

MEOROS HATZADDIKIM

— Lights Of Our Righteous —

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

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)

Parshas Shmini & Isru Chag Pesach

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Why Tzaddikim Simply Cannot Stomach Treif

Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel of Apta Mezibuz

"Zos hachaya asher tochelu - this is the animal that you should eat" (11:2). The Medrash says (*Tanchuma Shemini* 8) regarding this: *Dovid HaMelech* stated (*Tehillim* 40:9), "To fulfill Your will, Hashem, my G-d, I desire, and Your Torah is in my innards."

The *Apta Rav*, in *Ohev Yisrael*, explains our *pasuk* as follows: He asks why the



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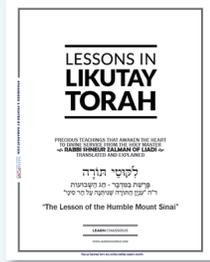
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pasuk uses the language *zos hachaya*, implying that Moshe pointed out which animals were pure and kosher. Obviously Moshe did not point out which animals were kosher; rather, using the signs of purity, he taught *Bnei Yisrael* to identify the kosher species through identifying marks and characteristics. *Chazal* say in *Menochos* 29a that Hashem did show Moshe each species, but Moshe did not do the same for *Klal Yisrael*, preferring to teach them the identifying signs and marks to distinguish kosher animals from nonkosher ones.

Based on this idea, we can explain the message of our *pasuk*. The *Apta Rav* introduces the idea that we too can recognize and identify signs and characteristics that tell us what is kosher and pure to eat. How can a person do so? First, the *Apta Rav* posits that anyone who wishes to give Hashem *nachas* will be unable to put something impure and nonkosher into his mouth.

The reason is that all kosher foods have a *chiyus* (vitality) rooted in a holy source in the upper realms. This *kedusha* desires to be uplifted and rise back to its root source in holiness. However, impure, tainted and nonkosher foods do not have this sanctity and have no draw pulling them up with desire to the higher worlds. They have no desire at all to be uplifted like kosher foods do. Furthermore, impure, nonkosher foods actually place a barrier between us and Hashem, causing the one who consumes them to have his heart clogged up and stupefied, so that he is cut off from holiness altogether.

A person who desires to grow spiritually and draw close to Hashem when confronted with forbidden foods will find he has no desire to eat such tainted food. When food is brought before a *Tzaddik*, surely that pure, kosher food was placed there by Hashem, Who desires that the sparks in that food should be refined and uplifted by this person who eats them to serve Hashem, as is known to those who understand these matters.

This, says the *Apta Rav*, demonstrates how the *pasuk* in *Tehillim* is true and the Torah is in such a person's innards. In his digestive tract there is a guiding force of Torah that guides him what to eat and what to refrain from eating. For such a person, if his innards hunger for the food, this is a sign of purity and kashrus, and if his innards detest the food and are disgusted by it, this is a sign of the food's

impurity and nonkosher status.

This, explains the *Apta Rav*, is why the *pasuk* says “*zos hachaya asher tochelu* - this is the animal” those to which we point and say, “You shall eat them” - those animals that you have a desire and appetite for are surely kosher and pure to eat, and holiness will be drawn from their inner vitality into such a meal. This is why the *Medrash* comments on our *pasuk* with the *pasuk* in *Tehillim*, “to fulfill Your will, Hashem, my G-d, I desire” -when I desire this food I know it is because of “Your Torah in my innards”.

This, concludes the *Apta Rav*, is all true regarding *Tzaddikim* who are completely holy. Their sole desire is to serve Hashem and fulfill His will and therefore His Torah is in their innards guiding them to eat and desire those foods that are kosher, in order to fulfill His will. The *Ohev Yisrael* concludes with the prayer: May we merit to be counted among those who fulfill His will, truly wholeheartedly, Amen!

Why Does Hashem Atone For Human Sinners Through Animal Sacrifice?

Rav Chaim Ibn Attar, the Ohr HaChaim

“And Aharon drew near to the *Mizbei’ach* (Altar)” (9:8).

The *Ohr HaChaim* says that our *pasuk* alludes to the words of *Chazal* in the *Yerushalmi* (*Makkos* 2:6): Prophecy was asked what punishment sinners deserve and she replied that they deserved death, whereas Hashem in His mercy decreed that sinners bring a sacrificial offering to atone. The *Ohr HaChaim* explains the meaning behind the sacrificial offerings:

The primary purpose of the act of offering sacrifices is to affect the thoughts of the person who is bringing the *Korban*. He is to think how all the things that are being done to the offering should all really be done to him; really he is the one who deserves to be slaughtered and burned in the fire instead of the animal, and

these thoughts atone for him.

This is why our *pasuk* says that Aharon drew near to the Altar - it means that he prepared himself to atone for the guilt of his soul, and he drew near to slaughter himself in the flames of the Altar. That is, he would now offer the calf as a sin offering instead of himself, and through Hashem's mercy the calf would be accepted in his place.

We need to understand how this works, for we know Hashem swore to judge the world and all of Creation (*Tanchuma Shoftim*) and anyone who dares suggest that Hashem forgives and forgets is liable, may his own innards be forgiven (*Yerushalmi Shekolim* 5:1)! If so, how can a sinner, whose judgment is death, who is liable for corporal punishment as the *Novi* says (*Yechezkel* 18:4) get off with a sacrificial offering to atone?

The *Ohr HaChaim* suggests that when a sinner commits a transgression he loses his humanity and is transformed into an animal, as *Chazal* say in *Sota* 3a that a person only sins if a spirit of *shtus* (frivolity) enters into him. He is then transformed and becomes like a beast! On the day he repents, a human spirit enters him again, and he rises back up to the level of humans. We might ask, is it correct and proper to kill a human being for the actions of an animal? Therefore, a similar offering must be brought on the same level to atone for such bestial deeds. The acts of a beast will be atoned for by the sacrificial offerings of a beast. When the sinner sees what is done to the beast and its sufferings, he can truly commiserate and empathize with his kindred, because he was liable and worthy of this very punishment for his own animal behavior.

These feelings of remorse save a person from his fate, as it says (*Tehillim* 36:7), *Adam uveheima toshia Hashem* - "Hashem shall save man and beast". When man's animal portion joins with his human mind, they are saved from punishment, when unworthy of the fate. Now we can see and understand how a sacrificial offering is truly part of Hashem's justice, as it says (*ibid.*), "Your judgments are deep as a chasm, man and beast shall You save, Hashem".

Praises for the Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh

I Heard it in Heaven

In this week's *Parsha, Shemini*, on *pasuk* 9:15, the *Ohr HaChaim* concludes his commentary with the cryptic word *shomati* - "I heard this", but does not specify where or from whom he heard the *peirush*. The holy *Koidonover Rebbe* used to say that he received a tradition that when the *Ohr HaChaim* said *shomati*, it means that he heard it from *Shomayim*, from Heaven! (Segulas Moshe)

Named for the Ohr HaChaim

Rav Aharon of *Karlin-Pinsk* related on *Parshas Bolok* 5753:

Rav Yehoshua Heschel Holtovski used to visit the *tziun* of the holy Rav Chaim ben Attar often and used each opportunity to *daven* and achieve salvations on behalf of others, especially in times of trouble. One time, his own young son became very sick; the poor babe's life was in danger and the doctors had despaired of healing him by any natural medical means. Rav Holtovski went to the *tziun* of the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* and davened and shed many tears for his son's recovery. Afterward, he pledged to add the name "Chaim" to his son's name in honor of the *Ohr HaChaim*. His prayers bore fruit and were answered; shortly afterward, his son had a miraculous recovery and was healed, completely regaining his strength! The child grew up to be Rav Chaim Yisrael Holtovski. (*Shivchei Chaim* p. 173)

Shabbos Nuch Dem Chulent

The *Karliner Rebbe* told one of his *Chassidim* that the best time to learn and study on Shabbos is after the *chulent* - "*Der bester zeman fun lernen iz Shabbos nuch dem chulent!*" Similarly, in one of his letters (*Kisvei Kodesh* p. 98), he wrote: "See to it that Shabbos after the *seuda* you do not lie down for a nap; instead, take a *sefer* and learn - and that study session should focus on the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh*." (*Kovetz Bais Aharon VeYisroel* Year 18 Gilyon #5)

The Reason Why Aharon Was Chosen

Rav Moshe Chaim Ephraim of Sudilkov

And Moshe said to Aharon, Draw near to the altar and offer your sin offering: Rashi (ad loc) comments that Aharon was fearful and in his modesty, shied away from do so. Moshe told his brother, "Why are you ashamed? For this reason you were selected.

I heard from my holy master and teacher, my grandfather, the *Baal Shem Tov* that he asked [a question on this passage]: Did not the fact that Moshe told Aharon that he was chosen remove the shame and reticence from Aharon? Yet, even once Aharon knew he was chosen [for the holy service in the *Mishkan*] he was still shamefaced!

The *Baal Shem Tov* answered that it was not a question rather a statement of fact. Moshe was not asking Aharon, "Why are you embarrassed; for this, you were chosen and selected," but instead, we should read this as a statement of fact that Moshe was revealing to Aharon the reason behind why he was chosen - because you are fearful, humble. and possess an embarrassed bashful nature. It is those qualities, those attributes that Hashem desires! Particularly for that reason, He selected you!

It seems to me in explaining my grandfather's words, it is because Aharon possessed fear and embarrassment - which together spell "*Bereishis*"-- that is why he was chosen (Zohar vol. III 20a) as the *Shoshvina de'Matronisa* (he deserved the position of overseer). This alludes to another way to read the compound word *Bereishis* besides *Yareh Boshes* (fear and humility/embarrassment). It may also able read as *Ashrei Bas* (fortunate was Aharon to be selected to oversee the Daughter of the King [to prepare the *Shechinah* and decorate her]).

Gedolim Be'misasm Yoser



Yahrzeits for the 23rd of Nissan ~ Begins Thursday Night (04-10-2026)



Rav Moshe di Trani - Hamabit (5345 / 1585 - 441st Yahrzeit)



Rav Yisroel Sholom Yosef Friedman of Bohosh - Pe'er Yisroel (5683 / 1923 - 103rd Yahrzeit)

Yahrzeits for the 24th of Nissan ~ Begins Friday Night (04-11-2026)



Rav Moshe of Premishel - Match Moshe (5366 / 1606 - 420th Yahrzeit)



Rebbetzin Sasha Mindel Hertzberg (nee Kluger) (5614 / 1854 - 172nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Chaim Menachem Heschel of Zinkov (5653 / 1893 - 133rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef HaKohen Friedman of Riminov (5673 / 1913 - 113th Yahrzeit)



Rav Eliyahu Akiva Rabinowitz of Poltava (5677 / 1917 - 109th Yahrzeit)



Rav Avrohom Yehoshua Heschel Weinberg - Slonimer Rebbe of Tel Aviv, B'Oholei Yissocher (5738 / 1978 - 48th Yahrzeit)

Harav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel Weinberg was born in 5658/1898. His father was Harav Yissachar Leib of Slonim, zy" a. Following the *petirah* of his father, on 28 *Nisan* 5688/1928, Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel was asked to lead the Slonimer Chassidus, but he was reluctant to become *Rebbe*; he would travel from Warsaw to Slonim from time to time, on set dates. After the *petirah* of his father's brother, Harav Avraham, who was *Rebbe* in Bialystock and later in Baranovitch, on *Rosh Chodesh Iyar* 5693/1933, Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel acquiesced to move to Slonim as *Rebbe*. In 5695/1935, Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel moved to Eretz Yisrael, and settled in Tel Aviv, where he opened a *beis medrash* for the Slonimer Chassidim in the city.



Rav Chaim Yitzchok Chaikin - Rosh Yeshivas Aix-les-Baines (5755 / 1995 - 31st Yahrzeit)

Rav Chaim Yitzchok was born in 1907 in Kossova, Lithuania. Died in Sarcelles in 1993. Pupil of Rabbi Elchonon Wasserman in Baranovitch. Rav Chaikin studied for 12 years in the *Radin Yeshiva*. He served in the Neudorf *Yeshiva*, the "Yeshiva of France," until the advent of World War II. Upon his release in May 1945, he was hired as *Rosh Yeshiva* for the nascent *Yeshiva* in Aix-les-Bains. Faithfully transmitting the values and teachings of the *Chofetz Chaim* to his thousands of students, Rabbi Chaikin lead the yeshiva for 48 years until his death.

Yahrzeits for the 25th of Nissan ~ Begins Saturday Night (04-12-2026)



Rav Dan of Radvil (5598 / 1838 - 188th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef of Mirtchov (5599 / 1839 - 187th Yahrzeit)



Rav Chaim Halberstam - Sanzer Rav, Divrei Chaim (5636 / 1876 - 150th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Chaim Halberstam of Sanz was known as the *Divrei Chaim* after his magnum opus on Halacha. He was the founder of the Sanz dynasty and was a famous Chassidic leader. The *Divrei Chaim* was born in 1793, in Tarnograd, Poland. He studied under Rabbi Naftali Zvi of Ropshitz who became his lifelong mentor. He went on to move to the town of Sanz where he founded a Hasidic dynasty. He attracted many followers partly due to his great piety. During his 46 year tenure as Rabbi of Sanz, that city was transformed into a vibrant center of Chasidism attracting tens of thousands of devotees.



Rav Nachum Tzvi Goldberg (5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)

Rav Nachum Tzvi was born to Rav Kalman Avraham Goldberg, Rav of Vasilkov, he moved with the family to America in 1926. He taught at *Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yaakov Yosef* (RJJ) for over 20 years. After his father was *nifter* in 1968, he replaced him as Rav of *Adas Yisrael*. In 1973, he also became administrator of *Ezras Torah* and made out the checks for all the *yungeleit*.

Yahrzeits for the 26th of Nissan ~ Begins Sunday Night (04-13-2026)



Yehoshua bin Nun (2517 / -1244 - 3,269th Yahrzeit)



Rav Efraim Navon - Machane Efraim (5495 / 1735 - 291st Yahrzeit)

The gaon Rabbi Ephraim Navon Zatzal was born in the city of Constantinople, where he and his friend of the same age, the gaon Yaakov Sasson, studied Torah with their teacher Rabbi Alfandri Zatzal. Rabbi Ephraim continuously elevated himself in the rungs of Torah and the fear of Heaven, studying with extraordinary diligence and perceptiveness. When he reached the age of marriage, he married the daughter of the gaon Rabbi Yehudah Irgaz Zatzal, at which time he and his father-in-law left for Eretz Israel and settled in Yerushalayim. Sent by Rav Roshehien, Rabbi Ephraim left Israel and returned to Constantinople, where he became the Rav of the city. At the same time, he wrote his famous book *Machaneh Ephraim* on various Halachos.



