that the Satmar *Rav* was able to see with a far-reaching vision, greater than many other *Rebbes* and *Rabbonim*, saying, "He sees further than all of us."

He once told the following story which demonstrated this far-reaching vision:

Once, two messengers arrived from *Eretz Yisrael* to visit the offices of *Agudas Yisrael* in America. They told how recently, many missionaries had been traveling from village to village and from city to city, attempting to turn Jews away from *Yiddishkeit* toward Christianity. The

Rabbonim in *Eretz Yisrael* asked the *Rabbonim* of the *Aguda* to sign a letter of protest against these missionary activities, which would then be sent to the Israeli prime minister, protesting the missionaries' nefarious activities.

Rav Moshe Feinstein and Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky, as well as Rav Hutner and Rav Kalmanovitch and others discussed the issue, wrote up such a letter and protested vehemently against what was going on. They decided to enlist the help and support of the Satmar *Rav* as well, thinking that perhaps he too would sign the letter.

Two important *Rabbonim* acted as messengers and visited the Satmar *Rav* in his home, asking him to sign the letter and pledge his support in protest against the missionary activities in *Eretz Yisrael*.

The *Rav* read the letter and answered them, "I cannot sign this letter." The Satmar *Rav* then offered the following explanation as to why he would not sign: "I know that in the next few days the Israeli prime minister has a trip scheduled to Italy. Surely he will take the opportunity to visit the Vatican and meet with the Pope.

"Once he receives this letter, I believe that he will take it with him, show it to the Pope and use it as a tool to find favor in the pontiff's eyes. He will wave our letter of protest and say to the Pope, 'See – they asked me to intercede against missionary activities, but no – even though *Eretz Yisrael* is a *medina* for *Yidden*, we believe in freedom of religion, and each religion has the right to practice unhindered and teach its ideas to anyone. See – even though the American *Rabbonim* protest against me, we – the Israeli government – pay them no heed and do not listen to them.'"

The Satmar *Rav* concluded and said, "I believe the Israeli prime minister will take this letter to the Pope and thereby cause a great *Chillul Hashem* (desecration of *Hashem's* name) – and so I cannot sign

a letter which will be used in such a way."

The messengers thought that the Satmar *Rav* was simply pushing them off with excuses. They did not believe that what he said was true, nor did they take it seriously at all. The letter was signed, sealed and delivered to the Israeli prime minister without the Satmar *Rav's* signature.

A few weeks later, they all saw just how prophetic the Satmar *Rav's* words were; they all came true – not one word was false. The prime minister of *Eretz Yisrael* took the letter with him to the Vatican, showed it to the Pope and the entire episode became public news. Then we all understood that a divine spirit of intuition spoke through the Satmar *Rav*, and through his *Torah* and righteousness he had the power and foresight to see what would indeed happen.

Rav Yitzchok Hutner concluded, "*Der Satmar Rav hot gezen far ois mit a pur chodoshim vus es vet zayn* – the Satmar *Rav* saw a few months ahead what would be!" (*Moshiyan Shel Yisrael* II, page 20)



The Satmar *Rav's* Berocha

Once, after the war, a young man approached the Satmar *Rav* for a *berocha*. "What

makes you think I can give you a *berocha*?" asked the *Tzaddik*.

"Some one whose opinion counts even in heaven surely has the right to bestow *berochos*,"



answered the young man.

“Well, if you could prove that were true about me, surely I would bestow my *berocha* upon you. Any person who knows that someone’s opinion counts in heaven is worthy of a *berocha*!” smiled the Satmar Rav. “Pray tell, how you would know such a thing.”

The young man told how, as they were almost liberated, he and a friend ran in search of food to feed their starving brethren. The Nazis caught them both and hanged his friend immediately.

“They would have hanged me too on the spot, except that I had done some favors for a few officers and they decided to at least grant me one final wish as thanks for my good deeds. I asked to be able to see my mother one last time and to say goodbye. At first they protested that the women’s camp was too far and it would take too long, but finally they agreed. They took me to her and as I stood there before her, I said goodbye, explaining that they were going to kill me. My mother fainted on the spot. As they were taking care of her to revive her, she came to and

whispered to me, ‘You will live! You will live!’

“I was dragged away by the Nazis and as they led me to the gallows, the American forces attacked and began to rain heavy artillery and bombs on the camp. The noise and explosions caused the Nazis to flee for cover and I escaped. Later, when the American officers liberated us, I was reunited with my mother. I asked her how

*Rav Yoel bowing before King
Carol II of Romania, 1936.*



she knew I would live. She told me that when she fainted, she rose up before the Heavenly tribunal and saw many *Tzaddikim* with long beards and *hadras ponim* (radiant countenances). She did not recognize any of them till she spotted the Satmar Rav, whom she recognized from her childhood in Rumania. ‘*Rebbe, Rebbe, save my son!*’ she cried to him, ‘Have mercy.’

‘Do not worry,’ said the Satmar Rav, ‘he will live.’ Then she woke up.”

So saying, the young man turned to the Satmar Rav and said, “You see, *Rebbe*, my mother told me how your opinion counts in heaven and I am living proof!”

“Well said,” smiled the Satmar Rav – and gave him his *berocha*.

(*Yiddish Licht* Vol. 33 No. 8 Kislev 5742, pages 9–12)



The Satmar Rav used to speak against a few misguided souls, who, in their campaigns, would always seem to find shortcomings among religious Jews, yet somehow always managed to find only merits and good among the wicked.

Such people, he said, were characterized by the *pasuk* in *Mishlei* 17:15: “He who vindicates the wicked and condemns the righteous – *also both* are an abomination to Hashem.” The Satmar Rav asked why the *pasuk* needs to say that *also both* of these are an abomination. Isn’t someone who makes wicked people appear righteous an abomination even alone – and isn’t someone who villanizes righteous people also an abomination on his own?

The truth is that each separately can be understood. If someone is always looking for the cloud’s silver lining and seeking to make everything appear good, always searching for merits and trying to see people in a positive light, we can understand that just maybe he will even make the wicked appear to be righteous. Conversely, someone who paints everyone in a negative light and sees shortcomings

and demerits everywhere, he too can be misled by his temper to see righteous people as having faults.

But someone who simultaneously errs to the point where he only sees the righteous as wicked and the wicked as righteous? Surely, that is an abomination to *Hashem* when he always does both of these!



The Satmar Rav Holds \$1,000 for Happiness

The Satmar Rav, Rav Yoel Teitelbaum, was famous for giving out huge sums of money to people who came to ask him for help. One day a man came from *Eretz Yisrael* and asked him for money to marry off his daughter. The Satmar Rav asked him how much he needed. The man quickly calculated the cost of an apartment, the wedding, and all the other expenses and said that he needed \$30,000.

The Satmar Rav then left the room and came back with a stack of bills. The man counted it and saw that it was \$29,000. His happiness knew no bounds. He went out literally dancing in the streets.

One of the people with the Satmar Rav asked him why he left him a thousand dollars short, rather than donating the entire amount. The Satmar Rav answered that had he given him the full amount he would have initially been ecstatic. However, a few minutes later, he would have been upset at himself for not asking for more. I wanted the man to be happy. By giving him \$29,000, the man was ecstatic that he got as much as he could ever have dreamed for.

www.revach.net/stories/gadlus/The-Satmar-Rav-Holds-1000-For-Happiness/4697



Satmar Rebbe – I Am a Person, Not Your Mitzva

Once when the Satmar Rebbe was leaving the hospital after an illness, a very pushy person insisted on helping get his coat on. The Satmar Rebbe told him that he did not need his help, although he really did. When asked for an explanation, he said that this person did not want to help an old weak Jew; rather he wanted the *mitzva* of *Bikur Cholim* – and he was not a *cheifetz shel mitzva*.

www.revach.net/avodah/ahavas-yisroel/Satmar-Rebbe-I-Am-A-Person-Not-Your-Mitzva/3824



Parshas Eikev: Satmar Rav – The Beginning of the Big Year

Einei Hashem Elokecho bah meireishis hashana v'ad acharis shana – “The eyes of *Hashem* are always upon it, from the beginning of the year until year’s end” (11:12). The Satmar Rebbe asks, “Why does the *pasuk* say for *reishis* – *hashana*, but for *acharis* it only says *shana*?”

He answers that the nature of people is that in the beginning of a new year, when people are in the *teshuva* mode, they say, “This year I will be better. This year I will give more *tzedoka*, I will watch my anger, and learn more *Torah*. This will be THE year!” But when the year passes and he didn’t fulfill any of his “New Year Resolutions”, he sees that the year, which he thought would be THE year, turned out to be “just another year”. The *pasuk* says for *reishis hashana* – in the beginning he thinks this year will be *hashana* – the year, but at the end of the year it’s only *acharis shana* – just another year.

We say in the *Kedusha* of *Mussaf*: *Hein go’alti es’chem acharis kereishis* – “When will I redeem you?” says *Hashem*. “When *Acharis kereishis* – the end of the year will be like the beginning.” When all the promises and resolutions that one makes before *Rosh HaShana* will still be in place at the end of the year, that is when the *Geula* will come!



Rav Yoel of Satmar was a descendant of the *Yismach* Moshe, Rav Moshe Teitelbaum of Ujhel, and the *Yetev Lev*. He traced his ancestry to the illustrious *Maharsha* and *Rema*. He was a gifted child who received his early *Torah* instruction from his father, Rav Chananya Yomtov Lipa Teitelbaum, *Rav* of Sighet, and mechaber of *Kedushas* Yom Tov. While yet a young man, he showed great promise as a *Talmudic* scholar and was acclaimed for his deep piety. While devoting the major part of his day to the analytic research of *Talmud* and *Halocha*, he immersed himself for several hours each day in the study of the great books of *Mussar* (ethics), such as *Chovos HaLevovos* by Rav Bachya *ibn* Pakuda. He became a *Chassid* of Rav Yechezkel Shraga of Shiniava, who was the son of Rav Chaim of Sanz. At the age of seventeen, Rav Yoel was appointed *Rav* of Musza, Czechoslovakia.

He subsequently served as *Rav* of Orshova and Kroli, and in 1935 he assumed the post of *Rav* of Satmar, where he officiated until 1944. At the time, he was miraculously saved from the claws of the Nazis as one of the 1,684 Hungarian Jews on the famous "Kastner train". This group was allowed to leave for Switzerland with a stopover in Bergen-Belsen, as a result of the negotiations Rav Michoel Ber Weissmandel of Nitra had conducted with Adolf Eichmann.

After spending about two years in



Eretz Yisrael, the Satmar *Rav* arrived in the United States in 1946. Settling in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn where he immediately set out to rebuild the *Chassidic* community. Initially, his followers consisted mainly of Holocaust survivors. With his strong and outspoken personality, he breathed new life into them, giving them guidance and inspiration. A staunch defender of the *Torah* way of life, he forcefully opposed even the slightest innovation or deviation from tradition. With his charismatic personality, illustrious scholarship and deep piety, he attracted thousands of new *Chassidim*. He established large *Yeshivos* and girls' schools in America and *Eretz* Yisrael and erected a small town, *Kiryas* Yoel, with a big *Yeshiva* and elegant home on the outskirts of Monroe, New York.

Rav Yoel firmly believed that a Jewish state would be established only upon the coming of *Moshiach*. As a result, he spoke out sharply against Zionism and any group participating in the Israeli government. He did not oppose living in *Eretz* Yisrael. Satmar *Chassidim* in *Eretz* Yisrael reject any form of monetary assistance from the government.

The writings of Rav Yoel, which have gained wide acceptance, were published under the titles *Va'yoel Moshe* and *Divrei Yoel*. These volumes comprise his *halachic* novellae, responsa, sermons and essays. In a clear and concise language, he expounds his views that reflect his vast knowledge and valiant spirit. The towering personality of the Satmar *Rav* has injected his *Chassidim* and other *Chassidic* sects with a sense of pride and self esteem, raising the standards of *Torah* observance to great heights. He left an indelible imprint on his *Chassidim* and on *Torah*-observant Jewry at large.

Rav Yoel had three daughters from his first wife, but no children from his second righteous wife *Rebbetzin* Alte Faiga (1912-2001) whom he married in 1937. His success would not have been possible

without her great support and acts of tremendous kindness. Rav Yoel was succeeded by his nephew, Rav Moshe Teitelbaum.

Rav Yoel and his Satmar movement are “notorious” to this day for giving and raising huge amounts of *tzedoka* to religious and non-religious Jews in need.

This doesn't usually get as much attention as their anti-Zionist beliefs. Although Satmar is large (numbering around 250,000 worldwide) and very influential, it has not received much positive publicity, and is often subject to stereotyping.

www.Ravshimon.com/tzadikim/showz.php?p=satmar.htm



Rav Yehuda Fatiya of Yerushalayim, 27th of Menachem Av

Born: Bagdad, Iraq, 1859; *Niftar*: *Eretz Yisrael*, 1942 – *Mekubol*

Rav Fatiya rose to be the foremost *talmid* of the *Ben Ish Chai*. He said regarding himself that he was the reincarnation of Rav Yechezkel Landau, a great *Ashkenazi halachist*, *mechaber* of the *Responsa Noda B'Yehuda*. Rav Fatiya said that he had to come back to the earth for, although in his last lifetime, he was a *Tzaddik*, he did not fulfill his *Torah* obligation to study *Kabbola*. So in this life, the study of *Kabbola* was his main focus and *tikkun* (rectification).

Among his many works, which include multiple commentaries to the holy *Zohar* and *Eitz Chaim*, Rav Yehuda authored *Minchas Yehuda*. In it, he writes of his experiences with earth-bound souls, and the exorcisms that he performed. Even among *Mekubolim*, this is not the norm. Rav Fatiya was a step above the rest. Rav Fatiya was a master at detecting the presence of spirits and demons and an expert in the art of exorcism. However, he also knew that people many times make up or imagine things to be that are just not true. He never simply accepted someone's word that he was in contact with a spirit or demon. In order to ascertain that person's credibility, Rav Yehuda would test him to see if he really was having an other-worldly experience or not.

Minchas Yehuda by Rav Fatiya is one of the most revelatory works about demons and how they act and deceive

people in the most malicious ways. Rav Fatiyah enumerates a number of personal experiences in which he witnessed how demons appeared to people in dreams and while awake in all kinds of forms with the intent of deceiving them for some unknown devious purpose. Rav Fatiya was an expert in exposing these demons and casting them out. He has recorded the procedures for doing these things in his work.

Rav Yehuda Fatiya about dreams...

