

# ME'OROS HA'TZADDIKIM

LIGHTS OF OUR RIGHTEOUS TZADDIKIM



בעזרת ה' יתברך

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

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)

❧ **KI SEITSEI** ❧

❧ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ❧

This week's parsha teaches us the *mitzva* of *hashovas aveida* (returning lost property):

*You shall not see your brother's ox or sheep straying, and ignore them. [Rather,] you shall return them to your brother. But if your brother is not near you, or if you do not know him, you shall bring it into your house, and it shall be with you until your brother seeks it out, whereupon you shall return it to him. So shall you do with his donkey, and so shall you do with his garment, and so shall you do with any lost property of your brother which he has lost and you have found. You shall not ignore [it]. (Devorim 22:1-3)*

The *Sefas Emes* discusses the deeper significance of *hashovas aveida* in several places and explains it on the following level: all Heavenly gifts, once given, are never really taken back, as the dictum of *Chazal* says (*Taanis* 25a): "We have a tradition that from the Heavens they give but never take [back]".

Every *mitzva* we do draws down *shefa* (abundance) and sustenance. A person who sins loses this gift. His *kedusha* (sanctity) and blessing become a "lost object" and *aveida*. Since it doesn't return to its Divine source, it is left among *Klal Yisrael*, waiting for someone to "find it", "pick it up" and retrieve this lost *kedusha*. This is what *Chazal* meant in *Avos* (5:3) where they explained how all the generations of *Bereishis* sinned and *Avrohom* took their reward, meaning he gathered all they had lost. Similarly, in *Shabbos* (88b), *Chazal* teach how *Moshe* merited to capture all the crowns *Bnei Yisrael* lost when they sinned at the *Egel HaZohov* (Golden Calf). These are the lost objects that we can find and pick up.

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The *Torah* teaches us, however, that we have a *mitzva* of *hashovas aveida*, returning lost objects to their proper owners. Says the *Sefas Emes*, that the *Tzaddikim* of the generation are naturally predisposed to find such lost treasures of sanctity, abundance and sustenance and pick them up. Their way to return them is through the *mitzva* of *teshuva*, which means “to return”. Helping another Jew to repent and return to *Hashem* helps him get back what he has lost. Thus, the *pesukim* are teaching us that if our fellow Jews are lost and have strayed, if they have acted like animals and beasts, if they have lost precious, Heavenly gifts, you must not turn a blind eye and ignore them; whatever *mitzvos*, good deeds, *shefa*, blessings and *kedusha* that you find, give them back to your fellow *Yid!* Help him to do *teshuva* and he will regain that *kedusha!* May we merit to restore all lost objects to their owners!

Rav Eliezer Dovid Friedman, Shlit'a, of London adds the following illustrative stories and anecdotes:

The *Tiferes Shlomo* teaches that the *Rebbe*, Reb Zisha of Anipoli would have a daily morning ritual. After reciting the blessing of *Birchas HaTorah* he would go outside into the marketplace searching for Jews to bless with the bounty of *shefa* he had harnessed and found in his own *Birchas HaTorah*. He would bless the first Jew he could find, no matter who he was!

Similarly, Rav Friedman relates, “I was on the bus in Givas Shmuel and I sat next to a Jew I knew from Grossvardein who unfortunately was not counted among the most religious. However, he had come from a *Chassidic* family and he was not ignorant of the value of a *Rebbe's berocha*. He told me how once he was passing by the holy *Tzaddik*, the *Ahavas Yisrael* of Vizhnitz, when he was in Grossvardein and he went in for a *berocha*. After he left, the *Ahavas Yisrael* sent his *shamosh* back after him. Surprised, he came back in and was even more taken aback when the *Ahavas Yisrael* said to him: ‘*Tit mir a toyva un zayt matzliach* – do me a favor and you should succeed!’

“‘You should know,’ he said to me, ‘that that year I had tremendous success in all my endeavors – whatever I did was successful.’”

Rav Friedman concluded, “The *Ahavas Yisrael* obviously sensed that it was an *eis rotzon*, an auspicious moment when his *berochos* could do and achieve – and he sought out the first Jew to bestow them upon, whoever that Jew was!”

May we learn to bestow our blessings and kindness on all *Yidden*, whoever they are – *Amen!*



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

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

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

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

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

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

### Hebrew Tefilla for Lighting a Yahrzeit or Hilula Candle

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

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#### Translation:

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

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

4) Study some of his teaching or writings.

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## GEDOLIM BE'MISASAM YOSER



YAHARZEITS FOR WEEK BEGINNING SHABBOS KI SEITSEI

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

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

### \* 9<sup>th</sup> of Elul ~ Begins Friday Night (Aug 28<sup>th</sup>)

- \* Birthday (1566 BCE) and *Yahrzeit* (1441 BCE) of **Don ben Yaakov Avinu** (*Medrash Tadshe*);
- \* **Rebbetzin Malka** of Belz, wife of the first Belzer *Rebbe*, Rav Sholom Roke'ach, (5613/1853);
- \* **Rav Chisdai ben Shmuel HaKohen** Perachia, *mechaber* of responsa called *Toras Chessed*. He was *niftar* in Salonika (then Turkey, now Greece), (5438/1678);
- \* **Rav Avrohom Shimshon HaKohen** of Rashkov, son of the *Toldos Yaakov Yosef*. He was one of the *talmidim* of the *Besht* who went to *Eretz Yisrael*, (5559/1799);
- \* **Rav Yosef Yoel Deutsch**, *Av Bais Din* and first *Rav* of Kretchinesf. He also served as *Dayan* in Tarnopol from 1832 to 1839, and as *Rav* in Manistrich in Galicia from 1846. He authored *Yad Yosef*, a collection of 124 responsa on the four sections of *Shulchon Aruch*. His son, Rav Dovid

Nosson Deutsch, wrote *Nefesh Dovid*, (5618/1858);

\* **Rav Moshe Sheinfeld**, (5693/1933).

\* **10<sup>th</sup> of Elul ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Aug 29<sup>th</sup>)**

\* **Rav Tzodok HaKohen Rabinowitz** of Lublin, *mechaber* of *Pri Tzaddik*, *Resisei Layla*, and other works (1823–1900). The son of Rav Yaakov HaKohen, *Rav* of Kreisberg, Rav Tzodok studied only the revealed aspects of *Torah* (*Halocha* and *Talmud*) until he was twenty-four. Beginning in 1847, he learned only kabbalistic teachings. Rav Tzodok became a *Chassid* of the Izbitcher *Rebbe* and a close friend of Rav Yehuda Leib Eiger. Upon the death of Rav Eiger in 1888, he agreed to take over the leadership of the *Chassidim*. Rav Tzodok was a prolific writer whose works made an enormous impact with their profound thoughts. Besides writing numerous *chiddushim*, he also wrote scholarly essays on astronomy, geometry, and algebra, (5660/1900);

\* **Rav Nachum Mordechai Perlow** of Novominsk, Poland (1887–1976), the son of Rav Alter Yisrael Shimon (the *Tiferes Ish*) and grandson of Rav Yaakov, the first Novominsker *Rebbe* and *mechaber* of the *sefer Shufra D'Yaakov*. In 1916, Rav Nachum married Beila Rochma, the daughter of Rav Yitzchok Zelig Morgenstern, the Sokolover *Rebbe*. The Sokolover *Rebbe* was one of the leading founders of *Agudas Yisrael*, as well as a *Rosh Yeshiva*. He was also a direct descendant of the Kotzker dynasty, and he embodied the approach of Kotzk. Rav Nachum learned with his father-in-law for five years and later helped his father-in-law found the *Yeshiva Bais Yisrael* in Sokolov. In 1926, he journeyed to the United States to raise funds for the Sokolover *Yeshiva*, eventually choosing to make his home and open his *Bais Medrash* in Brooklyn. He authored the *sefer Pe'er Nachum*. He was actively involved in *Agudas Yisrael*; his son, Rav Yaakov, is the current Novominsker *Rebbe* and one of the leading Rabbinic figures in the United States today, (5736/1976);

\* **Rav Yonoson Steif**, *Rov* of *K'hal Adas Yere'im-Vien* in New York, (5718/1958).

\* **11<sup>th</sup> of Elul ~ Begins Sunday Night (Aug 30<sup>th</sup>)**

\* **Rav Gavriel Zev Margolis**, (5695/1935);

\* **Rav Yitzchok Friedman**, the first *Rebbe* of Bohush (1834–1896). The eldest grandchild of the Ruzhiner, Rav Yitzchok was only a year younger than the Ruzhiner's youngest son, Rav Mordechai Shraga, and was cared for and educated by the Ruzhiner himself, regarded more as one of the Ruzhiner's children than as his grandchild. Rav Yitzchok's father, Rav Sholom Yosef, was the eldest of the Ruzhiner's six sons. Rav Yitzchok was only sixteen years old when his father passed away. For a few years he lived in the town of Potik with his uncle, Rav Dovid Moshe of Chortkov. Later on, Rav Yitzchok moved to the town of Ezemal and then finally to Bohush in Romania, becoming known as the Bohusher *Rebbe*, (5656/1896);

\* **Rav Yisrael Elozor Hopstein** of Kozhnitz;

\* **Rav Elimelech Ashkenazi**, the Melbourn *Rav*, (5772/2012);

\* **Rav Yehuda Arye Perlow** (1878–1961), born in Novominsk, Poland, where his father, Rav Yaakov, was *Rav* and *Rebbe*. When Rav Yaakov was *niftar* in 1902, his *Chassidim* divided their allegiance between his sons, Rav Yehuda Arye and Rav Alter Yisrael Shimon. The former established his *Chassidic* court in the town of Vlodova while the latter remained in Novominsk. In 1912, Rav Yehuda Arye assumed the additional positions of *Rav* and *Av Bais Din* of Vlodova, and he founded a *Yeshiva* there. In 1922, he accepted the call from his *Chassidim* who had settled in the United States, and he reestablished his court in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn. Rav Perlow was among the founders of the *Agudas Yisrael* of America, (5721/1961);

\* **Rav Moshe Yehuda Leib** of Peshkan, third son of Rav Yitzchok of Bohush. Recognized as one

of the greatest leaders of Romanian Jewry, his *Chassidim* numbered in the thousands. With the outbreak of the Second World War he moved to Bucharest where he founded and was president of the *Agudas haRabbonim* (Rabbinical Union). He spearheaded the many campaigns to help save Romanian Jewry from their oppressors, (5707/1947);

✳ **Rav Pinchas Shapiro** of Koretz, *mechaber* of *Nofes Tzufim* and *Imrei Pinchas*, *talmid* of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*. In the mid-eighteenth century, in the early days of the *Chassidic* movement, Rav Pinchas of Koretz joined the inner circle of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*. Although he was more a friend than a *talmid*, he shared with the *Ba'al Shem Tov* some basic concepts, including the immanence of *Hashem* (the indwelling of *Hashem* in all of creation) and the goal of *dveikus* (communion with *Hashem*). However, he differed with the *Ba'al Shem Tov*'s successor, the *Maggid* of Mezritch, in his emphasis on self-purification and simple faith rather than the attainment of *dveikus* through *tefilla*. A fierce individualist and independent thinker, Rav Pinchas stressed honesty, humility, piety and love for all Jews. Foremost among his *talmidim* was Rav Refoel of Bershad, whose life was the embodiment of his master's teachings, (5551/1791);



✳ **Rav Yitzchok Yaakov Reines**, (1839–1915). Born in Karolin, Belorussia (White Russia), he was appointed *Rav* of Shavkyana, Lithunia, and then moved to Sventsyany (a district of Vilna) to serve as *Rav* and *Av Bais Din*. There, he set up a *Yeshiva* in which secular subjects were taught along with the normal *Yeshiva* curriculum. In 1883, he went to Lida where he served as *Rav* and *Av Bais Din* and by 1905 his established reputation gave him the ability to set up without opposition the *Yeshiva* that he wanted under the name of *Torah* and *Mada*, which lasted ten years. Neve Yaakov, a suburb of Yerushalayim established in 1924, is named after him, (5675/1915).

✳ **12<sup>th</sup> ~ Begins Monday Night (Aug 31<sup>st</sup>)**

✳ **Rav Simcha Bunim** of Peshis'cha, *mechaber* of *Kol Simcha* (1767–1827). Rav Simcha Bunim studied in the *Yeshivos* of Mattersdorf and Nikolsburg under the guidance of Rav Mordechai Banet. He spent many years as a businessman and a pharmacist, and then became a follower of the *Chozeh* of Lublin and of the *Yid HaKodosh* of Peshis'cha, whom he succeeded as the *Rebbe* of Peshis'cha. His writings express the new approach to *Chassidus* that placed great emphasis on introspection and intense Torah study. His most famous *talmid* was Rav Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, the *Kotzker Rebbe*, (5587/1827);

✳ **Rav Shimon** of Toledo, son of the *Rosh*, (5102/1342);

✳ **Rav Yitzchok Zelaznik**, *Rosh Yeshivas Me'or Eliyohu*;

✳ **Rav Moshe Elyokim Hopstein** of Kozhnitz, *mechaber* of *Be'er Moshe* (1757–1828). His father, Rav Yisrael, the *Maggid* of Kozhnitz, was one of Rav Elimelech of Lizhensk's greatest *talmidim*. Rav Moshe Elyokim's first marriage was to a daughter of Rav Yehuda Leib *HaKohen* of Anipoli, a *talmid* of the *Maggid* of Mezritch and *mechaber* of the *sefer Ohr HaGonuz*. After the sad passing of his first wife, Rav Moshe Elyokim married a daughter of Rav Elozor, the son of Rav Elimelech of Lizhensk. After his passing in 1815, the *Maggid's* teachings were perpetuated by his famous *talmidim*, who included Rav Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov, Rav Yaakov Arye of Radzimin, Rav Naftoli Tzvi of Ropshitz, Rav Sholom of Belz, Rav Yissochor Ber of Radoshitz, the *Chiddushei HaRim* and, of course, his son and successor, Rav Moshe Elyokim. Rav Moshe Elyokim's followers included many well-known *Talmidei Chachomim*, and counted among them the young *Chiddushei HaRim*, founder of the Gerrer dynasty, (5588/1828);

\* **Rav Shmuel Tolwinski** (1914–2004). Born in Semyatitch, Poland, his grandfather was a close *Chassid* of the Kotzker *Rebbe*. He learned at Kamenitz with Rav Boruch Ber Leibowitz, and later at the *Mirrer Yeshiva*. When he was only fifteen, he substituted as *Maggid Shiur* at Novardok, when an older *Rebbe* took leave for a year. In the 1950s, he moved to Bnei Brak and learned at the *Chazon Ish Kollel*. He married Henna Gella Sifman. He moved to Los Angeles, giving a popular *Gemora shiur* for thirty years and teaching at *Yeshiva Toras Emes*. He lived his last few years in Monsey with his children, (5764/2004).

