

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 Vaeschanan & Tu B'av & Shabbos Nachamu

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לזכר נשמת

ר' זכרי' שמעון הכהן בן יצחק

Three Maamarim/Essays - Tefilla Transcends Time 1) Daven Anytime

"And I entreated Hashem at that time, saying..." (3:23)

The heilige Ropshitzer points out in Zera Kodesh that the *pasuk* neglects to tell us

at which time Moshe entreated Hashem. He explains that this omission of time is done on purpose to teach us the profound lesson that there is no set time for asking Hashem; we can always approach Him whenever we wish.

A person, says the *Ropshitzer*, should never say to himself, "Right now, at this moment, I don't have the wits to pray. I am not in the correct frame of mind. Later, when I am free and I have the time and my mind is unburdened - then I will *daven* to Hashem." This is an incorrect manner of thinking. Instead, *daven* now, at any time, in any way, in any frame of mind. There is no wrong time to ask and *daven*; *daven* at any time, no matter what time it is and what is going on with you and around you at that time.

This is the meaning behind the *pasuk* (*Devorim* 4:29), "And from there seek out Hashem, your G-d, and you will find Him". There the *pasuk* also does not specify the time or location.

The explanation of that *pasuk* is similar: at any time and in any place, no matter where you are or when you are - from that place seek Hashem and you will find Him.

Another explanation given in *Zera Kodesh* is that Moshe asked Hashem to open up the gates of prayer for him at any time. And Moshe's *tefillos* were indeed accepted, as Hashem said, "Climb up to the top of the mountain - *Rosh HaPisga*" (3:27). Moshe was asking, explains the *Ropshitzer*, that any type of *tefilla* that a Jew *davens*, at any time, should be included and incorporated into his own prayer. That is why the *pasuk* says "at that time" and does not specify when that time is. Moshe was saying that all future *tefillos* that will be said for all time to come will all be incorporated and included in this *tefilla* that he was *davening*.

Another explanation given by the *Ropshitzer* in *Zera Kodesh* is that Moshe davened and asked that *Klal Yisrael* should be able to *daven* properly whenever they wish, that even in *Golus* they should be able to *daven* properly.

That is why the *pasuk* says *bo'eis hahi* - "at that time". The *pasuk* does not specify a time because it refers to all times, that we should be able to *daven* to Hashem at

all times, even now in *Golus*, when we *daven* for the pain and anguish of the *Shechina*, so to speak.

Furthermore, the *Ropshitzer* cites the *pasuk* in *Tehillim*: 69:14 “And I, may my prayers be to You, Hashem, at an *eis rotzon* - an auspicious time”. The *Zera Kodesh* says that Moshe *davened* to Hashem asking further that whenever we *daven*, at any time, it should be an *eis rotzon*, a favorable and auspicious time to draw down Hashem’s will from the attributes of mercy, where Hashem said (*Shemos* 33:19) that He would favor whomever He found favorable, even if they are unworthy.

Another explanation that the *Ropshitzer* gives in *Zera Kodesh* is that a person must serve Hashem in all ways, even with the material world. Even through such physical acts as eating and drinking, a person should not think to fulfill his desires; rather, his intentions should be loftier: to eat in order to have strength to serve Hashem with Torah and *tefilla*. This is because when we use our mouths to vocalize our Torah study and *tefillos*, we release breath, called *hevel*.

The letters that spell *hevel* are *hei*, *lamed* and *bais*, alluding to *hei*, the five books of the *Chumash* and *lamed bais*, the first and last letters of the Torah (which begins with the *bais* of *Bereishis* and concludes with the *lamed* of *Yisrael* at the end of the last *pasuk* in *Devorim*). The letters of *hevel* also spell *lahav*, “flame” and *halev*, “the heart” because when we vocalize words of Torah and *tefilla*, the heat of our breath inflames us with excitement, which is generated from our hearts. This is why we eat - to have the strength to engage in Torah study and *tefilla*, and so we have demonstrated how to serve Hashem even through physical acts.

There are two limbs in the human body that correspond to these two types of divine service: the throat and the windpipe. The windpipe is used to express the heat of breath that forms the vocal sounds of our spiritual prayers and Torah study, whereas the throat is used to swallow food and drink to nourish the body physically.

Man must see to it that his actions by eating through the throat should serve the

windpipe, that he should eat to nourish and strengthen himself so as to be able to properly express *hevel* and *lahav* from *halev* through his windpipe in vocalizing the words of Torah and *tefilla*. This is the primary reason for Creation - to serve and praise Hashem.

This counterplay between throat and windpipe and their conflict occurred between Kayin and Hevel. Kayin represents the throat, since his actions were performed to fulfill his desires, which is why his offering was rejected. Hevel, on the other hand, represents the windpipe and the hevel that it expresses, because he offered the choicest and fattest of his flocks to Hashem. Even of what he ate was made an offering and given over to a higher purpose: to uplift the *hevel* of Torah and *tefilla*.

This is what the *Torah* is teaching us: the throat must serve the windpipe and give the windpipe strength. Kayin and Hevel's story is as an example for all future generations, teaching us that when Kayin murdered Hevel it was to satisfy his desires and fill his throat and stomach.

When Hashem asked (*Bereishis* 4:9), "Where is your brother Hevel?" He was asking, "Why are all your actions to fulfill desires? Where is your brother Hevel? Why are you not seeking to uplift your desires to express the *hevel* of Torah and *tefilla*?"

This is all hinted at in our *pasuk*: *Vo'es'chanan El Hashem*, whose initials are *vov*, *alef*, *yud* and spell *ayo* - "where?" *Bo'eis hahi leimor* - the initials are *bais*, *hei*, *lamed* and spell *hevel*, asking, "Where is Hevel? Where is the emphasis on serving Hashem with Torah and *tefilla*?" This is why Moshe, a *gilgul* of Hevel, was asking *Hashem* to let him see Eretz Yisrael. He knew that the sanctity of Eretz Yisrael had the power to rectify this error that had been promulgated by Kayin and Hevel.

Gedolim Be'misasm Yoser



**Yahrzeits for the 11th of Av ~ Begins Friday Night
(07-25-2026)**



Rav Elyakim Shlomo Shapira of Hordona

As a Rav and *posek* in several Lithuanian cities: Horodok, Ivnitz, Eyshishok (Eišiškes), Hordona (Grodno). Known as a child prodigy he was born in Lubcha (Belarus) 5586 to his father Chaim Shapira, who served as the Rav of Lubcha. He took over the position as assistant Rav in his father in law's life-time and later succeeded him. He later moved to Yerushalayim. He was laid to rest on Har HaZaisim near the Maharil Diskin.



Rav Hillel HaLevi of Paritsh - Reb Hillel Paritscher, Pelach Harimon (5624 / 1864 - 162nd Yahrzeit)

Rav Hillel was known as a *tzadik* and half a *rebbe*! Rav Hillel was born in Khmilnyk, Ukraine, and grew up in Chemtz (in the vicinity of Minsk). He was a talmid of the *Alter Rebbe*, Rav Shneur Zalman the founder of Chabad, through studying Tanya, and later a disciple of his son Rav DovBer the *Mittler* as well as his successor the *Tzemach Tzedek*. He served as the Rav of Paritch (Parwich), near Minsk, Russia, and Bobroisk, Belarus.



Rav Yitzchak Blazer - Rav Itzele Peterburger, Kochvei Or (5667 / 1907 - 119th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yitzchok Blazer was born in Shnipshok, near Vilna, on Rosh Chodesh Adar 5597/1837. His father was Rav Shlomo. At twenty-five, by order of Rav Yisrael, Rav Itzele, as he was fondly known, was appointed Rav of Petersburg, a position he held for sixteen years. He is called after that city. Subsequently, he returned to Kovno. In 5636/1876, Rav Yisrael Salanter had established a *kollel* there. The *kollel* was eventually named *Kollel Knesses Bais Yitzchok*, in memory of Rav Yitzchok Elchonon. The true glory of the *kollel* was realized under the leadership of Rav Yitzchok Blazer, whose rousing lectures were the *kollel's* life force. Rav Yitzchok was *niftar* on the eleventh of Av 5667/1907 at the age of seventy, and was buried on Har HaZeisim.