Rav Yehuda Fatiya explains in detail how to distinguish between dreams that come from angels and those which come from demons. He gives a warning that demons are not stupid and know very well how to seduce people as they sleep. These unclean entities have learned the art of replication and can show an individual in their dreams false Heavenly and sublime spiritual symbols. The person will believe that he is receiving a holy Heavenly message, whereas in fact the soul is being deceived into becoming an agent of evil. Just as there are unscrupulous people in this world seeking to dupe and deceive others for their own personal gain, so are there spiritual beings that wish to do the same. The dream world is the realm of the unconscious; as such, it is the rightful domain of spirits both good and evil. Therefore, when we dream, we must be very cautious. We must learn how to control our dreams. A dream interpreter must also be aware that not all message dreams come from holy sources.

“When a man’s soul ascends above as he sleeps, if he is sinful then his soul is cast about from place to place by the forces of the powers of evil; this is why one sees himself in a dream in another country or in another land” (*Zohar* III, page 222b).

Rav Fatiya brings down examples of how demons appear in dreams in the form of *Tzaddikim* or as “ascended masters”. They can show dreamers images of the heavens, the holy throne, or even Kabbalistic symbolism. All this is their attempt to convince the dreamer to believe in that which they send to him. In this way, the forces of evil ensnare for themselves another soul. The demons always begin by showing one images of holiness to convince the person that what he is seeing in his dreams is “kosher”. Then, after the soul is convinced and believes in what it is being shown, the demons lead him step by step, until eventually the person sinks into mental illness. In this state, the demons can control the person’s mind and body. The only way to avoid the onset of such a demonic attack is the recitation of the full order of the nighttime *Shema Yisrael tefilla*.

Rav Fatiya explains the difference between angelic dreams and demonic dreams as follows. An angelic dream is a message dream. Therefore, during the dream the dreamer will remain calm and reposed, almost unemotional, regardless of what is seen. The dreamer will watch the dream vision like watching a film, while the image’s inner meanings will somehow be imprinted on his mind. Upon awakening, the dreamer is not frightened or alarmed. Although he is perplexed about what to do next, the next step always seems to become manifest. Such was the case with Pharaoh. After he awoke from his dream, he knew he needed it interpreted. Intuitively, he felt that the interpretations his wise men were giving him were all wrong. He knew something was missing. Only then did his cupbearer speak to Pharaoh about Yosef. Pharaoh had never heard of Yosef to that

day. Yet, that day forever changed the lives of both men and both nations. *Hashem* gave Pharaoh his dreams. *Hashem* inflicted Pharaoh’s wise men with stupidity. *Hashem* brought Yosef to Egypt, made him a dream master and brought him before Pharaoh, all in accordance with the Divine plan.

A demonic dream takes on a different form. During a demonic dream, a person feels great agitation. He may feel a weight on his chest as if someone is sitting on him. The dream images are confusing and blurry. No clear mental message is received. He awakens with feelings of anxiety and panic. He feels an inner conviction toward a certain course of action, yet no logical or permissible means avail themselves. The person is then led to believe that his family, friends or community is holding back from him some form of “unmanifest destiny”. The forces of evil then return in dreams to confuse the person even further, making him suspicious of others around him. Eventually, paranoia sets in and is soon followed by schizophrenia. All this occurred because the person opened himself to foreign outside influences without first being on a proper level of *kedusha* (holiness) to defend himself. (*Minchas Yehuda*)

www.Ravshimon.com/tzadikim/showz.php?p=fatiyah.htm

A Story of Possession - The Evil Soul of the False Messiah Shabsai Tzvi Strikes from Beyond the Grave ~ Copyright © 1995 by Ariel Bar Tzadok. All rights reserved.

Introduction

Rav Yehuda Fatiya was truly a remarkable man, a master Mekubol, as the following story will show. This rendering is more of a paraphrased translation than literal. I sometimes changed tenses, and added a needed word that is implied (but not in) the original text. I have chosen this format to bring this piece to you so that you can get the feel of the original flow that the piece has to it.

There are many lessons within this episode. Those who work today with *Yichudim* and exorcisms rely heavily on Rav Yehuda's work as a guide to how to recognize spirits and how to deal with them once they have been identified. This episode unfortunately is not unique. Demonic possession is not limited to the realm of the horror film. Whenever we as Jews violate the *mitzvos*, we become open to spiritual-psychic attack. I offer this translation so as to open the eyes of those who do not see. Remember, this story is real. We have an insider's view of what happened. Know that a lot of stories going on around us today are similar to this one. Armed with the knowledge this episode will provide, you may become more aware of what is really going on in the hearts and minds of those around us. May Hashem bless and protect his people *Eretz Yisrael* from all our enemies, seen and unseen, corporeal and non-corporeal. *Amen!*



HoRuchos Mesaperos – The Spirits Speak

On Monday, the 22nd of Kislev 5663, a man named Reuven *ben Moshe Mani ben Rahama* came to me. He was possessed by a spirit named David Yohana. While I was yet working with him, another man, Yehezkel Ezra *ben Yisrael* came to me. His family name is Bakhur. He said to me that for a number of years evil thoughts would pop into his head as though from nowhere. During the silent *Amida tefilla*, or during *Kaddish* or *Kedusha*, he would hear a voice within him saying, "Give up your religion, convert and become a Christian" (G-d forbid).

These thoughts were so powerful that they would disturb his concentration, preventing him from answering the *Kaddish* or *Kedusha*. It had not been twenty years since he had gone to Rav Yosef Chaim (the *Ben Ish Chai*) who sent a letter to Rav Eliyahu Mani in Chevron. The response was that (Bakhur) had a great

klipah (evil shells/husks) within his heart, and that he (Rav Mani) could not help him.

The *Ben Ish Chai* consulted with me at that time and told me to write a *mezuzah*, and prescribed that Bakhur should wear it over his heart. This, however, had no effect. Therefore he had returned to me to inquire whether he had a spirit within him. Being that Bakhur was an honest, G-d-fearing man, I consented to his request. I started to perform *Yichudim* (Unifications, a specific form of Jewish meditation in Kabbalistic Jewish mysticism, especially denoting the complete meditative method developed by the *Arizal*) by his ear, the *Yichudim* used against spirits. Thus the breath of the *Yichud* enters into his ear, and then into his organs, for the breath of the *Yichud* disturbs the breath of the spirit.

While I was reciting the *Yichudim* into his ear, Bakhur started to laugh. I asked him what he was laughing about; he answered and said that he can almost hear another person inside himself, and he is very viciously cursing you, saying this one's Rav, Yosef Chaim (the *Ben Ish Chai*) advised you to wear a *mezuzah*, he should take the *mezuzah* and place it up his *Bais HaBoshes* (the embarrassing place) (G-d forbid). Now his *talmid* has become the Rav. He is only half of his Rav, Yosef Chaim. In this way did the spirit curse me and mock me.

Upon hearing all this, I returned to recite *Yichudim* by his ear numerous times, without interruption, until such a time that the spirit was cursing, twisting and turning within Bakhur's heart. But I would not pay the spirit any mind. In the end Bakhur inquired of the spirit within him, and he said, "Ask Yehuda what he wants from me."

I said to him, "I want to know from what city you come and what is your name. I want you to tell me the absolute truth. If you lie to me, I will show you what I can do by placing severe punishments and sufferings upon you."

The spirit answered Bakhur saying,

"There have been a number of people like Yehuda who tried to get me to reveal my name, but they weren't able to get anything from me. I am stronger than stone. I do not open up to just anyone."

I said to the spirit, "If so, I will continue to try, and we will see who will be successful in the end. If you are truly a strong spirit and are accustomed to sufferings, then prepare yourself to suffer the travails of the the *Yichudim*, for they are like an unquenchable flame, and they are more painful then hell itself; for I will not leave you alone until you truthfully tell me your name and whence you came. You will suffer all this pain for nothing, because you do not submit to me. You are causing all this suffering to fall upon you, and not me."

I started again to recite *Yichudim* by Bakhur's ear as I did previously; I also blew the *Shofar* close to his ear with the meditations that are appropriate for this.

Bakhur started to scream. "Enough, enough!! I surrender."

The spirit now wanted to tell me his name and place of origin. Yet I wasn't ready to listen. For I know it is the way of the spirits to be like Pharaoh; they only surrender for a moment, then go back to being stiff-necked. Therefore I decided to show the spirit the power of the Holy Names.

Only when I was finished with the *Yichudim* was the spirit tired and worn down, and asked me to give him time to relax from his travails.

Afterward, the spirit asked me, "Why do you seek to know my name and place of origin? Why do you need to know this?"

I said to the spirit, "So that I can rectify your soul and allow you to ascend to the Garden of Eden, so that you won't suffer from being earthbound anymore."

The spirit said, "This is not possible, not for you or for your rectifications. I do not wish to go to the Garden of Eden."

I said to the spirit, "Again you challenge me?" I brought my mouth close to Bakhur's ear so as to again recite the *Yichudim*. The spirit then screamed within Bakhur's mind, and said he would reveal his name.

He said his name was Dovid *ben Savti ben Rivka* from the city of Izmir (Turkey). He said that he was an apostate and that he had slept with gentile women, and that he left no children, and that he had possessed Bakhur some seventeen years earlier.

The spirit then asked why I had flipped the world over on him. He said, "I have never hurt (Bakhur) or caused him any harm, and if you are so concerned about these insignificant thoughts, I will be careful from now on not to cause him evil thoughts. Just leave me here in my place, for if I were to leave, where would I go? Where would I find rest?"

Bakhur said to the spirit, "Go to *Gehinnom*."

The spirit answered, "I am not yet worthy to enter into *Gehinnom*, for I am guilty of sleeping with a menstrual woman, a gentile woman, and a prostitute. Please don't go again to Yehuda, for I can't stand it. Let me stay here in my place, and I will not bother you further."

All these things did the spirit speak within Bakhur's mind, and he (Bakhur) would speak them to me. Being that I really didn't want to deal with spirits, I made a condition with the spirit. If he would return and place evil thoughts in Bakhur's mind, I would set my hand against him.

Only a few short days had passed when the spirit returned to his evil ways and brought evil thoughts into Bakhur's mind. Bakhur came to me and related what was happening.

I started to recite *Yichudim* by his ear. I commanded the spirit that this time to truthfully tell me his name, for the angel who oversees the *Yichudim* had already revealed to me the spirit's name and place

of origin. (This frightened the spirit.) I told the spirit that I would continue to recite a number of *Yichudim* by Bakhur's ear until he revealed to me his name, just as the angel had told it to me.

The spirit was very disturbed by this, and he said his name was Tzvi, and that his mother's name was Rivka, and that he was from Izmir. I commanded him to tell me the truth; for initially the spirit said his name was Dovid *ben Savti*, and now he said his name was Tzvi.

I asked him outright, "Aren't you none other than the notorious Shabsai Tzvi from Izmir, who made himself to be a messiah?"

The spirit answered that this was the truth. I asked him, "If so, you died in the year 1666; it has not been 237 years from your death. Tell me where you have reincarnated until now? How were you judged?"

The spirit answered me mockingly, "Even if you get for yourself enough paper to write a book and enough pens (I will not tell you), for these things are none of your business. Now, you are late for your class in the *Yeshiva*. Your *talmidim* are awaiting you, they are looking for you. How much time will you waste, delaying here with me?"

I saw that what he said was true. I arose and left for the *Yeshiva*. I decided I would finish this work tomorrow. While in the *Yeshiva* I met Rav Shimon Aharon Agasi; I related to him this matter of Shabsai Tzvi, and how he had possessed the soul of Bakhur. Rav Shimon went and told these things to Rav Yosef Chaim (the *Ben Ish Chai*). Together they warned me not to continue with Shabsai Tzvi, fearing he would hurt me, G-d forbid.

The next day, Bakhur came to me, and I started *Yichudim* for Shabsai Tzvi. From within Bakhur, Shabsai Tzvi began again to curse me with awful curses. Bakhur would tell me all.

I stopped the *Yichudim*, and started

to speak gently to the spirit, words that would touch his heart. I spoke with him, saying, "Let me ask you some questions: What is my strife with you? Do you think that I wish to take revenge for what you did when you were alive?"

The spirit answered that he did not think this. I asked him, "Do you really think my intent with these *Yichudim* is to cause you harm so that I will receive a Heavenly reward for my endeavors with Bakhur?"

The spirit said, "It's not that."

I said, "For Bakhur is a poor man, he cannot pay me for my services. Why then do you think I am troubling myself taking time away from my learning, if not for the sake of your soul? For is it still not a spark from G-d above? Can it not shine like the most brilliant pearl? It is only due to sin that you have fallen. The Holy One, blessed by He, is above all, and the Source of all. It is by His design that you entered into Bakhur's body, so that by such, your soul would have a limit and end to its sufferings by the work I am doing with you. I am making the endeavors to rectify you. What then is my sin, my blemish, that you curse me with all these horrible curses?"

The spirit said to me, "I can't stand the sufferings of the *Yichudim*."

I said to him, "It is the way of the world that if a person is sick from an illness deep inside the body, the doctor has to open up the body in order to remove the cause of the illness. Even if this causes much pain, the person suffers it so that he can get well. He doesn't curse the doctor. As for me, it is not my way to discuss things in such depth with the spirits, for the vast majority of them are quite ignorant, and can't tell the difference between what is good for them and what is bad. However, I know what I know. I know that you are a very learned individual. You know how to judge for yourself what is for your own good and what is not. Therefore, I am correct in what I am doing with you, and your curses can have no effect upon me; for

I know that your soul does not truly wish to curse me. It is the *klippa* that surrounds you that is forcing you to act thus. Therefore, I forgive your soul.” These were my words with Shabsai Tzvi that I spoke with kindness and respect (toward him). Rav Yosef Chaim and Rav Shimon Agasi had both told me to be aggressive with him.

When I finished my words, the spirit answered me in the words of a wise man. “I will not conceal from you a thing. For even though I suffer from the *Yichudim*, like a man who has wounds in the flesh, and along comes the doctor who covers the wounds with vinegar and salt, until it can hurt no more; yet, when the *Yichud* is finished, I do feel that my flesh has softened, and that the wounds are healing. I feel at ease. And now, I agree with your path. I want you to perform *Yichudim* upon me. And even if I jump or scream, pay no attention to my pain, for I scream due to the tremendous pain.”