\* **13<sup>th</sup> ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Sep 1<sup>st</sup>)**

\* **Rav Yosef Chaim** of Baghdad, *mechaber* of *Ben Ish Chai*, *Od Yosef Chai*, *Rav Pe'alim*, *Ben Yehoyada*, *Aderes Eliyohu*, and *Imrei Bina*, and many other works (1832–1904). Both his grandfather, Rav Moshe Chaim, and his father, Rav Eliyohu, served as *Rav* of Baghdad. Rav Eliyohu and his wife were childless for many years. Finally, ten years after their marriage, his wife made the long journey from Baghdad to Morocco to request a blessing from the renowned Rav Yaakov Abuchatzaira, the *Abir Yaakov*. The *Tzaddik* blessed her that she would give birth to a child who would one day illuminate the eyes of Jews everywhere. Less than a year later, she gave birth to a boy, who was named Yosef Chaim. As a child, he spent most of his time studying in his father's large library. At the age of ten, he left the *Sefardi cheder* in which he learned and began to study with his uncle, the *Tzaddik*, Rav Dovid Chai Nissim. Rav Dovid later founded the famed *Shoshanim LeDovid Yeshiva* located in the *Bais Yisrael* section of Yerushalayim. When his father passed away, Rav Yosef Chaim was only twenty-five years old. Nevertheless, the Jews of Baghdad accepted him to fill his father's position as *Rav* of Baghdad. His opinion on *Halachic* issues was sought throughout the *Sefardi* world and is still followed by thousands of people from these communities, and even outside these communities. Rav Yosef Chaim's son, Rav Yaakov, succeeded him as *Rav* and *Maggid* of Baghdad. His main *talmid* was the *Mekubol* and *Tzaddik*, Rav Yehuda Moshe Petaya, (5664/1904);



\* **Rav Yaakov Yisrael Twersky** of Tcherkas (Czerkass), son of the *Maggid* of Czernobyl and *mechaber* of *Emek Tefilla*, (5636/1876);

\* **Rav Yaakov Gezundteheit** of Warsaw, (5638/1878);

\* **Rav Avrohom Yissochor Dov HaKohen Rabinowitz**, the *Chessed L'Avrohom* (1843–1892), the second *Rebbe* of Radomsk, following his father, Rav Shlomo *HaKohen* Rabinowitz (1801–1866), the *Tiferes Shlomo*, (5652/1892);

\* **Rav Yerachmiel Moshe Hopstein** of Kozhnitz (1860–1909). The scion of a long line of Kozhnitzer *Rebbes*, beginning with the Kozhnitzer *Maggid* through Rav Yecheil Yaakov, Rav Yerachmiel's father. When Yerachmiel was only six years old, his father was *niftar*, and the *Rebbetzin* married Rav Aharon II of Stolin. Rav Yerachmiel was engaged to be married at the age of twelve, but the wedding was pushed off for two years, due to the untimely death of the *Bais Aharon* of Stolin and his son, Rav Osher. The following year, in 1875, Rav Yerachmiel returned to Kozhnitz to lead his flock of *Chassidim*, a job he performed for thirty-four years, (5669/1909);

\* **Rav Avrohom Fish**, ben R' Yosef Chaim (5758/1998). He was known as a tremendous *Tzaddik* and was said to have been the head of the 36 hidden *Tzaddikim*. It was said about him, that all those who were next to him in the camps during WWII made it out alive – and people knew to stay close to him. His *Melave Malka*'s were legendary and many people saw open miracles when attending them. He also did unbelievable amounts of *chessed*, especially

with couples getting married who did not have money. He would purchase them fridges and ovens etc. Over the years, they eventually numbered in the thousands. He would say that to do chessed with one's body was a Segula for salvations. As well, he said that the reason he was able to bring about so many yeshuos for people was in merit of the *Tzeddaka* he did specifically the fact that any *Tzeddaka* money he had he gave out immediately.

Being that R' Avrum (as he was affectionately known) passed away childless, it would be a great Chessed and Zchus for anyone who can light a candle on the Yortzeit and learn some Mishnayos Lezecher Nishmas Rav Avraham ben R' Yosef Chaim and his wife Fradel bas Sarah. He was particularly fond of the song *Rachem Bechasdecha* and at his kever there is a big sign that reads: "He (Rav Avrum) said, 'Anyone who recites *Rachem Bechasdecha* etc. at this Kever three times and davens for the final redemption is guaranteed to see salvations"



✧ **14<sup>th</sup> of Elul ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Sep 2<sup>nd</sup>)**

- ✧ **Rav Yosef Yuska** *ben* Rav Yisrael Ashkenazi, *mechaber* of *Ohel Yosef*, (5627/1867);
- ✧ **Rav Yitzchok Gotinyu** of Izmir, Turkey, *mechaber* of *Bais Yitzchok*, (5560/1800);
- ✧ **Rav Yaakov Malul**, *Rav* of Vezean, (5688/1928).

✧ **15<sup>th</sup> of Elul ~ Begins Thursday Night (Sep 3<sup>rd</sup>)**

- ✧ **Rav Chanoch Henach Eiges** of Vilna, *mechaber* of *Marcheshes*, *talmid* of Rav Alexander Moshe Lapidus at his *kollel* in Rassein, (5701/1941);
- ✧ **Rav Yaakov Koppel Chassid**, the *Shliach Tzibbur* and *chazzan* of the *Ba'al Shem Tov* and founder of the Kosov and Vizhnitz dynasties. Born in Kolomaya, Ukraine, he was able to trace his family tree through his father, Rav Nechemya Feivel, back to the *Ba'alei Tosafos* of Provence and beyond, to Dovid *HaMelech*. He was also a descendant of Rav Ovadia of Bartenura. His most famous work, *Sha'ar Gan Eden*, was printed posthumously in 1854. He also wrote a *kabbalistic* commentary on the *siddur*, *Kol Yaakov*, printed in 1859, based on the *nusach* of the *Arizal*, and a *kabbalistic* commentary on the *Haggoda*. Some of his *Torah* ideas are quoted by his son, Rav Menachem Mendel of Kosov, in his *sefer*, *Ahavas Sholom*, (5547/1787);
- ✧ **Rav Moshe Alshakar**, *mechaber* of *Shailos U'Tshuvos Maharam Alshakar* and *Kol Bruei Maala Umata*, a *piyut* of praises to *Hashem*, featured at the beginning of some *siddurim*, (5302/1542 or 5295/1535);
- ✧ **Rav Meir Horowitz** of Lebertov, (5601/1841);
- ✧ **Rav Akiva Eiger** (I), *mechaber* of *Mishnas Rav Akiva*, (5518/1758);
- ✧ **Rav Avrohom Yaakov Horowitz** of Provizna, *mechaber* of *Tzur Yaakov*, (5702/1942).



## ❁ HILLULA DE'TZADDIKA ❁

### WHAT'S BEHIND YAHRZEIT MEANINGS & CUSTOMS

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



the *aniyim* (poor) (*Kol Bo*).

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

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



## ❁ GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM ❁

STORIES & ANECDOTES

### Rav Tzodok HaKohen Rabinowitz of Lublin, 9<sup>th</sup> of Elul

The Pri Tzaddik

Rav Tzodok *HaKohen* was born on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of *Shevat* 5583/1823. His father was Rav Yaakov, the *Rav* of Kreisburg, Latvia; his mother was Rebbetzin Yuta, a descendant of the *Shela HaKodosh*.

From his earliest years people predicted that he was destined for greatness. At a very young age he studied *Gemora* intensely, at times under the light of the moon, since his parents could not afford candles.

When he was six years old his father was *niftar*. He moved into the home of his father's brother, Rav Yosef, *mechaber* of *Kapos Zohov*, and when his uncle became *Rav* in Krinik, near Bialystok, the young Tzodok went with him. He was known later on as "the *iluy* of Krinik".

At twelve, he was already answering *she'eilos* in *Halocha*. At his *bar mitzva* he delivered an intricate *pilpul*, astounding everyone.

At fifteen he became the son-in-law of a wealthy wine merchant, in whose home he continued to serve *Hashem* with growing fervor. In 5600/1840, when he was seventeen, he completed *Shas*, as he

mentioned in a letter. He wrote a number of *seforim* in those years: *Otzar HaMelech* on *Rambam*, *Meishiv HaTa'ana* on *ibur hashana* (leap years) and *Sefer HaZichronos*.

His success brought down upon him the fury of some of the townspeople, who disseminated vicious, unfounded rumors about his household. Unfortunately, Rav Tzodok was forced to leave the home of his father-in-law and seek a *Heter Mea Rabbonim*.

Due to this sad reality, he had to travel extensively and thus met many *Rabbonim* and *Admorim*. He was drawn closer to *Chassidus* and eventually became a close *talmid* of Rav Mordechai Yosef Leiner, the *Bais Yaakov* of Ishbitze.

After the *petira* of Rav Mordechai Yosef in 5614/1854, many *Chassidim* went to his son, while others chose Rav Yehuda Leib Eiger of Lublin as their *Rebbe*. Rav Tzodok became a devoted follower of Rav Leibele, traveling to him in Lublin. During that period Rav Tzodok lived in seclusion, devoting himself entirely to *Avodas Hashem*.

In 5648/1888, after the *petira* of Rav Leibele, Rav Tzodok was chosen by many *Chassidim* as their *Rebbe*.

At one point Rav Tzodok was offered the *Rabbonus* of Lublin, but he refused it. He devoted his life to writing his *seforim* and serving *Hashem*.

Rav Tzodok eventually remarried and raised his *Rebbetzin's* children. He eschewed all worldly pleasures, conducting himself with humility and *kedusha*. He would barely eat; in fact, he only ate at the daily *siyum* that he conducted. He did not accept any money from *Chassidim* other than that given to him at a *Pidyon HaBen*, which was rightfully his by *Torah* law, since he was a *Kohen*.

*Chassidim* said that on *Shabbos* he looked entirely different from during the week, and that on *Motzo'ei Shabbos* he would have to be revived as he parted from his *Neshoma Yeseira* (additional soul that a Jew receives for *Shabbos*).

Rav Tzodok led his *Chassidim* for nearly thirteen years. In 5660/1900 he became considerably weakened. As he never had any children of his own, he asked his stepchildren to print his *seforim*. He was *niftar* on the 9<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* and was buried in the *ohel* of his beloved *Rebbe*, Rav Yehuda Leib of Lublin.

Among the many *seforim* he authored are *Pri Tzaddik*, *Tzidkas HaTzaddik*, *Resisei Laila* and *Takonas HaShovim*. In his *seforim* he records many *chiddushim* that were revealed to him in dreams.

Many of his manuscripts remain unpublished. Rav Tzodok's *seforim* are a precious legacy to *Yidden* from all walks of life who seek closeness to *Hashem*, since in them he covers the gamut of revealed and hidden aspects of the *Torah*.

Zechuso yogen oleinu.

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## Some Thoughts of Rav Tzodok HaKohen

### Never Give Up

A Jew should never give up, neither on material things nor in regard to spiritual matters. Even if you are mired in a morass of immorality, don't be despondent, thinking that you'll never be able to extricate yourself. For a Jew there exists no such thing as despair. *Hashem* has countless ways of helping you.

As a matter of fact, the entire Jewish nation was founded on a seemingly hopeless situation. Avrohom and Sora were well on in years, and no one would have believed that they would still have children. Sora – who certainly believed that everything is within *Hashem's* power – doubted the *malach* (angel) who announced the birth of a child to her. Indeed, *Hashem* could have given them a son at an earlier age. Why did He perform a seemingly unnecessary miracle?

It was *Hashem's* design that the Jewish nation should be established on the notion of "believing in the impossible", that a Jew should never despair but believe that *Hashem* can always help, that nothing is too difficult for Him. (*Divrei Sofrim* 16)

May the merit of the *Tzaddik*, Rav Tzodok *HaKohen* of Lublin, protect us all, *Amen*.



## Rav Tzodok HaKohen – A Litvak's Strife Sends Him on a Journey to Chassidus

One of the great lights of *Chassidic* thought and arguably its most prolific author was not born a *Chassid*. Rav Tzodok *HaKohen* was born to his father, Rav Yaakov, the *Av Bais Din* of Kreisberg, in Lithuania. His grandfather, Rav Zalman Mireles, was the *Rav* of the three prestigious communities of Altuna-Hamburg-Wansbeck in Germany and was the son-in-law of the *Chacham Tzvi*.

Rav Tzodok was a child prodigy. He said about himself that when he was one year old, he would make a *berocha* on his mother's milk. At age two, he *davened* from a *siddur*. By age three and a half, he was learning *Gemora* with *Tosfos*. Before his *bar mitzva*, he was already writing *Shailos U'Tshuvos*. He delivered four *deroshos* at his *bar mitzva*, which were printed in the *sefer Meishiv Tzedek*. He was a rising star in the *Litvishe* world.

The turning point came after his first marriage came to a premature end, but his wife would not accept a divorce. He wandered among the *Gedolim* to secure a *Heter Mea Rabbonim* to enable him to remarry. Koretz During this difficult period he met with the *Shoel U'Meishiv* (Rav Yosef Shaul Nathanson of Lublin), Rav Tzvi Hirsch Chayos, Rav Shlomo Kluger and others. He also met with great *Chassidic Rebbes*, including Rav Sholom of Belz, the *Divrei Chaim*, the *Chiddushei HaRim*, Rav Meir Premishlan and others. When he met Rav Mordechai Yosef Leiner, the *Izhbitzer Rebbe* and former *talmid* of the *Kotzker Rebbe* before breaking away, he found in him a soulmate. The *Litvishe* Rav Tzodok became his ardent *Chassid*. At the end, his first wife accepted the *get* and he did not need a *Heter Mea Rabbonim*. He then remarried and moved to Lublin.

Under Rav Mordechai Yosef, Rav Tzodok learned together with another *Litvak-turned-Chassid* (and broke his

father's heart in the process), Rav Leibele Eiger, the grandson of Rav Akiva Eiger and son of Rav Shlomo Eiger. After the *petira* of Rav Mordechai Yosef in 1854, Rav Tzodok refused to take the mantle of his *Rebbe*, and lead the *Chassidim*. Instead he pushed Rav Leibele Eiger to become the *Rebbe*. Koretz In the ensuing thirty-three years, until Rav Leibele's *petira*, he learned in solitude, writing his multitude of *seforim*. Koretz In 1887, after Rav Leibele's *petira*, he again refused to lead the *Chassidim* and pushed for Rav Avrohom Eiger to lead the flock. This time, however, the *Chassidim* refused to give in and he ultimately became the *Rebbe* of Lublin.

He very much wanted to move to *Eretz Yisrael* but his *Chassidim* would not hear of it. Koretz Rav Tzodok was *niftar* on the 9<sup>th</sup> of *Elul*, 5660/1900. Koretz Although he did not leave behind any sons, he left the world with his vast writings which have made a profound impact on Jewish thinking moving forward. Koretz His *seforim* include *Pri Tzaddik (Chumash)*, *Divrei Sofrim*, *Otzar HaMelech (Rambam)*, *Yisrael Kedoshim*, *Tzidkas HaTzaddik*, *Taanas HaShovim*, *Kuntras Divrei Chalomos*, and many others. Koretz

*Yehi Zichro Boruch.*

[www.revach.net/stories/gedolim-biographies/Rav-Tzodok-HaKohen-A-Litvaks-Strife-Sends-Him-On-Journey-To-Chasidus/2749](http://www.revach.net/stories/gedolim-biographies/Rav-Tzodok-HaKohen-A-Litvaks-Strife-Sends-Him-On-Journey-To-Chasidus/2749)



## Rav Nachum Mordechai Perlow of Novominsk, 9<sup>th</sup> of Elul

Rav Nachum Mordechai Perlow, the son of Rav Alter Yisrael Shimon, was born in 5647/1887 in Novominsk. He married the daughter of Rav Yitzchok Zelig of Sokolov, a scion of the *Kotzker* dynasty.

Rav Nachum Mordechai was given *semicha* by Rav Eliezer Sholom, Rav of Piotrkov and Rav Shmuel, *Rav* of Wengrob. He served as *Rav* in Sokolov, Poland, alongside his father-in-law.

In 5685/1925, Rav Nachum Mordechai moved to *Eretz Yisrael* but, as he was unable to support himself there, was forced to return to Europe. He visited the United States in 5687/1927 to raise funds for the Sokolover *Yeshiva*. While there, he was persuaded to remain by the Novominsker *Chassidim* who had arrived earlier.

Following the *petira* of his father on

the 6<sup>th</sup> of *Teves* 5693/1933, Rav Nachum Mordechai became the Novominsker *Rebbe* of New York. He held court first on the Lower East Side and later in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, where he attracted people from among both the *Chassidic* and the Lithuanian communities. It was said that his style of learning was similar to the Brisker *derech halimud*. Later on, he moved to Boro Park.

Rav Nachum Mordechai was active in *Agudas Yisrael* of America and other public bodies on behalf of American Jewry.

After his *petira* on the 9<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* 5736/1976 at the age of eighty-nine, he was succeeded by his son, Rav Yaakov Perlow, the current Novominsker *Rebbe* and *Rosh* of *Agudas Yisrael* of America.

Rav Nachum Mordechai's *Divrei Torah* were compiled under the name *Pe'er Nachum* on the *Torah* that he said in assorted *deroshos*.

*Zechuso yogen oleinu.*

[www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-9-elulaugust-15/](http://www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-9-elulaugust-15/)



### Rav Gavriel Zev Margolis, 10<sup>th</sup> of Elul

Rav Gavriel Zev Margolis, or Rav Velvele, as he was commonly known, was born in Vilna, Lithuania, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of *Cheshvan* 5608/1847. His father was Rav Yechezkel Yitzchok, and he was a great-grandson of Rav Yechezkel Halpern, the *Seder HaDoros*. As a young child he attended the *Yeshiva* of Rav Yaakov Beirat of Vilna for three years, and then he went to the *Yeshiva* in Volozhin headed by Rav Naftoli Zvi Yehuda Berlin, the *Netziv*.