Rav Yehoshua Heschel of Manistrishtz - Divrei Yehoshua (5698 / 1938 - 88th Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Teitelbaum of Satmar - Berach Moshe (5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)

The *Beirach Moshe*, Rav Moshe Teitelbaum was a giant in Torah and humility. Despite being a prominent leader of Torah Jewry and a renowned talmid chochom, the *Beirach Moshe* was renowned for his extreme humility and his care and concern for every Yid. As Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Atzei Chaim of Sighet before the Divrei Yoel's passing, Rav Moshe was a father figure to the bochurim, caring for their needs with tender concern.

**Yahrzeits for the 27th of Nissan ~ Begins Monday Night
(04-14-2026)**



Rav Yehuda HaKohen Kahane - Kuntres Hasefekos (5579 / 1819 - 207th Yahrzeit)



Rav Aryeh Tzvi Frummer - Eretz Tzvi (5703 / 1943 - 83rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yeshaya Asher Zelig Margulies - Yerushalmi Mekubel, Kumi V'Roni (5729 / 1969 - 57th Yahrzeit)



Rav Levi Yitzchok Greenwald of Tzehlim - Migdelos Merkochim (5740 / 1980 - 46th Yahrzeit)

Rav Levi Yitzchak Greenwald, the *Tzelemer Rav* (1980). He arrived in America in 1939, just before the onset of WW2, after his *Beis Medrash* was destroyed on *Kristellnacht*, and he re-established his *Beis Medrash* in Williamsburg. He also established one of the first *Chasidische yeshivos* in America, *Arugas Habosem*, named after his father, the *Chuster Rav*, who was known as the *Argas Habosem*.



Rav Avigdor Miller (5761 / 2001 - 25th Yahrzeit)

Rav Avigdor Miller (1908-2001) was born in Baltimore. The first rabbinical position which Rav Avigdor accepted was in Chelsea, Massachusetts. In 1945, Rav Miller was offered a job as *mashgiach* of *Chaim Berlin* by Rav Hutner, a position he kept for 19 years. He was then invited by the Young Israel of Rugby to be their unofficial rov. In 1964, when *Yeshivas Chaim Berlin* moved to Far Rockaway, Rav Miller decided to resign and devote himself full time to his congregation and his writing.



Rav Shalom Moshe Ungar of Nitra - Masas Moshe (5763 / 2003 - 23rd Yahrzeit)

Rav Shalom Moshe (Shmuel Dovid) Ungar, a descendent of the *Abarbanel* (who was himself a descendent of Dovid Hamelech). (1916-2003) Born in Krumpach, Slovakia. In 1947, he was officially named Rav of Nitra. In 1948, the *Nitra kehilla* was established in Mount Krisco, Westchester County, NY.

**YAHRZEITS FOR THE 28TH OF NISSAN ~ BEGINS TUESDAY NIGHT
(04-15-2026)**



Rav Shabtai Sheptil Horowitz - Vavei Hoamudim (5420 / 1660 - 366th Yahrzeit)

Rav Shabsai Sheftl Horowitz II (1590-1660) was the son of the *Shelah Hakodesh*. After his father left for Eretz Yisrael, he became *dayan* of Prague. He then became Rav of Fuerth, then Frankfurt am Main, then Posen, where he founded a *yeshiva*. In 1654, he was appointed Rav of Vienna.



Mekubel Yichye Tzalach (5565 / 1805 - 221st Yahrzeit)

Rav Yichiyeh ben Yosef Tzalach, the *Maharitz*, founder of the Baladi community of Yemen (1713-1805). He is described as "without question,...the greatest rabbi and exponent of Jewish law ever to have been produced by Yemen." By 1795, he served on the *Beis Din* of Sanaa.



Rav Yehoshua of Ostrova - Toldos Odom (5633 / 1873 - 153rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef Yozpe Rosenberg of Zalkova - Yad Yosef, Revid Hazahav (5655 / 1895 - 131st Yahrzeit)



Rav Yehoshua Pinchos Bombach of Ushpetzin (5681 / 1921 - 105th Yahrzeit)



Yissocher Leib Weinberg of Slonim (5688 / 1928 - 98th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Yissocher Leib Weinberg (1873-1928) served as Rebbe of Slonim after the demise of his father in 1916, together with his young brother Rabbi Avrohom Weinberg (1884-1933) author of *Beis Avraham* who served as Rebbe in Baranovichi.



Rav Shem Klingberg of Zalushitz - Oholei Shem (5703 / 1943 - 83rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Klingberg of Zalushitz (5755 / 1995 - 31st Yahrzeit)



Rav Aharon HaKohen Rosenfeld of Pinsk Karlin (5761 / 2001 - 25th Yahrzeit)

The Pinsk-Karliner *Rebbe's* father, Harav Yitzchak Menashe Hakohen, *zt"l*, arrived in Yerushalayim from Lodz, Poland, at the age of 13 and became a Karliner Chassid. He named his son, born in 5687/1927, "Aharon" because his *bris* took place on *Yom Kippur*. For many years he was a *Maggid Shiur* at *Yeshivas Eitz Chaim* and afterwards in the *Belzer Yeshivah* in Eretz Yisrael and in Belgium. On *Pesach* 5751/1991 (the *yahrtzeit* of Harav Aharon Hagadol of Karlin, *zy"a*) he became the *Admor* of Pinsk-Karlin.



Rav Moshe Halberstam - Divrei Moshe, Member of Badatz Yerushalayim (5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)

Rav Moshe Halberstam (1932-2006). Born in the town of Tshakawe, Galicia to Rav Yaakov Halberstam, he was a great-great-great grandson of the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz. He was a member of the *Eida Chareidis Beis Din* and *rosh yeshiva* of *Yeshivas Tshakawe*. In 1997, he was appointed a member of *Badatz*. He founded the *Vaad HaRabbonim LeInyonei Tzedaka*, and was the head of the charity *Chibas Yerushalayim Kupas Rebbe Meir Baal Hannes*.



Rav Yissocher Dov Rubin - Tallelei Oros (5768 / 2008 - 18th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yissochor Dov (ben Shaul) Rubin, author of *Tallelei Oros* (1962-2008). After learning at *Yeshiva L'tze'irim Ruzhin* in Bnei Brak, he joined the *Ponevezh Yeshiva* and later continued his studies in the *Kollel Avreichim* of *Yeshivas Ponevezh*. He was hired as a *maggid shiur* in *Yeshiva Karlin Stolin L'tze'irim* and later as *mashgiach* in *Yeshivas Beis Chilkiya*.

Yahrzeits for the 29th of Nissan ~ Begins Wednesday Night (04-16-2026)



Rav Nochum Sofer of Tachov (5575 / 1815 - 211th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yehuda Meir Shapira of Shpivivka (5589 / 1829 - 197th Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Pallier of Kobrin - Imros Taharos (5618 / 1858 - 168th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Moshe Pallier of Kobrin [29 Nisan 1858] was a close follower of the *Rebbe*, R. Mordechai of Lechovitch and afterwards of his son, R. Noach. In 1833 he became the first *Rebbe* of the Kobrin dynasty, with thousands of chassidim, many of whom subsequently moved to Eretz Yisroel. His teachings are collected in *Imros Taharos*.



Naftali of Litovisk - Ayala Shelucha (5650 / 1890 - 136th Yahrzeit)

 **Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Twersky of Makarov (5652 / 1892 - 134th Yahrzeit)**

 **Rav Nosson Nochum Rabinowitz - Av Beis Din of Karimilov (5703 / 1943 - 83rd Yahrzeit)**

 **Rav Mordechaim Sholom Yosef Friedman - Sadigerer Rebbe, Keneses Mordechai (5739 / 1979 - 47th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Mordechai Shalom Yosef Friedman, *Sadigerer Rebbe*, the *Keneses Mordechai* (1897-1979) The son of Rav Aharon of Sadiger, and grandson of the second *Sadigerer Rebbe*, Rav Yisrael.

Yahrzeits for the 30th of Nissan ~ Begins Thursday Night (04-17-2026)

 **Rabbeinu Yosef HaLevi Ibn Migash - Rimigash (4901 / 1141 - 885th Yahrzeit)**

 **Rav Avrohom Broda (5477 / 1717 - 309th Yahrzeit)**

Son of Rav Shaul. From among the greatest Ashkenazi rabbonim of the eighteenth century. Born in Bomsala near Prague around 1650 ת"י, he was a student of Rav Yitzchok Charif and he served as chief rabbi of several *kehillos* including Prague and Metz. He was chief Rabbi and Rosh Yeshiva of Prague for sixteen years between תג-תסס. He established a yeshiva and bais medrash there that he himself supported. Due to disagreements with his halachic decisions he left and served in Metz. He served as *AvBeisDin* of Frankfurt after the great fire when it was rebuilt after the departure of Rav Naphtali Kohen author of *Semichas Chachamim*. He was Rav and Rosh Yeshiva of Frankfurt until his passing.

 **Rav Yaakov Emden - Yaavetz (5536 / 1776 - 250th Yahrzeit)**

Rabbi Yaakov Emden was born in Altona (near Hamburg) in the summer of 1697. His father Rabbi Tzvi Ashkenazi (known as the Chacham Tzvi) was then chief rabbi of the three sister communities of Altona, Hamburg and Wandsbeck (known in Jewish history as the 'Kehiloth AHU,' after the Hebrew initials of the communities). Rabbi Yaakov Emden's real name, as you see, was Ashkenazi, but he was called Emden after the city where he had served as rabbi. He is also known as *YaBeTz*, being the initials of the words Yaakov Ben Tzevi.

 **Rav Yechezkel Segal Horowitz - Toras Yechezkel (5598 / 1838 - 188th Yahrzeit)**

 **Rav Chaim Meir Yechiel of Drohbitch (5684 / 1924 - 102nd Yahrzeit)**



Rav Moshe Hershler (5751 / 1991 - 35th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Moshe Hershler, 69, a Jewish author and scholar, served as dean of the Hebrew Theological College in Skokie from 1976 to 1979. Rabbi Hershler studied in seminaries in Yerushalayim and was visiting professor at Jews College, London, and Yeshiva University, New York.

Biographies of the Tzaddikim



Rav Avrohom Yehoshua Heschel Weinberg Slonimer Rebbe of Tel Aviv, B'Oholei Yissocher (Nissan 24, 5738 / 1978 - 48th Yahrzeit)



Harav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel Weinberg was born in 5658/1898. His father was Harav Yissachar Leib of Slonim, zy" a, who was the son of the Divrei Shmuel, zy" a, and a great-grandson of the Yesod HaAvodah, zy" a.

Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel was brought up in the court of his grandfather the *Divrei Shmuel* in Slonim.

When he became of age, Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel was taken as son-in-law by Harav Dovid Weidenfeld of Warsaw, *zt"l*, a known *talmid chacham* who was also the father-in-law of the *Beis Yisrael* of Ger, *zy"a*, in his *zivug sheini*, after the war.

After his marriage, Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel settled in Warsaw, near his father-in-law.

Following the *petirah* of his father, on 28 *Nisan* 5688/1928, Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel was asked to lead the Slonimer Chassidus, but he was reluctant to become *Rebbe*; he would travel from Warsaw to Slonim from time to time, on set dates.

After the *petirah* of his father's brother, Harav Avraham, who was *Rebbe* in Bialystock and later in Baranovitch, on *Rosh Chodesh Iyar* 5693/1933, Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel acquiesced to move to Slonim as *Rebbe*.

In 5695/1935, Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel moved to Eretz Yisrael, and settled in Tel Aviv, where he opened a *beis medrash* for the Slonimer Chassidim in the city.

He wrote an encyclopedic work based on *Chazal's* words from the *Gemara* and *Midrashim* on all topics mentioned in *Tanach*. Seven volumes have been published thus far of his monumental set, *Otzar Arachei HaTorah-B'Ohalei Yissachar*, named for his father.

Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel was *niftar* on 25 *Nisan* 5738/1978 at the age of 80. He was buried in Bnei Brak, near the *kever* of the Ozherover *Rebbe*, *zy"a*.

Rav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel had two sons: *Harav Shmuel*, who was deputy mayor of Bnei Brak, and *Harav Aryeh*, *Rosh Yeshivas Shuvu Banim*.

Zechuso yagen aleinu.

hamodia.com



**Rav Chaim Yitzchok Chaikin Rosh Yeshivas Aix-les-Baines (Nissan 24, 5755 / 1995 - 31st
Yahrzeit)**



Born in 1907 in Kossova, Lithuania. Died in Sarcelles in 1993. Pupil of Rabbi Elchonon Wasserman in Baranovitch. Rav Chaikin studied for 12 years in the *Radin Yeshiva*. Of these years, he spent seven years, from 1926 to 1933, as one of the closest students of the revered *Chofetz Chaim*, Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan. In 1938 Rabbi Elchonon Wasserman suggested Rabbi Chaikin to be the *Rosh Yeshiva* of Chief Rabbi Ernest Weill's new *yeshiva* in Strasbourg-Neudorf. He served in the Neudorf *Yeshiva*, the "Yeshiva of France," until the advent of World War II when he enlisted as a soldier in the French Foreign Legion. Captured by the Germans, he was a prisoner of war in Germany for 5 years. Upon his release in May 1945, he was hired as *Rosh Yeshiva* for the nascent *Yeshiva* in Aix-les-Bains. Faithfully transmitting the values and teachings of the *Chofetz Chaim* to his thousands of students, Rabbi Chaikin lead the *yeshiva* for 48 years until his death.

<https://yeshiva-aixlesbains.com/presentation/biographies.html>



Rav Chaim Halberstam Sanzer Rav, Divrei Chaim (Nissan 25, 5636 / 1876 - 150th Yahrzeit)



Rabbi Chaim Halberstam of Sanz was known as the *Divrei Chaim* after his magnum opus on Halacha. He was the founder of the Sanz dynasty and was a famous Chassidic leader.