I told him that this was still not enough. “When a person becomes drunk, and stumbles around, falling into a pit of mud, he cries out to those passing by to help him up. It goes without saying that the one in the mud helps those helping him to pull him out of the mud. He doesn’t depend on them to do all the work. In relation to this I ask you not to place your full burden upon me. I will work to remove the *klippa* from surrounding you on the outside, but you must make the efforts to remove your *klippa* from within yourself. *Hashem* will help us both.”

The spirit answered, “Yes. Yes, let’s do it and prosper.”

I started performing a number of *Yichudim*, and the spirit would scream horrible screams. Yet I would not pay attention to his screams until I was exhausted from performing the *Yichudim*. The spirit also was tired and exhausted from all his travails. It was not able to speak anything for a good amount of time.

After this I asked the spirit if the

Yichudim had helped rectify him. The spirit said, “Yes, yes, your honor, I feel that the weight of the *klippa* is lighter upon me.”

I then asked him, “How thick is the *klippa* that is left upon you?” The spirit answered, “Without exaggeration, it is at least two feet thick.”

I asked him, “I have one question to ask you: tell me, does the ball of the sun revolve around the earth, or is it stationary in the heavens, or it is suspended in the air of this world?”

The spirit answered me, “Do you wish for me to enter my head between the great mountains (meaning the souls of the *Talmudic* Sages, dwelling above) so that they will crush my head? What you find written in the books, learn. I have no business in these matters.”

I asked the spirit a number of other questions, yet here I will only write the answers that were given to me, and from the answers I’m sure that you will understand what the questions were.

The spirit continued, “I am he, Shabsai Tzvi. My death was by hanging. I did not repent of my sins. I was buried in a gentile cemetery. While I was yet alive the *klippa* would materialize before my eyes. They are what caused me to become evil. I did not keep myself in holiness. [The spirit told me that] he had reincarnated numerous times that cannot be counted. He merited to achieve the levels of *nefesh* and *ruach*. When the *neshoma* started to manifest within him is when it happened what happened. Now he acknowledges that Moshe, our teacher, upon him be peace, is true, and that his prophecy is true, and that his *Torah* is true. Yet all this will bear him (the spirit) no fruits; for being that he is dead, he is not obligated to observe the *mitzvos* (*Shabbos* 30a). The merits he had earned from any *mitzvos* that he did perform are already gone.

[At this point, Rav Yehuda inserts this side note: Evil spirits can only speak in the heart, but not in the mouth. I give

witness to this. In 1914 a virgin woman came to me who was then thirty-five years old. She was blind in both her eyes. She had reincarnated within her the soul of a *Rav* that was of my generation, whom I had known very well.

With all this, he would only speak within her heart and not within her mouth, even though she was blind. She did not study *Torah*, and this *Rav* was attracted to her while he was still alive. Even now he was trying to get her commit a sexual sin with another *Rav*, saying that from their union would the Messiah be born. Yet, she did not listen at all to his voice. After performing *Yichudim* and making efforts, the identity of this *Rav* was made known to me, as well as the fact that he had desired her...This then is the reason why the spirits speak only in the heart, and not in the mouth. They do not want to be recognized. This way they can be mocking and maligning.

In *Sha'ar HaGilgulim* 22, 22A, it is written, "When one reincarnates in a person, it is done in one of two ways. The first deals with the souls of the wicked, who after their deaths are not even worthy to enter into *Gehinnom* (hell) – they enter into the bodies of living persons here in this world. The second manner is when a soul impregnates a person by what is called an *ibbur*. This soul bonds (with the living person) in great secrecy. Thus, if that person then commits a sin, the incarnated soul within can then overpower the soul of that person whom they are inhabiting, and cause that person to sin further and to deceive it into going in an evil direction. Until here are the words of the *Sha'ar HaGilgulim*. It is possible that what the *Rav* (the *Arizal*) meant here when he referred to the souls who "bond (with the living person) in great secrecy" is that they do this for the reason mentioned above, so that they will be recognized, and thus they will be free to mock and otherwise trouble the public.]

Let us return to our subject. With

regards to Bakhur, he was the reincarnation of the *ruach* (aspect of the soul of Shabsai Tzvi). The *nefesh* aspect was still living in an animal in the forest. It did not want to be in this place, nor did it want to ever reincarnate in the body of a Jew. It wanted to stay in the forest. (Regarding Shabsai Tzvi), he was thirty-five years old when he died. I asked him a number of other questions that he did not want to answer me, for he was still encased in a *klippa* two feet thick.

After five days, I again spoke with the spirit in a softer tone, and I saw that he had relented tremendously. He was actually remorseful over the sins that he had done. He was now very anxious for me to try to complete his rectification. He now abundantly blessed me and the members of my family. He said he wasn't saying all this (talk about repentance) for my sake, but rather because it was true.

(He told me) that his first sin was that he had fallen victim to committing adultery. And that it is true what they say about him, that he had had a homosexual affair while he was wrapped in his *tallis* and *tefillin*. He even once sent a young man to have an illicit adulterous affair with his own wife Sora, telling the boy what was written in the *Torah*, "All that Sora says to you, listen to her."

After his death he was punished with demonic beatings for twelve years. Until now he had always reincarnated into wild animals. Being in Bakhur was his first time possessing a human. He then explained to me why he was able to enter into Bakhur to possess him, the reason being that once Bakhur, when a young man, gave a young girl a (forbidden) kiss.

This Bakhur did thirty years ago. Prior to this, the spirit said, he would hang around Bakhur's proximity, because Bakhur was from the same source soul as he, the spirit, was. (The teachings referencing this are in *Sefer HaLikutim*, *Yirmiyohu* 8:14)...For the sake of one

forbidden kiss was an opening created for the spirit to come in and possess Bakhur. Yet the spirit is judged (and punished) every Friday, from the second hour of the day through the fourth hour and a half. The spirit told me that he is punished alongside the spirit of Yeshu *HaNotzri* in boiling feces. Regarding myself, the spirit told me, that I am here reincarnated for the second time, and that fifteen years ago I merited to receive the *ruach* level of soul. The spirit said that it was *Hashem* who brought him to me, in order for me to rectify him.

Regarding Bakhur, he must learn *Zohar* every day, in the early hours of the predawn morning, as well as after his meal, for the sake of the elevation of the soul of Shabsai Tzvi *ben Rivka*. He must go to the *mikve* every day. He must not be concerned with the evil thoughts that pop up in his mind. And when they do pop up, he should recite the *pasuk*: *Rochash libi dovor tov* – “My heart is astir with a good thing” (*Tehillim* 45:2) and meditate upon the holy Name *resh ches shin*.” Also meditate upon the holy Name *Kibel Rinat Ameycha* (*KRA STN* – tear the *Soton*) and the evil thoughts will be nullified.

From that day onward, the spirit of Shabsai Tzvi would request of Bakhur that he study more and more *Zohar* every day,

more than the day before, even if this meant taking time out from making a living. When it came to going into the *mikve*, the spirit would cause Bakhur to hurry so fast that he would almost fall down the stairs into the water. The spirit would also awaken him every morning early, in time for *tefilla*.

The spirit also requested of me that I should recite *Yichudim* for him every day into Bakhur’s ear, including the blowing of the *Shofar*. The spirit thought that by doing all this maybe he would merit to enter *Gehinnom*.

I asked the spirit when he would leave Bakhur. He told me not to ask. When he was ready to enter into *Gehinnom* he would leave Bakhur, without having to be asked. And in truth, this is the way it was. For after a few days, Bakhur was no longer being disturbed in his sleep, I examined him and found no traces of the spirit of Shabsai Tzvi. Thus ends a true story of demonic possession, what caused it and what efforts need be made to rectify such a terrible situation. Let us all learn from this a lesson, to safeguard and protect ourselves. Evil surrounds us. It can only be neutralized by the good within us. And there is no good but *Torah*, the word of the living G-d.



Rav Shmuel Tzvi Hirsch Horowitz,

“Reb Hershele” of Spinka



Reb Hershele was the son of Rav Avrohom Abish Horowitz (1897–1944), Kruler *Rav* and son-in-law of Rav Yitzchok



Isaac Weiss (1875–1944), much adored Spinka *Rebbe* and *mechaber* of *Chakal Yitzchok*; son of Rav Yosef Meir Weiss

(1838–1909), founding Spinka *Rebbe* and *mechaber* of *Imrei Yosef*. Reb Hershele served his grandfather as personal attendant, attending to him twenty-four hours a day, sleeping in the same room. Rav Avrohom Abish and Rav Yitzchok Isaac were murdered in the Holocaust. Reb Hershele lost both his parents and grandfather.

In 1947, Reb Hershele arrived in America and settled on the Lower East Side, establishing a *Bais Medrash* on East 7th Street. His piety drew many adherents and, in 1961, he moved his *Bais Medrash* to Keap Street in Williamsburg. That *Bais Medrash* endures to this very day. Hundreds of people beleaguered his doorstep daily, seeking his advice and blessing. Sadly, the *Torah* flame people knew as Reb Hershele burned its last on Friday night, *Shabbos Re'eh*, 27th of Av,

August 29, 1997, collapsing while saying *Divrei Torah* during his holy *tisch*, in the presence of his *Chassidim*. Thus was a holy personality taken from within our midst.

Reb Hershele was succeeded by five sons. They are: Rav Yissochor Dov Berish Horowitz (*niftar* 2007), late Spinka *Rebbe* of Williamsburg, eldest son of Reb Hershele Spinka. Rav Yissochor Dov Berish was succeeded by his eldest son, Rav Yosef Meir Horowitz, Spinka *Rebbe* in Williamsburg; Rav Avrohom Abish Horowitz, *Bais Yitzchok Isaac Spinka Rebbe* in Williamsburg; Rav Yitzchok Isaac Horowitz, *Toldos Zvi Spinka Rebbe* in Williamsburg; Rav Nuta Horowitz, *Bais Avrohom Spinka Rebbe* in Boro Park; and Rav Naftoli Horowitz, *Krula Rebbe* of Williamsburg, all of whom nobly carry on with pious devotion to Heaven as their father taught by example.



Rav Meshulom Feish HaLevi Lowy, 27th of Menachem Av

Tosher *Rebbe*

I have very fond memories of the *Rebbe* and have tremendous *hakoras hatov* for the *chessed* and love he bestowed upon me among the many other thousands of people he saw and helped. The *Rebbe* guided me and I learned a tremendous amount from his *derech*. He also shepherded me to my current *Rebbe*, whom I personally heard him call 'Mordechai HaTzaddik'.

One of the last times I saw him was on a *Motzo'ei Shabbos* in Fort Lauderdale, Florida when I was asked to walk with him for his daily 'exercise'. The *Rebbe* held onto my arm and while we walked he stopped and asked me for a story of a *Tzaddik l'kovod Melave Malka*. I repeated the famous story of Rav Mendele M'Riminov, that once the *Tzaddik* needed money to marry off a bride whose parents had passed away. After knocking on numerous doors, Rav Mendele saw he was still very short of his goals.

While walking home late at night, he noticed the tailor's light was still on and decided to visit him. The tailor was honored that the *Rebbe* had come to him and after the *Rebbe* explained his plight, the tailor asked, "How much money in total does the *Rebbe* need?"

The *Rebbe* said, "Two thousand gold coins."

The tailor went into his safe and removed two thousand gold coins and told the *Rebbe* as follows: "I scrimped and saved for the last two years in order to buy a new machine to make my work easier, but how can I keep it for myself when I see the *Rebbe* and an orphaned bride in pain!"

The
Rebbe was



overwhelmed and proceeded to bless this *Tzaddik* of a tailor and wished him among other things that he should be blessed with riches.

The *Rebbe's* blessings came to fruition and the tailor became phenomenally wealthy. When Rav Mendele once went to visit his *Rebbe*, Rebbe Reb Elimelech, his *Rebbe* (who saw this episode with his holy eyes) took Rav Mendele to task, asking how he had permission to grant such phenomenal wealth to one person.

Rav Mendele explained, "*Rebbe*, I only wished upon him to become a regular wealthy man. However, this tailor gives of his heart and money without any *cheshbon* (calculations) – so in Heaven they also gave and continue to give to him without any *cheshbon*!!"

The Tosher *Rebbe* stopped in his tracks and craned his head to look at me and gave me a wonderful smile.

The story of Rav Mendele epitomizes the essence of the Tosher *Rebbe*. He was one of the last links to the previous generation.

One quick story:

A wealthy *Yid* once came to the *Rebbe's Purim tisch*. When he took leave of the *Rebbe*, the *Rebbe* asked him numerous questions about *tzedoka* issues. During their conversation, this wealthy man mentioned to the *Rebbe* that he would be traveling to Rebbe Reb Elimelech's *kever* for the *Yahrzeit*.

The *Rebbe* then made a request. He knew of a descendant of Rebbe Reb Elimelech who was getting married soon – and would this wealthy fellow mind collecting money for this cause on the plane to Poland. The man replied that it made him feel a bit uncomfortable; couldn't he just write out a check for any amount the Tosher *Rebbe* requested? The *Rebbe* refused and insisted that he personally collect a sum of money and that it could not come from the wealthy man's pocket.

Having no choice, the man did as he was asked and collected quite a bit of money for the cause. After arriving back in the U.S., this fellow received a call in middle of the night (par for the course) from the Tosher *Rebbe*, asking him if he could please bring the *tzedoka* money to Rebbe Reb Elimelech's descendant. The *Rebbe* was adamant that he should drop off the money that morning. The fellow did as the *Rebbe* asked.

Later that day, this wealthy man's child was crossing the street when he saw a dog and froze in middle of the street, as a result of which, *l'o*, he got hit by a bus and was trapped under the bus's axle. After extricating the child, it was determined that the child's scan showed he had brain damage. The father frantically called the Tosher *Rebbe* for a *berocha* and the *Rebbe* replied, "If you dropped off the money, then nothing will be wrong with your child!"

Tzaddik gozer v'HaKodosh Boruch Hu mekayeim... After several days the child was released from the hospital with nary a broken bone.

Later on when he made a *seudas hado'a* at the Toshe *Rebbe*, the *Rebbe* told everyone present that this wasn't his *mofeis*; he just saw a calamity befalling the *Yid* and was looking for some kind of *zechus* to save him. The *Rebbe* knew that Rebbe Reb Elimelech promised to intercede before *Hashem* on behalf of anyone who helps his children. That is why this wealthy fellow could not give the money from his pocket and had to go collecting and get a bit embarrassed – because only through some hardship would it force this *nes*.

I personally know the fellow from this story and have seen this child and can attest he is completely healed.