In 5626/1866 Rav Velvele married the daughter of Rav Nachum Kaplan, the famed *Rebbe* of the *Chofetz Chaim*, and they settled in their hometown of Vilna. In 5629/1869 he moved to Grodno, where he delivered daily *shiurim* in *Gemora*.

During his years in Grodno he was given *semicha* by Rav Yaakov Beirat. In his *semicha* Rav Beirat wrote: "He became great and greater still; unlike the greatness of *talmidim* who succeed in their studies after five years, in a short time he surpassed his friends; they chased him but could not catch him, because his stomach was filled with *Talmud* and *Halocha*."

That same year he moved back to Vilna, where he assisted Rav Yehoshua Yitzchok of Slonim (Rav Eizele Charif) in the preparation and printing of his work on

*Talmud Yerushalmi, Noam Yerushalmi.*

Upon the *petira* of his father-in-law, he was invited to serve as Grodno's chief *Rav*. He held this position for close to twenty-seven years.

As chief *Rav*, Rav Margolis enjoyed a close relationship with Rav Yitzchok Elchonon Spector, and was active in Jewish community and world affairs.

Rav Margolis was initially a strong supporter of the *Chovevei Tzion* movement and attended the second Zionist Congress in Basel in 1898. But as the leaders of the Zionist movement became increasingly anti-religious, he not only distanced himself from the movement but attacked it outright.

It was his involvement in world affairs that forced Rav Margolis to leave Europe for America. Among the Russian revolutionaries of 1905 were Jews who did not appreciate Rav Margolis's constant public attacks denouncing them. As a result of harassment and death threats, in 5667/1907 he accepted the position of chief *Rav* of Boston, Massachusetts.

Rav Margolis liked his congregants in Boston and praised them highly in the *hakdoma* to his sefer, *Toras Gavriel*.

Nevertheless, in 1911 Rav Margolis

moved to New York City, accepting the position of spiritual leader of the *Adas Yisrael* Congregation (United Hebrew Community of New York). He held this position for the rest of his life.

In 1912, Rav Margolis established the *Agudas HaYehudim Ha-Orthodoksim*, which in 1920 became the *Knesset HoRabbonim Ha-Orthodoksim d'America*, and he served as its president.

Despite constant challenges, Rav Margolis established an elementary school with an enrollment of close to two hundred children, and an old-age home.

Rav Margolis was *niftar* on the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* 5695/1935, just a few months short of his eighty-eighth birthday. He was buried in the Old Montefiore Cemetery in Saint Albans, Queens. His *levaya* was

attended by close to four thousand people, many of them prominent *Rabbonim*.

Among his *seforim* are *Shem Olam*, *Toras Gavriel*, *Chruzei Margolios*, *Agudas Eizov* and *Ginzei Margolios* on *Esther*, *Shir HaShirim*, *Rus*, *Koheles* and *Eicha*.

*Yehi zichro boruch.*

This article was graciously provided by Boruch Amsel, who is locating the *kevorim* of *Rabbonim* who were buried in the United States over the last 150 years and recording biographical information about them. Anyone with information on *Kivrei Tzaddikim* in America should please call Boruch Amsel at 917-854-7387 or email him at [Baruch@amselias.com](mailto:Baruch@amselias.com).

[www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-10-elulseptember-5/](http://www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-10-elulseptember-5/)



## Rav Yitzchok Friedman, 10<sup>th</sup> of Elul

The first Rebbe of Bohush

An interesting story is told of Rav Yitzchok's move to the town of Bohush. When Rav Yitzchok made known his wish to come and live in Bohush, all the *Yidden* (Jews) of the area were overjoyed that a great *Tzaddik* had agreed to live in their midst. The necessary preparations were made, and everything was ready for his arrival. One snag, however, stood in their way. The local governor, Pan Moldavsky, was known as a violent anti-semite who delighted in making the lives of the *Yidden* a misery whenever he could.

The *Yidden* knew that the governor would never permit them to build a *shul* or house for Rav Yitzchok and could even stop him from settling in Bohush. The *Yidden's* fears were indeed realized. When the governor heard of Rav Yitzchok's wish to settle in Bohush, he forbade him to even enter the town. All the *Yidden's* pleas fell on deaf ears; the last thing the governor wanted was for Bohush to become a major *Chassidic* center. Rav Yitzchok, however,

was not upset by the news and stated quite simply, "Don't worry, I don't want to live together with the governor either. I don't want him to continue living in Bohush." A few days later, the *Chassidim* convened to try to work out a course of action, how to make the governor change his mind. In the middle of the meeting the door opened and Rav Yitzchok came in. "Is there anyone here who knows the governor personally?" he asked. One of the *Chassidim* who was well acquainted with the governor put up his hand. "I would like to know about the governor's daily routine and pastimes," Rav Yitzchok told him. "Does he enjoy hunting?"

"Not especially," the man answered.

"Does he smoke?"

"Not normally."

"Perhaps he is fond of drinking?"

Rav Yitzchok persisted.

Again the man replied in the negative, "No, I don't think he drinks

either.”

The *Chassidim* who were following this unusual conversation were beside themselves with the *Yid's* negative answers. Didn't he realize that Rav Yitzchok wasn't just making conversation for the sake of it? He no doubt had some deep *kavona* (intention) in asking these questions. Rav Yitzchok continued with his questions. “Does the governor gamble? Does he play cards?”

It finally dawned on the man that Rav Yitzchok was waiting to hear a positive answer and he cried out, “Yes, he does play cards and in fact he is quite a good player.”

Having at last received a positive response, Rav Yitzchok adjourned the meeting and left the room.

The governor had a very good friend by the name of Yevtushenko, and the two of them would spend much time together engaging in their various sports and pastimes. The next time Yevtushenko came to Bohush, the governor asked him if he would like to play a game of cards. “I really would love to play but I am exhausted from the journey,” Yevtushenko answered. “Perhaps later I'll have more strength.”

“Let's play now; later on you can rest as much as you like,” the governor insisted. Seeing his host so determined, Yevtushenko didn't have the heart to refuse his friend and the game began. Luck was against the governor from the start. He lost round after round with the stakes running high. Instead of bringing the game to a close, the governor carried on and on, quite oblivious to the sums of money he was losing. On the contrary, every loss increased his desire to continue to play and wait for fortune to shine on him.

After a few hours the governor had no money left to put on the table, but he still didn't give in. “I must play a little longer, my luck must turn.” He put up his property for stakes, his fields, gardens, mansion, furniture and servants, everything was sacrificed. The game only

came to an end when the governor had nothing left to gamble with, and was left without a penny to his name. The governor was evicted from his house and his job and left Bohush a broken and penniless man. Yevtushenko became the new governor of Bohush. Known as a fine and kind man, he immediately granted permission for the building of the *shul* and for Rav Yitzchok to settle in Bohush.

With Rav Yitzchok's arrival, the city was transformed into a vibrant center for all Romanian Jewry. Thousands of *Chassidim* flocked to Bohush to bask in his holiness and to receive his *berochos*. One of the famous *Rabbonim* of Romania who became a staunch Bohusher *Chassid* was Rav Yeshaya Falik. He often used to recount what had drawn him close to the Bohusher *Rebbe*.

The *Rebbe* often engaged some of his learned *Chassidim* in deep *Talmudic* discussions. These discussions took place in the very early hours of the morning before *Shacharis*. Rav Yeshaya was once present at one such discussion. Suddenly, in the middle of a sentence, the *Rebbe* got up to wash *negel vasser* (the morning hand washing that removes spiritual impurity). Rav Yeshaya looked at his watch and noticed that it was the exact time of *Amud HaShachar* (dawn). Rav Yeshaya wondered to himself how the *Rebbe* had known exactly when *Amud HaShachar* was without having looked at a clock. Noticing Rav Yeshaya's great amazement, the *Rebbe* said to him, “I suddenly felt my hands getting heavy, so I knew it was time to wash *negel vasser*.”

Rav Yeshaya said that it is written in *seforim* (*Chassidic* literature) that if a person truly sanctifies himself, his body feels the need to keep the *Torah* and *mitzvos* without having to be instructed by his head, in the same way that a baby feels the need to eat even though no one ever taught him that one must eat in order to live. It was this *madreiga* (level) that attracted Rav Yeshaya to Bohush. The

*Rebbe* had sanctified himself to such a degree, that his hands knew when it was time to wash *negel vasser* without having first to be instructed by his head that it was time to do so.

The *Rebbe* was very active in helping the *Yishuv* (community) in *Eretz Yisrael* to get on its feet. Under his guidance and help, the town of Rosh Pina was founded in the north of *Eretz Yisrael*. The *Rebbe* was once approached by a group of secular Zionists who wanted to enlist him in their group. They explained to him that the *Yidden* needed their own homeland where they would be safe from outside disturbances. “But why have you selected *Eretz Yisrael* as your land?” the *Rebbe* asked them. The group was rather surprised by the *Rebbe’s* question and they answered him, “*Eretz Yisrael* is our land; it belongs to the Jewish people.”

“Do you have any documents proving that it is your land?” the *Rebbe* asked them. The group stood, not knowing what to answer. They didn’t have any documents whatsoever. “I’ll show you the document,” the *Rebbe* told them, and with that he opened a *Chumash* to *Parshas Ki Sovo*. “This is our document,” the *Rebbe* explained to them. “Here it is written that *Hashem* has given *Eretz Yisrael* to the *Yidden*. But, there were conditions under which the deal was made. It says here that the *Yidden* have to keep the *Torah* and *mitzvos* and abide by *Hashem’s* commandments. If you keep these conditions, then you have a rightful claim to the land and I will help you to achieve your goal.”

Many are the stories told of the *Rebbe’s* *Ruach HaKodesh* (prophetic spirit) and the miracles that he wrought. A *Yid* (Jew) once came to the *Rebbe* crying. He was an innkeeper, and one day one of his non-Jewish customers dropped dead in his inn. The authorities claimed that the innkeeper had murdered him and were looking to arrest him. The *Yid* pleaded with the *Rebbe* to save him from the clutches of

the authorities who would certainly execute him if they caught him.



*Rav Yaakov of Husyatyn (fourth from the right) with other Rebbes of Bais Ruzhin. From right to left: Rav Dovid of Pishkan, Rav Avrohom Yaakov of Drohibisht, Rav Shlomo of Chortkov, Rav Mordechai Sholom Yosef of Sadiger, Rav Zvi Arye of Zlatipol and Rav Yitzchok of Bohush*

The *Rebbe* told the innkeeper to take the first available train back to his hometown and added that he should buy a ticket for the first class compartment of the train. The *Yid* did as the *Rebbe* instructed him and left on the first available train. On the way home, the *Yid* burst into bitter tears at the thought of what would happen to him when he arrived home. A *goyshe* nobleman, who noticed the *Yid’s* sobbing, came over to him and asked if he could help him. The *Yid* proceeded to tell the man of his predicament – how he had been wrongly accused of a murder and that a terrible fate awaited him. The nobleman calmed the *Yid* down and told him, “Don’t worry, I happen to be the judge of the local court and I can see that you are really innocent. You have nothing to fear.”

When the *Yid* arrived in his hometown, he was arrested immediately and put on trial. Before the trial began, the judge invited for a drink the witness who claimed to have seen the murder. After the witness had become drunk, he boasted to the judge that he was the real murderer and he had framed the *Yid*, to whom he owed a lot of money. When the court case came before the judge, he acquitted the *Yid* and convicted the witness in his place!

Among the masses who came

knocking on the *Rebbe's* door were many who were far removed from *Torah* observance. They came because they had heard of the *Rebbe's* reputation as a miracle worker, and they wanted the *Rebbe* to give them his blessings. One such person came to the *Rebbe* and asked him for a *berocha* (blessing) that he should not have to serve in the army.

“Do you put on *tefillin* every day?” the *Rebbe* asked. Stuttering with shame, the young man admitted that he did not. “Do you keep *Shabbos*?” the *Rebbe* asked further. Again the man answered in the negative. “How can I help you?” the *Rebbe* told him. “You haven’t got any *zechusim* (merits) for which I can bless you. All I can wish you is that the army be as disappointed in you as I am!” When the young man, who was a strong and healthy-looking person, went for his medical examination, the officer in charge took one look at him and screamed at him to leave at once, and he added, “How dare such a misfit step foot inside my office!” In due course the young man became a *ba'al teshuva* (a returnee to Judaism).

The Bohusher *Rebbe* had five sons,

each one of them renowned for his *tzidkus* (righteousness) and *gadlus* (greatness). The second son, Rav Dovid, was famed for his brilliance. He was *niftar* as a young man, and his *petira* (death) was a terrible blow for the thousands of *Chassidim* who had laid great hopes in him. The *Rebbe* told his *Chassidim*, “If a person is given an object to look after, and he returns it in the same condition as he received it, then he is praiseworthy. All the more so, if he returns it in an even better condition than he received it.” The *Rebbe* concluded, “I am returning my son in a much better condition than when I received him.”

The *Rebbe* was *niftar* on the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* 5656 (1896). Before his *petira* he turned to each one of his surviving four sons and said, “*Viheyisem kedoshim leElokeichem, Viheyisem kedoshim leElokeichem* – You shall be holy to Hashem,” and with these words he was *niftar*. The *Rebbe's* four sons did indeed fulfill their father’s last words. Famed for their *kedusha* (holiness), they spread the word of *Hashem* far and wide.

[www.nishmas.org/gdynasty/chapt15.htm](http://www.nishmas.org/gdynasty/chapt15.htm)



## Rav Elimelech Ashkenazi, 10<sup>th</sup> of Elul

The Melbourn Rav

Rav Elimelech Ashkenazi was born in Budapest, Hungary. His father was Rav Alexander Chaim Ashkenazi, *nosi* of *Yeshiva Ohr Torah* in Stanislav and later one of the founders of the Satmar *mosdos* in Yerushalayim.

According to family members, he was born on *Erev Rosh Chodesh Nissan* 5677/1917, and was thus ninety-five at his *petira*. Some sources indicate that he may have been older.

He spent his childhood years in Stanislav, basking in the presence of his paternal grandfather, Rav Itzikel of Alesk. Rav Chaim Hager, the Antiniye *Rebbe*,

whose court was also located in Stanislav, would *farher* Elimelech, and derive much enjoyment from listening to the young *Talmid Chochom*.

At the age of fifteen, he joined the famed *Yeshiva Chachmei Lublin*, studying under Rav Meir Shapiro, and learned together with *HaGaon* Rav Shmuel Wosner, later of Bnei Brak. The *Rav*, who was a powerful and eloquent speaker, would mention his *Rebbe*, Rav Meir Shapiro, in nearly every public address he gave. At the *Yeshiva*, Rav Elimelech forged an exceptionally close relationship with the famed *Mekubol*, Rav Shimon Zelichover.



He later learned in Ungvar, at the Yeshiva led by Rav Avrohom Yosef Greenwald, the son of the *Arugas HaBosem*.

The *Rav*, being a descendant of the *Sar Sholom*, the first *Rebbe* of Belz, had a close connection with the Belzer *Rebbs*. He was also very close to the Satmar *Rebbe*, Rav Yoel Teitelbaum.

In 5700/1940, Rav Elimelech emigrated to *Eretz Yisrael*, and shortly thereafter he married the daughter of Rav Zalman Weber, *Rav* of Frankfurt.

In *Eretz Yisrael*, he gave regular *shiurim* in the Satmar and Belzer *Botei Medrash*.

In 5717/1957 the Tchebiner *Rav* instructed Rav Elimelech to accept a position in *Rabbonus*, and he subsequently became *Rav* in Sao Paulo, Brazil. After selflessly serving this *kehilla* with great devotion for twelve years, he accepted an offer to become *Rav* of *Adas Yisrael* in

Melbourne, Australia.

Upon leaving Brazil, his son-in-law, Rav Meir Avrohom Illowitz, succeeded him as *Rav* of Sao Paulo.