The Divrei Chaim was born in 1793, in Tarnograd, Poland. He studied under Rabbi Naftali Zvi of Ropshitz who became his lifelong mentor. He went on to move to the town of Sanz where he founded a Chassidic dynasty. He attracted many followers partly due to his great piety. The Sanz dynasty per se is not around today but is succeeded by the Sanz-Klausenberg dynasty and the Bobov dynasty.

The Divrei Chaim was acclaimed by the leading rabbis as one of the foremost Talmudists, Halachic and Kabbalistic authorities of his time, he received queries from communities all over the world. His responsa, as well as his Torah commentaries, published under the title *Divrei Chaim*, reflect his Torah greatness, his humility, and his compassionate nature. He was a champion of the poor and established many organizations to relieve them of their poverty.

During his 46 year tenure as Rabbi of Sanz, that city was transformed into a vibrant center of Chassidism attracting tens of thousands of devotees. Among his disciples are counted such leaders as Rabbi Zvi Hirsh of Liska, Rabbi Solomon HaCohen of Radomsk, Rabbi Meir of Dzhikov, and the Yetev Leiv of Sighet. Rabbi Chaim's five sons all became famous Rebbes. His seven daughters all married Chassidic leaders.



Rav Nachum Tzvi Goldberg (Nissan 25, 5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)

Born to Rav Kalman Avraham Goldberg, Rav of Vasilkov, he moved with the family to America in 1926. As a bachur, he learned with Rav Shlomo Heiman for 5 years, then moved to Lakewood to learn with Rav Aharon Kotler for 9 years (1943-1952). As a married man, he moved back to the East Side and taught at *Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yaakov Yosef* (RJJ) for over 20 years. After his father was *nifter* in 1968, he replaced him as Rav of *Adas Yisrael*. In 1973, he also became administrator of *Ezras Torah* and made out the checks for all the *yungeleit*.

matzav.com



Rav Efraim Navon Machane Efraim (Nissan 26, 5495 / 1735 - 291st Yahrzeit)

The gaon Rabbi Ephraim Navon Zatzal was born in the city of Constantinople, where he and his friend of the same age, the gaon Yaakov Sasson, studied Torah with their teacher Rabbi Alfandri Zatzal. Rabbi Ephraim continuously elevated himself in the rungs of Torah and the fear of Heaven, studying with extraordinary diligence and perceptiveness. When he reached the age of marriage, he married the daughter of the gaon Rabbi Yehudah Irgaz Zatzal, at which time he and his father-in-law left for Eretz Yisrael and settled in Yerushalayim. Rabbi Ephraim remained isolated for 10 years, studying the entire Talmud with tremendous concentration and in great depth. During that time he also studied the works of the Rambam and the Beit Yosef. Thus Rabbi Ephraim's name became famous in the Jewish world.

Sent by Rav Roshehien, Rabbi Ephraim left IsEretz Yisrael and returned to Constantinople, where he became the Rav of the city. At the same time, he wrote his famous book *Machaneh Ephraim* on various Halachos, a book that the Chida described as being incredibly insightful and valuable. In fact his book was acknowledge by the entire Torah world, and even today both *Machaneh Ephraim* and its commentaries are studied in

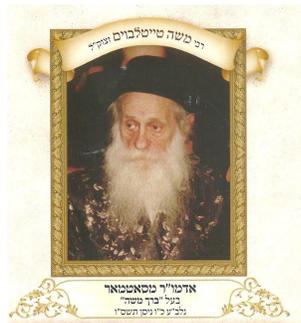
yeshivot throughout the world.

In reading Machaneh Ephraim, one can clearly see the author's extensive scholarship and wisdom. It is even said that Rabbi Ephraim could perform wonders, knowing the sacred Names of Hashem and being able to use Kabbalah to save Jews from their hardships and illnesses. Rabbi Ephraim Navon passed away on Nissan 26, 5491, as his soul ascended to the celestial academy. May the memory of the tzaddik be blessed.

https://hevratpinto.org/tzadikim_eng/191_Rabbi_Ephraim_Navon.html



Rav Moshe Teitelbaum Berach Moshe (Nissan 26, 5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)



The *Beirach Moshe*, Rav Moshe Teitelbaum was a giant in Torah and humility. Despite being a prominent leader of Torah Jewry and a renowned talmid chochom, the *Beirach Moshe* was renowned for his extreme humility and his care and concern for every Yid. As Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Atzei Chaim of Sighet before the *Divrei Yoel's* passing, Rav Moshe was a father figure to the *bochurim*, caring for their needs with tender concern. As a newly-married yungerman living in Keretzky, Hungary at the home of his illustrious father-in-law, Rav Henoch Chanoch Meyer, the *Beirach Moshe* served as Rosh Yeshiva of the Keretzky Yeshiva. Later, when he arrived in New York after the war, he immediately

founded his own yeshiva and continued being *marbitz Torah*. The talmidim of the Sigheter Yeshiva, many of them illustrious bnei Torah, have fond memories of those blissful years.

<https://yated.com/a-talmidaes-recollections-the-beirach-moshe-rav-moshe-teitelbaum-of-satmar-ztae%C2%9Dl-upon-his-fifth-yahrtzeit/>



Rav Levi Yitzchok Greenwald Migdelos Merkochim (Nissan 27, 5740 / 1980 - 46th Yahrzeit)

Rav Levi Yitzchak Greenwald, the *Tzelemer Rav* (1980). He arrived in America in 1939, just before the onset of WW2, after his *Beis Medrash* was destroyed on *Kristellnacht*, and he re-established his *Beis Medrash* in Williamsburg. He also established one of the first *Chasidishe yeshivos* in America, *Arugas Habosem*, named after his father, the *Chuster Rav*, who was known as the *Argas Habosem*.

matzav.com



Rav Avigdor Miller (Nissan 27, 5761 / 2001 - 25th Yahrzeit)



Rav Avigdor Miller. (1908-2001). Born in Baltimore, Rav Avigdor attended public school like all the other Jewish boys from religious homes, and he studied Torah with his grandfather and other local *rabbonim*. At the age of 14, he left to study at *Yeshivas Rabbenu Yitzchak Elchonon*, which at the time was the only Jewish high school offering high-level Jewish studies in the U.S. It was there that he met future leaders of US Jewery, such as Rav Nosson Wachtfogel, Rav Yehuda Davis and Rav Mordechai Gifter. They met

met secretly in Rav Miller's dormitory room in to hear a *shiur* in *Mesillas Yeshorim* by Rav Yaakov Yosef Herman. In 1932, he followed Rav Aizik Sher to Slobodka, where he spent 6 years learning. In 1935 he married his life partner for 64 years, Ethel Lessin. The first rabbinical position which Rav Avigdor accepted was in Chelsea, Massachusetts. In 1945, Rav Miller was offered a job as *mashgiach* of *Chaim Berlin* by Rav Hutner, a position he kept for 19 years. He was then invited by the Young Israel of Rugby to be their unofficial rov. The *shul*, located at East 49 street in the East Flatbush section of Brooklyn, a position which became official in 1946-47. He began writing his first book, *Rejoice O Youth*, in 1963. In 1964, when *Yeshivas Chaim Berlin* moved to Far Rockaway, Rav Miller decided to resign and devote himself full time to his congregation and his writing. He finished writing the book in 1965.

matzav.com



Rav Shalom Moshe Ungar Masas Moshe (Nissan 27, 5763 / 2003 - 23rd Yahrzeit)

Rav Shalom Moshe (Shmuel Dovid) Ungar, a descendent of the *Abarbanel* (who was himself a descendent of Dovid Hamelech). (1916-2003) Born in Krumpach, Slovakia. In 1941, he married the daughter of Rav Simcha Greenberg, an ardent *Munkatcher chasid*. Supported by his father-in-law, Rav Shalom Moshe learned bechavrusa with his brother-in-law, Rav Meir Greenberg, later to become the *Kezmarker Rav* of New York. Rav Shalom Moshe worked with another brother-in-law, Rav Michael Ber Weissmandl, in rescue operations during the War. Deportations from Nitra began in *Elul* of 1944. The *Nitra yeshiva* (of 200 *bachurim*) was the last yeshiva in Europe to remain open and was liquidated on the 17th of *Elul*. Hiding in the forest for the remainder of the War, Rav Shalom Moshe lost his father, his wife, and his three children. In 1947, he was officially named *Rav of Nitra*. In 1948, the *Nitra kehilla* was established in Mount Kisco, Westchester County, NY.

matzav.com



Rav Shabtai Sheptil Horowitz Vavei Hoamudim (Nissan 28, 5420 / 1660 - 366th Yahrzeit)

Rav Shabsai Sheftl Horowitz II (1590-1660). The son of the *Shelah Hakodesh*, Reb Shabsai studied under his father and under Rav Shlomo Ephraim Lunshitz. After his father left for Eretz Yisrael, he became *dayan* of Prague. He then became Rav of Fuerth, then Frankfurt am Main, then Posen, where he founded a *yeshiva*. In 1654, he was appointed Rav of Vienna. In 1649, he published his father's work, *Shnei Luchos HaBris*, along with his own extensive introduction, *Vavei HaAmudim*.

matzav.com



Mekubel Yichye Tzalach (Nissan 28, 5565 / 1805 - 221st Yahrzeit)

Rav Yichiyeh ben Yosef Tzalach, the *Maharitz*, founder of the Baladi community of Yemen (1713-1805). He is described as "without question,...the greatest rabbi and exponent of Jewish law ever to have been produced by Yemen." By 1795, he served on the *Beis Din* of Sanaa.

matzav.com



Yissocher Leib Weinberg (Nissan 28, 5688 / 1928 - 98th Yahrzeit)



Rabbi Yissocher Leib Weinberg (1873-1928) served as Rebbe of Slonim after the demise of his father in 1916, together with his young brother Rabbi Avrohom Weinberg (1884-1933) author of *Beis Avraham* who served as Rebbe in Baranovichi.

<https://www.kedem-auctions.com/en/content/collection-books-library-rebbe-slonim-author-divrei-shmuel>



Rav Aharon Rosenfeld (Nissan 28, 5761 / 2001 - 25th Yahrzeit)



The Pinsk-Karliner *Rebbe's* father, Harav Yitzchak Menashe Hakohen, *zt"l*, arrived in Yerushalayim from Lodz, Poland, at the age of 13 and became a Karliner Chassid. He named his son, born in 5687/1927, "Aharon" because his *bris* took place on *Yom Kippur*.

The young Aharon attended the *Chayei Olam cheder* until his *bar mitzvah*, after which he studied in the *Karliner Yeshivah* in Yerushalayim.

Reb Aharon married the daughter of Harav Chaim Yisrael Halitovsky, *z"l*, a prominent *Karliner Chassid*.

For many years he was a *Maggid Shiur* at *Yeshivas Eitz Chaim* and afterwards in the *Belzer Yeshivah* in Eretz Yisrael and in Belgium. He was an outstanding *marbitz Torah* who, over a period of 50 years, left an indelible impression on all his *talmidim*, infusing them with *yiras Shamayim*.

When he was still a *yungerman* his wife became ill and passed away, leaving him a widower with five young children. During this challenging period he was still careful not to miss any of his *sedarim* or *shiurim*.

He always practiced what he preached. A teacher, he felt, must be a living example.

He eventually remarried; his second *Rebbetzin* was the *almanah* of Harav Chaim Tzvi Halberstam, *zt"l*. He raised her orphaned children and married them off just like his own.

Even before he became *Rebbe*, whenever someone voiced the need for a *yeshuah* he would immediately open a *sefer Tehillim* and would recite heartfelt, tearful *perakim* until he heard that that person had merited a *yeshuah*.

On *Pesach* 5751/1991 (the *yahrtzeit* of *Harav Aharon Hagadol* of Karlin, *zy"a*) he became the *Admor* of Pinsk-Karlin.

He was well known for his lectures and *shmuessen* on Torah and Chassidus, and would travel often to deliver inspiring speeches.

A year and a half before his *petirah* he underwent open-heart surgery, after which he remained in critical condition. While he was in the hospital, he amazed the doctors with his serenity; remarkably, some of them became attached to the *Rebbe* and often sought his counsel and *brachos*.

At 2:00 a.m., while leading a *tisch*, he felt ill and was rushed to the hospital. All efforts to save his life were futile and he was *niftar*.

He was buried on Har Hamenuchos in *Chelkas Hachassidim*.

Zechuso yagen aleinu.

hamodia.com



Rav Moshe Halberstam Divrei Moshe, Member of Badatz Yerushalayim (Nissan 28, 5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Halberstam (1932-2006). Born in the town of Tshakawe, Galicia to Rav Yaakov Halberstam, he was a great-great-great grandson of the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz. As a youth, he studied at Yeshivas Beis Avraham Slonim under the *Nesivos Shalom* of Slonim. His *rebbe muvhak* was Rav Shmuel Wosner. He delivered *shiurim* for decades in a *kollel* for *halacha* that he headed. He was a member of the *Eida Chareidis Beis Din* and *rosh yeshiva* of *Yeshivas Tshakawe*. In 1997, he was appointed a member of *Badatz*. He published a collection of responsa called *Divrei Moshe*. He founded the *Vaad HaRabbonim LeInyonei Tzedaka*, and was the head of the charity *Chibas Yerushalayim Kupas Rebbe Meir Baal Hannes*. His son-in-law Rav Mattisyahu Deitch founded the *Yad Ramah* Institute under the guidance of the greatest halachic authorities of today, and it deals with solutions for problems in halacha and medicine. (Yated 2007 says 27 Nisaan; Hamodia 2007 says 28 Nissan)



Rav Yissocher Dov Rubín Tallelei Oros (Nissan 28, 5768 / 2008 - 18th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yissochor Dov (ben Shaul) Rubín, author of *Tallelei Oros* (1962-2008). After learning at *Yeshiva L'tze'irim Ruzhin* in Bnei Brak, he joined the *Ponevezh Yeshiva* and later continued his studies in the *Kollel Avreichim* of *Yeshivas Ponevezh*. He was hired as a *maggid shiur* in *Yeshiva Karlin Stolin L'tze'irim* and later as *mashgiach* in *Yeshivas Beis Chilkiya*. In 1988, he began writing his *divrei Torah* on the *parsha* which was printed weekly in *Yated Neeman*. Thus began the seeds for his *sefer, Tallelei Oros* on the *Parsha*.