Let us remember this story when we get bombarded for *tzedoka* on the *Yomim Noro'im* and are fortunate to be on the other side of the door. It is with a bit of

difficulty and adversity that we can 'force' the *yeshua*!!!

On the eve of *Rosh Chodesh Elul*, may *Hashem* accept our *tefillos* quickly – may the *Rebbe* be a *meilitz yosher* for *Klal Yisrael* and may we all be *zoche* to a personal and collective *geula*, *Amen*!!

Zechuso Yogein Oleinu!!



The *Torah* world was plunged into mourning on the 27th of *Menachem Av* 5775 with the petira of the Toshi *Rebbe*, Rav Meshulom Feish Lowy, at the age of ninety-three.

One of the eldest and most venerated *Rebbes* of the generation, the Toshi *Rebbe* was frequently hospitalized in recent years. Since *Adar* 5768/2008, when he contracted severe pneumonia, his health had been in a state of decline.

Communities all over the Jewish world *davened* fervently for his recovery, and the name Rav Meshulom Feish *ben Tzirel* was constantly on the lips of those who admired him, as his health fluctuated over the past years.

Several weeks after the pneumonia, the *Rebbe* recovered and returned home to Tosh, in Canada, although very weak. When he appeared in the *Bais Medrash* that *Purim*, the *Chassidim* cried with joy at what was seen as a medical miracle.

Two weeks ago the *Rebbe* attended the marriage of his great-granddaughter. Yesterday his condition deteriorated drastically; he was classified as critical and his family was summoned. In the afternoon hours, he was *niftar*.

The *Rebbe* was born in 5682/1922 in the village of Nirtosh, known as Tosh to the Jewish population. His parents were Rav Mordechai Segal Lowy, the eldest son of Rav Elimelech of Tosh, and Rebbetzin Tzirel, the daughter of Rav Yaakov Fekete of Nirbator.

In 5690/1930, his father was

appointed *Rav* of nearby Demetcher.

At the age of twelve, the *Rebbe* traveled to Kalov, to the *Yeshiva* headed by his great-uncle, the *Rav* of the city, Rav Menachem Braude, the *Be'er Menachem*. At that young age he was noted for his *hasmoda* and devotion to his learning and was recognized as an *iluy*.

On the 23rd of *Kislev* 5703/1943, his grandfather passed away, and his father, Rav Mordechai, was appointed *Rebbe*.

In 1943, the *Rebbe* was drafted to the forced labor brigades in Hungary and sent to camps in Koschitz and Margita. The overseers treated him as if he were crazy, because of his piety, and that made it possible for him to maintain a religious lifestyle.

In March 1944, Hungary was captured by the Germans. In April, the Jews of the region were assembled, among them the members of the Lowy family, into the Nirgehaze ghetto, and from there they were sent to Auschwitz. Most of the *Rebbe's* extended family perished there, and his father, the *Rebbe*, was murdered on *Rosh Chodesh Elul* 5704/1944.

After the Red Army entered Margita, the *Rebbe* was released from the labor camp. He then traveled to Arad, Mako and finally to Kleinwardein.

In 5706/1946 he married Rebbetzin Chava, the daughter of Rav Yehuda Weingarten of Yerushalayim, a descendant of the *Rebbe* Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk.



He was appointed by the survivors of Toshi *Chassidus* to serve as the *Rebbe* in Nirgehaze, where he stayed for two and a half years. He served there as a *Dayan* on the special *Bais Din* that helped *agunos* remarry after the war. At that point, fear of the communist regime led him to instruct

his community to leave the country.

After two years in Austria, in *Adar* 5711/1951 the *Rebbe* arrived in America. He first lived in Williamsburg, and later moved to Montreal, Canada, where his older brother, Reb Chaim Yosef, lived. Their sister, Fraidel, the wife of Rav Shmuel Meir Leifer, also survived the war.

As soon as he arrived in Montreal, the *Rebbe* decided to establish his community outside the city in order to avoid the influences of the outside world.

In 5723/1963, the *Rebbe* established a Chassidic neighborhood named Kiryas Tosh in the Boisbriand suburb, about thirty kilometers from Montreal. Over the years many *Chassidim* flocked to him, and there are also Tosher communities in Brooklyn, Monroe, London, *Eretz Yisrael* and Belgium.

A full range of institutions was established in Tosh, including schools for boys and girls, a *Yeshiva Gedola* and *Yeshiva Ketana*, and anything else a Jewish community needs. Today, some four hundred families live there.

The Tosher *Rebbe* loved peace and harmony and would pursue it; he avoided discord like fire. He was known for his *Ahavas Yisrael* and disbursed tremendous sums for *tzedoka*. He was admired by all, and people from across the spectrum streamed to his court. Thousands of *Chassidim* from the United States and Canada, from *Eretz Yisrael* and from Europe, visited him regularly, especially for *Shabbosos* and *Yomim Tovim*, to witness his holy visage and to



receive a *berocha* from him. Among those who came were many *Chassidim* of other courts, as well as *Litvishe Yidden*, businessmen, *Sefardim* and *Ashkenazim*.

The *Rebbe's Avodas HaKodesh* was carried out with tremendous *mesirus nefesh*, the *Chassidim* relate, and note that until his final days he made sure to complete the entire *Sefer Tehillim* every day, no matter what. He spent most of his day *davening*, as each *tefilla* took many hours. Only after an exhausting *Maariv* did he allow himself to eat something — a meal that was breakfast, lunch and supper in one.

His *Divrei Torah* and stories were printed in the *seforim Avodas Avoda*.

The *Rebbe* was widowed on the 21st of *Elul* 5756/1996 of his Rebbetzin Chava. He subsequently married Rebbetzin Malka Lowy.

On the 18th of *Teves* 5758, the *Rebbe's* eldest son, Rav Mordechai, son-in-law of Rav Yechezkele Mertz, was *niftar* at the age of fifty. The *petira* occurred in the middle of *Shacharis*, when Rav Mordechai was saying *Krias Shema*. Since it was on a Friday, the *Rebbe* carried on his *avoda* throughout *Shabbos* as if all were regular, to the astonishment of the *Chassidim*.

The *Rebbe's* other son, Rav Elimelech serves as the *Rav* of Kiryas Tosh. His surviving daughters are Rebbetzin Tzirel Fish, Rebbetzin Fradel Katz, and Rebbetzin Sossie Kahana. The *Rebbe's* daughter, Rebbetzin Berocha Chana Mayer, predeceased him.

The *Rebbe* is also survived by many grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Zechuso yogevin oleinu.

www.hamodia.com/2015/08/12/the-tosher-rebbe-zya-harav-meshulem-feish-lowy/



Rav Avrohom Yaakov HaKohen Pam, 28th of Menachem Av

Rosh Yeshiva of Torah V'Daas

The Majesty of Man

By: Rav Mordechai Kamenetsky

How do you capture the essence of an elderly man, stricken with a devastating and – ultimately – fatal disease, who insists on attending a fundraising event, having to be brought by ambulance and stretcher? With every last ounce of his failing strength he dressed in his Shabbos finery and left his home for the sake of ten thousand children he had never seen with his eyes but had touched with his heart and soul.

How do you write believable stories of a man who would cry bitter tears when hearing the plight of individuals in need?

How do you convey the essence of a person whose *mesiras nefesh* (self-sacrifice) for *Torah* transcended the constraints of his aged and stricken body?

No one who was privileged to meet Rav Avrohom Pam, the *Rosh Yeshiva* (dean) of Brooklyn's *Yeshiva Torah V'Daas*, will ever forget the warm smile that sparkled for every person: the strong or weak, rich or poor, observant or those searching to find the correct path.



In the Beginning

Rav Pam was appointed a *Maggid Shiur* (*Talmudic* lecturer) in *Torah V'Daas* in 1939. With secularism running rampant even in the Orthodox community, motivating young Jewish American boys to follow their spiritual heritage in those days was a daunting challenge. But the future *Rosh Yeshiva* excelled in doing just that. To him, every *talmid* was a world unto himself.

Once, one of Rav Pam's *talmidim* was caught secretly studying math during a *Gemora* class. The *talmid* explained that he was afraid that he had not mastered the

subject and was going to fail a test. Instead of taking offense at the slight, Rav Pam assured the boy that if he would study the day's *Gemora* lesson with diligence, then he himself would tutor him after class. Math, as it just so happened, was an area of the *Rav's* expertise.

Rav Pam's *talmidim* were truly like his children. Rav Moshe Francis, a founder of the Chicago Community *Kollel*, which has had a major impact on the strengthening of Jewish observance and scholarship in the Midwest, remembers that he was once speaking with Rav Pam at a wedding when someone asked, "Is this your son?"

Rav Pam did not hesitate. "*K'ben*," he responded. "Like a son."



Life Partner

In 1943, Rav Pam married Sora Balmuth. Although Rav Pam often expressed his gratitude for having chosen the right path in life, there was one choice that he forever emphasized to his *talmidim*, in a manner exceeding any other. He always expressed great gratitude to the Creator for having merited a *Rebbetzin* who tended to his every need, enabling him to pursue a life filled with divine service and *Torah* study.

The *Rebbetzin* put order to the thousands of requests for appointments, advice and letters of approbation. Rav Pam constantly expressed his gratitude for her ever-present care and concern, not only for the physical amenities of his daily life, but for enabling him to grow in spirituality as well.

The *Rosh Yeshiva's* emphasis on the importance of mutual respect in marriage found expression in his gentle reminders to *talmidim* to celebrate their wedding

anniversaries every year, and without fail.

When Yosi Heber, a close *talmid* of Rav Pam, became engaged, the *Rosh Yeshiva* was one of the first to be called with the good news. Immediately, Yosi was asked if a date had been set for the wedding. It was August 22. “Why, that’s my anniversary!” exclaimed the *Rosh Yeshiva*. “It will be easy to remember!” Not one to forget an important date or miss an opportunity, Rav Heber made it his practice to send out an anniversary card to Rav Pam and his *Rebbetzin* every year thereafter. As the years passed, he made a point of sharing his *nachas*, joy, with the Pams and included a picture of the children as each addition to his family arrived.

In Rav Pam’s final year, the card was sent out a bit early. During *shiva* (the seven-day period of mourning) the *Rebbetzin* motioned to Rav Yosi Heber, that she had something to tell him.

“I wanted you to know that I mentioned to Rav Pam on Tuesday, that I received your anniversary card. I took it to the hospital and read it to the *Rosh Yeshiva* and he reacted to it. It was the last time he reacted to anything!”

A small, inconsequential thing like an anniversary when used correctly can become another solid brick in the foundation of a marriage and the development of future generations. This was another aspect of the *Rosh Yeshiva*’s ability to take the small and commonplace things in life and elevate them to tools of greatness.

Well after midnight, after the devastating news of the *Rosh Yeshiva*’s passing reached the world, some of Rav Pam’s closest *talmidim* made their way to the house to join the *Rebbetzin* and offer whatever solace they could. Upon entering the house, they were shocked to discover the *Rebbetzin* at work on her ironing board. To their astonishment, she responded, “I am simply ironing Rav Pam’s

tallis and *kittel* for the burial tomorrow. I know it’s late at night, but this is my last chance to honor him.”



The Quintessential Humble Man

Rav Pam never wore the traditional frock (Prince Albert coat) of a *Rosh Yeshiva* and always wore a simple fedora, not a Hamburg or up-brim hat, as most *Yeshiva* deans wear.

Rav Pam would leave his hat in the public cloakroom of *Mesivta Torah V'Daas*, alongside those of his *talmidim*. Once, he innocently took his hat, not realizing someone, obviously not knowing to whom it belonged, had mistakenly balanced his coffee mug on its back brim.

The mug immediately came flying down from the shelf, shattering in a cacophony of ceramic shards. Without hesitating, Rav Pam went to get a broom and shovel. He insisted on sweeping up the mess by himself. Then, he went to the local hardware store to get a replacement mug. He could not find the exact matching color and so he wrote a note. In his meticulously crafted expression and perfect lettering, he attached this message to the mug:

I was negligent in my actions and I shattered your mug. I have bought this one to replace it. I hope that you forgive me. In the event that this replacement does not suffice, please contact me as soon as possible to arrange compensation.

The note was signed simply: Avrohom Pam.

(Author’s note: The note from Rav Pam was cherished by the mug’s owner, much more than the replaced mug. It is framed and hangs on his wall!)

Rav Pam had learned for himself and taught others that you never lose by

keeping quiet.

Of course, that viewpoint only applied to personal honor; when it came to *Chillul Hashem*, there was never a moment of silence!

Many years ago, Rav Pam and his *Rebbetzin* made their only visit to *Eretz Yisrael* together. They stayed in Yerushalayim, but when Rav Pam visited Bnei Brak, the Ponovezh *Yeshiva* was holding its annual *Yarchei Kalla* summer program. Rav Pam saw this opportunity to sit and study in virtual anonymity, and decided to stay in the *Yeshiva* setting.

The Pams moved into the dorm specially set up for the *Yarchei Kalla* families, and for two weeks, Rav Pam sat and learned. After two weeks, he was invited to a lifecycle event in the Ponovezh Dining Room, when he saw some people whispering. Then, suddenly a distinguished man approached.

“*Torah V’Daas Rosh Yeshiva*, please sit up front at the head table.”

The next morning, realizing that his identity was compromised, he and his wife returned immediately to Yerushalayim.



Leadership

Rav Pam would lead the charge of *Torah* sages who decried improper business practices or fraudulent dealings with government agencies. He did not differentiate between stealing on an individual, institutional or governmental level. It was all prohibited and he let it be known, emphatically and insistently.

Though he was often the featured speaker at conventions of *Agudas Yisrael* and other important venues with the ears of people focused on his every word – when he left the podium, he was as always the humble giant and master of simplicity.

A *talmid* recalls how he was in a car with Rav Pam and a *talmid* his own age,

who was also named Avrohom. His stop came first and upon leaving the car he turned to his peer, wishing him, “Good night, Avrohom.”

Rav Pam, unfazed at being addressed so informally and not realizing that the message was intended for the other *talmid*, simply smiled and returned the farewell. “Good night to you, too.”



Shuvu

In 1990, when the floodgates of the Soviet Union burst open, Jewry was faced with the prospect of hundreds of thousands of souls potentially being lost to secular oblivion. Rav Avrohom Yosef Leizer son of the *Chinuch Atzmai* organization recalls years later that he was present at the annual *Agudas Yisrael* convention that year and was among those who spoke to the *Rosh Yeshiva* of the spiritual disaster facing the children.