Rav Aharon Perlow - Stoliner-Warsaw Rebbe (5702 / 1942 - 84th Yahrzeit)

**Yahrzeits for the 12th of Av ~ Begins Saturday Night
(07-26-2026)**



Rav Aryeh Leib Katzenelenbogen - Av Beis Din of Brisk Lita (5597 / 1837 - 189th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yeshaya Weltfried of Kalish (5699 / 1939 - 87th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yeshaya was a son of Rav Avrohom Moshe of Rospsha, a descendant of Rav Yeshaya of Pshedborzh. Rav Yeshaya, carrying the illustrious name of his great-grandfather and emulating the holy ways of his forebears, was from his youth a *kodosh v'tohor* and a fervent *oved Hashem*. Eventually he moved to Kalisch, a less primitive city, where he was the first Chassidic Rebbe ever. The Rebbe was well-loved by his followers, stirring their souls and bringing them ever closer to Hashem with his moving *tefillos*. He was *niftar* about a month before the outbreak of World War II.



Rav Zevulun Aryeh Graz (5749 / 1989 - 37th Yahrzeit)

Rav Zevulun Aryeh Graz (1904-1989). Born in Ozband, Lithuania, to Rav Yosef Nesanael, a student of the Alter of Kelm and, for a while, the *menahel ruchani* of the *Telz yeshivah*. As a youngster, Rav Zevulun Aryeh studied for a while in Kelm, and then under Rav Eliyahu Lopian in Telz. In 1924, he joined a group of Telz students to Eretz Yisrael to study in the *Knesses Yisrael yeshivah in Chevron*, a branch of Slabodka. Rav Tzvi Yehuda Meltzer, the brother-in-law of Rav Aharon Kotler, was Rav of Pardess Channah at that time. Opening a branch of the *Kletzk yeshivah* in Pardess Channah, he invited Rav Zevulun Aryeh to deliver *shiurim* there. When Rav Tzvi Yehuda moved his yeshivah to Rechovot, he asked Rav Zevulun Aryeh to join him there, too.

**Yahrzeits for the 13th of Av ~ Begins Sunday Night
(07-27-2026)**



Rav Nosson Nota Shapiro - Megale Amukos (5393 / 1633 - 393rd Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Nosson-Nota Shapira [13 *Menachem-Av* 5393] was a noted rabbinical authority and kabbalist, who at a young age became the Chief Rabbi of Krakow in 1617. He was a main figure in the dissemination of the Kabbalah teachings of "the Holy Ari" of Safed throughout Poland. He is often referred to by the title of his most important book, the "*Megaleh Amukot*," an astonishing work containing 252 explanations of Moshe's prayer in the first verse of *parashas Va'es'chanan*.



Rav Mordechai Bennet - Har Hamor, Rav of Nikolsburg, Magen Avos (5584 / 1824 - 202nd Yahrzeit)

Rav Mordechai ben Rav Avrohom Banet (1753-1829) was chief Rav of Moravia born at Csurgó, a small village in the county of Stuhlweissenburg, Hungary. He was *niftar* in Carlsbad on 13 Av 5584 where he had gone for treatment. His body was buried temporarily at Lichtenstadt, near Carlsbad, but seven months later was permanently interred at Nikolsburg, in accordance with his will. His friend and colleague, the famed *Chasam Sofer*, had the highest esteem for him. The *Chasam Sofer* eulogized him and called him *Ben Yochid Le'Kudsho Berich Hu* (an only child to Hashem), meaning that no one was his equal.



Rav Yehuda Leib Peasch Primer of Lipsk (5625 / 1865 - 161st Yahrzeit)



Rav Sir Moses Montefiore of London (5645 / 1885 - 141st Yahrzeit)

Sir Moshe (Chaim) Montefiore (1784-1885). Born in Livorno, Italy, of Sephardic descent, he traced his lineage back to the exiles from the Spanish Expulsion. When he was still a young child his family resettled in England. In 1846, he was elevated to the rank of Baron. By the time he was 41 years old, Sir Moses, with his wife's encouragement, decided to retire from business affairs and devote the rest of his life, time and considerable resources to Jewish affairs. The welfare of the Jewish People became his sole business for the next 60 some years and his list of accomplishments is truly magnificent. The Montefiores died childless, but they left behind a legacy of *zedaka* and *chesed* that endures to this very day.



Rav Yehoshua Feinberg - Av Beis Din of Averitch, Zichron Yehoshua (5652 / 1892 - 134th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef Eliyohu Henkin - Menahel of Ezras Torah, Edut L'Yisroel, Perushei Ivra (5733 / 1973 - 53rd Yahrzeit)

Rav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin, a sixth-generation descendant of Rav Chaim Volozhiner (d. 1821) was born in 1881 in Klimavichy, Belarus, then in the Russian Empire. He studied at the Shtetl Yeshiva under Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer where he was ordained (*semichah*). He was also ordained by the Rav Yaakov Dovid Wilovsky, the Ridvaz, Rabbi Boruch Ber Leibowitz, and Rabbi Yechiel Michel Epstein, the *Aruch HaShulchan*.



Rav Yosef Greenwald - Rebbe of Pupa, Vayechi Yosef (5744 / 1984 - 42nd Yahrzeit)

**YAHREITS FOR THE 14TH OF AV ~ BEGINS MONDAY NIGHT
(07-28-2026)**



Rav Tzvi Hirsch Friedman of Liska - Ach Pri Tevuoh (5634 / 1874 - 152nd Yahrzeit)

Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Liska, Hungary (1798-1874). Rav Tzvi Hirsch spent several years at the court of the Yismach Moshe of Uhel, who spent a dominant role shaping his life. Rav Tzvi Hirsch authored *Ach Pri Tevua* and *Hayashar Vehatov*. His son and successor was Rav Chaim Friedlander of Liska.



Rav Pinchos Eliyohu Dembitzer - Rosh Beis Din of Krakow, Givat Pinchos (5680 / 1920 - 106th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef Naftali Stern - Rosh Yeshivas Pressburg in Yerushalayim (5731 / 1971 - 55th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yitzchok Friedman - Bohusher Rebbe (5752 / 1992 - 34th Yahrzeit)

Yahrzeits for the 15th of Av ~ Begins Tuesday Night (07-29-2026)



Nochum Ish Gamzu



Rav Shimon ben Lavie - Kesem Paz, Composer of 'Bar Yochai' (5348 / 1588 - 438th Yahrzeit)



Rav Amram ben Diwan (5542 / 1782 - 244th Yahrzeit)

(Some say the Yahrzeit is on the 9th of Av)

Rabbi Amram Ben Diwan It is always with a feeling of respect and awe that the Jews of Morocco evoke the holy name of Rabbi Amram Ben Diwan. Rabbi Amram Ben Diwan was born in Jerusalem, and later he settled in Hebron. In 5523 (1743), he was chosen by the Rabbis of Chevron as an emissary to Morocco with the mission of collecting money for the yeshivas of the Holy Land. He decided to settle in the Moroccan town of Wazan, and there he founded a Talmud-Torah and a yeshiva where numerous students came to quench their thirst for study by drinking from the source of his words. Rabbi Amram became attached to his students. His fatherly affection created a solid connection between him and his students. He provided for all their material needs, and spiritually directed them on the path that leads to the performance of G-d's will. By his rich and varied pursuits, he contributed to the elevation and dissemination of Torah in all the communities of Morocco. Rabbi Amram was also known for his miracles.



Meir Nossan Halberstam (5615 / 1855 - 171st Yahrzeit)



Rav Osher (the second) of Karlin (5633 / 1873 - 153rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yaakov Leiner of Izbitza - Bais Yaakov (5638 / 1878 - 148th Yahrzeit)



Rav Tzvi Hirsch Halberstam - Rav of Rudnik (5678 / 1918 - 108th Yahrzeit)

Rav Tzvi Hirsch Halberstam, born in 5606/1846, was the son of Rav Boruch of Gorlitz, son of Rav Chaim of Sanz, the *Divrei Chaim*. After learning under his grandfather in Sighet for a year, Rav Tzvi Hirsch received *semicha* from him and was appointed Rav of the Polish town of Niska, serving for ten years. After Rav Boruch of Gorlitz's *petira* on the first of *Adar* 5666/1906, Rav Tzvi Hirsch became *Rebbe* in his place. He was *niftar* on the fifteenth of *Av* 5678/1918 in Kleinvardein, and his aron was brought to Gorlitz, where he was buried next to his father, Rav Boruch. In 5647/1887, his father, Rav Boruch, moved to Gorlitz and handed over the Rabbonus of Rudnik to Rav Tzvi Hirsch.



Rav Bentzion Yadler - Maggid of Yerushalayim (5722 / 1962 - 64th Yahrzeit)

All the days of the life of the Tzaddik Rabbi Bentzion Yadler were devoted to Torah and the fear of Hashem. His voice was heard in the cities of Eretz Israel for 70 years without interruption, a voice that awakened hearts to repentance and good deeds. Like all children in Yerushalayim, the young Bentzion was educated in the famous Etz Chaim yeshiva, where he rose in the rungs of Torah and the fear of Hashem. At the age of 22, he received *semichah* from Rabbi Shmuel Salant's Beis Din.