Thereafter came volumes on *Sukkos, Pesach, Purim, Tisha B'av*, and the *Yomim Noraim*. In the last few years, Rav Yissochor Dov invested much effort in publishing the *Tallelei Oros* on *tefilla*-prayer. He produced five volumes. In addition to these *seforim*, Rav Yissochor Dov also published *Sefer Oros HaGra*, as well as the popular version of *Sefer Nefesh Hachaim* with his elucidations, footnotes, and references. He also (anonymously) printed two volumes of *Sefas Emes al Hatefilla*.

matzav.com



Rav Moshe Pallier Imros Taharos (Nissan 29, 5618 / 1858 - 168th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Moshe Pallier of Kobrin [29 Nisan 1858] was a close follower of the Rebbe, R. Mordechai of Lechovitch and afterwards of his son, R. Noach. In 1833 he became the first Rebbe of the Kobrin dynasty, with thousands of chassidim, many of whom subsequently moved to Eretz Yisroel. His teachings are collected in *Imros Taharos*.

<http://www.ascentofsafed.com/cgi-bin/ascent.cgi?Name=rebbeBios>



Rav Mordechaim Sholom Yosef Friedman Sadigerer Rebbe, Keneses Mordechai (Nissan 29, 5739 / 1979 - 47th Yahrzeit)

Rav Mordechai Shalom Yosef Friedman, *Sadigerer Rebbe*, the *Keneses Mordechai* (1897-1979) The son of Rav Aharon of Sadiger, and grandson of the second *Sadigerer Rebbe*, Rav Yisrael.

matzav.com



Rav Avrohom Broda (Nissan 30, 5477 / 1717 - 309th Yahrzeit)

Son of Rav Shaul.

From among the greatest Ashkenazi rabbonim of the eighteenth century.

Born in Bomsala near Prague around 1650 י"ת, he was a student of Rav Yitzchok Charif and he served as chief rabbi of several *kehillos* including Prague and Metz.

He was chief Rabbi and Rosh Yeshiva of Prague for sixteen years between תגג-תס. He established a yeshiva and *bais medrash* there that he himself supported. Due to disagreements with his halachic decisions he left and served in Metz.

He served as AvBeisDin of Frankfurt after the great fire when it was rebuilt after the departure of Rav Naphtali Kohen author of *Semichas Chachamim*.

He was Rav and Rosh Yeshiva of Frankfurt until his passing.

Among his talmidim were Rav Nesanel Weil author *Korban Nesanel* (who was an orphan that he himself raised and married off), as well as Rav Yona LandSofer author of *Shu"t Meil Tzedaka*.

His descendant Rav Shlomo Sofer (son of the *Kesav Sofer*, author *Chut HaMeshulash*) writes that he was responsible for returning the high level of Torah study back to Ashkenaz by encouraging sharp *pilpul* and had thousands of talmidim.

His seforim include *Aishel Avrohom chiddushim* on Pesachim, Chullin, Bava Basra, and Toldos Avrohom on Kiddushin and Kesubos.

His *chiddushim* on Kesubos end abruptly, it is said that he taught and studied Torah until his moment of passing and that he was in the midst of writing his *chiddushim* when he picked up the pages held them to his heart and his pure holy soul left his body to join his maker. Regarding him the *pasuk* says *Adam Ki Yamus BaOhel* - he passed on in the tent of Torah. (*Toldos Adam*)

He passed away on Sunday the first day of Rosh Chodesh Iyar 1717 תע"ז laid to rest in Frankfurt de Mein (according to Rav Shmuel Sofer son of the *Kesav Sofer* who visited the *kever* in תרנ"א his *kever* is in between the *kevarim* of Rav Shmuel Chaim Yeshayas' the *AvBeisDin* and the *Maharshashach*, and then the *gaon* Rav Mendel Bass *AvBeisDin*. In the

row in front of them lie the Haflaah and his son the Machaneh Levi. Opposite them in the next row The Maharich author of Shev Yaakov and behind him the Pnei Yehoshua.)

His first marriage was to the daughter of Rav Eliezer Lipman of Bomsala. His oldest son Rav Moshe was their child and he was the ancestor of Rabbi Akiva Eiger. His descendant Rav Moshe Ginz was the father of Rabbi Akiva Eiger the 2nd of Posen, father in law of the Chasam Sofer.

His second marriage was to the daughter of Rav Shmuel Zanvil Fefershi of Frankfurt DeMein. Rav Shmuel Zanvil's wife Esther was the sister of Rav Meshulem Zalman Mirels *AvBeisDin* AH"U [Altuna, Hamburg, Wandsbeck] who was the father in law of the Chacham Tzvi and this is how the Chacham Tzvi and Rav Avrohom Broda were related through marriage.



Rav Yaakov Emden Yaavetz (*Nissan 30, 5536 / 1776 - 250th Yahrzeit*)



Rabbi Yaakov Emden was born in Altona (near Hamburg) in the summer of 1697. His father Rabbi Tzvi Ashkenazi (known as the Chacham Tzvi) was then chief rabbi of the three sister communities of Altona, Hamburg and Wandsbeck (known in Jewish history as the 'Kehiloth AHU,' after the Hebrew initials of the communities).

Rabbi Yaakov Emden's real name, as you see, was Ashkenazi, but he was called Emden after the city where he had served as rabbi. He is also known as *YaBeTz*, being the initials of the words Yaakov Ben Tzevi.

The young Yaakov's first teacher was his own illustrious father, who was a famous Talmudist and rabbi in his time. From his father, Yaakov inherited a fiery nature and violent opposition to the movement of the false 'Messiah' Sabbatai Tzevi. Although this movement 'had already long been proven as false and misleading, there were still secret followers of it. Like his father, he was determined to ferret them out and expose them at all costs.

Until the age of eighteen, Rabbi Yaakov followed his father everywhere, when the latter took up position in Amsterdam and later in Lemberg. Then he left him to marry the daughter of a famous Talmudist Rabbi Mordecai ben Naftali Hakohen, who was the head of a great Yeshivah at Ungarish-Brod in Moravia. There he greatly enriched his knowledge of Torah by devoting most of his time to diligent study. In his spare moments he also studied languages, grammar and philosophy.

After three years of intensive study, he left his father-in-law's house and Yeshivah at Brod and became a travelling salesman in jewelry. He did not want to become a paid rabbi if he could help it. Nevertheless, he never neglected to continue his studies even during his travels, and wherever he came he preached and reprimanded Jewish communities or leaders when he was not satisfied with their religious conduct.

In 1728 he accepted the call of the Jewish community at Emden to fill the vacant rabbinical post in that city. He held the post for four years, during which he was in continuous strife with all those who did not live up to his expectations. Finally he gave up the position, and returned to his native Altona in 1733. Here he spent the rest of his life, more than forty years of relentless fighting for his convictions, which brought him in conflict with the leading rabbis of his time.

On arrival in Altona. he was permitted to establish a synagogue of his own. He also started a printing shop, for which he had received the king's approval. In addition he conducted a thriving business in gems.

Soon Rabbi Yaakov Emden printed a prayer book with commentaries which aroused a great deal of opposition because it contained radical changes. Rabbi Emden did not live at peace with the two leading rabbis of his community, Rabbi Moshe Chagis, head of the rich Portuguese community, and Rabbi Jezekiel Katzenelnbogen, chief rabbi of the triple

communities, the position previously held by Rabbi Emden's father. He often criticised the latter's law decisions, disregarding his age and position, for when Rabbi Yaakov Emden considered himself in the right he would respect no one who differed from him. For sixteen years he was a bitter opponent of the chief rabbi, until the latter's death in 1749, when Rabbi Yonasan Eybeschutz of Metz succeeded him.

Rabbi Yaakov Emden suspected the new chief rabbi of being a secret follower of the Sabbatai Tzevi movement. He denounced him in public, and demanded that he be excommunicated.

The leaders of the community defended their Rabbi, who was well known as an unusually pious man and outstanding scholar. They declared that Rabbi Emden was a trouble maker and demanded that he leave the community. He refused to do so, until he was threatened with violence; then he fled to Hamburg and appealed to King Frederick of Denmark, to whom the province belonged. In June 1752 judgment was passed in favor of "Yaakov Herschel" (Yaakov the son of Hersch-Tzevi) as Rabbi Emden was called in the official documents. The Jewish community council was blamed for high-handed action in driving Rabbi Emden out, and the leaders were fined. Rabbi Emden was permitted to return to Altona, where he continued his attacks against Rabbi Yonasan Eybeschutz. Finally the king was convinced that Rabbi Emden was in the wrong and ordered him to stop his attack. The heated conflict was ended, but not before it had spread far and wide and kept Jewry in a state of excitement for a long time. It was generally agreed that although Rabbi Yaakov Emden was prompted by good motives to defend Judaism against what he believed to be a grave danger, he was blinded by his zeal, and his fiery nature had the better of him.

There was, however, no difference of opinion as to Rabbi Yaakov Emden's great scholarship. He 'was recognized as an authority on Jewish law and had great influence among government circles. Thus in 1772 he was called upon to help the Jewish community- of Mecklenburg Schwerin in its fight for the right to bury the dead soon after death, in accordance with the requirements of Jewish law, which regards a delay in burial as degrading to the dead.

In addition to his Siddur, which despite some opposition became an important reference book in connection with Jewish prayer, Rabbi Yaakov Emden is the author of several other

works. He wrote a diary "Megillath Sefer" which is of great historical interest, since it gives a clear picture of Jewish life in those days. He also wrote various pamphlets in connection with the many controversies in which he was involved. Such was his "*Eidus B'Yaakov*" in which he presents his case against Rabbi Yonasan Eybeschutz. He wrote pamphlets in his fight against the Sabbatai Tzevi movement. Of greater importance are his commentaries on the Mishnah, called "*Seder Olam*," and the Siddur mentioned above, which are important contributions to Rabbinical literature, which gave him an important place among the leading Talmudists of his time.

https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/112038/jewish/Rabbi-Jacob-Emden.htm



Rav Moshe Hershler (*Nissan 30, 5751 / 1991 - 35th Yahrzeit*)

Rabbi Moshe Hershler, 69, a Jewish author and scholar, served as dean of the Hebrew Theological College in Skokie from 1976 to 1979 and had returned to the school each year since then for an extended semester as professor of Talmud and Codes.

"During his tenure in Chicago, he was a dynamic force in the Jewish community," said Rabbi Leonard Matanky. "Not only did he lecture extensively, but he also established a unique graduate program for young Jewish legal scholars from around the Chicago metropolitan area. These scholars currently hold prominent rabbinic positions in Chicago and Eretz Yisroel."

Rabbi Hershler studied in seminaries in Yerushalayim and was visiting professor at Jews College, London, and Yeshiva University, New York.

He published 52 volumes on Jewish law and served as a chief editor of Talmudic Encyclopedia.

His specialty was the Jewish legal issues of modern medicine, and he was one of the leading experts on it, writing six volumes of essays and articles on the subject.

Among the awards he won were the Rabbi Kook Prize of Tel Aviv, the Israel Prize and the Malmon Prize.

"He was a magnificent teacher," Rabbi Matanky said. "He was able to light up a room with his presence, bringing to life millenia of Jewish thought and scholarship. The depth and breadth of his scholarship made him one of the major rabbinic figures of our time."

Survivors include his wife, Rachel; four daughters, Enda Heiserik, Shulamit Porush, Aviva Lev and Elana Katzenellbogen; two sons, Rabbi Benyamin and Rabbi Yehuda; and 40 grandchildren.

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1991-04-19-9102040688-story.html>

Gedolim Be'Masayhem



Stories & Anecdotes

Rav Chaim Halberstam Sanzer Rav, Divrei Chaim (Nissan 25)

A FAIR TRADE

The *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz was once conducting a *siyum* to celebrate the learning of all of *Shas* when he was stuck on the meaning of a specific *Tosfos*. He travelled to the author of *Be'er Moshe*, the *rebbe* of Kozhnitz and asked him for his help in understanding the difficult *Tosfos*.

Due to Rav Moshe's great humility, he claimed that he did not understand the *Tosfos* and said, "You have already concluded studying all of *Shas* whereas I have just concluded saying all of *Sefer Tehillim*."

The *Sanzer Rav* was undeterred. "Maybe you would agree then to an exchange? Let's do a trade, you and I - I will trade you my study and *siyum* of all *Shas* for your *siyum Sefer*

Tehillim?"

"No," the *Be'er Moshe* said, shaking his head, "I won't agree to trade." Eventually he agreed to help the *Divrei Chaim* and they began to study the *Tosfos* together. When they were half way through, thanks to the *Kozhnutzer*, the *Sanzer Rav* understood! (*Otzar Yisroel*)

TRUE CHASSIDIM

Rav Yaakov Yitzchok, the *Chozeh of Lublin* once asked Rav Menachem Mendel of Rymanow if he had any followers and Chassidim? "Yes, we do," responded Rav Menachem Mendel.

"And in what way are they Chassidim?" inquired the *Chozeh* further.

"Our Chassidim, my followers," answered Rav Menachem Mendel of Rymanow, "study in depth *halocha* and *Tosfos*."

"If so," replied the *Chozeh*, "then they are indeed true Chassidim!" (*Bais Menachem* 5:2)

Similarly, regarding the study of *halocha* and *Tosfos*, Rav Menachem Mendel of Rymanow said that he never understood the secret of the matter until recently, that those laws and *halochos* forgotten during the *aveilus* over Moshe (see *Temura* 16a) were returned to us by Osniel ben Kenaz during the days of *Sefiras HaOmer*. Therefore, it is a *minhag Yisrael*, which has the status of Torah, to study *halocha* and *Tosfos* during these holy days. (From the letter *Igeres HaKodesh* of Rav Yechezkel Paneth of Karlsberg, originally published in *Shu"t Mareh Yechezkel Siman* 104 {it is known that on the thirty-fourth day of the *Omer*, the *yahrzeit* of Rav Menachem Mendel of Rymanow, they found the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz reviewing this *teshuva* and his eyes poured forth tears of longing. *Derech Yivchar* by Rav Chaim Betzalel Paneth of Tash and son of the *Mareh Yechezkel*})

EACH SIGH OF REGRET CREATES ANOTHER BRILLIANT DIAMOND FOR HASHEM'S CROWN

The *beis medrash* was packed. Every seat was occupied by someone deeply engrossed in Torah study, earnestly reciting *Tehillim*, or absorbed in fervent prayer. *Elul zeman* was in full swing and the atmosphere reverberated with a tangible sense of *teshuva* that came with upcoming *yomim noraim*.