At that year’s keynote session, Rav Pam made an impassioned plea to begin a network of schools in *Eretz Yisrael* for the children of these Russian immigrants.

That *Motzo’ei Shabbos*, he convened a meeting of the wealthy and influential participants at that year’s convention.

On the way to the meeting, he met a *talmid*, whom he would later call a “partner” and a “friend”, Rav Avrohom Biderman. He brought him along to the meeting. It was at that meeting that Shuvu was born, and then and there Rav Pam appointed Rav Avrohom Biderman as chairman.

Rav Pam lived and breathed Shuvu. It became his focus and his *nachas* over the course of the last decade of his life.

Laymen ready to donate five or ten thousand dollars to Shuvu would increase their contributions tenfold after hearing Rav Pam’s impassioned pleas.

Rav Pam would often cajole laymen

to give *tzedoka* with self-sacrifice. He once told Rav Sidney Glenner of Chicago that the challenge of the last generation was, quoting the words of the central *Shema tefilla*, *b'chol nafshecha* – giving up one's life. The challenge of this generation is *b'chol m'odecha* – giving up one's money for the causes of *Torah*.



Outlook

There were a few expressions that bothered Rav Pam. He did not like it when people would talk about the *amahliger yohren*, the good old days, when everything was so pure.

He felt that we must do our best to improve our generation without deriding it. And, if someone felt that it was once better, he did not want him lamenting the fact. Rather, he wanted to see him act in a way that would raise the level of this generation.

He stressed the need to be exacting when speaking. He asked his *talmidim* to refrain from the vernacular that infiltrated the *Yeshiva* world from the street. He felt it was unbecoming for them to express themselves in a less than articulate manner, and once told the boys that they should remove “whatchamacallit” from their vocabularies.

A close *talmid* approached him after one lecture. “What is wrong with ‘whatchamacallit’?” he asked.

“It shows you are not thinking,” he replied.

As a young man, Rav Pam was traveling home on the New Lots Avenue subway line when he spotted a five-dollar bill lying face down.

He mentioned the find to his wife, who responded, “Perhaps we can purchase a special treat with the new-found money.”

Rav Pam hesitated. “I cannot. How can we enjoy something special when there

is someone out there who is broken-hearted?”

Rav Moshe Francis, dean of Chicago's Community *Kollel*, remembers how an impoverished man came to Rav Pam toward the end of a study session in the *Yeshiva*. He closed his *Gemora*, and told his *talmid*, “This is a *mitzva* that will not be performed by anyone else here. Therefore, I must stop studying the *Torah*.”

He then excused himself and took the man home for a meal.

A man once came to Rav Pam in desperate straits. He asked the *Rosh Yeshiva* to contact certain philanthropists on his behalf. Rav Pam responded that he had just called them all for other charities. He was unable to help the man. He gave him what he could from his own money and the man left.

Less than half an hour later, the man realized he had left something in Rav Pam's study. When he came back he found Rav Pam crying over his inability to help the poor man.



Honesty

It was a late wedding and Rav Pam, who did not have a driver, was one of the last to leave. It was a blustery winter night. As no one who stayed offered him a ride, he shared a taxi with a *talmid* who later related this story:

The cab driver started to drive away from the hall when Rav Pam noticed that the man had not turned up the meter flag. The ride would therefore not be recorded into the travel log. Assuming that it was an oversight, the *Rosh Yeshiva* mentioned that the meter was not running.

“My boss,” the driver exclaimed, “he's a *ganev* (thief)! I should make a lot more than he offers me. It's okay to moonlight once in a while, even if I am on his time! Anyway, what's the difference to you? The fare is twelve bucks. Do you mind

if I keep all of it?"

Rav Pam was adamant – it was not honest.

"Listen," said the driver. "It's my way or the highway. I saw you shivering on this freezing night. I stopped. I picked you up and I'm takin' you home. Let me just do my thing. What does it bother you if I make some spare cash?"

Rav Pam sighed. "I'll tell you what. Run the meter. I will pay you double. Give your boss what is coming to him and keep the same amount for yourself."

The driver agreed. At the end of the trip the meter showed twelve dollars. Rav Pam paid him twenty-four dollars and gave him a tip of two dollars.



Every Child, an Entire World

Rav Simcha Lefkowitz, Associate Dean of *Yeshiva* of South Shore, related that a few years ago, the *Yeshiva* had to dismiss a particular talmid for an action that clearly defied the *Yeshiva's* standards and policies.

Pressure from the parenting committee and others could not influence the staff, which had thought long and hard before rendering their decision.

The young man had heard his teachers, Rav Leib Wolf, and Rav Yehuda Horowitz, constantly talk about the greatness of their *Rebbe*, Rav Pam. And so, on the slight chance that Rav Pam would hear his story, the young man called the *Rosh Yeshiva* who instructed him to come to *Torah V'Daas* an hour before *mincha*.

The boy was brought before the *Rosh Yeshiva*, where, frankly and openly, he told him what he had done and the ramifications of his actions. Rav Pam chided him strongly about his indiscretion and left him thoroughly chagrined.

Then they broke for *davening*.

Once the services ended, Rav Pam

changed his demeanor. "I see that you are truly an *ehrllicher bochur* – devout lad – and you will start anew." The boy, by now repentant and unable to speak, nodded his head and Rav Pam agreed to help.

The next day, Rav Lefkowitz was sitting in his office when the phone rang.

The soft voice on the other end of the line said, "This is Avrohom Pam." The *Rosh Yeshiva* went on to ask that the boy be returned to the *Yeshiva* despite the ramifications the administration anticipated. "It is on my head."

Rav Lefkowitz needed no cajoling. After all, he mused, it is not often that a member of the Council of Torah Sages calls on behalf of a *talmid* he has only met once in his life!

The postscript is vintage Rav Pam. The *talmid* went on to become a prized pupil in the *Yeshiva*, won the valedictory award for religious studies, and became an outstanding talmid in one of the most prestigious *Yeshivos* in *Eretz Yisrael* after he graduated from the South Shore *Mesiuta, Ateres Yaakov*.

There was once a child who was unable to advance to the next grade level, as his skills were way below that of his anticipated grade level. There was no way the principal would allow the boy to advance into first grade. The frantic mother called Rav Pam, who in turn called the principal.

"If a tutor would bring him up to grade level over the summer, would you allow him to enter first grade?" As soon as the principal agreed, Rav Pam arranged for a *talmid* of the *Yeshiva* to spend the summer learning with the child, for which Rav Pam paid from his own pocket.



At the End

Rav Pam's efforts in his final public appearance surpass any human capacity.

It took him literally two hours to dress and come to greet the gathering, all for the sake of the future of the children of Shuvu.

Though many will remember his strong demeanor, his light gait and uplifting spirit before his terrible illness, no one will ever forget his indefatigable self-sacrifice throughout the last years of his life. His determination and zeal for spreading the divine Word in spite of his waning strength will give us strength for endless generations. His ethical teachings will remind all of us to walk in his ways, a true example of the ultimate walking in the ways of the *Torah*.

The tragic news emanated from the hospital room in Brooklyn, packed with *talmidim* and family members, and reverberated throughout the *Torah* world that whole night. Rav Pam had returned his soul to his Creator.

Tens of thousands traveled to *Yeshiva Torah V'Daas* to pay homage to this *Torah* giant.

As per his request, there were no eulogies, only *Tehillim* and expressions of gratitude spoken by his oldest son, Rav Aharon.

May his memory be a blessing and may he be a heavenly advocate for *Klal Yisrael*.

Rav Mordechai Kamenetzky is the *Rosh Mesivta* (Dean of the high school) of the *Yeshiva* of South Shore. He is also the *mechaber* of Torah.org's weekly Parsha Parables (*Drasha*) *shiur*.

www.torah.org/features/firstperson/ravpam1.html



A True Jewish Leader

By: Rav Avi Shafran

Late the evening of August 16, 2001, the Jewish world became immeasurably poorer. Though most Jews may never have heard of Rav Avrohom Pam, who returned

his soul to his Creator that night, he was beloved and revered for decades throughout the Orthodox community as one of the truly great spiritual leaders of our generation.

The funeral, mere hours after “Rav Pam”, as he was known, departed this world, drew thousands to *Torah V'Daas*, the *Yeshiva* he led for over three decades in the Flatbush neighborhood of Brooklyn. The building, where his body lay, was packed to overflowing, and the crowd spilled over into the streets below.

The powerful attendance – despite the fact that much of Brooklyn's Orthodox community summers in the Catskill Mountains, three to four hours' drive away – reflected the special nature of the man those who had gathered had come to honor.

The funeral was not lengthy; the deceased – not surprisingly to anyone who knew him – had left explicit orders that there be no eulogies. There was recitation of several chapters of *Tehillim*, one of Rav Pam's sons said a few tearful words and the long funeral procession made its way to a Queens cemetery where the *Rosh Yeshiva* and member of the Council of Torah Sages was laid to rest.

In times like ours, authority and importance are often measured in newspaper column-inches; success, in stock portfolios; and influence, by the phone numbers in one's electronic organizer. There are parallel universes, however, with very different laws of nature, and the Orthodox world is one.

Rav Pam lived humbly, both in demeanor and in trappings. He was a physically small man who lived in a small house and spoke in a small voice. Yet tens of thousands of Jews considered him a *Godol* – literally, “large,” a spiritual giant.

They regarded his words as gems to be gathered, even when his message consisted of criticism. For his listeners

knew – from his reputation, his demeanor and the unmistakable pain on his face – that Rav Pam’s exclusive motivations were fear of *Hashem* and love for fellow Jews.

Before thousands at an *Agudas Yisrael* convention, he movingly bemoaned what he perceived to be an erosion of *sholom bayis* – “peace in the home” – among Jewish families. Jewish children can only breathe and thrive, he said quietly, his heart in every word, in “an atmosphere of harmony and sweetness”, and spouses must always show the deepest respect for one another.

“Where,” he asked his listeners, “is the feeling for the mother of one’s own children, for the father of one’s own children?”

Honesty and integrity were also recurrent themes of Rav Pam’s. Too ill to attend the *Agudas Yisrael* national convention toward the end of his life, he nevertheless “addressed” the crowd in a pre-recorded video appearance on large screens positioned throughout the huge convention center.

While he cautioned against being judgmental of others and noted the extreme financial pressures that bear so heavily on many Orthodox families and institutions, he decried financial wrongdoings on the part of Orthodox Jews as a “desecration of *Hashem*’s name”.

It makes no difference, he continued, whether one is acting as an individual or on behalf of an institution, or whether one is dealing with a fellow Jew, a non-Jew or a government. Meticulous honesty, he told the packed but hushed room, is the mandate of every Jew, and must be the hallmark of everyone claiming to be observant.

He reminded his listeners that the *Gemora* teaches that the first question a Jew is asked in the World to Come is: “Did you conduct your financial dealings with *emuna* [integrity]?” *Emuna*, he went on to

explain, also means “faith”, alluding to the fact that faith in our Creator as the source of our daily bread is antithetical to acting dishonestly.

Rav Pam’s deep concern for proper behavior encompassed the personal realm no less. Once, standing in his *Yeshiva*’s hallway, he seemed distraught. When asked what the matter was, he sadly recounted how he had just heard one of the boys say, “Shut up.” And he wouldn’t even pronounce the offensive phrase; he spelled it out, in a whisper.

Perhaps above all, he was powerfully dedicated to making authentic Jewish education available to all Jewish children – the “jewels in the crown” of *Hashem*, as he once wrote. Thus he worked tirelessly on behalf of Jewish educational causes both in the United States and in *Eretz Yisrael*, prime among them an organization he personally founded, Shuvu. It provides young immigrants to *Eretz Yisrael*, largely from the former Soviet Union, with a comprehensive Jewish education in an open and loving environment, helping both the children and their parents reconnect with their Jewish religious heritage.

The guest of honor at Shuvu’s tenth anniversary dinner mere months ago, Rav Pam was presented with a scroll that, when it was unfurled, stretched clear across the large banquet hall. It contained a paragraph of heartfelt appreciation for the *Rav* – and the signatures of the ten thousand boys and girls enrolled in Shuvu schools in *Eretz Yisrael*.

A Jewish tradition has it that worthy individuals, even after their *petiros*, are able to intercede with *Hashem* on behalf of the Jewish people. All Jews, whether they knew of Rav Pam during his life or not, would do well to recognize the profound loss to us all that his *petira* represents. But all of us can take some comfort as well in the fact that he will surely be a *meilitz yosher*, an interceder of integrity on behalf of his people during these troubled and

frightening Jewish times.

Am Echad Resources

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Eretz Yisrael of America.

www.torah.org/features/firstperson/ravpam2.html



My own personal meeting and experience with Rav Pam was on *Purim* many years ago. I was taken by one of my *Rebbeim*, Rav Jay Yaakov Schwartz (formerly *Mora DeAsra* of Oceanside LI, but today of Beit Shemesh, *Eretz Yisrael*) for a *berocha* from Rav Pam. I was a *chutzpadike* American teenager, so what did I ask for? A *berocha* that I should be *zoche* to be able to learn *Kol HaTorah Kulah!* And the *Tzaddik* smiled, warmly clutched my hand and gave that to me! It was on *Purim*, a time that *tefillos* can be answered, and to this day I believe it is the source for any *hatzlocha* I have in learning.

I had a kind of closure which came full circle when years later I attended the *Siyum HaShas* together with Rav Schwartz and many other Oceansiders and Rav Pam was the speaker who introduced *Maseches Berochos*, the only *mesechta* I had made a *siyum* on at the time. He began with the first *Tosafos* in *Shas*, something I had studied over and over (since I didn't know much else), and I was amazed and literally speechless when the answers I had written to *Tosafos's* questions many months ago, after hours of review and diligence, were what Rav Pam was saying, and, in the name of the *Pnei Yehoshua!* Until this day I attribute that experience solely to his *berocha*. I had come full circle.



Rav Avrohom Yaakov Pam was born in Vidz, a small village in Lithuania. His father, Rav Meir, was an exceptional *Torah* scholar. Rav Pam would tell his family and *talmidim* that his father almost never went to bed. He would learn until he dozed off

from fatigue, and would wake up in the middle of the night and return to his studies. His mother was a learned and pious woman. Rav Pam would say about her that since she was incapable of seeing bad in people, she never could speak ill of anyone. She was also fluent in the entire *Tanach* and was expert at using its lessons to comfort the downtrodden.