Rav Elimelech served as *Rav* in Melbourne for eighteen years, leaving a powerful and enduring impact. In 5747/1987 he moved to Seagate in Brooklyn, where he served as *Rav* of *K'hal Chavas Da'as*.

He was *niftar* on the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Elul*, 5772/2012, at the age of ninety-five, and his *mita* was flown to *Eretz Yisrael*, where he was buried on *Har HaZeisim*, in Yerushalayim.

He merited leaving behind children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren who are continuing in his illustrious ways.

*Zecher Tzaddik livrocha.*

[www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-10-elulaugust-16/](http://www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-10-elulaugust-16/)



## Rav Pinchas Shapiro of Koretz, 10<sup>th</sup> of Elul

### The Unpopular Tzaddik

by: Yerachmiel Tilles

Rav Pinchas of Koretz was a spiritual giant in his generation. At first, his greatness was mostly unknown to his contemporaries, but he had no regrets; indeed, it suited him just fine. He spent his days and nights in *Torah* study, *tefilla* and meditation. Rarely was he interrupted.

But then, the word began to spread, perhaps from fellow *talmidim* of Rav Yisrael *Ba'al Shem Tov*, that Rav Pinchas was very, very special. People began to visit him on a regular basis, seeking his guidance, requesting his support, asking for his *tefillos* and beseeching him for a blessing. The more he helped them, the more they came. The trickle to his door became a stream and the stream became a daily flood of personal stories and requests

for help.

Rav Pinchas was overwhelmed. He felt he was no longer serving *Hashem* properly, because he no longer had sufficient time to learn, *daven* and meditate as he should. He didn't know what to do. He needed more privacy and less distraction – but how could he turn away dozens and even hundreds of people who genuinely felt that he could help them? How could he convince them to go elsewhere, to others more willing and qualified than he?

Then he had an idea. He would *daven* for heavenly help in the matter. Let *Hashem* arrange it that people not be attracted to seek him out! Let *Hashem* make him become despicable in the eyes of his fellows!

“A *Tzaddik* decrees and Heaven

agrees,” they say. Rav Pinchas davened and so it became. No longer did people visit him. Not only that, on those occasions when he went to town, he was met with averted heads and a chilly atmosphere.

Rav Pinchas didn't mind at all. Indeed, he was delighted. The old pattern was restored; rarely was he interrupted.

Then the “Days of Awe” of *Rosh HaShana* and *Yom Kippur* passed, and there remained only four brief, busy days to prepare for the *Sukkos* festival. In previous years, there had always been some *Yeshiva talmidim* or local townspeople who were only too glad to help the pious *Rav* construct his *sukka*. But this time, not a single soul arrived. No one liked him, and no one even thought to help him.

Not being handy in these matters, the *Rav* didn't know what to do. Finally, having no choice, he was forced to hire a non-Jew to build his *sukka* for him. But the hired man did not possess the tools that were needed, and Rav Pinchas could not get a single Jew in the neighborhood to lend him tools because they disliked him so much. In the end, his wife had to go to borrow them, and even that was difficult to accomplish due to the prevailing attitude toward her husband. With just a few hours remaining till the onset of the festival, they finally managed to complete a flimsy minimal structure.

As the sun slid between the forest branches and the *Rebbetzin* lit the festive candles, Rav Pinchas hurried off to *shul*. Despite his solitary ways, he always made a point to attend the congregational *tefillos* on the holidays; besides, he didn't want to miss the opportunity to acquire a guest for the festival meal, something so integral to the essence of the holiday.

In those days in Europe, people in need of an invitation to a meal would stand in the back of the *shul* upon the completion of the *tefillos*. The householders would then invite them upon their way out, happy to so easily accomplish the *mitzva* of

hospitality. Rav Pinchas, unfortunately, did not find it so simple. Even those without a place to eat and desperate for an invitation to a *sukka* in which to enjoy the festival meal turned him down without a second thought. Eventually, everyone who needed a place or wanted a guest was satisfied, except for the *Tzaddik*, Rav Pinchas.

He trudged home alone, saddened and a bit shaken up at the realization that he might never have another guest, not even for the special festive meal of the first night of *Sukkos*. Alas, that too was part of the price of his freedom...It was worth it, wasn't it?

Pausing just inside the entrance to his *sukka*, Rav Pinchas began to chant the traditional invitation to the *Ushpizin*, the seven heavenly guests who visit every *sukka*. Although not many are privileged to actually see these exalted visitors, Rav Pinchas was certainly one of the select few who had this experience on an annual basis. This year, he raised his eyes and saw Avrohom *Avinu*, the first of the *Ushpizin*, and therefore the honored guest for the first night of the festival, standing outside the door of the *sukka*, keeping his distance.

Rav Pinchas cried out to him in anguish: “Father Avrohom! Why do you not enter my *sukka*? What is my sin?”

Replied the patriarch: “I am the embodiment of *Chessed*, serving *Hashem* through deeds of loving-kindness. Hospitality was my specialty. I will not join a table where there are no guests.”

The crestfallen Rav Pinchas quickly reordered his priorities. He *davened* that everything be restored to the way it had been, and that he should find favor in the eyes of his fellows exactly as before. Again his *tefilla* was answered. Within a short time, throngs of people were once more finding their way to his door; seeking his guidance, asking for his support, requesting his *tefillos*, and beseeching him for his blessing. No longer could he devote all or even most of his time to his *Torah*

study, his *tefilla*, and to his meditation. But thanks to his holy *Sukkos* guest, this was no longer seen as a problem.

Biographical Note:

Rav Pinchas Shapiro of Koretz (1726-1791) was considered to be one of the two preeminent followers of *Chassidus*'s founder, Rav Yisrael *Ba'al Shem Tov* (along with Rav Yisrael's successor, the *Maggid* of Mezritch).

[www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/2618/jewish/The-Unpopular-Tzaddik.htm](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2618/jewish/The-Unpopular-Tzaddik.htm)



Rav Pinchas of Koretz was among the most distinguished of Rav Yisrael *Ba'al Shem Tov*'s *talmidim*, and a close companion of his successor, Rav DovBer of Mezritch. Rav Pinchas was of the opinion that the holy teachings of *Chassidus* should be safeguarded. He believed that these esoteric ideas should not be publicized, but shared only with a select few. He was particularly opposed to those who transcribed Rav DovBer's teachings and actively distributed copies to the wider Jewish community.

Once, while Rav Pinchas was in Mezritch, he found one such transcription languishing in a mound of garbage. The sight of this caused him great pain. Rav Schneur Zalman of Liadi was also in Mezritch at the time, and knew of Rav Pinchas's intolerance of the indiscriminate publicizing of these teachings. Wishing to appease his holy feelings, he began to speak in metaphor:

"Once upon a time," he began his tale, "there was a mighty king who had an only son. Wishing his son to grow in wisdom and might, he sent him off to explore faraway lands and far-flung islands. There the prince was to learn the nature of foreign plants and animals, and brave dangerous terrain to capture exotic beasts and birds.

"One day, the news reached the king that his son, who was then on a faraway

island, had fallen gravely ill, and that the doctors were unable to find a cure for his illness. A call was issued throughout the land, offering great reward. But all the great doctors, all the famed scholars, were silent, for they knew no remedy or cure for the illness of the prince.

"Then there arrived a man who knew of a proven remedy for the illness of the prince. He described a certain precious stone which, if ground to the finest of powders, mixed with a superb wine and given to the prince to drink, would cure him.

"This gem, however, was extremely rare, and could not be obtained anywhere in the kingdom and beyond. The only specimen in existence was the centerpiece of the royal crown of the king. Removing this gem would mean destroying the crown – the king's most precious possession – and the ultimate symbol of his sovereignty.

"At first, the king's ministers were overjoyed to discover the gem. But as soon as they realized that by removing the stone from the crown – the very one with which their king was crowned – its entire glory would fade, they were extremely distressed. Nonetheless, they were forced to inform the king that the gem had been found.

"The king was delighted. He commanded that the gem be extracted and ground to a fine powder, and that the potion for his son be quickly prepared.

"But at that moment, terrible news reached the royal palace: the prince's condition had so deteriorated that his lips were sealed. So ill was the prince that he could take nothing, not even liquids, into his mouth. The experts and scholars assembled at the palace were certain that, under the circumstances, the king would surely direct that the stone not be ground, so that the splendor of the royal crown could be preserved.

"How astounded they were to hear the king instructing them to hurry and crush the gem and to prepare the potion as

swiftly as possible, and to pour it into the mouth of the prince. ‘Grind, pour, squander the entire gemstone,’ said the king. ‘Who knows? Perhaps a single drop will enter the mouth of my son, and he will be healed!’”

Told by Rav Yosef Yitzchok of Lubavitch

[www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/2671/jewish/The-Splattered-Gem.htm](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2671/jewish/The-Splattered-Gem.htm)



Rav Pinchas of Koretz had a *talmid* who meticulously observed the *mitzva* of refraining from eating leavened foods (*chometz*) on *Pesach*. This *talmid* scrutinized every morsel of food that he ate on *Pesach*, not even eating at the home of his *Rebbe*, Rav Pinchas. Rav Pinchas invited him to his house for every meal, and every day his *talmid* refused him. On the last day of *Pesach*, Rav Pinchas invited him yet again, and his *talmid* politely declined yet again. “Check the bottom of your water barrel,” Rav Pinchas told him. Lo and behold, lying at the bottom of his water barrel was a kernel of wheat – actual *chometz*. The *talmid* was shocked and devastated. He ran to his *Rebbe* and cried, “How could *Hashem* have done this to me, knowing how careful I am not to have one speck of *chometz* in my home?” The *Rebbe* replied, “We all need *Hashem*’s help, and we all have *Hashem*’s help – unless we say to *Hashem*, ‘I’ll manage on my own.’ Then *Hashem* says, ‘By all means, show Me that you can do it on your own.’”

[www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article\\_cdo/aid/2486802/jewish/The-Magic-Touch.htm](http://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/2486802/jewish/The-Magic-Touch.htm)



Rav Pinchas of Koretz gave the following analogy to explain the *Ba’al Shem Tov*’s place in Jewish history. In previous generations, there were no illuminated highways. When people would journey from one place to another, there was a natural tendency for them to look back to the city from which they departed. They

would see its lights in the distance and draw strength from the sight. Even after the lights were no longer visible, they would continue looking back, for the knowledge that their journey had a starting point reassured them that they were not merely wandering aimlessly. Then, at a given point in their journey, their focus would change. They would see the glimmer of the lights of the city to which they were going and the sight would engender new inner strength. For even though it was distant, the sight of their destination allowed them to continue with renewed vigor.

In the analogy, throughout the journey in exile, the Jews would look back to the *Bais HaMikdosh* for their inspiration. In the early generations, it was a powerful memory. Afterward, it became a mere recollection, but at all times, it was the polestar from which their course was set. From the revelation of the *Ba’al Shem Tov* onward, not only did our people “know from where you came”, they could also perceive “to where you are going”. For the *Ba’al Shem Tov* made the coming of *Moshiach* a palpable goal, something that could be appreciated not merely as a hope for the distant future, but a dynamic that is in the process of happening.

[www.chabad.org/therebbe/article\\_cdo/aid/2317642/jewish/Shavuos.htm](http://www.chabad.org/therebbe/article_cdo/aid/2317642/jewish/Shavuos.htm)



Rav Pinchas of Koretz would say: “Until the birth of the *Ba’al Shem Tov*, the Jewish people always looked backward: How many years has it been since the destruction of the *Bais HaMikdosh*? From the birth of the *Ba’al Shem Tov* onward, the clock has been ticking toward the future. With each new year, we look forward, realizing how much closer we are to the Redemption.”

[www.chabad.org/therebbe/article\\_cdo/aid/2314879/jewish/Nitzavim.htm](http://www.chabad.org/therebbe/article_cdo/aid/2314879/jewish/Nitzavim.htm)



Born: Shklov, Russia – 1728; *Niftar*: Shipitovka, Russia – 1790

One of the pillars of the *Chassidic* movement, *Rav* Pinchas was the son of *Rav* Avrohom Abba, and a descendant of *Rav* Nosson Shapira, the *mechaber* of *Megale Amukos*. He received a thorough Lithanian-style *Torah* education, becoming proficient in *Tanach* and *Talmud*, as well as in the *Halachic* codes and responsa. He also gained great expertise in Hebrew grammar and the writings of the great medieval philosophers. While still in his youth, he wrote *Talmudic* dissertations and *Halachic* novellae.

His father, *Rav* Avrohom Abba, a firm opponent of *Chassidus*, was forced to leave Shklov in the wake of a blood libel. He moved his family to Mirpol in Volhynia where he met the *Ba'al Shem Tov* and became a dedicated follower of *Chassidus*. His son, *Rav* Pinchas, also fell under the spell of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, becoming one of the closest *talmidim* of the charismatic leader of the new movement.

The *Ba'al Shem Tov* is reported to have said about *Rav* Pinchas, “A soul such as that of *Rav* Pinchas comes down to this world only once in five hundred years.” At the *Ba'al Shem Tov*'s behest, *Rav* Pinchas settled in Koretz, where he studied the mysteries of the *Torah* and labored at perfecting his way of life, striving for uncompromising truthfulness and conquering all traces of arrogance. Recognizing the purity of his soul, many people from all walks of life, among them outstanding *Rabbonim*, joined the circle of his *talmidim*.

For unknown reasons, *Rav* Pinchas moved to Ostroh in Volhynia, after having stayed in Koretz for twenty years. In 1790, he decided to settle in Tzefas, *Eretz* Yisrael. En route, he sojourned in Shipitovka. It was there that he fell ill and passed away.

*Rav* Pinchas devoted many hours to the study of the *Zohar*, and instructed his *talmidim* to learn *Zohar* every day. He said

that the study of *Zohar* is a good remedy for sustenance and conquering all traces of arrogance.

*Rav* Pinchas did not write any *seforim*, although his thoughts are mentioned in the writings of many other *Rebbes*. The comments and insights of *Rav* Pinchas have been anthologized by his *talmidim* under various titles: *Pe'er LaYesharim*, *Nofes Tzufim* and others. A comprehensive compendium was published, entitled *Imrei Pinchas*, from a manuscript that survived the Holocaust and was discovered in Poland.

The words of wisdom of *Rav* Pinchas of Koretz are written in the *sefer Medrash Pinchas*.

**About Anger...** “For many years I wrestled with my anger, until finally I conquered him and placed him in my pocket. Now I take him out only when I need him. But I am so angry with him, that I do not ever want to take him out again!”

**About Prayer...** “A *tefilla* which is not said in the name of all of *K'lal* Yisrael is not a *tefilla*. If we look at most of the formal *tefillos*, they are not for ourselves but for all of us. They are not written in the singular but in the plural. We *daven* in a congregation to remind us that we are not alone in our needs.”

**The Source of Depression...** “One of the roots of gloominess is pride. An arrogant person thinks that the world owes him honor and respect. He always feels slighted, believing that people disdain and snub him. As a result, he is always in a somber mood. A humble man cheerfully accepts everything that comes his way.”

(*Medrash Pinchas*)



### **The Broken Vessels**

*Rav* Pinchas of Koretz explained: [At the time of creation the light of *Hashem* flowed from the sphere of the spiritual down to the physical world through a series

of vessels or emanations.] But the vessels proved unable to contain the Divine Light. They broke. This primordial catastrophe is called *sheviras HaKeilim*, the Breaking of the Vessels. You can better understand it with an analogy. Think of a man who is deeply troubled and depressed. Suddenly he receives an exhilarating piece of good news. His troubles are over. Instead of jumping for joy, the man will break down crying. The “bright light” of the good news was too much for him. Similarly, *sheviras HaKeilim* means that the vessels broke because they could not encompass the brilliant splendor of the luminescent Divine Light.

(*Imrei Pinchas, Bereishis 9*)



### **A Special Guest...**

Rav Pinchas lived in terrible poverty. His house was shabby and it looked ready to fall at any moment. Once, Rav Pinchas's *Chassidim* in another town invited him to

spend *Shabbos* with them. In honor of the occasion, they bought him a new *bekeshe* and prepared a beautiful apartment in which he would stay. On Friday night, Rav Pinchas was in high spirits. He said, “Here, where I am a guest, they feed me on silver platters like a wealthy man, whereas at home, the poverty reaches every corner of my house. I assume that my *Chassidim* learned to treat me this way from the *Torah* itself.”