It was this intense environment into which the *Uhjler Rav*, Rav Moshe Yosef Teitelbaum entered. To his great consternation, however, he felt cold and impassive to the electric energy of *Elul!* He was bitterly disappointed in himself when the feeling didn't dissipate. Rather, but the matter grew worse through all the days of *selichos* the *aseres yamei teshuva*.

"What is wrong with me?" the *Uhjler rav* sighed. *Elul* passed without so much as a flutter of passion in his heart. "Why do I feel unmoved by these auspicious days of mercy and good will - *rachamim ve'ratzon?!*" he cried.

His answer arrived from none other than his *zeide*, the holy *Sanzer Rav*, the *Divrei Chaim*. Immediately following the *yomim noraim* (the days of awe), the *Uhjler Rav* made his way to Sanz.

That Shabbos as the *Divrei Chaim* was in the midst of conducting his *Friday Night tisch*, he recited the words to the *Arizal's* poem in honor of Shabbos "*Na'avid lehon kisrin bemilin yakirin* - We shall create crowns with precious words." He then paused and said:

"When *Klal Yisroel* serve Hashem with prayer and devotion, their *avoda* creates the crown jewels for Hashem. The luster of each jewel is based on the quality of each person's *avoda*. Some shine bright and some are duller; and some jewels..." Here, the *Divrei Chaim* paused for emphasis "...some jewels dazzle the most from those who agonize over their apparent lack of feeling and who are unable to muster enthusiasm though they yearn to be close to Hashem. This is why we say "*Na'avid lehon kisrin bemilin yakirin* - We shall create crowns with precious words," as these words for Hashem's crown are "*yakirin*": substantial, consequential, precious, because they were said with a heavy heart that longs for Hashem!"

Rav Moshe Yosef had received his answer; the *Uhjler Rav* rejoiced. (*Zichron Ish Chayil Naipest* p. 152)

NOW THEY CAN ALSO ACQUIRE YIRAS SHOMAYIM

The *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz used to say: The *Rambam's* heart burned with a devotional fire for Hashem, which made him ever-conscious of how a Jew should behave. The *Rambam* saw that most people would not have time to set aside to study how to acquire *yiras shomayim*. First, they would have to study the entire Torah. Understanding this difficulty,

the *Rambam* set out to author his fourteen volume Magnum Opus, the *Mishne Torah* which is also known as *Yad HaChazaka*. The *Rambam* wrote the *Mishneh Torah* in order to allow for the straightforward study of *halacha*. With access to a *sefer* from which to more easily learn how to act and behave, people would now have time left to engage in studying how to acquire *yiras shomayim* and *dveykus*.

THE ROPSHITZER'S MIRACLE OIL

The *Shinover Rav*, *mechaber* of *Divrei Yechezkel*, did not refrain from saying *Tachanun* on the *yahrzeits* of various *tzaddikim*. Similarly, he did not have the custom to visit the gravesites of *tzaddikim*. There was one exception: He observed the *yahrzeit*, and visited the *tziyun* of the *heilige Ropshitzer Rav*, *mechaber* of *Zera Kodesh* to whom the *Shinover Rav* felt he owed his very life. This is the story why: When Rav Yechezkel Shraga was seven-years old when his life was almost cut short by a terrible accident. Rav Yechezkel Shraga's uncle, Rav Avigdor of Dukla, was in town visiting his brother, Rav Chaim of Sanz in Rudnick. At the end of the visit, when Rav Avigdor entered his carriage to leave, he realized that he had forgotten something back in the house and sent young Yechezkel Shraga on an errand to fetch the forgotten object.

In his zeal to help his uncle, he dashed across the street. A passing wagon carrying a heavy load of lumber came careening down the road at high speed, running him over! The heavy wheels had crushed his body. When the doctors rushed to examine his mangled body, they shook their heads. They despaired for his life as the surgeon determined that the wheel had sliced his liver in half!

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

The holy *Divrei Chaim* examined his son's broken body and each limb he touched, the bones grew back together and straightened themselves out! Even later, in his old age, people would remark - especially the physicians - how straight and stately a stature the *Shinover Rav* had!

The *Divrei Chaim* still feared for his young child's life, as Yechezkel Shraga's internal

organs had been damaged beyond natural repair. He sent word with one of the chassidim to his own rebbe, the great *tzaddik*, Rav Naftoli Ropshitzer, to *daven* for his son's life. The Rebbe did this and more: he sent back a flask of pure olive oil with instructions to anoint and massage the child's body. In a short while, miraculously, the child healthy again.

In the weakened state of old age, the *Shinover Rav* would recount his miraculous salvation. He would recall how when he was massaged with the oil sent by the *Ropshitzer*, he could feel his bones repair themselves and how his organs regenerated and straightened themselves until his body became healed and whole again. He would then sigh and remark longingly, "From where could we get such pure, holy oil today if we needed it?" (*Divrei Yechezkel* pp. 2-3)

ROCK SOLID FAITH

On *Erev Pesach*, after having finished baking matzos about a half hour before *Mincha*, Reb Shimon approached the *Divrei Chaim* of Tzanz with the traditional blessing "*LeShana HaBa Be'Yerushalayim* - next year may we eat the matzos in Yerushalayim!" "Why next year?" the *Tzaddik* yelled and thundered "I have not yet despaired of eating the *kezayis* matzo in Yerushalayim this very night!" Such was the *Divrei Chaim's* rock solid, unshakable *emunah*.

Chemda Genuza

SIMPLE FAITH

Once, the *Divrei Chaim* related how he watched a simple Jew recite the blessing *Ga'al Yisrael* in the *Haggadah*. So saying, the Jew got to his feet and stood tall and erect and began to bow and prostrate himself silently - shuckling away. After saying *Ga'al Yisrael*, he proceeded to *daven* as he always did during *Shacharis*! The *Divrei Chaim* derived great pleasure at the simplicity of these faithful Jews.

Chemda Genuza

THE DIVREI CHAIM DEFINED A CHILUL HASHEM

Rav Yisrael of Rizhin was imprisoned for 22 months - 16 in the notorious Kiev dungeons in a dark and damp cell and then another 6 months in Kamenetz. No charges were ever brought against him and he was never placed on trial. The *Rizhiner*, undaunted, continued to lead his Chassidim even while incarcerated, despite the fact that he was allowed almost no visitors.

The way he fully accepted upon himself this decree and *sanctified* Hashem's name while in prison, can be comprehended by the way he left his imprisonment. When, on *Shushan Purim*, March 20, 1840, the iron cell door creaked open to release the *Rizhiner*, he walked out, paused, turned around and stepped back in the cell. To the wonderment of those present, he remained inside for a few moments before finally stepping out to freedom. Everybody understood that the time he had spent in prison were holy days; to learn from and to be remembered — not forgotten. Days later, after receiving information that the authorities were planning on re-arresting him, and a sentence of lifetime exile in Siberia was in store for him, he made a miraculous flight to the town of Sadigora, where the Austrian government declared him a citizen and granted him a safe haven. The *Rizhiner* spent the rest of his days in Sadigora, and even now that name is synonymous with *Rizhiner* chassidus.

One of the admirers of the *Rizhiner* was the *tzaddik*, Rav Chaim of Tzanz, the *Divrei Chaim*. Rav Chaim had an illustrious Rabbinic career and in his later years was the Rav of Tzanz and presided over its *Bais Din*. (Rabbinical court) When he retired, his son Rav Aharon assumed his position.

Once, when Rav Aharon was presiding over the *Bais Din*, he rendered a certain decision that displeased the guilty litigant. Not only did he not accept the verdict against him, but demanded that the results be reversed - insisting that he would not take "no" for an answer. Rav Aharon, unmoved, refused to be influenced and called the case closed.

At that point, the unfortunate litigant, desperate for things to go his way, claimed that if the Rav would not reverse the results he would report him to the local authorities on some trumped up charge which carried the risk of imprisonment. After Rav Aharon again refused to reverse the decision of the *Bais Din*, the fellow followed through on his threat by fabricating some story in the eager ears of the local authorities. They arrived promptly at the home of Rav Aharon, arrested him and threw him into prison without any investigation.

His family and students came running to his father Rav Chaim to report the news, but to their great astonishment, he was calm and surprisingly unconcerned. "If my son were sitting in jail because of some crime or indiscretion that he committed, that would certainly bother me," he told them. "But that he was thrown into jail because rendered an

honest and fair judgment upholding the sanctity of the Torah... it should only be so!"

When the family saw that they were getting nowhere with Rav Chaim, they went to see his *mechutan* (the father of a son or daughter's spouse) Rav Yehoshua of Belz, and asked him to intervene; perhaps he would be able to convince Rav Chaim to use his influence to get his son out of jail.

Rav Yehoshua agreed to take on the mission and went immediately to speak with Rav Chaim. He related to him all that had transpired; from the case that had come before the *Bais Din* until the current tragic outcome. He explained how difficult it must be for a refined person like Rav Aharon to be in a Hungarian jail, and how important it was for his family as well as for the community to have him back. And last but not least, there was a *Chillul Hashem* (desecration of Hashem's name) involved.

At that Rav Chaim ignited, and he turned full force to Rav Yehoshua. "Do you really believe that if one is put into prison because he upheld the *Kedushah* (holiness) of the Torah by rendering an honest and true judgment, that it is the cause of a *Chillul Hashem*?! Would you label Yosef HaTzaddik's sentence in the prison of Pharaoh a *Chillul Hashem*?! Were the twenty-two months that Rav Yisrael'tche (the *Rizhiner*) spent in prison a *Chillul Hashem*?! No! Just the opposite! It was a *Kiddush Hashem*! Both Yosef HaTzaddik and Rav Yisrael'tche sanctified the name of Hashem until the highest heights. My dear *mechutan*, listen to me! Anybody who calls himself a Jew and is not attached body and soul to his Creator every hour of the day - that is *Chillul Hashem*!

(Source: *Sefer Ner Yisrael*, "Dalet" page 145-6, as told by Rav Yankele of Antwertp zt"l)

THE BITTER TASTE OF SIN

Rav Chuna Halberstam of Kolshitz once related that on *Hoshana Rabbah*, the *Sanzer Rav* used to tell the following parable which he in turn had heard and received as a tradition from his rebbe the *heilge Ropshitzer*:

There was once a *galach* (priest) who constantly rebuked and castigated his parishioners against drinking vodka and other forms of hard liquor. Once, when this *galach* passed through the marketplace he saw one of his parishioners lying like a drunkard on the sidewalk in a dazed stupor.

When his alcohol induced state wore off he reported to the *galach* to await punishment for his public misconduct. The *galach* proceeded to rebuke him to his face. "I am sorry," replied the parishioner, "but there is nothing that can make me give up my drinking habit, I am hooked on this drink and that's that!"

When the *galach* heard this, he asked one of his attendants to bring him some brandy so he could sample it for himself. "I must see for myself why this drink is so addictive," he thought, "it must taste so wonderful and be so tempting that he cannot give it up!"

The attendant brought his master a glass of strong brandy and the *galach* sipped the drink and immediately spit it out wrinkling his nose, while wheezing, hacking, coughing and retching violently.

"This is disgusting!," he declared, "how can you drink such strong, bitter liquid!?" he questioned the drunkard. With a wave of dismissal, the *galach* said "you can go! You don't need any punishment at all! Drinking such bitter horrible stuff such as that . . . there is no better punishment for you!"

When he concluded the story he explained the parable's message:

The same is true regarding sins and transgressions that people do. People sin and transgress thinking of the pleasure and delight they will feel.

However, anyone who has never tasted sin in his life would taste in such actions the bitter and vile poison that they really are!

With this we can advocate on behalf of *Klal Yisrael* and say: *Ribono Shel Olam* - Master of the World there is no need to further punish the *yidden* for any of their sins! The bitter taste of sin itself should be punishment enough!

(*Sippurei Tzaddikim Succos* - page 18)

THE DIVREI CHAIM CASTS HIS BREAD UPON THE WATERS

The *Divrei Chaim* was approaching a busy train station in Vienna surrounded by his chassidim. Suddenly, he stopped and mentioned to his chassidim that he hears the sound

of crying and asked them to locate the source of the crying. One of the chassidim walked in the direction that the Rav pointed him to and he found a young girl, who was well-dressed, but whose eyes were red from crying. It was apparent that she had been crying for a long time.

The chassid asked her what was wrong and the girl, who was the daughter of a non-Jewish minister, told him that she was supposed to travel home by train, but her money had been stolen, and now she was stranded. She had been sitting there crying for a long time, but no one had paid any attention to her. "What will I do now?" she said, beginning to cry again, "How will I get home?"

The chassid went back to Rav Chaim and explained to him the source of the crying. Immediately, Rav Chaim took some money out of his pocket and said to the chassid, "Return to the girl with this money and tell her that Rabbiner Halberstam sent her the money." The chassid did as instructed, and the girl happily accepted the money as she wiped away her tears.

Years later, Reb Shmuel, a Sanzer chassid, came to Rav Chaim with a tale of woe. Reb Shmuel owned a thriving boot factory and one of his clients was the Hungarian army. The army had recently ordered a large supply of boots for the approaching winter. A jealous non-Jewish competitor decided to take matters in his own hands and informed the army general that Reb Shmuel's boots were made out of inferior materials and Reb Shmuel was a liar and a thief, just like the rest of the Jews. The army general was more than willing to accept these anti-Semitic trumped-up charges and informed the Hungarian government. Reb Shmuel was now facing serious charges and faced imprisonment.

Rav Chaim listened and then told Reb Shmuel, "Don't worry at all. Go to the justice minister in Lemberg and tell him that Rabbiner Halberstam said that you're not guilty and these are false accusations."

Reb Shmuel traveled to Lemberg, but the justice minister was not in his office. He remembered Rav Chaim's reassurance not to worry and decided to go to the justice minister's home. To his surprise, the justice minister invited him in immediately and allowed Reb Shmuel to tell him his story. He ended his story with the words, "Rabbiner Halberstam told me to come to you and tell you in his name, that I'm not guilty and these

are all false accusations.”