Rav Meir Pam first learned in *Knesses Bais Yitzchok*, and later in the *Chofetz Chaim's Kollel Kodoshim*, where two of his colleagues were Rav Elchonon Wasserman and Rav Yosef Kahaneman, the future *Ponevezher Rav*. Rav Kahaneman later was the *Rav* of Vidz for a while, and invited Rav Meir to give lectures in the *Yeshiva* there. In 1927, Rav Meir Pam came to the United States. After securing positions as a *Talmud* lecturer in *Yeshiva* Rav Chaim Berlin and as *Rav* of the *Bais Medrash HaGodol* in Brownsville, he brought over his family.

When Rav Avrohom Pam was eleven years old, his parents sent him away from home to a *Yeshiva*. There was a time when he slept on a bench in the local *shul*, but nothing deterred him from learning as long and intensely as he could. He was part of a special group of youngsters in Slabodka, where he became a frequent *Shabbos* guest of Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky. It was a warm relationship that was to be resumed many years later when Rav Kamenetzky became *Rosh Yeshiva* in *Torah V'Daas*.

When Rav Pam returned to America he became a *talmid* in *Torah V'Daas* in Brooklyn. He remained there for the rest of his life. Rav Pam's teaching career began at *Yeshiva Torah V'Daas* in 1938, when was appointed a *Talmudic* lecturer there. Holding various teaching positions at *Torah V'Daas*, Rav Pam spent over sixty years there, including even teaching mathematics, utilizing his degree from City College. For many years he delivered the *semicha* class to *talmidim* studying toward *Rabbinic* ordination.

Rav Pam was totally unassuming in his dress, his speech, as well as in his mannerisms. Rav Pam was a great *Talmudic* scholar, but he was famous for his humility and soft-spoken style. He was one of the great spiritual leaders of our generation and a member of the Council of Torah Sages of *Agudas Yisrael*.

Rav Avrohom Yaakov Pam had tremendous concern for families in *Eretz Yisrael* and the *Rav Meir Ba'al HaNes* Salant charity fund. Rav Pam is a signatory on the historic 1979 *Kol Koreh* (broadside) on behalf of *Rav Meir Ba'al HaNes* Salant, together with such *Torah* giants as Rav Moshe Feinstein, Rav Yaakov Yisrael Kanievsky the "*Steipler*", Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, Rav Elozor Simcha Wasserman, Rav Dovid Povarsky, Rav Yechiel Michel Feinstein, Rav Moshe Shmuel Shapiro, Rav Shmuel Birnbaum and many, many others. May their memory be a blessing to all.

www.Ravmeirbaalhaneis.com/Rav%20Avrohom%20Yaakov%20Pam.asp



Rav Avrohom Pam: "Then They Will Call Me Humble"

One time someone introduced Rav Avrohom Pam, the *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Torah V'Daas*, with all sorts of flattering comments, including calling him the *Godol HaDor*. Rav Pam got up and gave his speech without making any remarks about the introduction.

Afterward, someone close to him approached him and asked his normally humble *Rebbe* why he did not protest or at least deflect any of the comments made about him. Rav Pam answered that at that point, the only thing it would have accomplished was that people would have said, "He is so humble as well!"

May this great *Tzaddik* be a lesson and inspiration in true humility!

www.revach.net/hanhagos/maaseh-rav/Rav-Avrohom-Pam-Then-They-Will-Call-Me-Humble/3228



Rav Naphtali Tzvi Yehuda ben Yaakov Berlin, 28th of Menachem Av

Netziv of Volozhin

Keviyas Itim = Shalom Bayis

Rebbe Meir used to say: Engage minimally in business and occupy yourself with *Torah* (*Avos* 4:12)

When Rav Ovadiah Yosef used to teach this *Mishna* from *Pirkei Avos* he would illustrate it with the following story found in the *sefer Mekor Baruch* - Volume III page 843:

There once came before the *Netziv* a friend who was known all about as a tremendously successful businessman. The friend told the *Netziv* with a sorrowful sigh, "I must reveal before you the truth, everyone knows me for my financial success and my material well-being, and honestly thank *Hashem*, I can testify that

regarding my friendships, my livelihood and my business I have no complaints. I have many friends, business associates and contacts and my standing in society is good. I have a successful business and everything seems to be running just fine. Yes, that is until I cross the threshold and enter my home which I cannot call my domain! No sooner do I come home that I find myself downcast, downtrodden, alone, forsaken and forgotten! My wife ignores my needs, she treats me like a useless good for nothing. She never asks my opinion on any matters, instead she rules our house like a Queen. She is strong willed whereas I am by nature kinder and softer, she displays might and I am bending and soft spoken.

All the servants have by now fallen in line to her manner of running the home. They all follow her orders and hers only, leaving me on the sidelines like a spectator whose presence has no meaning or consequence - I feel like I am living alone in my own personal *Gehinom* – Oh, please help me and advise me what to do to regain my standing at home and my wife's respect, love and care?"

The *Netziv* asked his sad friend to describe his daily schedule and his friend filled his ears with a busy day full of business meetings, lunches, deals and so on and so forth. "Don't you have any free time?" asked the *Netziv* surprised. "No, my business is so busy I have no time left in my day for anything unrelated," declared the friend. "And what about your *Torah* study?" inquired the *Netziv*, who knew full well that his friend knew how to learn and could study *Torah* if he so wished. The friend hemmed and hawed and admitted that he had been neglecting his *Torah* study. "Now let me advise you thus," continued the *Netziv*, "it says in *Mishlei* 16:17, that when *Hashem* is pleased with a man's ways then also his enemies shall make peace with him as well. Now *Chazal* tell us in the *Midrash* that the enemies described here refer to none other than his wife. As it says in *Micha* 7:6, a man's enemies are the people of his household and a man's wife is his very household as it says in *Shabbos* 118b and *Tosfos* in *Berachos* 51a, that tells us that as the wife runs most household matters, she is called the *Bayis*.

Now we know that in *Bereishis*, Adam's wife Chava is described as *Ezer KeNegdo*, and in *Yevamos* 63a, *Chazal* say that if he merits she is an *ezer* and helpmate and if not she is *kenegdo* against him. Further, we know in *Sotah* 17a, that *Chazal* also tell us that if a man and wife are at peace - the *Shechina* resides with them and if not a fire consumes them. Now you see clearly what your problem is don't you? In order that *Hashem* find your ways pleasant so that your enemy wife should make peace with you - you must establish and set aside times for *Torah* study. When you are *kovea itim leTorah*, then *Hashem* will find your ways pleasing once again. Now, rearrange your daily schedule around your study sessions and see the results and fruits of your labor as your wife will once again know her place. I can tell you," added the *Netziv* in conclusion "that from my own personal experience, only when I acquired my proper portion in *Torah* did my standing at home with my wife change to its proper way and manner."

After the *Netziv* passed away, this friend and businessman visited the *Netziv's* son Rav Chaim Berlin and told him this story while holding his hands, clasping them warmly and kissing them affectionately, "Your father's advice saved my life, my standing. My marriage slowly but surely became blessed by *Hashem* and my *Shalom Bayis* was restored and my standing repaired. My house now runs with the foundations of *Torah* and *Mitzvos*, I owe your father everything!" (*Anaf Etz Avos*, pages 270-272)



Rav Shmuel Salant of Yerushalayim, 29th of Menachem Av

A gem that is unique in its multifaceted beauty is not left long at the jewelers. The first buyer with a keen eye recognizes its worth and is ready to pay dearly for it. Rav Shmuel Salant was taken as a *chosson* already at the age of ten, for

his exceptional talents were already well known.

His humility perhaps outweighed his greatness. In accordance with Rav Shmuel's wishes, the only praise written on his headstone on *Har HaZeisim* is that he

was given a written *semicha* by Rav Abele, the famous *Dayan* of Vilna, though it is not noted there that this was when he was just *bar mitzva*!

As a seven-year-old, he was once ill and in bed. The doctor who checked him saw that his mouth was full of blisters. Turning to the boy's parents, the doctor explained that if the tongue isn't clean, it's a sure sign of a malfunctioning stomach.



"Is there anyone who can truly say his mouth is clean?" retorted the sick child. "*Chazal* tell us in the *Gemora Bava Basra* that most people are guilty of theft and everyone of *loshon hora*!"



Throughout the seventy years of his *Rabbonus* in Yerushalayim, Rav Shmuel was to the public as a loving father, and even more, a faithful servant. The *Rav* was always available and reception hours were an unknown. In fact, he placed his table close to the door so that whoever would need him, at any hour, would just come to the door and find the *Rav* ready to hear a *shaila* or listen to a Jew's troubles.

When he was asked why he did not set aside specific times for receiving the public, the *Rav* replied, "A person must emulate the ways of *HaKodosh Boruch Hu*. We say every day in *Bircas HaMozon* that *Hashem* feeds us and provides all our needs, *tomid bechol yom uvechol eis uvechol sho'oh* – "always, every day, every time and every hour". Am I more important than *HaKodosh Boruch Hu*?"



The first, and perhaps longest-

lasting, innovation of Rav Shmuel Salant in Yerushalayim was the establishment of the *Talmud Torah* system for boys that we know today worldwide.

Rav Shmuel had noticed that not all the Jewish boys received a formal education. Those parents who could afford it would hire a *melamed* to teach a few boys together. Often they would learn in the *melamed's* house in a small room, under cramped conditions, with not enough *seforim*. Meanwhile, those children whose parents had no means with which to pay a private *melamed* would wander aimlessly in the streets.

Grasping the situation and perceiving the dangers therein to the boys' spiritual growth, Rav Shmuel gathered together all the parents of the city and presented a novel idea: the *Rav* would appoint a *melamed* who would teach all children, irrespective of their parents' financial means. He would be paid a regular wage, which would be the *Rav's* responsibility. Aside from this, he, Rav Shmuel, would rent a suitable building so that classes could be carried out in spacious rooms.

Within a short time, all the children of Yerushalayim, rich and poor alike, were learning under the new *Talmud Torah* system. The *Rav* personally saw to every detail, even checking the boys' school bags, to check that they all had food. When he saw one that was bare of even a piece of bread, he would place some nourishing food into the bag.

With the new *cheder*, the standard of *Torah* was raised dramatically in Yerushalayim. From these youngsters grew the new generation of *Talmidei Chachomim* in Yerushalayim, a generation that looks back with pride to the institution that built them. The mosad named *Eitz Chaim* still stands proudly today in the center of Yerushalayim and continues to educate the coming *doros*, to learn and to love *Torah*. (Editor's Note: My father

learned in *Eitz Chaim* as a child and some of his fondest memories took place within its walls).



In Yerushalayim, anecdotes and accounts of Rav Shmuel Salant's sharp wisdom abound.

The *Rav* was once standing at the door of his house and, upon seeing a man passing by, he beckoned to him to come in. As soon as the man had entered, the *Rav* locked the door securely. Quickly, he instructed a member of his family to summon two *Dayonim* and a *sofer* who lived in the vicinity. When all were present, the *Rav* raised his voice sternly at the bewildered man. "Tell me your name and that of your wife and instruct the *sofer* to write a bill of divorce for your wife."

The stranger composed himself and blatantly denied everything. "Forgive me, *kvod HaRav*, I think the *Rav* is mistaken. I am not married and have no wife to divorce. I have no idea what the *Rav* is talking about."

Ignoring his glib talk, the *Rav* began to shout, "Give your wife a valid *get*, according to *Halocha*! You'll meet a bitter end if you do not heed my words!"

After a few minutes, the man's facade crumbled and he gave in. The bill of divorce was written up and the *Rav* sent the man free on his way.

Shocked by the pace and bizarre turn of events, the *Dayonim* wondered, "How does the *Rav* know this stranger? How does he know that he must divorce his wife?"

"A few months ago, there were public notices everywhere that a man had disappeared after refusing to give his wife a *get*, leaving her an *aguna*. The notice displayed a picture of the man and requested anyone who saw him to report him immediately. When this man passed by my house, I recognized him and decided

to act fast and extract the *get* from him *al pi Torah*, thereby saving his wife from her predicament."



The *Rav's pikchus* saved a community as far away as Poland from what would have been an ugly pogrom.

In the month of *Tammuz* 5665 (1905), a telegram arrived at the home of the *Rav* of Rishon LeTzion, Rav Yaakov Shaul Elishar. It was a lengthy telegram of one hundred and thirty-three words, apparently written by the *Rav* of Novominsk. It reported a story of two Novominsker Jews who had moved to Yerushalayim. They had given false testimony that five gentiles were involved in a murder. The five were condemned to a harsh sentence. In the event that this would be carried out, the local *goyim* would no doubt exact a bloodthirsty revenge on all the Jews.

"Please," the letter read, "would the *Rav* send a telegram stating that the two admitted they had testified falsely? Then all the Jews of the city will be saved."

Rav Elishar reread the letter, not knowing what to make of it. Gathering the *askonim* of Rishon LeTzion, they could come to no decision. Was the letter authentic, or could it be just a ruse to get the people of Novominsk into trouble? No solution was found and the *Rav* decided they would take the telegram together to Rav Shmuel Salant and whatever he decided would be the final word.

Due to the danger involved, they awoke the *Rav* from his sleep when they arrived. Rav Shmuel, who was already almost ninety years old, listened to the *shaila* and then glanced at the telegram. Immediately, he discerned the intent behind it.

"The telegram looks too long. No *Rav* would write so many words. Such a lengthy message could only have been

written by the *goyim* themselves and perhaps they forced the *Rav* to sign at the end. No doubt they want us to report that Jews are false witnesses and whip up the fury of the masses against the *Yidden*.”

The venerable *Rav* then gave his sage advice: “Avoid giving a direct answer and say you have no idea of any witnesses at all.”

Rav Elishar obeyed the *Rav* and promptly sent a telegram back, saying that since he was a Turkish citizen, it was forbidden for him to mix into the laws of other countries and that he had no idea of any Jews who had come from Novominsk.

A few weeks later, the Jewish newspaper in Warsaw had a full report of the sharp wisdom of Rav Shmuel Salant, who had saved the Jews of Novominsk. Had the *Rabbonim* fallen into the trap of the false telegram, the *goyim* would have been severely incited against the Jews and who knows how far their anger would have taken them, *chas vesholom*.

www.chareidi.org/archives5773/shofetim/fsrSalntshf73.htm



Rav Shmuel Salant (1816– 1909) was a renowned *Talmudist* and *Torah* scholar who followed the customs of the *Gaon* of Vilna. From 1841 until his passing in 1909 he served as the *Ashkenazi* chief *Rav* of Yerushalayim.