He explained: “*Parshas Pinchas* contains a description of the sacrifices for all of the holidays, yet this *Parsha's* regular place, its ‘home’ (the regular time it is read), is during the depressing Three Weeks. On the other hand, when this *Parsha* comes as a guest, it is a holiday (i.e., on each of the holidays, we read the day's sacrifices from *Parshas Pinchas* as a *maftir*).

May the merit of the *Tzaddik*, Rav Pinchas of Koretz, protect us all, *Amen*.

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



## **Rav Avrohom Yaakov Friedman, 10<sup>th</sup> of Elul**

The Sadigerer Rebbe

With the *petira* of the Ruzhiner, his position in the town of Sadiger was assumed by his second son, Rav Avrohom Yaakov. He exercised immense influence on all aspects of Jewish life throughout Russia, Galicia and Poland. The town of Sadiger became the uncrowned capital of European Jewry, the place where hundreds of thousands turned for their every need and problem.

Rav Avrohom Yaakov was born on the 20<sup>th</sup> of *Cheshvan* 5580 (1820). During that particular time, Russian Jewry was undergoing a painful and difficult period. The accursed Czar Nikolai had embarked on his plan to destroy the Jewish nation; each day brought terrible new decrees, in an attempt to bring the *Yidden* (Jews) to their knees. When one of the *Chassidim*

asked the Ruzhiner in desperation, “Is there nothing that can be done to topple this terrible man?” the Ruzhiner answered him, “My son, Avrohom Yaakov – he will topple the Czar... Concerning him it is written *HaKol Kol Yaakov* (the voice is the voice of Yaakov).” And indeed, not long after Rav Avrohom Yaakov became *Rebbe*, the Czar committed suicide, on *Purim* 1854.

When Rav Avrohom Yaakov turned thirteen, his father asked him, “You know that the *yetzer hatov* (positive inclination) joins a person when he becomes *bar mitzva*. Yet his *yetzer hora* (negative inclination) is with him right from birth. Tell me, how were you able to stand up to the *yetzer hora* all these years without the help of the *yetzer hatov*?” Rav Avrohom

Yaakov answered his father, “Whenever my *yetzer hora* tried to tempt me to sin, I put him off with a convincing argument. I told him that the *Halocha* (Jewish Law) forbids a judge to hear the arguments of one of the parties in a case where the other one is not present. So he would have to wait until I turned thirteen and my *yetzer hatov* would be able to refute his persuasive arguments.”

When Rav Avrohom Yaakov came of age he married *Rebbetzin* Miriam, the daughter of Rav Aharon Karliner. Before the *chupa* (wedding “canopy”) the Ruzhiner told his son, “My father used to say, ‘From my sons, people will know who I am,’ but I say differently. From my sons people will know who *Hashem* is. My dear son, you should know that you possess a very holy *neshoma* (soul)...” And with these words, Rav Avrohom Yaakov went to his *chupa*.

When the Ruzhiner was *niftar*, the Russians confidently believed they had seen the end of *Bais Ruzhin*. Thus when they realized that the Ruzhiner’s successor, his son, Rav Avrohom Yaakov, was proving himself both competent and beloved, they were furious. They were ready to do anything to get rid of him, and when the opportunity presented itself they grabbed it with both hands.

A *Yid* who was a forger of Russian banknotes was apprehended by the police. In his possession they found a letter from the *Rebbe* blessing him in all his endeavors. The local *Maskilim* (secular Jewish intelligentsia), who had long regarded the *Rebbe* as a thorn in their side, grasped this golden opportunity. They went to the police and testified that the *Rebbe* was also mixed up in forging banknotes and was in partnership with the forger.

On the strength of the false evidence provided by the *Maskilim*, the Russian Government demanded the arrest and imprisonment of the *Rebbe* on charges of being involved in circulating forged Russian banknotes. A few days after *Pesach*

1856, the *Rebbe* was arrested and imprisoned in the notorious dungeons of Czernowitz.

The *Rebbe* was thrown into a tiny, dark cell in which there was hardly room to turn and nowhere to sit or lie down. To add to his discomfort, his jailers put another man with him in the cell. This man, a hardened criminal, and known to be a violent anti-Semite, delighted in annoying the *Rebbe* with his remarks and coarse talk. He disturbed him during his *davening* and purposely got in his way whenever the *Rebbe* wanted to lean against the wall after the many long hours of being forced to stand on his feet.

After several days of this cruel torture, the warden of the prison was bribed to permit an armchair to be placed in the cell, so that the *Rebbe* could sit down during the daytime. No sooner was the armchair brought in than the criminal carved crosses all over it, knowing only too well that the *Rebbe* would not sit on a chair with such decorations and thus he would be able to use it himself.

And so the days and nights passed, until one Monday morning when the *Rebbe* was busy *davening Shacharis*. As he recited the words: “Look from Heaven and see how we have become a scorn and a derision among the nations...”, he burst into sobs of anguish and misery. Quickly, the *Rebbe* controlled himself and cried out, “Nevertheless, we have not forsaken Your Name, *Hashem*; please do not forsake us.” He repeated these words several times.

Suddenly a surprising thing happened. The criminal collapsed on the floor writhing in agony, his whole body gripped in excruciating pain. He began screaming at the top of his voice, “Help! I’m dying! Help! Help!” The guards came rushing toward the cell and threw open the door. Inside, the *Rebbe* stood immersed in *tefilla* with his face to the wall. On the floor, writhing in pain was the criminal screaming, “Take me out of here! I’m

dying! The *Rav* is tearing me to pieces!”

Not knowing what to do, the guards rushed into the warden’s office to ask for instructions. But the warden, too, was writhing on the floor, unable to speak. In terror, the guards returned to the *Rebbe’s* cell and dragged the criminal out of the room. Only then did he and the warden recover. The *Rebbe* was transferred to a larger cell where he spent fifteen months until he was finally released.

The *Rebbe* emerged from prison a desperately ill man. The many hours spent standing on his feet and the damp and cold conditions plus the lack of basic food had seriously damaged his health. A few days later the *Rebbe’s* condition worsened and his life hung by a thread. The *Rebbe’s* brothers converged on Sadiger to visit him and to *daven* to *Hashem* to revoke the decree. With tears in their eyes, thousands of *Chassidim* stood in the great *Bais Medrash* pouring out their hearts in *tefilla* to *Hashem*. Suddenly the Chortkover *Rebbe*, Rav Dovid Moshe, walked up to the *bima* (readers table) and called out, “We have done all that we can, but the Gates of Heaven remain closed. Call in all the townspeople, the simple and the ignorant, and let them join us in our *tefilla*. Perhaps the pure *tefillos* of the simple folk will succeed where the *tefillos* of the *Tzaddikim* failed.”

Within a few minutes the *Bais Medrash* was packed full with the local laborers and workers, their voices joining the crying and wailing of those already present. After a few more minutes Rav Dovid Moshe mounted the *bima* for the second time and called out, “The crown is falling! Only a short while remains until our crown will be removed! Who is willing to offer himself as a *korbon* (sacrifice), to accept the *Rebbe’s* illness on himself? I guarantee *Olam HaBa* (the World to Come) to whoever will take on himself the *Rebbe’s* illness.”

A deathly silence descended on all

those assembled. Suddenly a *Yid*, Rav Mordechai Mishel of Linsk, jumped up and said, “I am willing to be a *kapora* (atonement) for our holy *Rebbe*; I accept on myself to be his *pidyon nefesh* (soul redemption).” No sooner had he finished speaking than scores of *Chassidim* also jumped up saying they were willing to be the *Rebbe’s* *kapora*. “Mordechai Mishel was first,” Rav Dovid Moshe announced, “Only he has been *zoche* to become the *kapora*.”

That evening Rav Mordechai Mishel fell ill. As his condition deteriorated, so did the *Rebbe’s* condition improve. With jolly spirits Rav Mordechai Mishel told his visitors how happy he was that he had been found fit to be the *Rebbe’s* *korbon*. As he lay on his deathbed, he asked that a *l’chaim* should be brought in. With his last breath he whispered, “The *Rebbe* should have a *refua shleima*, and myself – a place *tachas kanfei HaShechina* (under the wings of the Divine Presence).”

Years later, on Rav Mordechai Mishel’s *Yahrzeit*, the *Chassidim* wanted to drink a *l’chaim*. The *Rebbe* told them, “*Nu*, you have finally remembered him! I haven’t forgotten him, not for one second. When he arrived in the next world, he was looked at as something of a wonder. No, no, he doesn’t need your *l’chaim* at all. He is supported by my holy father on one side and my grandfather on the other.” From then on, whenever the *Chassidim* spoke about Rav Mordechai Mishel, they would add the words *zechuso yogein oleinu* (may his merit protect us), as one does when speaking about great *Tzaddikim*.

After the *Rebbe* had fully recovered, Sadigerer *Chassidus* started to increase and expand even more. *Tzaddikim* would say that the Sadigerer *Rebbe’s* very holiness was ‘contagious’. As his name and fame spread ever wider, so the numbers grew. Every week new faces appeared, eager to experience for themselves a *Shabbos* in Sadiger. Already hours before a *tisch* (the *Rebbe’s* table, a *Chassidic* gathering), the



vast hall was jam-packed with *Chassidim* who hurried to grab a place. Often the crowd was so great that it was impossible for them all to fit into the hall, but still they came. They knew that even if they couldn't see the *Rebbe*, he could still see them and feel their presence.

Once, while the *Rebbe* was wishing a *l'chaim* to those at the *tisch*, he suddenly called out, "L'chaim to the *Yidden* in the town of Nesiveilitz." At the time no one understood the *Rebbe's* words, but on *Motzo'ei Shabbos*, his words were understood by all. A large group of *Chassidim* who had been hoping to spend *Shabbos* with the *Rebbe* arrived in Sadiger on *Motzo'ei Shabbos* (Saturday night). Their journey had taken longer than anticipated and they had been forced to spend *Shabbos* in the town of Nesiveilitz. Although they hadn't been able to see the *Rebbe*, he had seen them.

Besides his tremendous influence in all matters concerning European Jewry, the *Rebbe* also had an overwhelming personality that was so powerful that, once seen, he could not be forgotten by those who had met him. A Sadigerer *Chassid* had a son who took to modern ways until he finally became a *mechallel Shabbos* (*Shabbos* desecrator). Grief-stricken, the father turned his back on his son.

The next time the *Chassid* journeyed to Sadiger the *Rebbe* asked him about his son. "I no longer want to know of him," answered the *Chassid*. "He has forsaken the *Torah* and *mitzvos*."

"A *Chassid* who was once at my *tisch* cannot forsake the *Torah*," the *Rebbe* told him. "If he has sinned, he will not die without doing *teshuva*." When the *Yid* returned home, he found that his son had indeed repented his former ways and returned to *Yiddishkeit*.

The *Rebbe's* brother, Rav Menachem Nuchem of Stefanisht, once said, "If my brother wanted to, he could make all his *Chassidim* so wealthy that they could travel

in wagons with golden wheels. He, however, concentrates on a totally different undertaking. He has managed to achieve that whoever visited him once will not have to return to this world!"

Not for nothing was the Sadigerer *Rebbe* hailed as the greatest *Rebbe* of his era. It was commonplace to hear from him about events which were about to happen in faraway countries and cities. One of the *Rebbe's* closest *Chassidim* was the *Gaon Rav Meir Leibish*, the *Rav* of Turka. In his memoirs he writes, "It is impossible to describe what our eyes have seen and what we have heard from the *Rebbe*. Every different aspect of the coming year was known to him: If food prices would rise or fall, if there would be rain for the crops or not, and also the running of the monarchy – if there would be peace or war. In short, all the future events of the coming year we heard from him long before they happened, and it was so commonplace that it didn't arouse anybody..."

On one occasion after the *Rebbe* had displayed his knowledge of local affairs in Philadelphia, America, his *gabbai* (attendant) asked him in wonder how the *Rebbe* knew what was going on in such a remote city. The *Rebbe* answered him, "Every morning when one wakes up, one has to declare that *Hashem* is *Melech HaOlam* – King of the world. Now if a person doesn't know and understand what is in the world, he won't be able to appreciate what it means to be King of the world! Therefore, every morning I look through the world to see what is in it, and while I was looking I saw what was going on in Philadelphia!" Indeed, when the *Rebbe* was still a small child, his father the *Ruzhiner* declared that his son was able to see from one end of the world to the other.

When the famed *Maggid* and preacher, Rav Hillel of Kolomei, was in Sadiger, the *Rebbe* called him in and said, "Your job is to travel through the towns giving people *mussar* (ethics) and encouraging them to change their ways. I

want you to tell me some *mussar* as well, tell me how I can improve my ways.”

Rav Hillel didn't feel up to giving the *Rebbe mussar*, but after the *Rebbe* insisted for a second time he told him, “I have only one observation to make, and that is, why doesn't the *Rebbe* give *mussar* to his *Chassidim*?”

The *Rebbe* listened to Rav Hillel's words of rebuke and told him, “Our holy father taught us that it is not enough just to say *mussar*, our actions and behavior must also be a living *mussar sefer*.”

On another occasion the *Rebbe* met Rav Isaac'l of Zhiditchov who asked the *Rebbe* to tell him a story, a *maaseh* from one of the *Rebbe's* *zeides*. The *Rebbe* told him: “We know of only one *maaseh* (actions, a play on words), the words of *Chazal* (the Sages) who say: A person is obligated to say, ‘When will my *maasim* reach the *maasim* of my fathers?’”

True to his words, the *Rebbe's* every action was a living *mussar sefer*. In his memoirs, the *Rebbe's* trusted confidant, Rav Meir Leibish writes:

The *Rebbe* is careful not to waste even a split second; not a moment passes which isn't totally utilized to serve *Hashem*. Even when he speaks mundane matters with those who have come to see him, the *kedusha* (holiness) doesn't leave his face for a second, and even while he is busy with those around him it is clearly noticeable that his thoughts are far away in the highest Heavens.

During meal times his whole face glows with *kedusha*, and indeed, a simple person as myself cannot possibly grasp or understand his great *kedusha*, but from what I see it is clear that his eating is an *avoda* (divine service) just like *davening* or putting on *tefillin*.

Where is the pen that can attempt to describe the sweetness of his voice when he makes a *berocha*

(blessing)? It is clearly visible that as he recites the words his physical being ceases to exist, becoming totally subservient to his *neshoma* (soul). The sight of him making a *berocha* is so captivating that afterward the onlooker doesn't know whether he will be able to resume his daily mundane life, having just felt that this world is really an empty shell.

Once during a *tisch*, the *Rebbe's* son-in-law, Rav Yisrael of Mezibuzh, knocked over a glass of wine, spilling it over the tablecloth. After a few days, Rav Yisrael noticed that his *shver* (father-in-law) seemed to be upset with him and he realized that it must be due to the incident at the *tisch*. He went up to the *Rebbe* and apologized, adding that it had been a pure accident, that he hadn't spilled the wine on purpose. “That's why I'm upset,” the *Rebbe* answered him. “How can a person move one of his limbs without any *kavona* (intention)?!”

The *Rebbe* was venerated not only among *Yidden*, but also by prominent *Goyim*. It was not unusual for princes, counts and famous writers to journey to Sadiger to see the ‘Wonder Rav’ and speak with him. Articles about him appeared in the press of Vienna, Berlin, Frankfurt, Prague and elsewhere. For such audiences the *Rebbe* relied on a translator, since he himself spoke no German.

One prominent figure who came to see the *Rebbe* was Sir Laurence Oliphant, a wealthy and eminent landowner. He was said to have an enormous influence on the English Government. For political reasons, he took an interest in the settlement of Palestine. At the time (during the 1870s) there was talk of eventual partition of Turkey. Sir Oliphant tried to convince his government that the Jews should, in that event, have Palestine, the land of their fathers, where they could once again make their home.

Although exactly what he spoke about to the *Rebbe* was a secret, the *Rebbe's* translator years later told the *Chassidim* in hints and allusions about the contents of their conversation. Sir Oliphant, believing the Sadigerer *Rebbe* was the leader of world Jewry, wanted his help to establish a national fund to buy Palestine from Turkey. The *Rebbe* was supposed to have refused on the grounds that he was a Turkish subject living on a Turkish passport. Moreover, he believed Jews must await redemption by a miracle, not by purchasing land.