Rav Yaakov Yehuda Hecht - 'J.J.' (5750 / 1990 - 36th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda ("J.J.") Hecht (15 Av 1990) was sometimes described as the Lubavitcher Rebbe's Foreign Minister. In 1945, he was appointed the official director of the National Committee for the Furtherance of Jewish Education (NCFJE). In 1953 he started one of the first camps for religious Jewish girls, Camp Emunah. In the 1970's he became the administrative head in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, of both Hadar HaTorah Yeshiva and Machon Chana Seminary. Rabbi Hecht also was the official translator of the Rebbe's talks to children and for the *farbrengens* on the radio.



Rav Chanoch Henich Dov Padwa - Rav of London, Cheishev Ha'efod (5760 / 2000 - 26th Yahrzeit)

**Yahrzeits for the 16th of Av ~ Begins Wednesday Night
(07-30-2026)**



Rav Yitzchok Meir Levine



Rav Menachem Mendel Lazar of Tarnow - Av Beis Din of Strizhov, Sova Semachos (5591 / 1831 - 195th Yahrzeit)

Rav Menachem Mendel was born in 5548/1788 in Tarnow. His father was Rav Moshe Avrohom Dovid. As a child he excelled in Torah, outshining the other children his age. Aside from his *ge'onus*, he served Hashem with a unique inner fire, and was a *mushlom* in Torah and *Avodas Hashem*. After serving as Rav in Strizov he returned to Tarnow, the city of his birth, where he led an elite group of Chassidim to higher aspirations in *Avodas Hashem*. Unfortunately, he was *niftar* at the young age of forty-three.

Yahrzeits for the 17th of Av ~ Begins Thursday Night (07-31-2026)



Rav Shimshon Wertheimer (5484 / 1724 - 302nd Yahrzeit)

Rav Shimshon Wertheimer (1658-1724). Born in Worms, Germany, he learned in the Yeshivos of Worms and Frankfurt. After marrying the daughter of the Rav of Mannheim in 1684, he moved to Vienna. Within a few years, he became the wealthiest Jew of his day. He served as finance minister for Austrian emperors Leopold I, Josef I and Karl IV. In exchange for his services, Rav Shimshon requested better treatment for his fellow Jews throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire.



Rav Asher - Mayim Adirim (5564 / 1804 - 222nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Avrohom Mordechai Horowitz of Pintchov (5584 / 1824 - 202nd Yahrzeit)

Son of Rav Binyamin Zev Yaakov of Zhmigrod. A disciple in Chassidus of Rav Yechiel Michel the Maggid of Zlatshuv, Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev, Rav Elimelech of Lizensk and after their passing of the *Chozeh of Lublin*. He passed away on 17 Av תקפ"ד.



Rav Shmuel Eibschutz of Apta (5600 / 1840 - 186th Yahrzeit)

Born in 5514/1756, Rav Shmuel Eibschutz was the son of Rav Naftali Hertz, related to Rav Yonoson Eibschutz, and a descendant of the *Megaleh Amukos*. Rav Shmuel learned under Rav Akiva Eiger for a number of years. Rav Shmuel also went to the court of the *Chozeh*. He was appointed Rav in Vorka, where he served for thirty-eight years. Later, in 5595/1835, he became Rav in Apta, a post he held until his *petira*. Rav Shmuel was *niftar* on the seventeenth of *Menachem Av* 5600/1840, at the age of eighty-six. He was buried in Apta.



Rav Shlomo Chaim Perlov of Koidanov (5622 / 1862 - 164th Yahrzeit)

Rav Shlomo Chaim Perlow of Koidenov, the son of Rav Aharon, the son of Rav Mordechai Yaffe of Lechovitch. They were direct (*ben acher ben*) descendants of the Levush. He was raised by his maternal grandfather, Rav Osher Perlow of Karlin, after his father was *niftar*, and therefore he is also known by the last name of Perlow. After his uncle, Rav Noach of Lechovitch, was *niftar*, all the Chassidim flocked to Rav Shlomo. He had several sons who became great Rebbes in their own rights, (5622/1862).



Rav Yehuda HaLevi Levi - Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem (5639 / 1879 - 147th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yehuda Levi (1783-1879). Born in Sarajevo to Rav Menachem Levi, he immigrated to Eretz Yisrael, and became Chief Rav of Yerushalayim in 1845. He was *niftar* in Yaffo, (5639/1879).



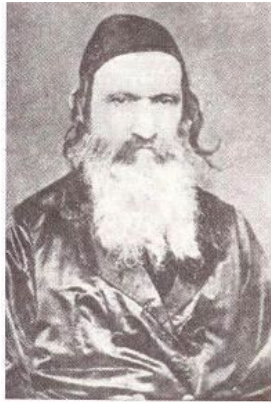
Rav Avrohom Korkidi - Vayikach Avrohom (5645 / 1885 - 141st Yahrzeit)

Biographies of the Tzaddikim

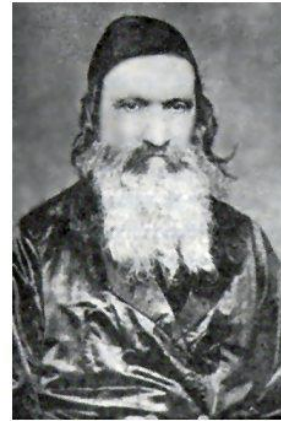




Rav Elyakim Shlomo Shapira (Av 11,)



הרב ר' אליקים שלמה שפירא
Rabbi Eliakim-Shlomo Shapira



As a Rav and *posek* in several Lithuanian cities: Horodok, Ivnitz, Eyshishok (Eišiškes), Hordona (Grodno). Known as a child prodigy he was born in Lubcha (Belarus) 5586 to his father Chaim Shapira, who served as the Rav of Lubcha. He studied under his relative Rav Aryeh Leib Shapira of Kovno and under Rav Reuven HaLevi under who he earned *semichah*. He married the daughter of Rav Leib Zalmans of Grodno (Hordona). When the heads of the kehillah saw that their beloved Rav had grown too old to serve as Rav alone, the *Rosh kehillah* approached him, asking who to appoint as assistant Rav? Rav Leib Zalmans asked them to appoint his young and relatively unknown son in law, who was then serving as Rav in Eyshishok. Trusting his judgment they agreed. And so it was that he took over the position as assistant Rav in his father in law's life-time and later succeeded him.

He was known as worldly and highly respected, for example he knew the local language and was involved in world and communal affairs.

He later moved to Yerushalayim. He was laid to rest on Har HaZaisim near the Maharil Diskin.

He was a staunch anti-zionist who opposed a secular state: How can I bear that something be called 'the State of Israel' without the Torah and the commandments (heaven forbid)?" "Let him be abstinent in the land and beware of any transgression, for if he sins there, he

will be punished most severely. For Hashem watches over the land and supervises its inhabitants [see *Devarim*. 11:12]. He who rebels against the kingdom from within the king's palace is not the same as he who rebels outside it. This is the meaning of 'a land that consumes its inhabitants' [*Bamidbar* 13:32]. As for those who go there and think they can get away with levity and reckless behavior, I would invoke the verses, 'But you came and defiled My land' [*Yermiah*. 2:7] and 'Who asked of you to trample My courts?' [*Yishayah* 1:12]."



Rav Hillel Reb Hillel Paritsher, Pelach Harimon (Av 11, 5624 / 1864 - 162nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Hillel was known as a *tzadik* and half a *rebbe*! Rav Hillel was born in Khmilnyk, Ukraine, and grew up in Chemtz (in the vicinity of Minsk). He was a *talmid* of the *Alter Rebbe*, Rav Shneur Zalman the founder of Chabad, through studying Tanya, and later a disciple of his son Rav DovBer the *Mittler* as well as his successor the *Tzemach Tzedek*. He served as the *Rav* of Paritch (Parwich), near Minsk, Russia, and Bobroisk, Belarus. He authored Chassidic teachings on *Chumash* printed and published as *Pelech HaRimon*. See Bereishis here <https://www.hebrewbooks.org/21290>, VaYikra here <https://www.hebrewbooks.org/16006> and Shir haShirim here <https://www.hebrewbooks.org/15637>.

And a collection of his teachings was published as *Imrei Noam* <https://www.hebrewbooks.org/21952>

He also authored two perushim on Rav Dovber, the *Mittler's seforim*, a commentary on *Sha'ar HaYichud* and a commentary on *Kuntres HaHispa'alus* <https://www.hebrewbooks.org/43257>.