Rav Shmuel Salant was born in 1816 in the city of Volknik near Bialystok, then part of Russia. His father, Rav Tzvi, was the *Rav* of the town, as well as the *Rav* of Trakai, near Vilna. Rav Shmuel’s mother, Risa, daughter of Rav Shimon, immigrated to *Eretz Yisrael* in her old age. She passed away on the 5th of *Tishrei* in 1857 and was buried on *Har HaZeisim* in what is known today as the *Sefardi* section. In his early youth Rav Shmuel studied with his father. Unfortunately, Rav Tzvi passed away when Shmuel was but a child. Relatives of the young Shmuel sent him to the city of

Keidan to study under Rav Tzemach Shapiro, known as Rav Tzemach Drubiyaner, who later became one of the great leaders of the city of Vilna.

In Kaiden, at the tender age of ten, Rav Shmuel, who was already renowned as a child prodigy, became engaged to Fruma Shapiro, the daughter of Rav Shimon Merkel Shapiro (the son of Rav Avrohom Shapiro) who was the chief *Rav* of Birz and brother to Rav Salant’s mentor, Rav Tzemach Shapiro. The marriage took place after Rav Shmuel Salant’s *bar mitzva*. Rav Salant had a daughter from this marriage. After his wedding Rav Shmuel and a group of *Torah* scholars traveled to Lithuania to the city of Salant to study under the famed Rav Tzvi Hirsch Brodah. For reasons unknown, the marriage of Rav Shmuel and his young wife Fruma ended in divorce after three years. The famed *Tzaddik*, Rav Yosef Zundel of Salant, highly respected Rav Shmuel as an exceptional prodigy and outstanding *Tzaddik*. Rav Yosef Zundel had a daughter, Tova (1816-1869), who was a pious woman, and in 1834 offered Rav Shmuel her hand in marriage. After his marriage to Tova, Rav Shmuel adopted his father-in law’s surname, Salant.

(Rav Yosef Zundel Salant was a *talmid* of Rav Chaim Itzkowitz of Volozhin (Rav Chaim Volozhiner), who in 1803 founded the famed Volozhin *Yeshiva*. Following the *petira* of Rav Chaim of Volozhin in 1821, Rav Yosef Zundel would make trips to Posen to study with Rav Akiva Eiger (1761–1837). Rav Zundel was the spiritual mentor of Rav Yisrael Lipkin Salanter (1810–1883), who would later be immortalized as the father of the Mussar Movement.) In 1837, Rav Yosef Zundel Salant immigrated to Yerushalayim from Lithuania. Rav Zundel refused support from public funds and instead made a living in the vinegar business. At that time the *Ashkenazi* settlement in Yerushalayim was very small and had no judicial court. Only the *Sefardi* community had an

established *Bais Din*. Upon his arrival in Yerushalayim, Rav Zundel established an informal *Bais Din* in his courtyard to serve the local *Ashkenazi* community.)

After his marriage Rav Shmuel Salant moved to the city of Volozhin where he was appointed *Talmud* lecturer in the Volozhin *Yeshiva*.

In 1840, due to health reasons and upon the advice of doctors, Rav Shmuel Salant took his family and traveled to *Eretz Yisrael*. En route, in Constantinople, he met and befriended Sir Moses Montefiore, who was on his way to defend the Jews falsely accused in the Damascus Blood Libel. Sir Moses subsequently traveled to *Eretz Yisrael* seven times during his lifetime and developed a profound respect for Rav Shmuel Salant. Together they would collaborate on many projects for the benefit of the fledgling *Ashkenazi* community.

Rav Salant arrived in Yerushalayim in 1841, rejoining his father-in-law and about five hundred other *Ashkenazim* who had preceded him in 1838. There were about five thousand Jews in *Eretz Yisrael* at that time, living mainly in Yerushalayim, Tzefas, Teverya and Chevron. Smaller communities were in Yaffo, Chaifa, Peki'in, Acco, Shechem and Shfaram. A large part of the Jewish settlement studied full-time and was supported by donations from Jews in the Diaspora. This age-old practice of supporting scholars in *Eretz Yisrael* who studied full time was known as *Chaluka*.

Upon his arrival in Yerushalayim, Rav Shmuel Salant moved into a tiny two-room apartment without windows in the courtyard of the *Churva*, "the ruins of Rav Yehuda the *Chassid*". Here in this modest apartment he would live and work for the next fifty years. In his capacity as chief *Rav*, he met with the great sages and prominent people of the era to discuss communal matters, in addition to the

continuous stream of plain folk who came to consult with him.

Rav Salant could not have come at a more auspicious time. The *Ashkenazi* community had grown in size considerably and urgently needed a strong *Torah* scholar to stand at the helm of an official *Ashkenazi Bais Din*. With the arrival of Rav Salant, the scope and dimension of the temporary *Ashkenazi Bais Din* changed dramatically. In this very same courtyard Rav Salant established an authorized permanent *Bais Din* for the *Ashkenazi* community. Sitting with him on the Rabbinical court were his brother-in-law Rav Uri Shabbetai and Rav Binyomin Dovid of Vilna. This was the first established *Ashkenazi Bais Din* in Yerushalayim for centuries. Rav Salant would thus serve as the chief *Ashkenazi Rav* of Yerushalayim for the next seventy years!

As chief *Rav*, Rav Salant was also in charge of administering the *Kollel Ashkenazim* and its concomitant *Chaluka* system, an age-old practice of supporting scholars in *Eretz Yisrael* who studied full time. A large part of the Jewish settlement was supported in this manner by donations from Jews in the Diaspora. Rav Salant traveled often to Europe to raise funds for the impoverished Jewish settlement and managed to visit most major cities of Lithuania and Poland.

In 1850, while visiting Vilna, he met with the committee that oversaw the assignment of funds to the Holy Land. Rav Salant presented a plan for setting up a *Yeshiva* of higher learning. His plan met with approval and upon his return to *Eretz Yisrael* he quickly set up the *Yeshiva* in the *Menachem Tzion shul* and began to deliver daily lectures there. By 1855 the *Yeshiva* had successfully grown to major proportions. The *Yeshiva* was named *Eitz Chaim* with Rav Shmuel Salant and Rav Yeshaya Berdaky at the helm. By the turn of the twentieth century *Yeshiva Eitz*

Chaim had a total enrollment of almost one thousand *talmidim*! The remarkable success of the *Yeshiva* ensured that a whole new generation of pious scholars would be ready to guide the populace and forge the path of the country for future generations.

The year 1860 was a time of universal poverty and hardship and the communities in *Eretz Yisrael* began an unprecedented descent into abject poverty, the likes of which they had not seen in decades. Rav Meir Auerbach (1815–1878), the chief *Rav* of Kalisch, arrived from Poland that year. Rav Salant appointed him to take his place as chief *Rav* of Yerushalayim in his absence, while Rav Salant traveled to Germany, Amsterdam and London on behalf of the community. In Germany he also met with the *Rav* of Wurzburg, Rav Seligmann Baer Bamberger (1807–1878), one of the last great *Geonim* of German Jewry. They discussed the status of the various *Kollelim* in Yerushalayim and ways to manage them. Although new settlements in *Eretz Yisrael* were being funded by their mother countries, the communities that had been living in *Eretz Yisrael* for centuries no longer had a source of income. Hundreds of people died of hunger, particularly young children and infants. The situation threatened to engulf the entire country.

Upon the return of Rav Salant from Europe in 1860, Rav Meir Auerbach wanted to step down and return the post of *Rav* of Yerushalayim back to Rav Salant. Rav Salant, in his keen wisdom and insight, saw the tremendous benefit of having Rav Auerbach involved in communal affairs. He convinced Rav Auerbach to stay on to assist him since he himself was caught up in overseeing the financial viability of the community and therefore had little time to fill his role as sole chief *Rav*. Rav Auerbach was thus persuaded to remain in the Yerushalayim Rabbinate together with Rav Salant. As assistant chief *Rav*, Rav Auerbach assisted Rav Shmuel Salant in

the spiritual and material wellbeing of Yerushalayim and continued to play a most critical role in all the communal affairs of the country. Rav Auerbach also played an essential role on the Yerushalayim Rabbinical Board of Directors of the Rav Meir Ba'al HaNes Salant charity founded in 1860 by Rav Zundel and Rav Shmuel Salant. In rising to the monumental challenge of administering to the desperate financial woes of the vast majority of families in *Eretz Yisrael*, Rav Shmuel Salant had thrown himself into communal work and particularly the central Rav Meir Ba'al HaNes Salant charity fund which provided for destitute and impoverished families and saved them from oblivion. During Rav Shmuel Salant's lifetime and later until after World War I, with the unanimous backing and blessing of all the great Rabbinical leaders around the world, all charity collected throughout the world on behalf and in the name of Rav Meir Ba'al HaNes was under the sole jurisdiction of the Rav Meir Ba'al HaNes charity fund and distributed by Rav Shmuel Salant.

In 1866 when the cholera plague rained death and destruction on Yerushalayim and all the various *Ashkenazi* groups and organizations were in disarray, Rav Shmuel Salant and Rav Auerbach felt that it would be a tremendous advantage to the entire city to create an umbrella organization uniting all the various factions and which would work harmoniously and in unison for the benefit of the *klal*. Thus was born the *Vaad HaKlali*, which eventually became the central institution dealing with all Yerushalayim's vast and varied issues, both financial and spiritual.

In 1878 Rav Meir Auerbach passed away, and once again the entire burden fell on the shoulders of Rav Salant and he returned to his post as chief *Rav* for Ashkenazim. In 1888 Rav Salant's eyesight began to fail. He did not, however, allow this debilitating disability to stop his wide-ranging activities in the communal affairs

of the country. In 1900 he enlisted as his assistant in the Rav Meir Ba'al HaNes Salant charity fund Rav Eliyohu Dovid Rabinowitz-Teomim, chief *Rav* of Mir, and world-famous scholar and author. Rav Rabinowitz-Teomim was born near Kovno in 1845. In 1873 he was invited to the Rabbinate of Panevez, the fifth-largest city in Lithuania. Twenty years later he was appointed chief *Rav* of Mir. At the turn of the century Rav Rabinowitz-Teomim settled in *Eretz Yisrael* and was immediately chosen by the ailing Rav Salant to assist him. For five years they worked tirelessly together for the benefit of the Jewish settlement. Unfortunately, Rav Rabinowitz-Teomim predeceased Rav Salant, passing away in 1905 at the early age of sixty.

Rav Salant was regarded as a distinguished *Talmudist* and an excellent and sagacious leader. Many of his positions in Jewish law are known through the writings of his *talmidim*. He was also known for his moderation and tolerance of all classes of Jews. Although serving as the *Ashkenazi* chief *Rav*, he carried on excellent relations with chief *Rav* and *Chacham Bashi* Rav Yaakov Shaul Elyashar, his *Sefardi* counterpart, and they acted in harmony and unison concerning the welfare matters of the community.

Among the myriad accomplishments of Rav Salant for the community was the founding of the Bikur Cholim Hospital. Rav Salant encouraged people to move into new neighborhoods outside the Old City walls, and during his tenure as chief *Rav*, the population of Yerushalayim grew from five thousand to thirty thousand Jews.

Rav Shmuel Salant was also instrumental in collecting the necessary funding to build the Bais Yaakov *shul*, located in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Yerushalayim. The cornerstone was

laid in 1856 in the presence of Rav Salant, and other dignitaries such as Baron Alphonse James de Rothschild, brother of Edmond James de Rothschild, who dedicated much of his life supporting the Jews of Palestine. It was officially named *Bais Yaakov* after their father James (Yaakov) Rothschild. It remained Yerushalayim's main *shul* until the twentieth century, when it was reduced to rubble by Jordanian soldiers during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.

Rav Shmuel Salant passed away on Monday, August 16/29th of Av 1909 and was buried the next day on *Har HaZeisim* in the *Perushim* section alongside his father-in-law, Rav Zundel Salant. Many of Yerushalayim's great leaders, who were also friends and colleagues of Rav Shmuel Salant, are interred in that very same area: Rav Rabinowitz-Teomim, Rav Chaim Berlin, Rav Yehoshua Leib Diskin, Rav Yitzchok Blazer, Rav Meir Auerbach, Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, Rav Eliyohu Kletzkin and many others.

On the following day, Tuesday August 17, 1909, the New York Times had a lengthy column reporting the passing of Rav Salant along with a biography of his life.

Before he left this world, Rav Salant inscribed his last will and testimony and pledged that all who continue supporting the Rav Meir Ba'al HaNes Salant charity will merit heavenly blessings and divine mercy.

The remarkable legacy of Rav Meir Baal HaNes Salant is vibrantly alive and potent to this very day. Stories abound of men and women who, during personal need and crisis, experienced miraculous help when they gave charity to this holy fund.

www.rabbimeirbaalhaneis.org/



Rav Eliezer Zusia Portugal, 29th of Menachem Av

The Skulener *Rebbe*

Shachris with the Skulener Rebbe Brings Success

The following story was told over by Rav Shlomo Mandel, *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshiva* of Brooklyn:

He has a relative, a diamond dealer, who was walking to the train station in order to get to a very important business meeting. As he passed by the Skulener *Bais Medrash*, a man asked him to help the Skulener *Rebbe*, Rav Eliezer Zusia Portugal, complete a *minyan* for *Shacharis*. The diamond dealer, who, of course, had already *davened*, responded that he was in a hurry, but the man convinced him to stay and help the *Rebbe's minyan*. He walked into the *shul* and saw that they were still short the required ten for a *minyan*, but he was there already, so he stuck around. They finally gathered the required ten men and started to *daven* at the *Rebbe's* usual deliberate pace. The man kept glancing at his watch and realized that he was going to miss his important business meeting. At this point, he couldn't leave and ruin the *minyan*, so he stayed.

To make a long story short, he missed his important meeting. However, that day turned out to be his most successful day in business ever, despite missing an important meeting. Rav Shlomo Mandel concluded, "After a *Shacharis* with the Skulener *Rebbe*, of course it was his most successful day in business!"

Zechuso Yogen Oleinu

www.zchusavos.blogspot.com/2007/08/shachris-with-skulener-rebbe-brings.html



Chessed L'Avrohom: For All the Rebbe's Children

In 1960, the Skulener *Rebbe*, Rav Eliezer Zusia Portugal, and his son, Rav Yisrael Avrohom, were released from a

Communist Romanian prison where they had been held for almost a year. Intense public pressure from the leading *Gedolim* of that era, including the Lubavitcher, Kapishnitzer, Sadigerer and Boyaner *Rebbs*, coupled with diplomatic intervention from United Nations Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, had allowed them to immigrate to the United States.