After the *Rebbe's* *petira* in 1883, Sir Oliphant described his visit in a Viennese journal.

When I was in Vienna, people I trusted told me so much about the Sadigerer *Rebbe*. I very much wanted to meet him. I thought, Come what may, a person who by spirit alone rules thousands of people cannot be an ordinary commonplace human. Since I was then situated near Sadiger, I advised the *Rebbe* that I would like to meet him. Arriving in the *Rebbe's* house, I was led into a room much like a princely court, furnished with precious gold and silver antiques. There I met the *Rebbe*, accompanied by two servants. Regal authority was in his face, and he spoke intelligently about the situation of the Russian Jews. Though I did not quite understand his conduct, I was nevertheless convinced that he could lead and command his people with just the barest gesture.

In the *Rebbe's* last year, he started to prepare himself to leave this world. More and more he secluded himself, sitting for hours on end in deep *dveikus* (attachment to *Hashem*). He refused to see people, cutting himself off totally from his surroundings. Although he had never eaten much – just a few spoonfuls a day – he now

refused even the bare minimum.

With the onset of the *Yom Tov* of *Shavuot*, thousands of *Chassidim* journeyed to Sadiger to spend *Yom Tov* in the company of their *Rebbe*. The *Chassidim* who drew conclusions from every word the *Rebbe* did or did not say, could not help but notice the change in his behavior. During *davening*, the unusually loud sighs emitting from the *Rebbe's* room filled the hearts of his followers with dread.

Every year the highlight of the *Yom Tov* was when the thousands of *Chassidim* would gather in the massive courtyard underneath the *Rebbe's* room. When the singing and dancing reached their peak, the *Rebbe* went outside onto his balcony overlooking the courtyard. With a slight smile on his face, the *Rebbe* would watch his *Chassidim* dance below.

This year, however, even though the *Chassidim's* singing pierced the very heavens, the *Rebbe* did not appear in front of his *Chassidim*. Instead, he stayed in his room surrounded by his sons and *gabboim*. The *Rebbe* was deep in thought, quite oblivious to the sounds going on outside. Suddenly, the *Rebbe* aroused himself from his deep *dveikus* and said, "Each *Tzaddik* is given a certain period of time during which he may procure a *yeshua* (salvation) for *Yidden*. When that time comes to an end, the *Tzaddik* loses his power to do anything, and he is called to the Next World, from where he continues to worry for his people. At this time the *Tzaddik* feels as if a voice from Heaven is calling him saying, '*Lech shuvu lochem le'oholeichem*,' tell the people who are close to you that the time has arrived for them to return home, because '*ve'ata*', you have to leave them and to be with Me – '*amod poh imodi*'."

When the *Rebbe* finished speaking, he signaled his sons to leave the room. He then instructed his *gabbai* to tell the *Chassidim* to stop their singing, and instead to go and sit with his sons.

In his last months, a very bright star

was seen over the skies of Sadiger. When the *Rebbe* was informed of its presence, his expression became very serious and he exclaimed, “Is that so? There has appeared a star...” It seemed as if he had been expecting its appearance, as if it foretold news of what was about to happen. The star appeared every night until the night of the *Rebbe’s petira*, after which it was never seen again.\*



*The Rebbe’s first Beis Medrash in Sadiger*

On the night of the 11<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* 5643 (1883) the *Rebbe’s* holy *neshoma* ascended. His *petira* was described by his faithful *Chassid*, Rav Meir Leibish:

Until the second of his *petira*, the *Rebbe* didn’t rest from his holy *avoda*; even when it appeared that his *neshoma* had already departed, his lips were still moving in constant *tefilla*. Those who saw him in his last minutes understood and realized to what *madreiga* (spiritual level) he had reached. It’s not possible to write at length, for my hands still tremble when I remember what I saw, wonder of wonders...

*Zechuso yogein oleinu.*

Before the *petira* of the *Chozeh* of Lublin, a bright star was also seen in the skies of Lublin every night until the night of his *petira*. In the *sefer Tov HaAretz* (Yerushalayim 1891) the mechaber writes that every *neshoma* has its own star that is its representative. A *Tzaddik* has a brighter star than others, and as his life draws to a close, so the star grows in brightness, sometimes even becoming visible to the human eye.



## Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshis’cha, 12<sup>th</sup> of Elul

### The Lottery Ticket

By: Yerachmiel Tilles

When the great *Chassidic Rebbe*, the *Chozeh* of Lublin (Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Horowitz, 1745–1815), passed on to his heavenly abode, he left behind a devastating void. A large group of his orphaned followers approached one of his outstanding *talmidim*, Rav Fischel of Strickov, to become their *Rebbe* and mentor, even though while the *Chozeh* was still alive Rav Fischel had been a hidden person who kept very much to himself, barely having personal contact with anybody, including his fellow *Chassidim*.

Rav Fischel acceded reluctantly, as if under duress: “Where there is no man,

stand up and be a man.” But soon thereafter the new *Rebbe* made it clear that he intended to hew a path strikingly different from his predecessors. In contrast to the custom of “miracle-working” *Rebbes* of the time who helped the impoverished and persecuted Jews of Eastern Europe with advice, *tefillos*, blessings and even supernatural intervention, Rav Fischel announced that he, for one, would not do so. He was prepared to advise his *talmidim* in their relationship with the Creator and to guide them in *Torah*, *tefilla* and the fulfillment of the *mitzvos*, but had no intention of becoming involved in their material concerns. He felt it was not proper to bother the One Above with such petty matters.

The *Chassidim* were flabbergasted by this new policy – and of course disappointed – but they had no choice but to accept it. It was the price they had to pay in order to be connected to their new *Rebbe*.

Even so, it would happen occasionally that a suffering Jew would come and pour his physical misfortunes into the ear of Rav Fischel, and the *Rebbe* would always listen sympathetically and endeavor to find a natural solution for the person's woe. If the petitioner was in a desperate state of poverty, Rav Fischel would try to enlist one of his wealthier supporters to succor him, and if the problem was a medical one, he would recommend a doctor with expertise in the needed field. Always good practical advice, but no miracles or wonders.

Then one day something happened that shocked the *Chassidim* totally. The *Rebbe's* door was locked! He refused to receive any of his *Chassidim* in audience.

The *Chassidim* gathered around the *Rebbe's* house in consternation, desperate for an explanation of this new development. When Rav Fischel did step out, his appearance so startled them that their hearts began pounding in trepidation: the *Rebbe* was wearing a regular hat! From the day he accepted upon himself the leadership, Rav Fischel had worn a *shtreimel* (fur hat) in the manner of the *Chassidic Rebbes* in Poland. But now he was dressed just like any other *Chassidic* man on the street.

The *Rebbe* looked very serious and there was a worried expression in his eyes. No one dared to approach him directly and ask for an interpretation of his change of attire. But they were terrified that he had decided to abandon his position as their leader.

Some time went by. The *Rebbe's* door remained closed to his *talmidim*. The *Chassidim* felt abandoned. Then something happened that gave rise to a new burst of

hope in their hearts. Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshis'cha arrived in town.

He, too, had been a leading *talmid* of the *Chozeh* of Lublin, and he, too, had accepted upon himself the mantle of leadership over a large number of *Chassidim*. Although he was much younger than Rav Fischel, the two of them had a close, affectionate relationship. The elder Strickover *Chassidim* implored Rav Bunim to influence Rav Fischel to retract his devastating decision.

The two holy men sat and talked in Rav Fischel's room for several hours. The *Chassidim* stood trembling outside. They felt that their spiritual survival was tied to the success of the Peshis'cha's efforts.

Finally Rav Bunim emerged. The hearts of the *Chassidim* fluttered in joy when they saw the broad smile on his face. They heaved a collective sigh of relief. Their *Rebbe* would return to them; their *tefillos* had been answered!

With the heavy boulder of their concern rolled from their hearts, the *Chassidim* were now filled with curiosity as to how the Peshis'cha *Rebbe* had managed to persuade his elder colleague to change his mind. They gathered around Rav Bunim and begged him to tell them all that had transpired.



What had happened was this: A few weeks before Rav Fischel's dramatic change of heart, a desperately poor person had visited him in his room and confessed before him his plight. He had several daughters of marriageable age, but he had no money whatsoever to be able to provide for them and had exhausted all possible hopes of acquiring any. He was broken-hearted, and his daughters even more so.

Rav Fischel offered him advice but none of his suggestions bore fruit. Very much wanting to help the man, he said to him, "I see that I am unable to aid you by natural means. Therefore, I say this: go buy

a national lottery ticket, and may *Hashem* provide your salvation.”

At the first possible opportunity, the man hurried to purchase a ticket. The system was that the ticket enabled its purchaser to participate in ten drawings over a period of ten successive days. The first drawing took place and the man did not win anything. Nor was his luck any better in the second or third. The pattern continued for the entire week. With each failure his frustration grew, and as each day passed his faith in the *Rebbe's* blessing weakened.

After the ninth drawing, he was completely disheartened. He decided bitterly that at least he should recoup his losses and make back the outlay of the ticket. And indeed, he managed to sell it to someone for the price he had originally paid.

The next day the news spread rapidly that Mr. So-and-so had won a huge sum of money in the lottery. He, of course, was none other than the lucky man who had bought the poor man's ticket.

The poor man ran back to the *Rebbe*, bemoaning his misfortune. In tears, he confessed the whole story. Rav Fischel, too, was affected deeply. He saw in the episode a divine message to him. He understood it as a sign that such miraculous behavior on his part was displeasing to Heaven. That was why, he figured, his blessing was distorted so bizarrely. It was fulfilled, but the person to whom it was given still did not benefit at all from it. His conclusion was that he was unfit for the role of *Rebbe* he had allowed himself to assume.



So how did Rav Bunim convince him to change his mind? He told Rav Fischel how he too had been approached by a desperately poor man with many children but not nearly enough income. He blessed him that he should meet financial success.

However, the man refused to be satisfied with such a simply-expressed blessing. He demanded to know exactly how it would be fulfilled, seeing that up to then he had failed miserably in whatever he had undertaken in order to make a living. Rav Bunim replied to him, “Woe to Bunim if this is how he must serve *Hashem*, that he has to provide advice for Him as to how He should enable a Jew to prosper.”

Rav Fischel caught the gentle hint, and agreed to resume his post, and to do so with a changed attitude.

#### *Biographical notes:*

Rav Fischel (“Fisheleh”) Shapira of Strickov (1743–1822) was a *talmid* successively of the *Maggid* of Mezritch, the *Rebbe* Elimelech, and the *Chozeh* of Lublin. He was known for his extreme modesty and humility. His colleagues referred to him as *Ola Temima* – “the unblemished offering”.

Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshis'cha (1765–1827) spent many years as a businessman and a pharmacist. He was a beloved *talmid* of the *Chozeh* and of the *Yid HaKodosh* whom he succeeded. Known as “a *Rebbe* of *Rebbes*”, his major *talmidim* included the Kozker *Rebbe* and the first *Rebbes* of Ger and Alexander.

[www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/80480/jewish/The-Lottery-Ticket.htm](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/80480/jewish/The-Lottery-Ticket.htm)



### **The Story of Yitzchok ben Yakil**

Rav Simcha Bunim used to tell this story to his followers the first time they visited him:

There was once an impoverished man by the name of Rav Yitzchok *ben* Yakil of Cracow. He lived in poverty for many years, not knowing where his next crust of bread would come from. Still, Rav Yitzchok had implicit faith that *Hashem* would not let him starve, and that one day his suffering would end.

One night, he dreamed that there was highly valuable buried treasure under a

specific bridge in Prague. At first, he paid the dream no attention, assuming it was mere wishful thinking. After all, who doesn't dream of riches? But when the dream repeated itself night after night after night, he began to reconsider. Perhaps there was something to it? Could it possibly be true?

So, he set off to Prague – a long and tiring journey, only to discover that the bridge was right near the royal palace and thus heavily guarded at all hours. Soldiers marched up and down, alert and ready, looking for any signs of danger or unusual activity. Digging under the bridge was clearly out of the question. Oh, how disappointing!

But Rav Yitzchok was not going to give up that easily. He returned to the bridge day after day until the guards began to recognize him. Soon they became curious. "Why do you come to the bridge every day?" one of the guards asked him. "Are you waiting for someone?"

Rav Yitzchok knew they wouldn't believe some half-hearted excuse, so he told them about his dream. The guard listened, threw back his head, and laughed heartily. "You came all this way because of

a silly dream? You fool! I had a dream that a certain Jew, Rav Yitzchok *ben* Yakil, has buried treasure under his stove, but do you see me going on a wild good chase? Of course not!" and he laughed uproariously.

Meanwhile, Rav Yitzchok hurried off to buy a ticket for the first train back to Cracow. Now he knew where to look. When he arrived, he immediately shoved the iron stove out of the way and began digging at the hard dirt floor. And, to his great joy and astonishment, after some effort, he uncovered a chest of gold coins!

He used the money to build a magnificent *shul* which bore his name, and with the rest of the money he built himself a comfortable home and furnished it well.

When Rav Bunim told this tale to followers who had traveled from far and wide to visit him, what was the message? The followers understood. You don't always find what you are looking for by traveling to a distant *Chassidic* court. True spiritual treasure can be acquired right near home, with intense effort and devout *tefilla*.

[www.chabad.org/blogs/blog\\_cdo/aid/2166670/jewish/The-Story-of-Isaac-Ben-Yakil.htm](http://www.chabad.org/blogs/blog_cdo/aid/2166670/jewish/The-Story-of-Isaac-Ben-Yakil.htm)



## Rav Avrohom Yissochor Dov Rabinowitz 13<sup>th</sup> of Elul

The Chessed L'Avrohom of Radomsk

Rav Avrohom Yissochor Dov *HaKohen* Rabinowitz was born on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of *Cheshvan* 5604/1843 to Rav Shlomo, the *Tiferes Shlomo* of Radomsk. At the *bris*, the *Tiferes Shlomo* spoke about the lofty *neschoma* that had just entered the world.

Rav Avrohom Yissochor learned *nigleh* and *nistar* under his father, to whom he was very attached.

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of *Adar* 5626/1866, when Rav Avrohom Yissochor was just twenty-two years old, his world darkened with the *petira* of his father and *Rebbe*. Despite his young age, he succeeded his

father as *Rebbe*, and many *Chassidim* traveled to his court in Radomsk.

In the early years Rav Avrohom Yissochor did not speak often in public, but with time he began to deliver lengthy *Divrei Torah*. He would quote from across the *Torah* spectrum.

Rav Avrohom Yissochor led the *Chassidim* for twenty-six years with love and warmth. He was *niftar* on the 13<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* 5652/1892 at the age of forty-eight and was buried in the *ohel* of his father in Radomsk.

Rav Avrohom Yissochor's *Divrei*

*Torah* were published under the title *Chessed L'Avrohom*.

His sons were Rav Yechezkel, the *Knesses Yechezkel*, his successor as *Rebbe* in Radomsk; Rav Nosson Nachum, *Rebbe* of Krimilov; Rav Shlomo of Elkush; Rav Moshe Elimelech; and Rav Yaakov Yosef of Klabotzk, the *mechaber* of *Emes L'Yaakov*.

His sons-in-law were Rav Menachem Mendel Alter, *Rav* of Pavianitz; Rav Avrohom Kalisch of Amshinov; and Rav Mordechai Menachem Kalisch of Otwoitzk.

*Zechuso yogen oleinu*

[www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-13-elulseptember-8/](http://www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-13-elulseptember-8/)



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

The Marcheshes

Rav Chanoch Henach Eiges was born in 5624/1864 in Raissen. His father was Rav Simcha Reuven Eidelman (Rav Simcha Reuven used a different last name, probably due to fear of being drafted into the Russian army), known as Sar *ben Chayal Ha'Adulami*, by the *Roshei Teivos* of his name (Sar, Simcha Reuven) and his father's name (*Chayal*, Chaim Yehuda Leib).

In his youth, Rav Chanoch Henach learned in Raissen under Rav Alexander Moshe Lapidos, *mechaber* of the *mussar* classic, *Divrei Emes*. A *masmid*, the young *talmid* sat for hours on end in the *Bais Medrash*.