You can listen to two Niggunim - Hasidic melodies composed by Rav Hillel Paritsher here https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/music_cdo/aid/4771664/jewish/Nigun-Reb-Hillel-Parit



**Rav Yitzchak Blazer Rav Itzele Peterburger, Kochvei Or (Av 11, 5667 / 1907 - 119th
Yahrzeit)**



Rav Yitzchok Blazer was born in Shnipshok, near Vilna, on Rosh Chodesh Adar 5597/1837. His father was Rav Shlomo. Rav Yitzchok was a child prodigy, and when he was just fourteen, his father published a *kuntres* of his *chiddushim*.

After his marriage at the age of fifteen, Rav Yitzchok moved to Kovno. He learned in the *Bais Medrash* of Rav Yisrael Salanter.

At twenty-five, by order of Rav Yisrael, Rav Itzele, as he was fondly known, was appointed Rav of Petersburg, a position he held for sixteen years. He is called after that city.

Subsequently, he returned to Kovno. In 5636/1876, Rav Yisrael Salanter had established a *kollel* there; its purpose was to produce Rabbonim and Dayonim by supporting and guiding exceptional *Talmidei Chachomim*. The project received the blessing and support of Rav Yitzchok Elchonon Spector, Rav of Kovno. It was joined by such luminaries as Rav Naftoli Hertz (later Chief Rav of Yaffo), Rav Naftoli Amsterdam, Rav Chaim (Telzer) Rabinowitz, and Rav Yosef Yoizel Horwitz, the "Alter of Novardok", among others.

The kollel was eventually named *Kollel Knesses Bais Yitzchok*, in memory of Rav Yitzchok Elchonon. The true glory of the *kollel* was realized under the leadership of Rav Yitzchok Blazer, whose rousing lectures were the *kollel's* life force.

As one of the leading and most famous *talmidim* of Rav Yisrael Salanter, founder of the *Mussar* movement, it was to be expected that after Rav Yisrael's *petira*, Rav Yitzchok would become his successor.

Rav Yitzchok spent the last few years of his life in Yerushalayim, where Rav Shmuel Salant requested his help with community affairs.

Rav Yitzchok was *niftar* on the eleventh of Av 5667/1907 at the age of seventy, and was buried on Har HaZeisim.

Rav Chaim Berlin related that Rav Yitzchok left a request that no *hespeidim* be delivered for him. Rav Chaim Berlin asked Rav Shmuel Salant if they were required to abide by the humble last wishes of Rav Yitzchok Blazer, since it would be meritorious to be *maspid* a person of his stature. Rav Shmuel Salant ruled that indeed they were obligated to heed his final wishes. A few days after his *petira*, Rav Chaim Berlin related that Rav Itzele came to him in a dream and thanked him for honoring his request.

Rav Chaim then asked Rav Itzele what issues of *halocha* the *Bais Din Shel Ma'ala* is stringent about. Rav Itzele told him that a human being cannot fathom the depth and detail of the Heavenly judgment. They were particularly exacting on the purity of a person's speech. This, coming from a person who had mastered the art of silence!

Rav Yitzchok wrote *Pri Yitzchok* on *Shas* and also brought to print *Ohr Yisrael*, the *derashos* in *mussar* of Rav Yisrael Salanter.

Zecher Tzaddik livrachah.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-11-avaugust-7/



Rav Yeshaya Weltfried (Av 12, 5699 / 1939 - 87th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yeshaya was a son of Rav Avrohom Moshe of Rospsha, a descendant of Rav Yeshaya of Pshedborzh. On his mother's side, he was a descendant of Rav Yaakov Yitzchok, the *Chozeh* of Lublin.

Their forebear, Rav Yeshaya of Pshedborzh became a *Chassid* under the influence of Rav Dovid of Lelov, who traveled with him to the *Chozeh*. The *Chozeh* would refer to Rav Yeshaya as "my *seforim shrank*", and *Rebbe* and *talmid* maintained a strong bond. Rav Yeshaya became Rav in Pshedborzh, one of the ancient *kehillos* in Poland. After the *petira* of the *Chozeh*, Rav Yeshaya became a *Rebbe*, as well, as *Chassidim* began flocking to him.

He was succeeded by his son, Rav Emanuel, who, in turn, was succeeded by Rav Avrohom Moshe of Rospsha, the father of Rav Yeshaya of Kalisch.

Rav Yeshaya, carrying the illustrious name of his great-grandfather and emulating the holy ways of his forebears, was from his youth a *kodosh v'tohor* and a fervent *oved Hashem*.

He married the daughter of Rav Yechiel Danziger, the first Alexander *Rebbe*, and resided in Dzunsk-Walya, where he was commonly referred to as Rav Yeshaya of Walya.

Eventually he moved to Kalisch, a less primitive city, where he was the first *Chassidic Rebbe* ever. The *Rebbe* was well-loved by his followers, stirring their souls and bringing them ever closer to Hashem with his moving *tefillos*. In addition to his own *Chassidim*, he was revered as well by many Alexander *Chassidim*, since he was the son-in-law of Rav Yechiel of Alexander.

The *Rebbe* would say that when a *Yid* came to his court thinking that he could be helped by the *Rebbe*, and even spent money for that purpose, then the *Rebbe* had to do all in his power to help him.

He was *niftar* about a month before the outbreak of World War II. A large number of his

descendants were murdered *al kiddush Hashem*, although one son, Rav Yechiel, had moved to *Eretz Yisrael* before the war, while another, Rav Chaim, survived the Holocaust, and was *niftar* in 5757/1997 in *Eretz Yisrael*.

Zechuso yagen aleinu.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-12-avaugust-8/



Rav Zevulun Aryeh Graz (Av 12, 5749 / 1989 - 37th Yahrzeit)

Rav Zevulun Aryeh Graz (1904-1989). Born in Ozband, Lithuania, to Rav Yosef Nesanael, a student of the *Alter of Kelm* and, for a while, the *menahel ruchani* of the *Telz yeshivah*. As a youngster, Rav Zevulun Aryeh studied for a while in Kelm, and then under Rav Eliyahu Lopian in Telz. In 1924, he joined a group of Telz students to Eretz Yisrael to study in the *Knesses Yisrael yeshivah* in Chevron, a branch of Slabodka. After the massacre of 1929, the survivors left Chevron and settled in Yerushalayim. Rav Zevulun Aryeh moved back to Lithuania in 1931, married, and delivered *shiur* at *Yeshivah Ohel Moshe*. Later, Rav Zevulun Aryeh studied in the *Kovna kollel* of Rav Avraham Kahana-Shapiro, the *Dvar Avraham*. In 1939, when the Nazis overran Lithuania, Rav Zevulun Aryeh, who already possessed Palestinian citizenship, headed back for Eretz Yisrael. Upon arriving, he moved to Chadera, where he stayed for 10 years. Rav Tzvi Yehuda Meltzer, the brother-in-law of Rav Aharon Kotler, was Rav of Pardess Channah at that time. Opening a branch of the *Kletzk yeshivah* in Pardess Channah, he invited Rav Zevulun Aryeh to deliver *shiurim* there. When Rav Tzvi Yehuda moved his yeshivah to Rechovot, he asked Rav Zevulun Aryeh to join him there, too. Every *Erev Shabbos*, Rav Zevulun Aryeh would return from Rechovot to his home in Chadera for Shabbos, in an armored vehicle that protected him from Arab snipers.

matzav.com



Rav Nosson Nota Shapiro Megale Amukos (Av 13, 5393 / 1633 - 393rd Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Nosson-Nota Shapira [13 *Menachem-Av* 5393] was a noted rabbinical authority and kabbalist, who at a young age became the Chief Rabbi of Krakow in 1617. He was a main figure in the dissemination of the Kabbalah teachings of "the Holy Ari" of Safed throughout Poland. He is often referred to by the title of his most important book, the "*Megaleh Amukot*," an astonishing work containing 252 explanations of Moshe's prayer in the first verse of *parashas Va'es'chanan*.

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



Rav Mordechai Bennet Har Hamor, Rav of Nikolsburg, Magen Avos (Av 13, 5584 / 1824 - 202nd Yahrzeit)



Author of *Parshas Mordechai* and *Techeiles Mordechai*.

Rav Mordechai *ben* Rav Avrohom Banet (1753-1829) was chief Rav of Moravia born at Csurgó, a small village in the county of Stuhlweissenburg, Hungary.

A gifted child

As Rav Banet's parents were very poor and consequently unable to engage a teacher, they sent their son when only five years old to his grandmother at Nikolsburg. There Rav Gavriel Markbreiter provided for the tuition of the gifted child for a period of six years, and then sent him to Ettingen, Alsace, the Rav of which place was Rav Markbreiter's brother-in-law. The latter became Rav Banet's teacher, and took great delight in his

talmid's wonderful development. At Rav Banet's *bar mitzva* celebration his teacher showed the guests, to their great astonishment, three of the boy's manuscripts: a commentary on the *Chumash*, a commentary on the *Pesach Haggoda*, and novellae on the *Talmud*.