Although they had been locked away from the eyes of world Jewry for decades, the *Rebbs'* holiness and efforts on behalf of Romanian wartime orphans were well known. Their arrival was met with jubilation and reverential devotion among Jews from all walks of life.

Almost immediately after they settled in Crown Heights, they formed a network of orphanages in *Eretz Yisrael* to provide material and spiritual sustenance to hundreds of orphaned children and children who came from homes where the parents were either unfit or unable to care for them. Their goal was to help these children grow up, marry and raise *Torah*-true generations. The organization was *Chessed L'Avrohom*.

To this day, the Skulener *Rebbe* guides *Chessed L'Avrohom*. Orphanages in Bnei Brak, Meron and Kadima are staffed by teachers, house parents and a full roster of educational professionals. The children receive a *chareidi chinuch* in a loving and nurturing environment. Wherever possible, the birth parents are invited to participate in the child's upbringing, even if only in a limited way. And every child's *simcha* becomes a *Chessed L'Avrohom* family occasion, as milestones like *bar mitzvas* and weddings are arranged and sponsored by the organization.

After-school programs in Chadera, Kiryat Ata, Nahariya, Ashkelon and Ashdod

give public-school children the opportunity to thrive in a wholesome *Torah* atmosphere. Summer camps, national outreach and alumni programs, *Shabbatonim*, separate educational programming for married men and women

and a vocational training center help young people develop the social and other skills necessary to lead productive lives.

www.5tjt.com/chesed-lavraham-for-all-the-rebbes-children/



Rav Yosef Meir Twersky of Makhnovka, 29th of Menachem Av

Rav Yosef Meir Twersky was born in 5620/1860 in Skver. He was the son of Rav Avrohom Yehoshua Heschel of Skver.

Rav Yosef Meir was the son-in-law of Rav Menachem Nachum Twersky of Loyav, like him a descendant of the Czernobyl dynasty.

After the *petira* of his father in 5246/1886, Rav Yosef Meir was appointed *Rebbe* in the village of Makhnovka in Ukraine.

His court attracted many thousands of *Chassidim*, and his influence was tremendous. Rav Yosef Meir was revered by his generation; many *Tzaddikim* said that he was worthy of being among the *talmidim* of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*.

Rav Yosef Meir was known as a *boki* in *sifrei Kabbola*. He endured fasts and

other self-inflictions.

During World War I, many *Yidden* found refuge in his *Bais Medrash*, despite the *mesirus nefesh* this demanded of him.

Rav Yosef Meir was *niftar* on *Erev Rosh Chodesh Elul* 5677/1917 in Makhnovka. He was fifty-seven.

His son, Rav Avrohom Yehoshua Heshel, succeeded him as *Rebbe*. He later moved to *Eretz Yisrael*, where he rebuilt the Makhnovka court in Bnei Brak.

Rav Yosef Meir's sons-in-law were Rav Dovid Leib Twersky; Rav Nachum Twersky of Zlotipoli, the son of Rav Dovid of Skver; and Rav Yehoshua Roke'ach of Yaroslav.

Zechuso yagen oleinu.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-29-avaugust-25/



Rav Yisrael Friedman of Boyan-Leipzig, 30th of Menachem Av

Rav Yisrael was the son of Rav Yitzchok (the *Pachad Yitzchok*), founder of the Boyan dynasty. He was born on the 24th of *Elul* 5638/1878, coinciding with the first day of *Selichos*.

His paternal grandfather, Rav Avrohom Yaakov of Sadigura, commented that he entered this world like a veteran *Chassid*, arriving at the *Rebbe's* court on the first day of *Selichos*. He was named Yisrael after his great-grandfather, Rav Yisrael of Ruzhin.

His father hired the best *melamdim* for him as he quickly climbed the ladder of success in his studies. In fact, he finished

the entire *Shas* during his youth.

Rav Yisrael closely followed his holy father's ways, absorbing the exalted nature of his *Avodas HaKodesh*.

He was the son-in-law of his uncle, Rav Shlomo of Sadigura. His second wife was the daughter of his uncle, Rav Dovid Halpern, son-in-law of the Ruzhiner.

After the *petira* of his father, he, along with his brothers, Rav Menachem Nachum, Rav Avrohom Yaakov, and Rav Mordechai Shlomo, began leading *Chassidic* courts.

The eldest son, Rav Menachem

Nachum, set up his court in Czernowitz, Bukovina. The third son, Rav Avrohom Yaakov, moved to Lemberg, Galicia, where he established a large court and *Yeshiva*. Sadly, he was killed *al kiddush Hashem* at the hands of the Germans; *Hy"d*. The youngest son, Rav Mordechai Shlomo, left Europe for New York, where he was instrumental in building up the *Torah* community in the United States.

Rav Yisrael eventually moved to Leipzig, Germany, where his court served the many Ruzhiner *Chassidim* who had fled there during World War I.

Rav Yisrael was a beloved figure in the region; not only his *Chassidim* consulted with him, but the local population also benefited immensely from his presence.

He accomplished a great deal by building *mikvaos*, upholding *kashrus*, and generally strengthening *Yiddishkeit*.

In 5695/1935 he visited *Eretz* Yisrael, and was warmly welcomed by the

yishuv there. He returned to Germany on a temporary basis, his heart desiring to settle permanently in the Holy Land.

In 5699/1939, he escaped the Nazi barbarity by fleeing to Switzerland, where he stayed for a short while before continuing his journey to *Eretz* Yisrael.

Rav Yisrael re-established his *Bais Medrash* in Tel Aviv, which served as a focal point for Boyaner *Chassidim* after the war.

He was known for his ability to be *po'el yeshuos*. His father said of him that he had the abilities of his father-in-law, Rav Shlomo of Sadigura, in his power to achieve *yeshuos* for people in need.

He was *niftar* on the first day of *Rosh Chodesh Elul* (30th of *Av*) and was buried in Tzefas. He was succeeded by his younger brother, Rav Mordechai Shlomo of Boyan.

Zechuso yogein oleinu

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-30-avaugust-26/



Rav Yehoshua Zeitlin of Shklov, 1st of Elul

Rav Yehoshua Zeitlin was born in 5502/1742 in Charson.

He was a *talmid* of the Vilna *Gaon* and of Rav Arye Leib Ginsburg, the *Sha'agas Arye*.

Rav Yehoshua was a *Gaon* who was regularly asked by other *Gedolim* for his opinion in matters of *Halocha*.

He wrote the commentary *Amudei Gola* on *Sefer Mitzvos Koton*, better known as the *Smak*. He also published a compilation of his *Halachic* responsa.

Besides his greatness in *Torah*, Rav Yehoshua was also wealthy and was an

influential adviser to the king. He supported many of his *talmidim* from his own pocket.

Among his famous *talmidim* are Rav Menachem Mendel Leffin, the *mechaber* of *Cheshbon HaNefesh*; Rav Binyomin Rivlin, *mechaber* of *Gevi'i Gvia HaKesef*; and Rav Boruch of Shklov.

Rav Yehoshua was *niftar* on the 1st of *Elul*, the second day of *Rosh Chodesh* 5582/1822, at the age of eighty.

Zecher Tzaddik livrocha.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-1-elulaugust-27/



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

Zera Shimshon Re'eh

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

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

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

The following is his passionate request to learn his works.

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

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

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

לזכר נשמת

רבינו שמשון חיים בן רב מיכאל נחמן זצ"ל

בעל הזרע שמשון זיע"א

ויה"ר שיתקיימו בנו ברכותיו של אותו צדיק

להצלחת כל ישראל

ראה אנכי נתן לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה (יא' כו')

See, I place before you today a blessing and a curse.

The passuk says, (Yirmiya 13:16), *"Listen and give ear, do not be haughty, for Hashem has spoken."* On this, the Medrash (Devarim Rabbah 4:2), explains, *listen* - to the words of Torah, *and give ear* - to the words of Torah, *do not be haughty* – do not send back the good that is supposed to come to this world. (The Hebrew word תגבהו, usually translates as, haughty. Here, the Medrash translates it by another possible interpretation – raise or send back). *For Hashem has spoken* – when did he speak? When He said, (Yeshaya 1:19, 20), *"If you are willing and obey, you will eat from the good of the land. But if you refuse and you rebel, you will be devoured by the sword, for the mouth of Hashem has spoken."* The Medrash asks, what does the passuk mean, *"If you are willing and obey etc?* The Medrash explains that the Torah came to this world along with a sword (see Bereishis 3:24 where the passuk speaks about guarding the 'Eitz Hachaim' which refers to the Torah and the same passuk speaks about the 'turning sword'). This implies that if the Torah is kept, we are saved from the sword and if not, we will be cut down by the sword. The Medrash ends of, this is what Hashem told the Jewish people (in this week's parsha), if you do My will, the good and blessing is before you, and if not, the curse is before.

The Zera Shimshon asks the following questions on this Medrash:

Firstly, what problem did the Medrash have with the passuk *"If you are willing and obey etc.* the passuk is very straight forward – when we do what Hashem wants we receive blessings and vice versa. Another question with the Medrash is the way the Medrash ends off. The Medrash says, this is what Hashem told the Jewish people, if you do My will the, good and blessing is before you, and if not, the curse is before you. Why doesn't the Medrash say, and if not (you do not do My will), the *bad and* the curse is before you, the same way it says if you do My will the good and blessing is before you?

To answer this, the Zera Shimshon brings another Medrash.

The passuk says (Iyov 41:3), (Hashem says), *"Who preceded me and I will reward him."* The Medrash (Tanchuma Emor 7) explains this passuk to mean that Hashem is saying, that any time a person does a Mitzva, it is always preceded by his receiving a gift from Hashem. The Torah says that one must build a fence on the roof of his house. This is only possible if Hashem first provided him with a house. The same is true with the Mitzva of Tzitzis - one must first have a garment before he does the Mitzva. As well, one can only perform Bris Mila once he has a son, and so on. We see from here that first Hashem provides the person with the good and then, through a person's doing of the Mitzvos, he brings more blessing to himself. However, when one does not do the Mitzvos, he causes that the good he supposed to receive, even before the Mitzva, to be 'sent back'.

This is the meaning of the Medrash - *listen* - to the words of Torah, *and give ear* - to the words of Torah, *do not be haughty* – do not send back the good that is supposed to come to you in this world.

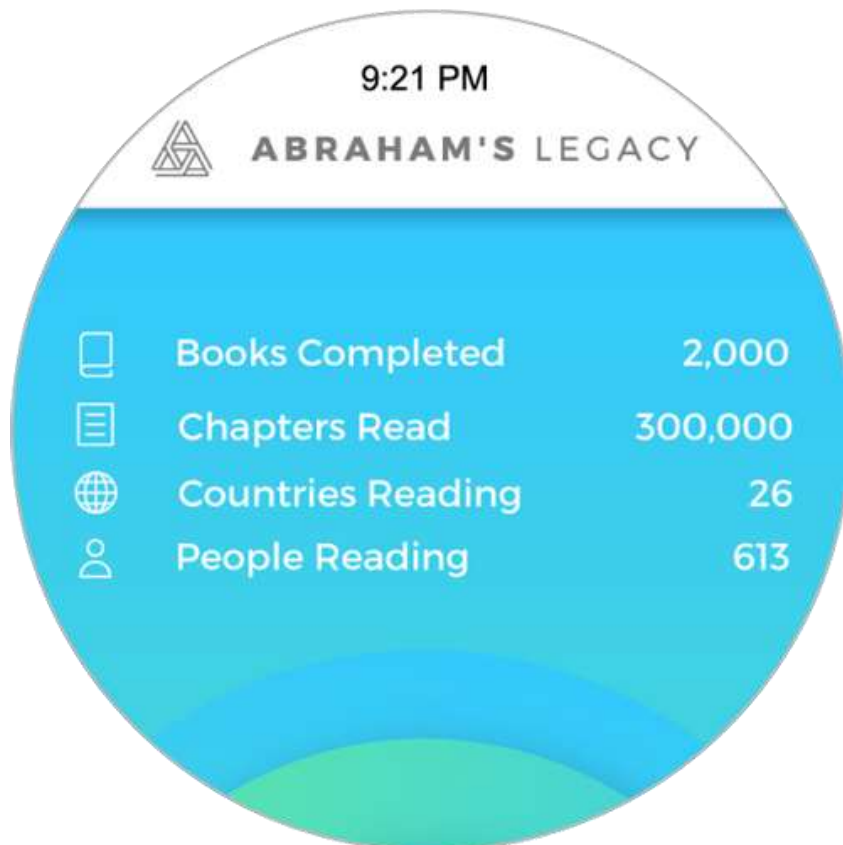
This is why the Medrash asks, what does the passuk mean, *"If you are willing and obey etc?* Which is seemingly a straight forward warning. However, based on the previous Medrash, this passuk seems to imply that *only once* we listen and obey, will we receive the good, contrary to what the Medrash Tanchuma seems to say, that the good first comes to a person and only if he sins, he causes it to become obstructed? This is the Medrash's question.

On this, the Medrash answers that the Torah came to this world along with a sword etc. meaning that Torah, which contains within it all the commandments, implies that if there are Mitzvos, that must mean that one will first be the beneficiary of Hashem's goodness before he will be able to keep the Mitzvos. By saying this, the Medrash is explaining that the correct order is - first Hashem sends good to a person and with that good one is enabled to keep the Mitzvos.

This is why the Medrash ends off by saying - if you do My will, the good and blessing is before you and if not, the curse is before, and not - the *bad and* the curse is before you. Since the good precedes the keeping of the Mitzvos and the blessings comes after. Whereas there is no bad that precedes the transgression of the Mitzvos, only curses that come afterward.

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התנא רבי חנינא בן דוסא

הרה"ק רבי משה חיים בן הרה"ק ר' יעקב זצוקללה"ה זי"ע

הרה"ק רבי ישעיה בן הרה"ק ר' משה שטיינער מקערעסטיר
זצוקללה"ה זי"ע

הרה"ק רבי חיים זאנוויל בן הרה"ק ר' משה אבראמאווויטש
מריבניץ זצוקללה"ה זי"ע

זכותו הגדול יגן עלינו ועל כל ישראל אמן



הרה"ח אברהם חיים בן מו"ה שלום ז"ל
מרת זיסל בת מוה"ר מאיר זאב הכהן ז"ל
מוה"ר שלום בן הרה"ח אברהם חיים ז"ל
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