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

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

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

Rav Chanoch Henach made his

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

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

During World War I, Rav Chaim Ozer was forced to flee Vilna, but Rav Chanoch Henach remained. Many *bochurim* from neighboring *Yeshivos* found refuge in Vilna, and Rav Chanoch Henach said a *shiur* for them every week.

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

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

In 5691/1931, Rav Chanoch Henach printed the first volume of his work, the *Marcheshes*. It was a two-part sefer of *teshuvos* in *Halocha* and *chiddushim* on



the *Shas*. These *seforim* made him famous in the *Yeshiva* world; they became standard learning material in the *Yeshivos*. In 5695/1935 he published the second volume.

After the *petira* of Rav Chaim Ozer in *Av* 5700/1940, Rav Chanoch Henach

was considered by many of the *bnei Torah* the senior *Rav* and *Torah* leader.

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

*Hashem yinkom domo.*

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



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

It once happened that Rav Yaakov Koppel Chassid entered a *shul* in a town he had never been to before. The regulars were curious – who was he and why had he come to their town? He was in a great hurry at the time and so he was relieved to see a quorum of men already assembled, ready to begin the morning *tefillos*. There was no *Rav* there, and not wanting to wait, he ascended the *bima*. The “regulars” were surprised and offended that this unknown man presumed to lead the *tefillos*. After all, who was this fellow, who didn’t even have the courtesy to wait a few minutes for the *Rav* or the president of the congregation?

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

No sooner had those words been uttered than everything went dark before the president’s eyes. He rushed to a doctor, then to a specialist – to several specialists – but no one could find a cause for his sudden blindness. He tried every treatment that was suggested to him, but nothing proved a cure. Then, it dawned upon him: when had his blindness begun? After he

had angry words with the stranger in the *shul*. Undoubtedly, he had offended a hidden *Tzaddik* with his words, and this was the consequence of his anger.

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

The *Ba’al Shem Tov* replied, “The man is my *talmid*, Rav Yaakov Koppel, and you sinned against him with your angry speech. Go to him and beg his forgiveness. If he forgives you, your blindness will be cured.” The man indeed traveled to Rav Yaakov, who accepted his apology. His sight returned as quickly as it had vanished.

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

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

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

Rav Yaakov Koppel answered, "Before I partake of the physical food, I first stand in front of the table and absorb

the food's spiritual essence. Sometimes, I become so aroused that I sing and dance."

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

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



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

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

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

(מתוך אמונה טהורה) בדרך המסורה (והתנהגה כאשה כשרה) לכל  
משפחתה, היא הודה היא הדרה - נקיה וטהורה היוצר וצר צורה (וקיבלה  
הגזירה) נפטרה בש"ט בת תשעים שנה ביום כ"ד לחודש כסלו (ערב חנוכה)  
שנת תשע"ח לפ"ק תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה ותקים לתחיה לקץ  
הימין מהרה תנ"צ'ב'ה'

# Zera

# Shimshon



# Ki Seitzei

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

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

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

The following is his passionate request to learn his works.

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

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

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

לזכר נשמת

רבינו שמשון חיים בן רב נחמן מייכאל זצ"ל

בעל הזרע שמשון זיע"א

ויה"ר שיתקיימו בנו ברכותיו של אותו צדיק

## לזכות כל ישראל

שלח תשלח את האם (כב' ז')

*You shall surely send away the mother (bird) (22:7).*

The Gemara teaches (Brachos 33b): if someone says that the same way Hashem has mercy on the mother bird (by commanding us to first send away the mother before taking the children), He should also have mercy on us – we are required to tell him to be quiet. The reason is that by saying so, this individual is turning Hashem's commandments into simple acts of mercy, when in reality they are decree's that are beyond our comprehension.

The Zera Shimshon asks that the Medrash (Rabba 6:1) clearly contradicts this Halacha. The Medrash says that Hashem had mercy on the birds as the passuk says etc. *You shall surely send away the mother*, implying that the underlying reason for this mitzva is mercy?

Before answering, the Zera Shimshon brings another Medrash and asks on it. The Medrash (ibid 3) says that in the merit of the mitzva of Shilu'ach HaKen, one merits having children. The Zera Shimshon asks why is the merit of fulfilling the mitzva of Shilu'ach HaKen that one merits children?

The Zera Shimshon explains this specific reward based on yet another Medrash that says that by fulfilling the mitzva of Shilu'ach HaKen, one brings the arrival of Moshiach closer.

Being that the Gemara says (Yevamos 62a) that Moshiach will only come once all the neshamos have come through this world, it only makes sense that in the merit of Shilu'ach HaKen, which helps bring Moshiach closer, that one should merit having children and help all those neshamos that still have to come down to this world.

To explain why this mitzva helps bring the arrival of Moshiach closer, the Zera Shimshon says as follows:

The Zohar says (Chodosh Rus 77a) that when one sends away the mother bird, she is in such terrible pain that she wants to kill herself and the angel that governs over the birds asks Hashem to have mercy on her. When Hashem hears this request, He Himself feels mercy for the Jewish people that He destroyed the Bais HaMikdash and sent the Jewish people into exile. This is how the mitzva of Shilu'ach HaKen brings Moshiach closer.

Therefore, although this mitzva does stir up Heavenly mercy on the Jewish people, the mercy is only an *outcome* of the mitzva - not the *reason* behind it. Thus, the Gemara and the Medrash do not contradict each other. The Gemara says that one should not say that the reason behind the mitzva of Shilu'ach HaKen is a show of Hashem's mercy since in fact it isn't. The Zera Shimshon understands that the Medrash on the other hand, is referring to the mercy that comes as a *result* of the mitzva, not as the *reason* for the mitzva.

לעילוי נשמת דוד בן תמר

שבת שלום

Ki Teitzei

August 29<sup>th</sup> 2020

9<sup>th</sup> of Elul 5780

867



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Hilula

9 – Rabbi Tzaddok HaKohen of Lublin

10 – Rabbi Pinchas Shapira of Koritz

11 – Rabbi Shalom Yosef of Rozhin

12 – Rabbi Ahron Alkaslassi zya"á

13 – Rabbeinu Yosef Chaim of Bavel, the 'Ben Ish Chai'

14 – Rabbi Mordechai Bardugo

15 – Rabbi Amram Ben Divan

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

# Pachad David

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

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

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



MASKIL LEDAVID

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

## The Yetzer Hara is Overcome in Circumventing Ways

**"When you will go out to war against your enemies, and Hashem, your G-d, will deliver him into your hand, and you will capture [its people] as captives; and you will see among its captivity a woman who is beautiful of form, and you will desire her, you may take her to yourself for a wife"**

(Devarim 21:10-11)

The Mussar authorities explain this verse as referring to the Yetzer Hara, meaning that one must wage an all-out battle against the Yetzer Hara, for he is a person's greatest enemy. When a person indeed enlists all his strength, he is given the explicit promise of "you will capture [its people] as captives". This means that not only will he merit emerging victorious from the battle against his Yetzer Hara, but he will also succeed in redeeming all the captives that were taken from him by the Yetzer Hara. To clarify: When one is under the power of the Yetzer Hara, he cunningly takes from the person a number of things. For example, he 'captures' his Yirat Shamayim, meticulousness in obeying Torah law, fear of sin or other similar matters. But when a person decides to go out in battle against his Yetzer Hara, he is promised to emerge victorious and even regain all those positive things that were taken from him when he was a captive in the Yetzer Hara's hands.

Many commentaries ask why the verse says, "and Hashem, your G-d, will deliver him into your hand". Would it not have been enough to write "and Hashem will deliver him into your hand"? Why did the Torah find it necessary to add the words "your G-d"? A simple explanation seems to be that according to nature man does not possess the ability to conquer his Yetzer Hara, since the Yetzer Hara is fashioned from consuming fire while a person is only flesh and blood. When fire competes with flesh and blood, fire will easily overcome the flesh. So the Torah added the words "your G-d", to tell us that only when a person leaves behind all other gods, which refers to the lusts and vanities of This World, and appoints Hashem as the only G-d over him, is he then given special Heavenly Assistance to defeat his Yetzer Hara.

In addition, when a person goes out to war against his Yetzer Hara, heaven and earth testify that his entire being is given over to Hashem's authority, for were it not so, he would not gather his strength to battle the Yetzer Hara. Since the person's actions prove that he is under the Kingship of Hashem Yitbarach, he therefore merits Heavenly Assistance to succeed in his battle against the Yetzer Hara. The Mussar authorities add that this power of discarding all other gods and accepting Hashem alone as King over him, affords the person the merit of the special gift, "you will capture [its people] as captives". All the positive attributes and lofty levels that were cunningly taken from him through the Yetzer Hara's ruses are returned to him, and not only this but the person merits an additional level, as will now be explained.

The Torah says, "and you will see among its captivity a woman who is beautiful of form". Interpreting this according to Mussar, one can explain that the verse is referring to the Torah that is called 'a woman'. For as long as the person was a captive to his Yetzer Hara, the Torah that he contained was also in captivity. But once a person merits defeating his Yetzer Hara and redeeming all the attributes that were taken from him, he immediately recognizes the reality of the Torah and regrets that it was under captivity as long as he was under the influence of the Yetzer Hara. When a person repents completely, not only does he hurry to reconnect to the Torah, but he sees in the Torah "a woman who is beautiful of form", the beauty of the Torah and its brilliance shines far into the distance and causes a person to want to connect to it even stronger than previously.

The Mussar authorities question why Adam Harishon was punished immediately after he sinned by eating from the Tree of Knowledge. We know that Hashem is Slow to Anger and Abundant in Kindness and does not hurry to punish His children, rather He waits for them to repent. If so, why with Adam HaRishon did Hashem overstep His usual conduct and hurry to punish Adam with great stringency despite this being his first and only sin?

The Mussar authorities answer that when Adam HaRishon was created, the Yetzer Hara was not yet a presence in the world. Adam was the one who fashioned it and brought it into the world by his sinning. Had Adam been vigilant with his deeds and conquered his middot, this 'overcoming' would have stood for all future generations and the Yetzer Hara would not have taken up residence in man's heart. But once Adam HaRishon was tempted to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, through this act he brought the Yetzer Hara into existence, including all its terrible repercussions for all future generations. Since Adam HaRishon's sin was not only a 'personal' sin but also caused his future descendants to sin, Hashem punished him with full severity so as to illustrate to him the destructive significance of this sin whose ramifications will be felt by all future generations.

This is also the reason why Hashem is particular with the righteous like a hair's breadth (see Baba Kama 50a). This is because their greatness in Torah endows them with the ability to recognize Hashem's greatness and the truthfulness of the Torah, therefore when the righteous sin, the claim against them is much bigger and greater since they possessed the ability to overcome their Yetzer and compel it. A person is only faced with challenges that he has the ability to overcome, so certainly the righteous, due to their greatness in Torah, are capable of defeating their Yetzer Hara, as Chazal say (Kiddushin 30b), "I created a Yetzer Hara and I created the Torah as an antidote". This being the case, the more Torah a person contains, the greater is his ability to defeat the Yetzer Hara and annul his power of influence.



## Walking in their Ways

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

### Kosher Money – Cornerstone of Endurance

A Rosh Yeshiva once approached me and began singing the praises of his worthy institution. He told me about the wonderful staff and the remarkable young men who glorify this noteworthy Yeshiva by immersing themselves in the Torah's teachings day and night. But, he added, the yeshiva suffers tremendously in the area of finances. For some unknown reason, they could never make ends meet.

I advised him to investigate the source of the money which comes into the yeshiva. Did it come from a place of sanctity, or, chalilah, the opposite?

After an exhaustive search, the Rosh Yeshiva discovered that the majority of their funds came from Jews who violated either the Shabbat or other severe Torah prohibitions, rachmana litzlan. With this realization, he understood that a yeshiva cannot exist on a rotten foundation. When it is supported by tainted monies, a blessing cannot rest upon it. This was surely at the source of his yeshiva's difficulties.

This incident reminded me of something that happened to me. A considerable amount of money was once stolen from me. I was stumped by this as the money had belonged to public funds. Why did Hashem allow it to be taken from me? I decided to make a thorough investigation into its source and discovered that this money had its origins in theft. When money is acquired in unjust and crooked ways and it is not pure, it cannot provide berachah.

On another occasion, when a mikveh was being erected in Paris, things kept going wrong, causing untold losses of money. An enormous sum had been invested in this venture to make the mikveh as beautiful and perfect as possible, but for some mysterious reason, each day brought more incidents of damage and deficit than the day before. One day a pipe burst, the next day the walls revealed cracks, and so on and so on.

Eventually, I decided to investigate the source of the funding. I found that all the donations had come from Shabbat desecrators, therefore this building was incapable of containing a blessing.

I instructed the workers to demolish the entire edifice which had already been built. We then rebuilt the mikveh using money that was kosher and untainted. Baruch Hashem, the second time around, the building went smoothly without any monetary losses or hitches.

## The Haftarah

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

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

On those years when Rosh Chodesh Elul falls on Shabbat Re'eh and the special Haftarah for Rosh Chodesh is read instead of the regular one, then Ashkenazim have the custom to continue with the next section, **"O afflicted, storm-tossed one"**, the Haftarah that would have been read.

## Guard Your Tongue

### A Gossipmonger

One who repeats stories that he heard from others and goes around saying, so-and-so said this about you, a certain person did this to you, I heard that so and so did this to you or intends to do to you, then even if this matter is not necessarily negative, and even would the person be asked, he would not deny the fact, nevertheless the one who repeats these tales is called a gossipmonger and this behavior is forbidden.



## In Our Father's Path

### Why are You Paying Him?

**"On that day shall you pay his hire; the sun shall not set upon him"** (Devarim 24:15)

The son-in-law of the Chafetz Chaim once travelled with a wagon driver to a certain destination. On arrival, he took out money from his pocket and paid the wagon driver his fee, as per their agreement.

The Chafetz Chaim asked him, "Tell me, why did you pay the wagon driver?"

His son-in-law replied, "What do you mean? I paid him because he brought me to my destination."

Again the tzaddik asked, "But why did you pay him?"

"Because he deserves it...he completed his job", replied the son-in-law.

The Chafetz Chaim did not let up. "Tell me why you paid him!"

The son-in-law could not understand what the tzaddik wanted. "We made an agreement that I would pay him. He fulfilled his part of the deal so I must fulfill my part." Then the Chafetz Chaim animatedly said, "Say that you paid him because there is a mitzvah of 'on that day shall you pay his hire'. That is why you paid him!"

With the Chafetz Chaim, there was no such thing as merely paying someone because 'he deserved it'. Who said that he deserves it? The Torah! The Torah commands us to pay a person for his service, therefore we pay because this is what the Torah commanded us to do.

This is how the Chafetz Chaim conducted himself in all his ways and deeds. He had only one deliberation when considering how to act. What is Hashem's will?! Due to this, when he wrote his significant masterpiece, the 'Chafetz Chaim', he did not assign his name to the sefer initially. What difference does it make who authored this sefer? He quoted the source for every ruling, therefore anyone studying the laws could explore the source and realize that indeed all his words were true and just and that he did not fabricate anything. If so, the Chafetz Chaim was of the opinion, why would it be necessary to know the name of the author?



## Pearls of the Parsha

### "It Belongs to Him" Yet One is Permitted to Announce

*"You shall surely return them to your brother" (Devarim 22:1)*

The following is a true account of an incident that happened in Yeshivat Porat Yosef:

One of the bachurim found a fifty lira note (a large sum in those days) on the premises. He approached the Gaon Rabbi Ben Tzion Abba Shaul zt"l and asked him if he can keep it since it is clear from the Gemara that if one finds money in a Beit Knesset or Beit Midrash "it belongs to him".

Rabbi Ben Tzion took out a fifty lira note from his pocket and told the bachur, "Take this as a gift from me and now go to the Beit Midrash and search for the one who lost the money!" The bachur did as he was told and indeed found a panic-stricken avreich searching for a fifty lira note that he had lost. This man was a poor avreich with many children. He had borrowed the money from a gemach and now it had disappeared.

The bachur immediately returned the money to the avreich and restored his peace of mind.

Rabbi Ben Tzion said to him, "See how you performed an act of kindness with a fellow Jew! Even if you were right according to the law, it is proper to act leniently, above the strict law. The meaning of "it belongs to him" is not that one is forbidden to announce one's find. There are situations where one must be ready to make concessions and conduct oneself above the strict law.