The minister was silent, but his wife, who had also listened to the story, turned to Reb Shmuel and asked with great interest, “Who told you to come here?”

“Rabbiner Halberstam,” said Reb Shmuel, who was surprised by her interest.

“Rabbiner Halberstam of Sanz?!” she asked excitedly.

“Yes,” Reb Shmuel replied, now even more curious why this non-Jewish woman was so interested in his Rebbe.

“Do you know who that is?” she said to her husband. Once, when I was a girl, I was stuck in the Vienna train station when all my money was stolen. I sat and cried there for a full hour, and not one person in the crowded train station paid any attention to me, except that Rav - Rabbiner Halberstam. He heard me crying and gave me enough money to buy a ticket to travel home. He’s an angel of G-d, this Rabbiner Halberstam, and I’ll remember him as long as I live. If this angel of G-d is supporting this man, he is surely not guilty.”

When *Reb Shmuel* left Lemberg, after he was cleared of the charges, he immediately traveled to Sanz and told Rav Chaim the story. Rav Chaim smiled and said, “This is what it means when it says, ‘Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it.’ When you act appropriately to every person that was created in the image of Hashem, you will only gain. And this is not referring to only important people...”

(Leorum Neilach)

FATAL WHITEWASH

A young man, who was afflicted with a severe case of tuberculosis, was housed with a poor householder in the town of Sanz. Before *Pesach*, the householder wished to whitewash his house, as he did each year. The problem was that the doctor had warned him that although the young man did not have much time to live as it was, since his lungs were badly eaten away, the smell of the whitewash would hasten his death.

The landlord ran to the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz and told him, in anguished tones, that he

could not forgo whitewashing his house for *Pesach*, so he felt he had no choice and must turn the sick young man out.

The Rebbe was shaken by the tale. He pondered briefly and then asked the man to wait a short while, until the illness would pass, and then he would be able to whitewash the house without worry.

The doctor heard about what the Rebbe had said and laughed scornfully. But after a few days had passed, he was forced to admit that the patient had improved. And, shortly thereafter, the sick man was found to be completely cured.

The *Divrei Chaim* dismissed with the wave of his hand the talk of miracles that was on everyone's lips, but his grandson Rav Shlomo, the future *rebbe* of Bobov, pursued the doctor and asked him, "Nu, what do you have to say now?"

"It would seem that I was mistaken when I said the lungs were eaten away and disintegrated," replied the doctor.

"Why don't you admit, rather, that you were wrong in mocking the words of my grandfather, the Rebbe of Sanz?" insisted the *Bobover*.

"If your grandfather can create new lungs, why doesn't he make the blind see and give speech to the dumb?" countered the doctor.

"If my grandfather were to give sight to the blind, you would have no choice but to repent," said the *Bobover*. "However, Hashem wants man to have free choice and choose the good from his own will. That is why the *tzaddik* only performs miracles of this sort which allow the doctor to say, 'I was mistaken in my diagnosis.'"

ARE YOU HOLIER THAN A NESHOMA?

The *Sanzer Rav*, the *Divrei Chaim*, once asked a guest who had come to spend an uplifting spiritual Shabbos in Sanz, where he was staying and what he was eating. "Is that what I came to Sanz for?" retorted the Chassid incredulously, "to sleep, eat and drink?!"

The *Divrei Chaim* replied, "Are you any better than the neshoma? Do you think you are

somehow greater than your soul? The soul comes down to this world with only one purpose: to serve her Creator. Still, if she is not provided with food, drink and sleep as she needs to live, she will depart her body and go!" (*Maamar Mordechai Slonim #4-6*)

HOW CAN THEY SLEEP AT NIGHT

The *Divrei Chaim* was renowned for his charity. He not only gave away thousands for *tzedoka*; he could not sleep when money was left over in his home.

When he first heard about safes that people kept at home to guard their wealth and money from thieves, he queried his family asking them, "Can't the thieves steal the keys to the safe?"

His family explained that people slept with the keys under their pillows. Incredulously, the *Divrei Chaim* cried out, "How can a person sleep at night if he hasn't already given out all his money for *tzedoka*?!" (*Haggoda Darchei Chaim Sanz*)

WHAT IF SHE HAD BEEN YOUR WIFE?

The *Sanzer Rav's gabbai*, Moshe Yehoshua, stood at the Rav's doorway looking in with wonder and astonishment; since when did the *Divrei Chaim* sit and study without his housecoat?!

"Where is the Rav's *chalatel*?" asked the *gabbai*. The *Divrei Chaim* patiently explained how a poor widow had just been to ask for a donation. "What should I have done?" the *Divrei Chaim* excused himself to the irate *gabbai*. "I had no money left, so I gave her my *chalatel* to pawn for some money."

"But Rebbe," persisted the *gabbai*, "why did you have to give your own *chalatel* off your back?"

"You wouldn't ask me that question," leveled the *Divrei Chaim* sternly, "If that poor widow had been your wife!" (*Ner Yehoshua* page 281-282)

HE CAN ALWAYS SAY HE IS THE SANZER RAV'S SON!

When the time came for the *Divrei Chaim's* son, Rav Boruch of Gorlitz, to marry off one of his daughters, he approached his father, the *Sanzer Rav*, and asked him for money, to which the *Sanzer Rav* replied, "At this time I have none."

A few days passed and some wealthy Jews came to visit the *Divrei Chaim* and left him a sizeable donation. Rav Boruch was overjoyed; surely now, when he had asked his father for help, he would get the much-needed funds for his daughter's upcoming wedding. But alas, that was not to be. As soon as the wealthy Jews left, the *Sanzer Rav* sent for a local pauper, and he gave all the money he had just acquired to the poor Jew, so that he could marry off his daughters.

When Rav Boruch came in to see his father and requested money for his daughter's *chasuna*, the *Divrei Chaim* explained, "I have already donated all the money to that poor Jew to marry off his daughters."

Hearing this reply, Rav Boruch burst into bitter tears of disappointment and cried, "Why am I any worse than him? Don't I also need money to marry off my daughter?!"

The holy *Sanzer Rav* explained how he saw matters differently. "You are my son. You can go anywhere, travel to any town or city and people will recognize you and give you money to help you marry off your daughter just because you are the son of the *Sanzer Rav*. However, this poor Jew has no one. If I don't give this pauper money, who will?" (*Eser Tzachtzachs* Chapter 9 #22)

WHO NEEDS SEFORIM?

A pauper once approached the *Divrei Chaim* complaining that he had to marry off his daughter but lacked the necessary funds. The *Divrei Chaim* did not hesitate and replied, "Look, I have no cash left, but I have a house full of *seforim*. Surely you can sell or pawn them for the funds you need? I have no real need of *seforim* when I can learn in the *Bais Medrash*."

The pauper did not need to be told twice and did not wait for the *Sanzer Rav* to change his mind. He quickly ordered a wagon and loaded the *Divrei Chaim's* entire library of *seforim* onto it. He drove the cartload of *seforim* into town, sold them all for a hefty sum and married off his daughter. The *Sanzer Rav* from then on simply went to the *Bais Medrash* to learn. "Who needs *seforim* when there are plenty in the *Bais Medrash*?" he explained to his astounded *gabbai* and family. (*Haggoda Darchei Chaim Sanz*).

SUKKA DECORATIONS

The *Bobover Rav* once told how on *Erev Sukkos* the *Divrei Chaim* told them all how there is an extra special *mitzva* of *tzedoka* on *Erev Sukkos* and that this is the most beautiful decoration a *sukka* can have, because the *Ushpizin* (heavenly guest) of the first night is none other than Avrohom Avinu, whose attribute is *chessed*. We therefore give extra *tzedoka* to merit to have Avrohom, the pillar of *chessed*, as a guest in our *sukka*.

That *Erev Sukkos*, continued the *Bobover* in his story, the *Divrei Chaim* had already given away all his money. However, the *Sanzer Rav* felt as if he had not yet properly fulfilled the *mitzva* of *tzedoka* to its true extent. What did he do? He noticed all the *esrog* merchants packing up and heading home. The *Sanzer Rav* went and begged them to lend him their money. "Surely you have money from selling *esrogim* - lend me some for *Noy Sukka* - for decorations to light up my *sukka*!" And they did, and the *Sanzer Rav* immediately began to purchase the most exquisite *sukka* decorations he could think of - distributing all that money to the poor for *tzedoka*! (*Zemiros LaAter Pesora* p. 154 cited in *Ner Yehoshua* page 265)

RAV MORDECHAI OF SLONIM USED TO TELL THE FOLLOWING STORIES ABOUT THE DIVREI CHAIM OF SANZ:

Our Tzaddikim Comfort

The Chassidim in Sanz were once sitting around the table telling *sippurei Tzaddikim* when the *Divrei Chaim* himself entered and said to them, "There is a bird named the *Re'em*, whose feet are covered in hideous boils and this embarrasses him so much that he hates his life and feels like he wants to end it by killing himself. But the Creator gave him a gift - he has wondrous, beautiful plumage that covers the entire top half of his body. When he sees his own dazzling feathers he is comforted and filled with *simcha*. So it is with the body of *Klal Yisrael*. When we look at ourselves and see our despicable lowliness and how unworthy we are, we are filled with sadness and despair. But when we see the holy *Tzaddikim* and *Gedolim*, we comfort ourselves and are filled with joy."

Free Bird

A different time, the Chassidim in Sanz sat and discussed *Chassidus* well into the night past chatzos. The *Divrei Chaim* himself entered and remarked, "When hunters capture a

bird and place her in a cage, she approaches the bars of her cage and comes to the locked door. She pecks at it again and again, coming back over and over. Even though all her previous efforts were in vain, she doesn't give up and tries again and again...maybe this time she will be successful. So too regarding Chassidim - they try all manner of tricks and strategies to overcome the *yetzer hora* and free themselves from his bondage. They never give up. Even when it feels like they tried previously and were unsuccessful, they try over and over until they escape his clutches and run free from darkness into light."

Are You Holier Than a Neshoma?

The *Sanzer Rav*, the *Divrei Chaim*, once asked a guest who had come to spend an uplifting spiritual Shabbos in Sanz, where he was staying and what he was eating. "Is that what I came to Sanz for?" retorted the Chassid incredulously, "to sleep, eat and drink?!"

The *Divrei Chaim* replied, "Are you any better than the *neshoma*? Do you think you are somehow greater than your soul? The soul comes down to this world with only one purpose: to serve her Creator. Still, if she is not provided with food, drink and sleep as she needs to live, she will depart her body and go!" (*Maamar Mordechai Slonim #4-6*)

NO CHIDDUSH

The *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz once told Rav Shimon Sofer of Cracow regarding his father the *Chasam Sofer* that:

"It was no *chiddush* that your father the *Chasam Sofer* was so great and holy and rose to such heights when he had a rebbe such as Rav Nassan Adler.

Regarding whom I heard from my own rebbe Rav Naphtali of Ropshitz who heard in turn from his rebbe the Rebbe Reb Melech of Lizensk author of *Noam Elimelech* who said that 'for many years a soul such as Rav Nosson Adler's had not descended to this world besides the soul of the *Baal Shem Tov*.'"

Rav Aryeh Tzvi Frummer Eretz Tzvi (Nissan 27)

ON THE SAME LEVEL?

The *Koziglover Rav* reprinted Rav Arye Leib Tzintz's *sefer Shiurei Kometz HaMincha* together with his own marginal glosses and commentary. After the *sefer* was again well known and available, a *yungerman* approached the *Koziglover Rav*, and asked him to *daven* and give a *berocha* for his sick daughter to have a *refua sheleima*. His daughter was very ill, the doctors had despaired of a cure and said that her life was in danger. Quickly he rushed to the Rav and begged him to save his daughter's life!

When the *Koziglover Rav* heard this request he responded, "How can I help? Can I change Hashem's mind? And if you just want me to recite some *Tehillim*, well, that you too can do. Why are my *Tehillim* any better than yours?!"

The *yungerman*, however, disagreed, persisting and arguing, "When Rav Leibush Charif (a nickname for the *Maharal Tzintz*, whose *sefer* we just mentioned above the *Koziglover Rav* had reprinted) just said the words, 'May Hashem help - *Hashem ya'azor*,' that was enough for a *yeshua* and a miracle to occur!"

"How can you compare me," argued the *Koziglover Rav*, "to Rav Leibush Charif? What kind of comparison is there even - are we on the same level?"

Again, the *yungerman* remained undeterred and argued back, "Why then did you place yourself on the same page as him (referring to the aforementioned glosses and commentary that the *Koziglover Rav* had published on the *Maharal Tzintz's sefer*)?"

No further arguments back helped and finally he gave in and responded, "Okay, you win!"

His face changed and took on an ethereal expression. He turned to the *yungerman* and said those very words: "*Hashem ya'azor* - Hashem will help," and He did. The deathly ill girl recovered completely in a miraculous manner. (*Marbitzei Torah Me'olam HaChassidus* Vol. 6 p. 53)

ROSH YESHIVA CHACMEI LUBLIN

Rav Arye Tzvi Fromer, the *Koziglover Rav*, was first asked by Rav Meir Shapiro to take over the position as *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Chachmei Lublin* even during Rav Shapiro's lifetime and that he would step down, but the *Koziglover Rav* refused. He was too close to his

talmidim and simply did not want to leave them and his friends behind. Yet when Rav Meir Shapiro passed away at the young age of forty-six and the *hanhola* asked the *Koziglover Rav* once again to accept the position of *Rosh Yeshiva*, he saw it as his duty and could not refuse. One of his *talmidim* described Shabbos in the *Yeshiva* when the *Koziglover Rav* davened *mincha* before Shabbos, crying and sobbing tears like a river. After a fiery *Kabbolas Shabbos*, he began to publicly recite the portion of *Zohar* printed in the Friday night *zemiros* and explain it out loud, his only public shiur in *Zohar*, and this lasted sometimes for so long, sometimes for hours, that those *Talmidim* who had already gone to sleep were often woken up with a start to hear his loud voice booming as he recited *Kiddush* so late at night before dawn broke! Regarding his davening on Shabbos day, they would say, whoever never heard the *Koziglover Rav* say *Nishmas* (which lasted over half an hour alone, as he enunciated each word lovingly) never tasted the true taste of *tefilla* in his entire life! (*Marbitzei Torah Me'olam HaChassidus* Vol. 6 p. 54-55, p. 59)

Rav Shabtai Sheptil Horowitz Vavei Hoamudim (Nissan 28)

THE TOSAFOS FROM HEAVEN FOR THE BEARER OF THE RABBIENU TAM'S SOUL

The *Chida* writes: I heard from Rav Hirsch of Balchov that when the Rebbe Reb Heschel of Cracow traveled to Vilna, fleeing the Cossacks and Chmielniczki during the riots of Tach and Tat, and he arrived before the *Av Bais Din*, Rav Sheptil Horowitz, *mechaber* of *Vovei HoAmudim* and son of the *Shela HaKodosh*, he did not recognize the Rebbe Reb Heschel or respect his greatness.