From his thirteenth to his fifteenth year, Rav Banet devoted himself exclusively to the study of the *Tenach*, with the aid of the *Meforshim* (Jewish commentaries) and of the *Haggoda* in *Talmud* and *Medrash*; his strictly *halachic* studies he completed later in the Yeshiva of Rav Yosef Steinhardt at Fürth, where he remained three years. He then went as a *chover* to Prague, where Rav Meïr Karpeles started a private "*klaus*" for him; though Rav Yechezkel Landau (the *Noda B'Yehuda*) conducted a large Yeshiva in the same city, a number of able Talmudists came daily to hear Rav Banet's discourses. After staying in Prague for two years, he married Rebbetzin Sora Finkel (*niftar* 1828), the daughter of a prominent well-to-do citizen of Nikolsburg. Here he settled in 1773, and within a year was made *Av Bais Din*.

Thirteen years later, he accepted the rabbinate at Lundenburg in Moravia, which he held for six months, when he resigned to become Rav at Schossberg, Hungary. His stay in his native country was short, and in 1789 he was appointed Rav of Nikolsburg and chief Rav of Moravia. Later on, he also received offers from Pressburg and Cracow, but yielding to the solicitations of his congregation, he remained at Nikolsburg. He was *niftar* in Carlsbad on August 12, 1829, where he had gone for treatment. His body was buried temporarily at Lichtenstadt, near Carlsbad, but seven months later was permanently interred at Nikolsburg, in accordance with his will.

His friend and colleague, the famed *Chasam Sofer*, had the highest esteem for him. The *Chasam Sofer* eulogized him and called him *Ben Yochid Le'Kudsho Berich Hu* (an only child to Hashem), meaning that no one was his equal.

His Works

Although Rav Banet's works are neither numerous nor exhaustive, they are among the classic products of *Talmudic* literature in the eighteenth century. They are:

- *Biur Mordechai*, Vienna, 1813, a commentary on Mordecai ben Hillel's compendium;

- *Mogen Avos*, Zolkiev, 1835, a treatise on the thirty-nine acts prohibited on *Shabbos*;
- *Har haMor*, responsa, with allusion to the rabbinical explanation of the name Mordechai as *mora dakya* ("pure myrrh");
- *Parshas Mordechai*, Szigeth, 1889, responsa;
- *Techeiles Mordechai*, Lemberg, 1892, *halachic* and *haggadic* discourses.

All these works clearly show Rav Banet's keenness, wide knowledge of rabbinical literature, and, what is more important, his logical and strictly scientific method. In contrast to his friends, Rav Moshe Sofer and Rav Akiva Eiger, who were casuists, Rav Banet avoided casuistry in discussing involved *halachic* questions, gaining his ends by means of a purely critical explanation and a systematic arrangement of the matter. An excellent example of Rav Banet's criticism is his letter to the chief Rav of Berlin, Rav Tzvi Hirsch Levin, whom he tries to convince of the spuriousness of the collection of responsa *Besomim Rosh*. This collection was published by Rav Shaul Berlin, Rav Levin's son, as the work of Rav Osher ben Yechiel (*Parshas Mordechai*, No. 5; *Literaturblatt des Orients*, v. 53, 55, 140). A comparison of Rav Banet's criticism on the work with Zunz's remarks on it (*Ritus*, pages 226-228) cannot fail to excite admiration of Rav Banet's method.

Superiority of his Style

Rav Banet's works differ in other respects from those of his contemporaries. His style is clear and elegant, and his language is a pure Hebrew. Moreover, Rav Banet's attitude toward the strict Orthodoxy of his friends and colleagues was exceptional, and may be attributed to his knowledge of modern thought (compare his letter to Rav Tzvi Hirsch Levin in *Literaturblatt des Orients*, v. 54). These characteristics gave him an independent position in the struggle between Orthodoxy and the so-called "spirit of enlightenment".

Views on Education

Frequently Rav Banet showed an insight lacking in his opponents. In his memorial to the

government on the education of *Rabbonim* (printed in *Toldos Mordechai*, pages 35–37), he remarked that if the course of studies which the gymnasium demanded of candidates for all other professions were required of a rabbinical candidate, the latter would be fit for anything except the rabbinate. Still, far from objecting to a secular education for *Rabbonim*, as he was understood to do (see Löw, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ii. 190 et seq.), he favored it; but he thought that a *Rav* should first of all possess sufficient knowledge of rabbinical matters; and he proposed that a rabbinical candidate should devote his time chiefly to Jewish subjects until his eighteenth year. His opinions concerning the duties of a *Rav*, especially with regard to the instruction of children, show the strong influence that modern views had upon him. He wrote a catechism for religious instruction and submitted it in manuscript to the government. To judge from the letter accompanying it, *Rav Banet's* views on the education of the young were sensible and in accordance with the spirit of the time.

Opposes Religious Reform

Nevertheless, *Rav Banet*, conscientiously opposing the new tendency, declared every reform in religious observance to be wrong and harmful. Thus, in a letter to the government concerning the introduction of German into divine service (ib. pages 38–42), he wrote in favor of the preservation of Hebrew. His attitude is significant in view of the fact that, many years later, *Rav Zacharias Frankel* used the same arguments in the convention of *Rabbonim* at Frankfurt-on-the-Main, 1845; and events have proven the truth of the prophecy made by *Rav Banet*: that if the *tefillos* are said in another language, few Jews will care to study Hebrew, and familiarity with the Hebrew Scripture will gradually cease.

Although *Rav Banet* was independent in his attitude, his learning and high character gained for him many faithful friends among young and old. Even the *Chassidim* respected him, and *Rav Dov Ber*, the “middle *Rav*” of *Chabad*, speaks highly of him in a letter (as of 1906) in the possession of J. L. Sossnitz of New York. Compare also Weiss, *Zikronotai*, pages 77–81.

The communities of Lichtenstadt and Nikolsburg contended for the honor of interring his mortal remains, and the dispute which later arose over the exhumation of the body was fought with the weapons of learning, and figures in the responsa literature of the time.

Rav Mordechai Banet was a *talmid* of the famed Rav Yechezkel Landau (*Noda B'Yehuda*) and was considered the *Godol HaDor* of his time. He was the one who gave the *Chasam Sofer semicha*.

Rav Mordechai was the Rav in Nikolsburg but in the last years of his life, he fell sick and moved to Lichtenstadt (near Carlsbad) for treatments.

When he was *niftar* on 13 Menachem Av, the people in Lichtenstadt buried him there quickly because they wanted his merit to stay and protect their town. When the people in Nikolsburg found out what had happened, they raised an uproar - and the question of should they reinter him came before the *Chasam Sofer*. In his *teshuva* (responsa), he ultimately gives three reasons why it was *mutar* to reinter him in Nikolsburg. And so it was: after six months on *Zayin Adar* his body was removed and brought forth and then on Sunday 12 *Adar* his holy body was re-interred in Nikolsburg.

Following is the text of his *matzeiva* - denoting part of this story:

נוסח מצבתו:

מה רב טוב הצפון פה באדמה קבורה

ראש שבטי ישורון אבן פנה יקרה

דמע עיני כל תירדנה על שבר בת עמו

כי לוקח תפארת עוזמו מעל ראשימו

יפעת אורימו חשכה בעלות הכורת עלימו

בשוב נפשו עדינה טהורה אל מקורה

היה בן שבעים וחמש שנים לגבורה

לא נס ליחא ולא כהתה עינו מאורה

העמיד תלמידים הרבה והרביץ תורה
ובאחריתו היתה מאת ה' נסבה בגבורה
כי יסע לעיר קרלסבאד לשתות מי בארה
ושמה בקשו העליונים נפשו הטהורה
ביום ד' י"ג אב עזב אותנו לאנחה וצרה
לפרט עיני עיני ירדה מים ונפשנו מרה
ולמחרתו נקבר ע"מ לפנות בל"ש העירה
ואחריו בז' אדר בהסכמת שרי התורה
העלוהו בניו מקברו והובל פה העירה
והושם בין קברות משפחתו היקרה
בכבוד גדול בבכי והספד מרה
ביום א' י"ב בחדש אדר התק"ץ ליצירה
ה"ה אדוננו גאון הגאונים רשכבה"ג יקר בדורו
ויחיד בעמו כק"ש מו"ה מרדכי בנעט זצ"ל ע"ה
ארבעים שנה היה רועה נאמן
אב"ד ור"מ פה קהלתנו והמדינה

[Editor's note: Several years ago, I made the trip to Nikolsburg to daven at his *kever*. We arrived very late at night in the bitter cold and wandered the cemetery aimlessly searching for his *kever* in the near-pitch darkness. We were almost at the point of leaving,

when we quickly davened to be *zoche* to say a few chapters of *Tehillim* at his *kever*. Within seconds, we turned to the next row, and there, right in front of us, was his *kever*. I can attest that there is a palpable spiritual high at his *kever*].