### The Segulah of Tzitzit

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### The Difference Between a Guest and a Prisoner

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

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

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

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

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

## Treasures

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



### The Enemies Intentions Are Not Known in Advance

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

The Mussar authorities explain this verse as referring to the war against the Yetzer Hara, for a person must battle an all-out war against his Yetzer Hara and when Hashem sees that the person tries his best to defeat his Yetzer Hara, He endows him with Heavenly assistance to overcome his Yetzer Hara and force him into captivity.

A person's main enemy is his Yetzer Hara and to be successful in this battle one requires help from Hashem. Just as Hashem helps those who fear Him to succeed in defeating their physical enemies, so Hashem will help someone achieve success in his battle against the Yetzer Hara, if He sees that his deeds and intentions are authentic and he possesses the sincere desire to subdue his Yetzer Hara.

A Moroccan king once said that he is more afraid of his friends than his enemies. Since his enemies openly express their evil intentions, he is therefore aware of the need to take precautions. On the other hand, his friends display a loving and friendly countenance, yet sometimes beneath the surface they are digging a pit for his downfall. He therefore has no idea whether they are sincerely faithful to him or have evil intentions. In the same way, the Yetzer Hara works against man with tricks and tactics. On the one hand, he makes as if he loves him and is concerned for his welfare but on the other hand, he stealthily spreads out a net with which to trap him and imprison him in the captivity of materialism and lusts.

When we are not aware of our enemies' intentions, we require great Heavenly mercy and Divine Assistance to be successful in this battle, since man with his powers alone is not capable of waging this war and emerging victorious. Only Hashem who is the King of Kings and tests thoughts and emotions, can help man succeed in this battle. It is the power of Torah study alone that can protect a person from the lowly schemes of the Yetzer Hara and merit him with Hashem's protection.

Chazal tell us (Eruvin 18b) that if a person is faced with two paths, where on one stands a woman and on the other a hungry lion, a person should rather choose the path of the lion, for if he takes the path where he will come across the woman, it is almost certain that he will stumble because of the temptations of the Yetzer Hara. This shows us the extent to which a person must be careful not to stumble. In order for a person not to arrive at a situation where he will fall into the Yetzer Hara's hands, he must try from the start to stay away from situations of temptation and challenge. This is why we recite daily in our prayers, "do not bring us into the power of challenge", for once we are already faced with a challenge, who knows if we will succeed in overcoming it and then shame will be our lot.



## A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA

**T**he Holy Ba'al Shem Tov said that a person's soul comes down to this world and lives here for seventy or eighty years so as to benefit us materially and mainly spiritually. Hagaon Rabbi Yitzchak Zilberstein shlita added that when a person performs Hashem's will and brings his friend benefit, which certainly includes not causing him harm, he has no reason to suspect that he might lose out. There is nothing more worthwhile than fulfilling the will of the Creator, and if He commanded us and warned us to protect the honor of our fellow man and take care not to harm him, whoever does so will never lose out.

Harav Zilberstein related a wonderful story on this topic, in the name of Rabbi Goel Alkrief, which demonstrates the above directive.

There was a religious family of fourteen who set off to spend a few days in a guest house in the Galilee, during the summer vacation. The father had a few thousand shekels in his pocket, which he, together with his children's help, had saved up for the vacation.

In the middle of the journey, after they had already passed the Golan junction, one of the children urgently needed to use the restroom. The father noticed a prestigious restaurant in the distance and asked their driver to stop off there for a few minutes. The father took the child and asked a worker who was standing by the entrance if he could give him permission to use the restaurant's restroom.

The worker told him that the owner had instructed all the staff not to permit this on any account. Since the restaurant was located right in the middle of the route to the Galilee, if

word would spread that he allows such a thing, crowds would take advantage. However, the worker looked around and when he saw that no one was watching he allowed the child to enter but asked that he leave as quickly as possible.

Just at that moment, the restaurant owner arrived... He had probably been following the incident on the security cameras and when he saw that the worker had allowed the child to use the restroom, he came right over and asked the father, "What are you doing here?"

The father, a religious and G-d fearing Jew, immediately grasped the situation and understood that if he would tell the real story and reveal that the worker had given them permission to use the restroom, he will be fired on the spot for going against his boss's orders.

In a fraction of a second, he decided to tell the owner that he had come here with his family to dine in the restaurant. This answer satisfied the owner.

The father took out the few thousand shekalim which were meant to pay for the guest house and told the owner, "You see, with this money I will pay for the meal in your restaurant"... All this sacrifice so as not to cause harm to the worker who could have been fired!

So the entire family sat down to eat in the restaurant and the waiters began serving them course after course, bringing food for the parents and all twelve children. One does not need to be good at mathematics to realize that the price amounted to a few thousand shekels. During the meal, a waiter approached and offered the family drinks. Drinks, to those who are unaware, are not given free... The father decided to decline the offer and not order drinks, so as not to inflate the huge bill even more.

But to his surprise, the waiter told him that the owner had instructed him to offer them drinks on his account...

In his innocence, the father thought that because the owner was aware of the huge sum that the meal had cost

them, he had decided to include the drinks free of charge.

The meal ended and it was now time for dessert. Here too, due to the astronomical price, the father decided that he and his family had no need to indulge in dessert. But again to his surprise, the waiter announced that the owner had instructed him to present them with dessert free of charge.

They finished eating and the father went to pay the thousands of shekel that the meal had cost him. He stood by the desk while the cashier rung up the account and then presented him with the receipt. He glanced at the receipt and almost fainted... After a detailed reckoning of all the dishes, the final sum indeed amounted to a few thousand shekels. Yet three words were printed on the receipt: 'Not for payment!' In other words, the family was not being charged a shekel for the entire meal!

Seeing the enormous surprise on the father's face, the restaurant owner approached him, shook his hand warmly and said: "Tell me, do you really think that I did not grasp your clever tactic? Do you think that I don't know that you came here not to eat but to use the restroom?"

Do you think that I am not aware that you did all this so that I should not fire my worker who gave you his consent?"

"I understood exactly what your intentions were," concluded the restaurant owner. "And when I saw your nobility and good-heartedness, and the fact that you were prepared to give up thousands of shekel so as not to cause harm to another Jew, I decided to give you the meal for free! You can go on your way in peace, I am not prepared to take an agurah from you!" The owner added that by sending him drinks and dessert 'on the house' he was trying to hint to his decision...

This story demonstrates that if one has good intentions one never loses out!

## MeOros Ramchal Ki Seitze

### **ROSH HASHANNA & SUKKOS REBUILDING NUKVA AND SURROUNDING HER WITH PROTECTIVE LIGHT**

**“When you build a new house, you shall make a guard rail for your roof, so that you shall not cause blood [to be spilled] in your house, that the one who falls should fall from it [the roof]. “(Devarim 22:8)**

The *Ramchal* explains to us that the secret of the *partzuf* of *Nukva* is rebuilt anew on *Rosh haShanna* is alluded to in our *pasuk* therefore all the residents of this world pass like sheep before *Hashem* on this day to be judged for their actions and to see how *Nukva* can be rebuilt to guide and lead them all year long.

As soon as she has been built up into a new structure and edifice, we must draw around her the surrounding lights called *Oros Makifin* in order that the external forces of darkness cannot grasp hold of her with their evil clutches.

Therefore, we build a *Sukkah* right after *Rosh haShannah* [and *Yom Kippur*] to achieve this surrounding light and protect the *partzuf* of *Nukva* from the *chitzonim*. This final building is only completed on *Shemini Atzeres*. Therefore, *Chazal* say the *zman* of *Sukkah* lasts all seven days since so long as the edifice is not finished being completely built we can draw around her the *oros makifin* of the *Sukkah* to surround her with protective light.

Our *pasuk* says “when you build a new home,” which is the secret of rebuilding the *Nukva* and then immediately “make a guard rail for your roof,” the roof is the secret of the three supernal attributes the *sefiros* that have the primary protection, “so that you cause no bloodshed in your home,” and prevent the external forces of evil from entering the edifice so that no one “should fall from there.”

The *Ramchal* explains further on the *pasuk* “*Bais Yaakov lechu ve'nelcha BeOhr Hashem,*” in (*Yeshaya 2:5*): All the souls and celestial lights are all surely contained within the *Shechinah*, therefore She is known as *Bais Yaakov* since *Hashem* places all into Her hands and She guides them all the higher and lower beings – *elyonim ve'tachtonim*.

She is compared to a house, like a *Bayis* where people place within their homes whatever they need and want, so is the *Shechinah* like a *Bayis* – a home where *Hashem* places all the soul and celestial lights of the higher and lower beings. Everything is handed over to Her and She guides all the creations and creatures of all the worlds based on how man operates. . .

The *Shechina* leads and guides all of our souls to completion and perfection so we can all leave the exile and go out of *golus* and the redemption of *geulah* can arrive.



As Chazal say: Ben Dovid – the *Moshiach* cannot arrive until all the *neshomos* of the *guf* cease coming. They are called collectively known as *Bais Yaakov* since Yaakov alludes to *katnus* – immaturity and small-mindedness however our positive actions help them reach *gadlus* – maturity and expanded consciousness – that is why the *pasuk* says – *Bais Yaakov lechu* – go out of *golus* into redemption, leave *katnus* behind and be repaired through the *tikkun* of *gadlus*. Then once repaired we can walk together *beOhr Hashem* - in the light of G-d.

## **THE SECRET OF READING *PARSHAS ZACHOR* - TO REMEMBER AMALEK TO CANCEL THEIR POWER OF FORGETFULNESS**

**“You shall remember what Amalek did to you [on the way, when you went out of Egypt, how he happened upon you on the way and cut off all the stragglers at your rear,] when you were faint and weary, and he did not fear G-d.” (*Devarim* 25:17-18)**

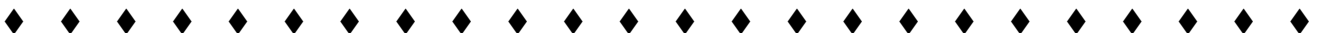
The *Ramchal* teaches us that Amalek represents the *klippah* that causes us to forget *Hashem chas ve'shalom*. Correspondingly, *Hashem* commanded us to remember Amalek, and to remember what they did to us, this conquers them and prevents them for causing us to forget, therefore we are commanded *Zachor* – Remember!

In order to rectify this, we are commanded to read *Parshas Zachor* annually from the *Torah* as *Chazal* say – Remember vocally with your mouth.

This *tikkun* correspondingly defeats the *klippah* of Amalek because it directly repairs the *kilkul* and damage that they caused, their damage is that they caused us to be “faint and weary,” from *Torah*, this allowed them to grow strong and defeat us in battle, and against them to oppose them directly and defeat them, we therefore read vocally with our mouth from the *Torah* once a year to achieve this matter, and this helps us defeat and conquer their *klippah*.

**“[Therefore,] it will be, when the Lord your G-d grants you respite from all your enemies around [you] in the land which the Lord, your G-d, gives to you as an inheritance to possess, that you shall obliterate the remembrance of Amalek from beneath the heavens. You shall not forget!” (*Devarim* 25:19)**

Rav Moshe Dovid Walli teaches us further from his *rebbe* the *Ramchal* that it is well known that there is no more dangerous, powerful and difficult *klippah* than the *klippah* – the husk and shell of impurity of Amalek, the reason for this is that they grasp hold onto the inner essence the *penimiyus* of *kedusha* and prevents the attributes from uniting to achieve *zivug*.



## Reb Shloma'la z'l on the Parsha

So here the *Torah* says "כי תצא למלחמה על אויביך", when you go out to battle your enemies. When the *Torah* talks about someone going out to war, it writes it in singular. So let me ask you friends, how can one Jew go out and conquer the world? It's crazy.

I want you to know, there are two struggles going on in our lifetime. One struggle is going on *mamesh* inside, deep inside. The struggle is when I don't even know if I want to be a Jew, I don't know if I should keep *Shabbos*. I don't know if I should be married to my wife or not. I already have grown up children, but I haven't decided yet if I should have had children. These are all real inside struggles. But then there is something else. It's when my inside is already fixed. It's *mamesh* clear to me in two million ways that I cannot move an inch away from the *Torah*... I just can't, even if I wanted to.

You know friends, let's say I decided to take off for a *Shabbos* and go into Tel-Aviv? Let me ask you, in all honesty - It's not even a question of choice. I look at my feet, they don't move... they don't move. You know why? What's the first sign if I make a covenant with G-d? - that there are certain things inside that I don't have to struggle about anymore. I'm a *Yid*. Inside, inside, I don't have to struggle anymore. Sure, it's hard. You have to make decisions every minute. G-d is testing you every second of your life. So what I'm doing is only fixing the outside. It's clear to me; I cannot go Friday night and go to a discotheque in Tel Aviv. I can't. But you know something, I have choice when I am sitting by my *Shabbos* table. I can sit there and eat a meal, or I can *mamesh* keep *Shabbos* in the deepest depths.

G-d created the world in six days and on *Shabbos* He rested. What a sad translation! On *Shabbos* - G-d gave the world a soul. On *Shabbos* - G-d created a world of souls, of depth, of tasting that which is most real. *Shabbos* invites all those who need new energy, all those who have been broken by the world of the six days, who need the world of *Shabbos* to make their brokenness whole again. *Shabbos* invites all those who have so far only felt the pain of life and are crying for the joy, the bliss, the unbelievable heavenliness of being alive in a world created by G-d. *Shabbos* invites all those who are tired of walking slowly, who only cover a spiritual inch per lifetime on their journeys. *Shabbos* invites all those who have traveled through the valleys of sadness, of waiting and waiting all the time. *Shabbos* is to get to the top of the mountain in one second, and there discover even higher mountains that we may have never ever seen before.

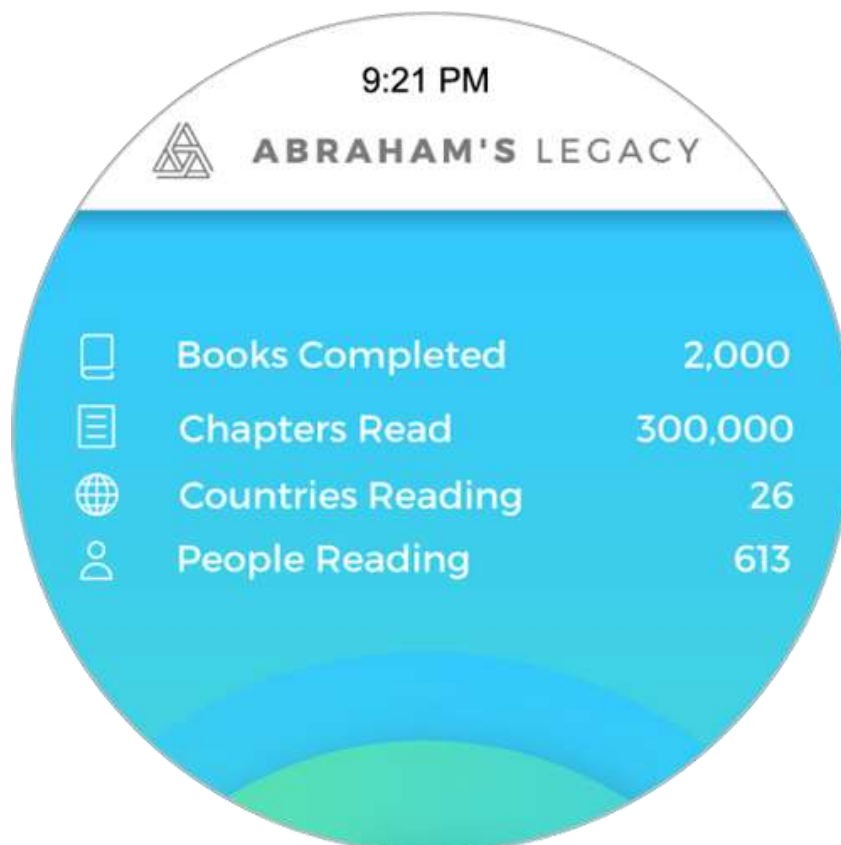
*Shabbos* invites all those who know, who experienced so much sweetness, so much holiness in life, but it's clear to them this cannot be all G-d wants to give them. Isn't G-d infinite? Isn't life infinite? *Shabbos* is the name of G-d.

Will you accept the invitation of *Shabbos*?

Good *Shabbos*!

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