The Rebbe Reb Heschel then asked the son of the *Shela* to explain a *Tosafos* and he said he would study it but could not understand the *Tosafos* at all. He fasted and cried and then his own father, the *mechaber* of the *Shela HaKodosh* himself, appeared to him in a dream. His father explained to him the meaning and explanation of the *Tosafos*. He also admonished and warned him to honor the great Rebbe Reb Heschel for he had the soul of *Rabbeinu Tam*. Reb Sheptil awoke and immediately sent for the Rebbe Reb Heschel and honored him, explaining the *Tosafos* to him. The Rebbe Reb Heschel exclaimed and remarked in public, "The only way you got this explanation was a revelation from Heaven!" (*Maagal Tov*)

RAV YOEL BAAL SHEM AGAINST THE FORCES OF EVIL & DARKNESS IN POZNA

Between the years 5441 and 5442 (1680-1681) there was a stone house that stood on the main road of the city of Pozna, whose basement was closed and locked and no one was able to enter.

One day a boy somehow breached the door and entered. The members of the household found him lying dead at the doorway to the cellar, the reason for his death was unknown and remained a mystery.

Two years later the external forces of darkness entered the chimney of the kitchen where the family was cooking and preparing food over the stove and they found all the pots filled with dust and ashes until all the food was ruined and inedible.

Afterwards the powers of the forces of evil grew stronger until they entered the living quarters where the family was living as well, they began to throw objects such as the chandeliers and various ornamental objects that were hanging, the evil forces seized them and cast them down until they fell on the ground. At this point however, the forces of evil did not actually harm anyone or disturb the inhabitants. Eventually they began enter the rooms of the home until their fear and dread spread over all the individuals and inhabitants and they had no choice but to leave and move out of there. A great outcry went out in Pozna and the entire congregation began to discuss what could be done and to seek advice as to what solution could be agreed on to this problem.

At first they tried to use the services of exorcists and other various priests but nothing they did was successful at getting rid of or chase out the forces of evil.

Afterwards they sent a messenger to the renowned Rav Yoel Baal Shem of Zamotsh and as soon as Rav Yoel arrived he began to adjure and use oaths to bind them with Divine Names to force them to explain the reason behind why these forces of evil came to this home that is inhabited by people and that normally the forces of evil have no permission to live or dwell in places that are inhabited or civilized, instead they live and dwell in filth, squalor and desolate places that are deserted. They replied that this home belongs to them and it is completely theirs according to the letter of the law of the Torah and they even agreed to appear before a tribunal such as a Bais Din and to try their case at the Rabbincal Court of Badatz Pozna.

The dayanim assembled together with Rav Yoel and they held a trial at the Bais Din. One of the demons spoke, all the dayanim heard his disembodied voice but they could see no form or visage from where it came from. The demon began his opening arguments as follows:

In earlier times in days past there was an owner whose name was such and such. That

man was a smith, and he lived with a demoness, and together they had a family. She gave birth to his children, destructive forces of evil, demons besides the true human children he had from his human wife. The man was deeply in love with the demoness and his soul was bound up to hers and sometimes he would leave *shul* in the middle of services and do her bidding. Once in the middle of the Pesach Seder that he was conducting like all the Jews among the Jewish people, in the middle of the meal the smith got up from his seat and went to the lavatory. His wife suspected something and followed him to the out house and through the keyhole she saw inside the outhouse a beautiful room filled with a lavish table decorated with gold and silver tableware and a lavish bed where a beautiful demoness waited for her husband's licentious illicit attention.

She went back home in a terrible mood, frightened and despondant. A quarter of an hour later the smith returned and his wife did not mention what she had witnessed.

The next day the wife went to Rav Sheftil (the son of the Shelah haKadosh author of Vavei HaAmudim) and told him all she had seen and all that transpired.

The Rav sent for the smith and he admitted that he had a demoness for a wife. The Rav wrote for him a Kameo amulet with Divine Names and forced the smith to abandon his demoness wife.

Before the smith's death the demoness came and cried and wailed how could he leave her and her children? Afterwards she put on a smile and began to entice him with hugs and kisses until he relented and he promised her on his deathbed that she and her children would inherit him and have a portion of his inheritance for their own. He gave her the basement cellar. After many years and wars in Poland between the years 5400 and 5418 the smith died in battle along with his descendants and inheritors and we the demons are the only descendants and we have a right to our inheritance. This was the argument and the case as presented by the demon from the external forces of evil.

The inhabitants and dwellers of the home argued that they had purchased this home for a full price and paid up their share, therefore they had purchased the property rightfully and legally from the smith and his descendants and it was rightfully theirs. Besides, argued the human inhabitants, we are human beings whereas you are demons, whose demoness mother forced and seduced the smith to her wishes against his true will.

The Bais Din heard the case and handed down their ruling as a psak din that the external forces of darkness had no rights whatsoever to own a portion of that home since their primary place of residence is not in civilization at all, but in desolate barren wastes and deserted places. Then Rav Yoel Baal Shem adjured and bound the demons with an oath forcing them to leave the home and the basement cellar and to leave and go to the forests

and dessert wastelands.

(Source Kav HaYashar Chapter 69)

Rav Yosef Yozpe Rosenberg Yad Yosef, Revid Hazahav (Nissan 28)

MISHNA 2:1 “WHAT IS THE PROPER PATH THAT MAN SHOULD CHOOSE FOR HIMSELF?”

Excerpt from the upcoming Moisa Edition of Ma’asei Avos:

Mishna 2:1 “What is the proper path that man should choose for himself?”

The story occurred on *Shabbos Bereishis* in the *Bais Medrash* of Rav Yisrael of Tchoortkov. Among the many guests was the then-Rav of Sanok, Rav Meir Shapira, who later became famous as the *Rosh Yeshiva of Chachmei Lublin* and the founder of the *Daf HaYomi* movement.

On Shabbos morning after *Kerias HaTorah* the door to the Rebbe’s private room opened and the Rebbe himself made an unusual appearance where, before the astounded Chassidim, he honored the Rav of Sanok, Rav Meir Shapira, to bless the new month and to lead the tefillos for *Mussaf*. This was an unusual occasion to say the least, but Rav Meir took the *amud*, and led the congregation. His powerful, sweet and melodious voice awoke a strong outpouring of the soul and a holy excitement among the Chassidim and many later recounted that the aura of sanctity resembled that of *Yom Kippur*. The sweet niggun and songs plucked the strings of their souls and they were all moved by Rav Meir Shapira’s heartfelt *tefillos*.

Afterward, as the Chassidim passed before the Rebbe to receive his Good Shabbos blessing, Rav Meir too passed before him. “I did not know that the Rav of Sanok knew so well how to lead the prayers!” exclaimed the Rebbe.

“I too did not know this,” said Rav Meir innocently, “until the Rebbe revealed this to me as well!”

The Rebbe invited Rav Meir to *kiddush* and after the meal they secreted themselves in the

Rebbe's private room for a long, drawn-out conversation. When Rav Meir left the Rebbe's room, his face shone with a supernal other-worldly aura.

During that conversation, Rav Meir's powerful gift of *tefilla* was mentioned once again, on which he commented, "If I have such a gift, perhaps I should become a chazzan; it would be appropriate, since I am a descendant of Rav Pinchas Koretzer, before whom all the gates of *tefilla* were open!"

Upon hearing these words the Tchortkover suddenly grew serious and after a few moments he said, "Rav of Sanok, allow me to tell you a tale about the holy Rebbe Reb Zusha of Aniploi, the brother of the illustrious Rebbe Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk.

"Once, when Rav Zusha was wandering in self-imposed exile from land to land, he arrived in Galicia. He had heard of Rav Yuzpa, the famous *Rosh Yeshiva* of Zolkava, and decided to travel there, since his wondrous shiurim, discourses in Talmudic topics, were quite legendary. Rav Zusha traveled there and when he reached Zolkava he entered Rav Yuzpa's *Yeshiva*. At that time, Rav Yuzpa was in the midst of a Talmudic *pilpul*, a deep discussion of the tractate's *sugya*, and all his *talmidim* were absorbed in his profound words so that no one noticed Rav Zusha's appearance in the *Yeshiva* at all.

"Rav Zusha was dressed as a wandering vagabond, in tattered rags, with his walking stick and bundle in hand. He went and sat in the corner and listened as well to the Talmudic discourse Rav Yuzpa delivered without removing his eyes from the orator for even a moment.

"After the lecture had ended, Rav Zusha approached the *Rosh Yeshiva* and said to him, 'Thank you so much! You deserve such a *yasher ko'ach* for the lecture you delivered! I have heard of your great erudition and scholarliness from afar and about your wonderful lectures and therefore I decided to travel and hear them for myself first hand. Believe me, it was well worth the long and arduous journey!'

"Rav Yuzpa heard the words of praise and answered, 'Well, I am glad that you enjoyed the lecture and that you heard words of Torah wisdom which you enjoyed, so I understand why I find favor in your eyes. However, how can you find favor in my eyes? Why, I do not yet have the pleasure of knowing you! Who are you and where are you from?'

“Oh, how can a vagabond such as myself find any favor in anyone’s eyes? I do not even know how to learn or study Torah. Why, I know nothing at all!’ declared Rav Zusha.

“Impossible,’ countered Rav Yuzpa. ‘It cannot be that you have no wisdom or sanctity. I sense that deep inside you there is some hidden treasure which causes you to find favor in my eyes.’

“I only know how to *daven*,’ concluded Rav Zusha.

“Well, what Jew doesn’t know how to do that? Every Jew knows how to daven,’ exclaimed Rav Yuzpa with wonder.

“But I know the proper way to *daven* before the Master of the World!’ added Rav Zusha.

“If so, reveal it to me. Teach me the secrets of your *tefilla*,’ requested Rav Yuzpa.

“Very well then. Come, let us go somewhere private and I will open the gates of prayer before you,’ suggested Rav Zusha.

“And so,” concluded the *Tchortkover Rebbe* to Rav Meir Shapira, “the two entered a room and secluded themselves. Rav Zusha taught the *Rosh Yeshiva* the secrets of *tefilla* and they pierced deep into Rav Yuzpa’s soul. He grew aflame with excitement and declared, ‘I will leave my Yeshiva and go after this man, just as Elisha followed Eliyohu - and then perhaps during that time I will learn at least how to *daven* just one proper *tefilla* in my lifetime! I will learn to stand before the Master of the World in *tefilla* and to concentrate with true purity. Yes, I will get up right now and leave my Yeshiva!’

“No, no, Rav Yuzpa,’ countered Rav Zusha. ‘Let me explain something to you. Our Sages taught us that just as man’s facial features are different from one another so too are their minds different. There are millions and billions of people living in this world, and each one has a different face from the other. And just as their outer appearance differs, so does their inner essence, their souls and their purpose in life, even though each soul can achieve its own personal beauty equally. Why did Hashem create so many people? Because each of them has his unique purpose to fulfill a lofty and supernal goal. Just as there are many people, there are many goals and aspirations for each individual. Each

person has to fulfill his own aspirations and goals with the tools, talents and character traits that Hashem has given him. This is why our Sages taught that one should always study from where his heart desires, since man's heart aspires to his personal goal that Hashem expects him to fulfill. You, Rav Yuzpa, have the talent and power to inspire *talmidim* and teach them Torah. Heaven gifted you with this ability to deliver such beautiful Talmudic lectures and discourses. Leave the gates of *tefilla* for someone like me,' concluded Rav Zusha."

The Tchortkover ended the tale and turned to Rav Meir Shapira, who understood the meaning of the Rebbe's words. Later in life, when Rav Meir was the *Rosh Yeshiva of Chachmei Lublin*, he told those close to him about that Shabbos in Tchortkov, saying, "With that story the Rebbe put me in my proper place and set me on the proper path in life to fulfill my unique mission and purpose: to teach and spread Torah through the chinuch of the next generation of *Am Yisrael* - the Jewish nation."

Rav Moshe Pallier Imros Taharos (Nissan 29)

LOVESICK FOR CHASSIDUS

When Rav Moshe Kobriner first joined the *Derech HaChassidus* he yearned to travel to Rav Mordechai of Lechovitch, but his father-in-law was a strong *Misnagged* and staunchly forbade his son-in-law to go. This went on until Rav Moshe's yearnings and pangs were so strong that he became sick, so sick that they brought in a physician to diagnose his illness. The doctor declared that he was lovesick - his passionate desire and yearning for something was so strong that it was making him physically ill.

His father-in-law realized that it was Rav Moshe's yearnings for the *Lechovitcher* that was the root of this sickness and so he finally relented and agreed to allow him to travel. His father-in-law hired a coach, wagon and some horses, and they set out. As they neared their destination, slowly but surely Rav Moshe's condition improved. Seeing that his son-in-law was getting well, the father-in-law decided to turn back around. When Rav Moshe saw them going back, his illness returned and he had a total relapse. Seeing that there was no other option, they turned back again to Lechovitch. When they arrived in Lechovitch, it was the Shabbos before *Selichos* and Rav Moshe quickly absorbed the *Derech HaChassidus* and became an ardent and devoted Chassid of the Rebbe he would

one day succeed. (*Yehi Ohr* p. 229 #480)

In Kobrin the *davening* was so intense, with such *mesirus nefesh* and *dveikus* that there were specially appointed Chassidim whose job it was to revive all the other Chassidim who fainted during *Nishmas*. (*Yehi Ohr* p. 232 #489)

THE KOBRINER'S SAYING AND PRAISES

The *Lechovitcher* said regarding Rav Moshe Kobriner: Every day he reveals a new meaning and discovers a new *derech* in the concept of *Bechol derochecha do'eihu* - "Know *Hashem* in all your ways". A different time he remarked how even the angels and *seraphs* did not recognize the *Kobriner's* true *stature*.