Rav Mordechai once went away on summer “break” with his good friend, the *Chasam Sofer*, for a mere few weeks. When they returned, Rav Mordechai related to his son that the pair covered the complete *Talmud Bavli*, *Talmud Yerushalmi*, *Shulchon Aruch*, *Rambam*, *Ramban* and *Kisvei HaAri HaKodosh* - then stopped himself and said to his son that he had “spoken and revealed too much already”.

We would like to convey our special thanks to Rav Mayer Reichberg (*ah brider*) and the elusive Rav D. (who refuses to be named publicly) for their tremendous help with Rav Banet’s biography. May Hashem bless them in the *zechus* of these holy *Tzaddikim* to receive a profusion of *shefa*, *brocha v’hatzlocha*.



Rav Sir Moses Montefiore (Av 13, 5645 / 1885 - 141st Yahrzeit)

Sir Moshe (Chaim) Montefiore (1784-1885). Born in Livorno, Italy, of Sephardic descent, he traced his lineage back to the exiles from the Spanish Expulsion. When he was still a young child his family resettled in England. Young Moses became a member of the London Stock Exchange at a time when there were only 12 licensed Jewish brokers in all of England. In a matter of a few years he had amassed great wealth and had become a member of the London Aristocracy. In 1812, he married his wife Judith, whose sister was the wife of Reb Nathan Meyer Rothschild, one of the wealthiest Jews in Europe at the time. Sir Moses eventually became the stockbroker for his brother-in-law and as a result of their partnership they amassed a tremendous fortune. In addition, he was a partner in a large insurance company as well as a gas company that introduced gas lighting to many of the major cities of Europe. Sir Moses also had a hand in building railroads and many other industrial and financial enterprises. As the years passed, Moses and Judith grew together in their Yiddishkeit. In 1837, Montefiore was appointed Sheriff of London. In the same year, Queen Victoria, who had recently ascended the British Throne, awarded him the honorary title of Knighthood, bestowing upon him the title “Sir” Moses. In 1846, he was elevated to the rank of Baron. By the time he was 41 years old, Sir Moses, with his wife’s encouragement, decided to retire from business affairs and devote the rest of his life, time

and considerable resources to Jewish affairs. The welfare of the Jewish People became his sole business for the next 60 some years and his list of accomplishments is truly magnificent. When he was appointed as Sheriff of London, he specifically wrote in his contract that he would be absolved from working on *Shabbos* and *yom tov*. He also specified that he was to be absolved from entering a Church on non-Jewish holidays. Even when he was traveling, he almost always made sure to travel with an entourage of at least 10 Jews to ensure that he would have a *minyan*. He also took one of the many *sifrei Torah* that he owned along with him. In 1840, a monk named Thomas disappeared from his home several weeks before *Pesach*. The French Counsel in Damascus blamed the Jews for his disappearance and claimed that they killed the monk to use his blood for *matzos*. Prominent Damascus Jews were imprisoned and tortured. Many died and some, who could not withstand the torture, “confessed” under duress to the crime. Upon learning of it, Sir Moses traveled to Damascus to save the country and the honor of the Jewish people. In 1846, Sir Moses was invited by the Russian government to visit Russia in connection with its Jewish situation. Upon returning to London, he demanded equal rights for the Jews and stressed that it would also be an economic blessing for the country. Montefiore’s 100th birthday was celebrated as an official holiday in London and he was accorded great honor by both Jew and non-Jew alike. The Montefiores died childless, but they left behind a legacy of *tzedaka* and *chesed* that endures to this very day.



Rav Yosef Eliyohu Henkin Menahel of Ezras Torah, Edut L'Yisroel, Perushei Ivra (Av 13, 5733 / 1973 - 53rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin, a sixth-generation descendant of Rav Chaim Volozhiner (d. 1821) was born in 1881 in Klimavichy, Belarus, then in the Russian Empire. He studied at the Slutzker Yeshiva under Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer where he was ordained (*semichah*). He was also ordained by the Rav Yaakov Dovid Wilovsky, the *Ridvaz*, Rabbi Boruch Ber Leibowitz, and Rabbi Yechiel Michel Epstein, the *Aruch HaShulchan*. After serving as a rabbi in a number of Russian towns, he emigrated to America in 1922. In 1925 he became the director of Ezras Torah, which provided assistance to scholars both here and in the land of Israel. He served in that capacity until his passing in 1973.

<https://kevarim.com/rav-yosef-eliyahu-henkin/>



Rav Tzvi Hirsch Friedman Ach Pri Tevuoh (Av 14, 5634 / 1874 - 152nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Liska, Hungary (1798-1874). Rav Tzvi Hirsch spent several years at the court of the Yismach Moshe of Uhel, who spent a dominant role shaping his life. Rav Tzvi Hirsch authored *Ach Pri Tevua* and *Hayashar Vehatov*. His son and successor was Rav Chaim Friedlander of Liska.

<https://matzav.com/todays-yahrtzeits-and-history-14-av-3/>



Nochum Ish Gamzu (Av 15,)



Nachum Ish Gamzu was a Tanna who lived during the second century. He was the teacher of Rebbe Akiva.

It is related that in later years Nahum's hands and feet became paralyzed, and he was afflicted with other bodily ailments. He bore his troubles patiently, however, and even rejoiced over them. In answer to a question of his pupils as to why, since he was such a perfectly just man, he had to endure so many ills, he declared that he had brought them on himself because once when he was on the way to his father-in-law's and was carrying many things to eat and drink, he met a poor man who asked him for food. As he was about to open the bundle the man died before his eyes. In deepest grief, and reproaching himself with having perhaps caused by his delay the man's death, he cursed himself and wished himself all the troubles to which his pupils referred. Various other stories are told of miracles that happened to him.

One tradition places the burial site of Rabbi Nachum Ish Gamzu in Safed, Israel, and his tomb may be found in Gamzu Street, named for him, inside a modern protective structure. Another tradition places his burial site on the main road as one approaches Farradiyya (Parod).

Nachum gained his name because of his use of this phrase as his response to anything that happened to him.

The Gemara (Tractate Taanit 21a) tells us a classic story of simple emuna, personified by the holy sage Nachum Ish Gamzu, whose name means "Nachum, the man who says 'this too [is for the best].'" Nachum's simple emuna invoked miracles; as a result, the leaders of ancient Israel sent him to Rome to try and appease the very irate Caesar.

Nachum was sent with a chest full of rare gemstones as a gift for Caesar, purchased with the last coins of a downtrodden and vanquished population, so that Caesar would refrain from issuing further harsh decrees against the Jews.

Nachum slept overnight in an inn on the way to Rome. While he slept, thieves emptied out the priceless contents of the chest and filled it full of soil.

In the morning, Nachum noticed that the chest seemed somewhat awry. He opened it and

found that the rare gems were all missing. Instead, there was nothing but clods of earth.

Imagine being in Nachum's place: you've been entrusted with the very last resources of your beleaguered brothers and countrymen whom the Romans are throwing to the lions. You're the last chance to appease Caesar. Now, the jewels have been stolen. What do you do? Was it your carelessness in picking such an inn or failing to guard the jewels properly? Do you persecute yourself? Do you run away to India or contemplate suicide, Heaven forbid? Are you numbed with depression and incapacitated?

Not Nachum Ish Gamzu; he conducted himself with perfect emuna, believing that this too was for the very best. This was exactly what Hashem wanted. He took the chest full of soil and continued on his way to Rome.

Arriving at the royal palace, Nachum Ish Gamzu told the guards that he, the emissary of the Israelites, had brought a treasure chest for Caesar. He was ushered directly inside.

With Caesar overlooking, the royal attendants opened the chest. Seeing that it contained nothing but dirt, Caesar's eyes opened wide in fury and his jaw trembled in anger. Utterly insulted, he raged, "Those insolent Jews! I shall kill them all!"

Nachum neither flinched nor budged. This too was definitely for the best, whether or not he understood how...

Suddenly, Elijah the Prophet appeared, masquerading as a Roman minister. "Your excellency, maybe this soil is the magic soil that was used by their ancestor Abraham in subduing his enemies. Perhaps we ought to try it out on our hostile border to the north. This soil, when thrown in the direction of the enemy, is known to become a rain of lethal arrows in their midst." Caesar nodded and agreed to try the "magic soil" against the difficult and stubborn enemy that Rome hadn't been able to subdue.

Sure enough, to Caesar's delight, the "magic soil" quickly overcame the enemy. Caesar filled Nachum's empty treasure chest with pearls and rare gems, and sent him amicably home.

On the way back to the port, Nachum frequented the same inn. The surprised thieves,

amazed the he returned not only alive but with great honor, asked: "How did Caesar react when you gave him the treasure chest? Didn't he see what was in it?"

"Oh yes," answered Nachum, "he loved the dirt..."

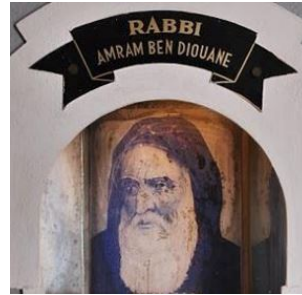
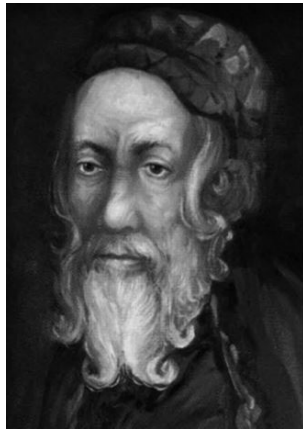
The thieves prepared an entire shipment of soil and carried it to Rome. They told Caesar, "The dirt that the Jew brought really came from us." Caesar threw a clod skyward, but it didn't become a dozen lethal arrows like Nachum's did. On the spot, he ordered that the thieves be executed. A thief's end is always with a noose around his neck...

The story of Nachum Ish Gamzu - one of many such stories - testifies just how simple emuna is so beneficial. Caesar certainly had all the rare gemstones he desired; a few more wouldn't have had much influence on him. Hashem, in His compassion for his oppressed people of Israel, engineered a much greater salvation than even they had hoped for. But, this salvation was contingent on Nachum Ish Gamzu's passing a most difficult test of emuna, which he did.

If one delves into the Arizal's writings, as well as Rebbe Nachman's, he will find that simple emuna is not simple at all. The sophisticates with all their ideologies have nothing to fall back on in times of stress. Since simple emuna is malchut - monarchy, the light of the Divine Presence - it surpasses human intelligence. In fact, the epitome of knowledge is that we know nothing. We do know that everything Hashem does is for the very best - we learn that from Nachum Ish Gamzu.



Rav Amram ben Diwan (Av 15, 5542 / 1782 - 244th Yahrzeit)
(Some say the Yahrzeit is on the 9th of Av)



Rabbi Amram Ben Diwan It is always with a feeling of respect and awe that the Jews of Morocco evoke the holy name of Rabbi Amram Ben Diwan. Rabbi Amram Ben Diwan was born in Jerusalem, and later he settled in Chevron. In 5523 (1743), he was chosen by the Rabbis of Hebron as an emissary to Morocco with the mission of collecting money for the yeshivas of the Holy Land. He decided to settle in the Moroccan town of Wazan, and there he founded a Talmud-Torah and a yeshiva where numerous students came to quench their thirst for study by drinking from the source of his words. Rabbi Amram became attached to his students. His fatherly affection created a solid connection between him and his students. He provided for all their material needs, and spiritually directed them on the path that leads to the performance of G-d's will. By his rich and varied pursuits, he contributed to the elevation and dissemination of Torah in all the communities of Morocco. Rabbi Amram was also known for his miracles. His blessings always came to pass, and Jews would travel from all the towns of Morocco to urgently seek him in order to be delivered, through his merit, from their troubles. He occupied himself with the well-being of everyone in particular, and the well-being of the community in general. His home was always open to all the afflicted who came knocking at his door, hoping that the Tzaddik would be their staunchest defender before our Father, the Holy One, blessed be He. After a long stay in Morocco, Rabbi Amram felt a great longing for Eretz Yisrael. He therefore interrupted his holy work. His students, to whom he had taught Torah, had themselves become great scholars over the course of the years. Thus he decided to return to the Holy Land. When he arrived in Chevron, he became friends with Rabbi Chaim Bagoyo and Rabbi Avraham Gedalia, the Rabbis of the city. Together they studied Torah

and penetrated many of its wondrous secrets, ascending day by day the rungs of perfection in Torah study and Divine service. However, Rabbi Amram's stay in Chevron was short-lived. An unfortunate incident caused his departure, forcing him to take up the mantle of sojourner once again and return to Morocco. The following story describes what happened. At that time, Jews were not permitted to enter into the tomb of the Patriarchs. However, for Rabbi Amram, this prohibition did not in the least quench his fervent desire to pray by the tomb of our Fathers. He therefore disguised himself as an Arab, and without being noticed he entered the cave with the rest of the Muslims that had also come there to pray. Imagine his emotions when he approached the tomb of the Patriarchs! As his face became drenched with tears, he quietly uttered his prayers, beseeching the Creator of the world to hasten the Final Redemption. No one doubted that this "Muslim", so absorbed as he was in his prayer, was nothing other than a Jew. Suddenly, as Rabbi Amram was preparing to leave, an Arab saw and recognized him. Immediately, he ran to the Pasha and informed him of the offense. Rabbi Amram incurred heavy suffering for such a sacrilege. A friend of Rabbi Amram, who was also a servant of the Pasha, hurried to warn him that he intended to arrest him. In the middle of the night, Rabbi Amram, accompanied by his young son, Rabbi Haim, left their home. They feared returning to Jerusalem or a neighboring country because during that era Turkish power held sway over several countries. He therefore decided to return to Morocco. As soon as he arrived in Fez, the city's inhabitants welcomed him with great honor. Many of the city's notable men quarreled over the merit of having him as their guest. He was finally received by Rabbi Menasheh Ibn Denan, one of the leaders of Fez's Jewish community. The story is told that Rabbi Menasheh's children were all girls, and that another girl had just been born to him. Rabbi Amram advised him to name her Fedina, which means, "we have finished". In other words, we have finished giving birth to girls. And it was thus that after this girl, Rabbi Menasheh had only boys. Not long after his arrival in Fez, Rabbi Amram and his son Rabbi Haim traveled to all the towns of Morocco in order to spread the teaching of Torah. He arrived in Sefru, where he lodged in the Elbaz home. Having no children of their own, they asked him for a blessing to have a son. Rabbi Amram blessed them and promised that in the following year, at the very same time of year, the wife would give birth to a son who would later become a great Torah scholar. The blessing of the Tzaddik came to fruition. The son who was born to the Elbaz family was given the name of the Tzaddik, Amram, and afterwards the name of Rabbi Amram of Sefru became famous as a Gaon and great Torah Scholar. While Rabbi Amram was staying in the Elbaz home in Sefru, his son Rabbi Chaim fell deathly ill. The doctors gave him no chance at recovering. Rabbi Amram prayed

to the Creator of the world that He take his soul in place of his son's. His son, Rabbi Chaim, recovered from his illness, and they continued on their journey to all the towns of Morocco. When they arrived in Wazan, Rabbi Amram himself fell gravely ill, and soon afterwards rendered his soul to his Creator. The tomb of Rabbi Amram became a place of pilgrimage for all the Jews of Morocco. The great poet, Rabbi Dovid Ben Hassin, composed a liturgical poem especially in his honor, a song that is sung by the Jews of Morocco on the day of his Hilloula. His son, Rabbi Chaim Ben Diwan, continued his father's work. He traveled from town to town with the goal of instructing Torah. He died at a ripe old age and rests in the village of Anranz, south of Marrakech. His tomb has also become a place of pilgrimage for all the Jews of Morocco. May his merit protect us. Amen.



Rav Tzvi Hirsch Halberstam Rav of Rudnik (Av 15, 5678 / 1918 - 108th Yahrzeit)

Rav Tzvi Hirsch Halberstam, born in 5606/1846, was the son of Rav Boruch of Gorlitz, son of Rav Chaim of Sanz, the *Divrei Chaim*. His mother was the daughter of Rav Yekusiel Yehuda Teitelbaum, the *Yetev Lev* of Sighet.

At the age of fifteen, Rav Tzvi Hirsch married the daughter of Rav Yisrael Horowitz of Barnov, son of Rav Eliezer of Dzikov, and he lived with his in-laws for the next three years. Afterward, he moved to Sanz, to the court of his illustrious grandfather, who cherished him.