Rav Yisrael Rizhiner said to Rav Moshe Kobriner, "When you travel and come to me I can smell your fragrance like the bouquet of Eretz Yisrael, even when you are still fifty meters off, and your *emes* can be felt at several miles distance!"

The *Kobriner* used to say regarding the wording of the first *berocha* of *Shemone Esrei*, *koneh hakol* - that *Hashem* acquires each and every gesture that a Jew does for *Hashem's* sake and accepts them all as long as they are *emes*. (*Toras Avos* p. 293 #114, #129)

HIS HISTALKUS

Before his *petira* he remarked, "The thing I am truly ashamed of is that the *Bais HaMikdosh* wasn't rebuilt in my lifetime." And before he left this world his body changed form so that his sinews and veins began to bulge on his head until they formed the shape of the letter *shin* [like on the *Tefillin Shel Rosh*] (*Maamar Mordechai Slonim* #29, #30, #36-37)

Rav Yaakov Emden Yaavetz (Nissan 30)

THE DEATH OF THE GOLEM

Rav Yaakov Emden writes: I heard from my father's holy mouth (the Chacham Tzvi) regarding the golem that was created by my ancestor Rav Eliyahu Baal Shem of Chelm. After he saw that the golem grew too strong, Rav Eliyahu feared that he would destroy the entire world.

Therefore, Rav Eliyahu removed the Divine Name that was on the forehead of the golem, by so doing the golem lost his life and became dust and earth once more. However, the golem injured Rav Eliyahu and the golem scratched his face while Rav Eliyahu was attempting to detach the Divine Name from the golem by force. I also received the tradition that because the golem was created to fight against the goyim and take retribution and vengeance against them, therefore afterwards the wicked hounded Rav Eliyahu and he had to hide from them in fear. (She'elas Ya'abetz Volume II Siman 82)

Segulos Yisroel



SEGULOS FOR PARSHAS SHMINI & SEFIRAS HAOMER & SHABBOS AFTER PESACH

Shlissel Challah

There is a minhag to bake 'Shlissel Challah' (shlissel means key in Yiddish) for the Shabbos after Pesach. Shlissel Challoos are best known as a segula for parnasa, though there are other reasons for it, as we shall soon see.

Some bake the challah with an actual key inside. Others make the challah in the shape of a key and some put sesame seeds on top in the form of a key. There are those who make the challah flat to look like matzos. We will discuss this later on.

The Ohev Yisrael says about Shlissel Challah that, "The minhagim of our fathers are most definitely Torah." There are many reasons given for this minhag of baking Shlissel Challah; we will go through some of them. (Some of what is written below can also be found in Ta'amei Minhagim, Nitei Gavriel, Sefer Hatoda'a and Minhag Yisrael Torah).

The second mishna in Rosh HaShana says, that on Pesach we are judged on the grains, or in modern day terminology - parnasa. Rabbeinu Nissim asks that if we were already judged on Rosh HaShana as to how much sustenance we will allotted throughout the year, what are we being judged for on Pesach? He answers that on Pesach it is determined how much grain there will be in the coming year for the world, and on Rosh HaShana it is decided how much of that grain each individual receives.

The Meiri, however, says that on Rosh HaShana it is decided if one will live or die, suffer or not and other such things, but Pesach is when we are judged on the grains. Based on this, there are customs in Sephardic communities to do things on Motzai Pesach as a sign

that we want Hashem to give us livelihood. The Moroccan minhag is to have a Seuda with Chometz called a 'Mimuna". The word Mimuna strongly resembles the word Mamona, the Aramaic term for money. In Aram Soba (Syria) and Turkey, they put wheat kernels in all four corners of the house on Motzai Pesach as a sign of prosperity for the coming year. (Moed L'Kol Chai - Rav Chaim Palagi, Bais HaBichira). From this mishna in Rosh HaShana we already see that there is a connection between Pesach and parnasa.

Reasons for Shlissel Challah

1) In Shir Hashirim (which we read on Pesach) it says, פָּתַחַי לִי אַחֲתַי רַעֲיָתִי - "Open for Me, My sister, My beloved". Chazal say that Hashem asks us to open up for Him a small hole - even just as small as the tip of a needle - and He will open up a huge opening for us. Also, Klal Yisrael is called a bride and a wife is also referred to as one's bread. During Pesach, all the upper gates and minds are open and after Pesach they close and we need to reopen them.

For this reason, the Shabbos after Pesach, we put a key in the challah to hint that we must now open a small opening, through the mitzvah of Shabbos (and, if I might add, the mitzvah of challah), and in that merit, Hashem should open up the Heavens and shower on us all His goods from his vast storehouses. This coincides perfectly with the fact that on this Shabbos we bless the month of Iyar, since it was during this month that Hashem began to feed the Mon to our forefathers.

2) The Mon ceased falling after Pesach, that is when we bring the Omer offering. From then on, we needed to eat from the produce of the ground; we needed parnasa. Therefore, after Pesach, we daven to Hashem to open up the gates of parnasa and we have a minhag to put the form of a key on the challos to allude that Hashem should open up for us the gates of parnasa.

3) During the sefira, we count 49 days until Shavuot - the 50th day. This counting represents the 50 sha'arei bina, gates of understanding. We go from gate to gate, and each gate has a key. That is why we make an image of a key on the challah.

4) It says in Shir Hashirim (1:11), תּוֹרֵי זָהָב נְעֻשָׂה לָךְ עִם נִקְדוֹת הַכֶּסֶף - "We will make for you circlets of gold with spots of silver." When the Torah enumerates the materials needed for

the construction of the Mishkan it says, זהב וכסף ונחשת, putting zahav (gold) before kesef (silver). In Bereishis, by the creation of the world, during the first day it says Yehi Ohr. Ohr is chesed (which is represented by silver) The second day represents gevura, which in turn is represented by gold.

The reason why during the creation of the world the order is 'silver' (chesed) then 'gold' (gevura), is because at the time of creation there was pure chesed, as it says (Tehillim 89:3), "The world was built on chesed," therefore, chesed, which is represented in kesef, precedes gevura, which is represented by zahav.

By the Mishkan, however, Hashem had to, so-to-speak, contract (tzimtzum) the Shechina (Divine Presence) to dwell in the Mishkan, and any form of constriction (tzimtzum) is associated with Gevura. This is why zahav precedes kesef in the building of the Mishkan.

Still, the word zahav written there has the nekuda (vowel sound) of a פתח (it has a pasach instead of the usual kometz), it says זהב התניפה (Shemos 38:24), and that is the nekuda of chesed - the nekuda of chochma. And פתח (the vowel) also means an opening as in פתח ושער - from there comes all the kindness.

Putting it all together, when we say in Shir Hashirim, תורי זהב נעשה לך עם נקדות הכסף, this means that the Mishkan was made with zahav - the aspect of tzimtzum, but with the nekuda of kesef, meaning the that word "zahav", instead of having the usual vowel, kometz, is written with the nekuda of pasach, which is associated with chesed.

The Shabbos after Pesach always coincides with the second week of the sefira which is gevura, the aspect of zahav, except that it is menukad with kesef - the nekuda of pasach, which represent chesed. On this Shabbos we make the image of a key on the challah, since every gate has a מפתח (key), in way of beseeching Hashem to open up all the gates of blessings.

5) The previous four reasons are all brought by the Ohev Yisrael in Shabbos Achar Pesach and Likutim Parshas Shmini. There is a fifth reason brought by the Ohev Yisrael, also based on the posuk תורי זהב נעשה לך עם נקדות הכסף, connecting the Written and Oral Torah to Challah. (See Ohev Yisrael, Shabbos AchAr Pesach).

6) The matzah we ate on Pesach is supposed to instill in us Yiras Hashem. The Gemara in Mesechtas Shabbos (31a-b) compares Yiras Shomayim to a key, the Gemara says, “Rabbah bar Rav Huna said: Any person that has Torah but doesn’t have Yiras Shomayim is comparable to a treasurer who has the keys to the inner chambers (of the treasure house) but the keys to the outer area were not handed to him. How can he get to the inner chambers (if he can’t first get into the outer parts)?”

Therefore, we put a key in the challah the Shabbos after Pesach to show we want the Yirah obtained from the matzos to stay with us, because if one has Yirah then he will succeed in his Torah learning (Yismach Yisrael).

7) At the beginning of Hilchos Chometz U’Matza, the Rambam lists 8 mitzvos (3 positive & 5 negative) involved in chometz on Pesach. The key we put in the challah alludes to this Rambam. The letters of מפתח (key) stand for מַצוֹת פֶּתַח נֶפֶשׁ bread, representing the chometz and מ is for matza, these allude to Hilchos Chometz U’Matza, and the ח is the 8 mitzvos involved] (Tzvi LaTzaddik).

8) The Shabbos after Pesach we make challos that resemble matzos, as an allusion to the matzos that were eaten on Pesach Sheini. We place a key in the challah to allude to the “gates” being open until Pesach Sheini (Imrei Pinchos).

9) One minhag is to put keys in the challah and make them in the form of matzos. The reason is that in these seven weeks of the sefira, we are supposed to work on our Avodas Hashem until re-attain the level we reached on first night of Pesach. The way to do this is to put the “left into the right”, meaning mix the trait of ahava (right side) with yirah (left side). In the second week of sefira, we have these two traits in our hands, since the first week of sefira is chesed - ahava, and the second week is gevura - yirah. That is why we make the challah look like matza. Matza represents the Yetzer Tov, the right, and chometz represents the Yetzer Hora, the left. Now, we have challos which are true chometz, in the form of matza; “the left is in the right”, chometz in matza (Shearis L’Pinchos).

10) There are many reasons given for the shlissel challah, and I say that the shlissel challos are the keys to parnasa (Segulos HaBeShT V’Talmidov quoting Nachlas Yaakov).

Different ways of making Shlissel Challah

As mentioned above (reasons 8 and 9) there are those that make the challah round and flat for this Shabbos, in the image of matza.

Some make the challah in the shape of a key. Some attach a piece of dough in the shape of a key. Breslov Customs for Pesach (page 57) says this is the minhag of the family of Rav Elazar Kenig shlit"a and of Manistritch.

Sefer Hatoda'ah mentions making the image of a key with sesame seeds on top of the challah. These first three customs can, perhaps, be seen from the wording of the Ohev Yisrael in one place where he says to put the image of a key on the challah.

Others place an actual key in the challah. Perhaps this is done because of the wording in many places of indenting the challah with a key.

Either way it is done, the key or image of the key is usually on top of the challah. An interesting observation about this: The Gemara quoted by the Yismach Yisrael (reason 6), about the key, is at the top of daf 31b. At the bottom of the daf is the mishna mentioning the women's mitzvah of challah. Here the key is on top and the challah on the bottom!

Conclusion

The Gemara in Ta'anis says that there are three keys that Hashem directly controls, without the assistance of Malachim. They are, rain, which the Gemara explains is parnasa, childbirth (or conception) and techias hameisim. If I may humbly add, when we are making the challah to have in mind the parnasa of others also, and also those who don't have children and most importantly, to daven for techias hamaeisim.

Regardless of how one performs this minhag, they are all correct and all have holy sources. When I started writing this, I did not realize how much information there was on this minhag which is done only once a year. I learnt a valuable lesson - every minhag and of course, every mitzva has many holy reasons behind it and it is not done just because someone decided this is a nice thing to do, as some say. The more I looked into shlissel challah, the more I found it in seforim, written by Rabbonim who were gaonim in every part of Torah - nistar and nigleh, and Tzaddikim in every aspect - between "Hashem and man" and "between man and man". They were able to understand reasons for every little

action we do as a way of serving Hashem. May we all be blessed with parnasa berevach together with all of Klal Yisrael, Amen!

Note: See below for instructions on how to fulfill the mitzva of separating challah - the most important part of baking challah. It is said in the name of Rav Dovid of Tolna that one should make sure the dough separated as challah is burnt completely until no part of it is edible. In addition to being the ideal way to burn the challah, he says that if a davar tamei eats the unburnt challah, it can cause one's children to go off the derech, chas v'shalom.

The segulah that I received from my Rebbe, the Clevelander Rebbe Shlit"a of Ra'anana, is that on the first Shabbos after Pesach you "knead the challah dough" with a key. In fact, that is the custom recorded and found in the sefer Ohev Yisrael of the Apta Rebbe. Our custom is (I wash the key first in soap and hot water) to knead the challah dough and poke the key into the dough while reciting the open the shaarim prayers found in most zemiros bentchers at the end of the zemiros for Melave Malka - where we ask Hashem to open many gates for us. Other people I have seen also bake a key shape on the challah, but I didn't receive any such tradition.

The Ohev Yisrael says:

לשבת שאחר הפסח המנהג הוא מימים קדמונים לנקוב את החלות בשבת שלאחר פסח במפתחות, ונעשה על החלה צורת מפתח.

In at least three other places, the Ohev Yisrael uses similar wording to ונעשה על החלה צורת מפתח. This is probably where the minhag of some to bake a key shape image on the challah comes from.

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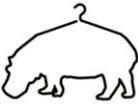
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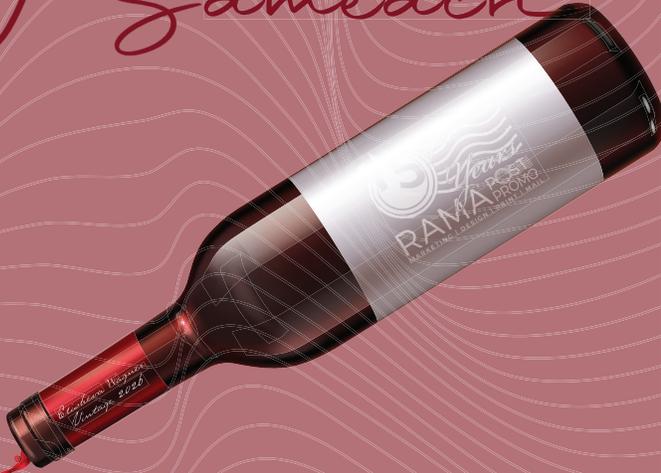
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