In 5635/1875, less than two years before his *petira*, the *Divrei Chaim* called in Rav Tzvi Hirsch and said to him, "I am old and sick and have no more strength. Go to your other grandfather, the *Yetev Lev* in Sighet, and learn *Torah* from him." The *Divrei Chaim* was *niftar* a year later, on the twenty-fifth of *Nissan* 5636/1876.

After learning under his grandfather in Sighet for a year, Rav Tzvi Hirsch received *semicha* from him and was appointed *Rav* of the Polish town of Niska, serving for ten years.

In 5647/1887, his father, Rav Boruch, moved to Gorlitz and handed over the *Rabbonus* of Rudnik to Rav Tzvi Hirsch. Rudnik was a small town on the banks of the San River in

southern Poland, near Russia.

Four members of the illustrious Sanzer dynasty served as *Rabbonim* there: the *Divrei Chaim*; Rav Yechezkel Shraga, later of Shiniva; Rav Boruch of Gorlitz; and his son Rav Tzvi Hirsch. This Rabbinic dynasty in Rudnik began in 5572/1812, when the community approached Rav Naftali Tzvi of Ropshitz to help them, and the *Divrei Chaim* was appointed *Rav*.

After Rav Boruch of Gorlitz's *petira* on the first of *Adar* 5666/1906, Rav Tzvi Hirsch became *Rebbe* in his place.

Rav Tzvi Hirsch's *zivug sheini* was the daughter of Rav Meir Meshulom Shapira, a grandson of Rav Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov. During World War I, Rav Tzvi Hirsch fled to Hungary, settling in Kleinvardein. In 5676/1916, he fell ill and went to Vienna for medical care. He was *niftar* on the fifteenth of *Av* 5678/1918 in Kleinvardein, and his *aron* was brought to Gorlitz, where he was buried next to his father, Rav Boruch.

His most famous son, Rav Yekusiel Yehuda (later *Rav* and *Rebbe* of Klausenburg), only fourteen at the time, delivered an hours-long *hesped*. He founded his own court in Klausenburg, Transylvania, in 5687/1927. He survived World War II and founded Kiryat Sanz in Netanya. He was known as the Sanz-Klausenburger *Rebbe*.

The other sons were Rav Avrohom, who was *Rav* in Rudnik, and (from his first *zivug*) Rav Naftoli; he also had a daughter who married Rav Moshe Halberstam of Bochnia.

Zechuso yagen aleinu.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-15-avaugust-11



Rav Bentzion Yadler Maggid of Yerushalayim (Av 15, 5722 / 1962 - 64th Yahrzeit)



All the days of the life of the Tzaddik Rabbi Bentzion Yadler were devoted to Torah and the fear of Hashem. His voice was heard in the cities of Eretz Israel for 70 years without interruption, a voice that awakened hearts to repentance and good deeds.

Let us examine just who this Tzaddik was, a man whom all the Jews of Eretz Israel loved and whose impassioned and awe-inspiring words were heeded.

Rabbi Yitzchak Zev Goldberg was a great Talmid Chacham and a wealthy man. At an early age he dispensed with all his business dealings in the city of Grodno and traveled to the port of Odessa on his way to Eretz Israel. In those times, the journey to Eretz Israel was not easy. The Turkish government, which was then in power, prohibited his family from settling down in the land of his ancestors. When Rabbi Yitzchak Zev arrived at the coast of Jaffa, his wife was hidden in a sack of potatoes. Thus when these sacks were being lowered off the ship, one of them contained the mother of Rabbi Bentzion Yadler!

Rabbi Yitzchak Zev remained in Jaffa with his wife for several weeks, as they awaited a caravan heading for Jerusalem on camels. The journey from Jaffa to Jerusalem lasted two days.

When they arrived in the holy city, Rabbi Yitzchak Zev tore his clothes (in accordance with Halachah), but when he proceeded to tear his wife's clothes, she was seized with birth

pangs and began to give birth. She bore a son, whom his father named Bentzion because he was born at the gates of Zion.

Like all children in Yerushalayim, the young Bentzion was educated in the famous Etz Chaim yeshiva, where he rose in the rungs of Torah and the fear of Hashem. At the age of 22, he received *semichah* from Rabbi Shmuel Salant's Beis Din.

During that time, Jews in Eretz Israel had already spread beyond the walls of Jerusalem and begun to establish settlements. In a short time, new settlements were established in every corner of the land. Rabbi Ben Zion was appointed by Rabbi Shemuel Salant's Beis Din to go from village to village in order to teach and watch over the separation of offerings and maaser, mitzvos dependent on the land.

Automobiles did not exist at that time, and Rabbi Bentzion would travel by donkey from Jerusalem to Metula, Mishmar Hayarden, Rosh Pina, and throughout the Galilee. Wherever he went, he would speak in synagogues, markets, and city streets, and his words - which emanated from a pure heart - entered the hearts of his listeners.

https://hevratpinto.org/tzadikim_eng/147_rabbi_benzion_yadler.html



Rav Yaakov Yehuda Hecht 'J.J.' (Av 15, 5750 / 1990 - 36th Yahrzeit)



Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda ("J.J.") Hecht (15 Av 1990) was sometimes described as the Lubavitcher Rebbe's Foreign Minister. In 1945, he was appointed the official director of the National Committee for the Furtherance of Jewish Education (NCFJE). In 1953 he started one of the first camps for religious Jewish girls, Camp Emunah. In the 1970's he

became the administrative head in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, of both Hadar HaTorah Yeshiva and Machon Chana Seminary. Rabbi Hecht also was the official translator of the Rebbe's talks to children and for the farbrengens on the radio. The Rebbe once described him publicly as one of "the chasidim who share deep soul bonds with him."

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



Rav Menachem Mendel Lazar Av Beis Din of Strizhov, Sova Semachos (Av 16, 5591 / 1831 - 195th Yahrzeit)

Rav Menachem Mendel was born in 5548/1788 in Tarnow. His father was Rav Moshe Avrohom Dovid. As a child he excelled in Torah, outshining the other children his age. Aside from his *ge'onus*, he served Hashem with a unique inner fire, and was a *mushlom* in Torah and *Avodas Hashem*.

His *Rebbe* was Rav Menachem Mendel of Rimanov, who cherished him. He also traveled to the Kozhnitzer *Maggid* and the *Chozeh* of Lublin.

Rav Mendel of Strizov was the *Ba'al Mussaf* in the Rimanover court, famous for his fiery *davening* as well as for being a great *Tzaddik*. He had the privilege to help the *Yomim Noro'im tefillos* of the holy Rimanover *Rebbe* reach the highest celestial spheres.

One *Yom Kippur*, the Rimanover *Rebbe* suddenly banged his *machzor* shut in the middle of *Mussaf*. After *davening*, the *Rebbe* explained to the perplexed *Chassidim* that Rav Mendel was trying to have the *kavonos* of the *Kohen Godol* on *Yom Kippur*, and because he was so young the *Rebbe* feared that it would harm him!

Rav Menachem Mendel served as Rav in Strizov for a while, where he wrote many responsa in *Halocha*, especially on the topic of *agunos*. After serving as Rav in Strizov he returned to Tarnow, the city of his birth, where he led an elite group of *Chassidim* to higher aspirations in *Avodas Hashem*. Unfortunately, he was *niftar* at the young age of forty-three.

This is how his passing came about: During his last year, 5591/1831, a terrible plague

erupted in his town and many *Yidden* tragically succumbed. It was only after Rav Mendel offered himself as a *kappora* that the dying stopped...

Sova Semochos al HaTorah, a collection of *Divrei Torah* that he told his *talmidim* on *Shabbosos* and *Yomim Tovim*, was revered by all as a holy *sefer*. It was reprinted with a lengthy foreword in 5759/1999. Another of Rav Mendel's *seforim* is *Sova Semochos al Maseches Kiddushin*.

Yehi zichro boruch.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-16-avaugust-12/



Rav Shimshon Wertheimer (Av 17, 5484 / 1724 - 302nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Shimshon Wertheimer (1658-1724). Born in Worms, Germany, he learned in the *Yeshivos* of Worms and Frankfurt. After marrying the daughter of the Rav of Manheim in 1684, he moved to Vienna. Within a few years, he became the wealthiest Jew of his day. He served as finance minister for Austrian emperors Leopold I, Josef I and Karl IV. In exchange for his services, Rav Shimshon requested better treatment for his fellow Jews throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He negotiated the Jews' right to live in major cities, including Vienna and Frankfurt, saved the Jews of Rothenberg from expulsion and

intervened to save the Jews of Worms and Frankfurt. He was also a *Talmid Chochom* and helped to establish forty *kehillos* in Hungary. He founded and endowed a *Yeshiva* in Frankfurt, setting up his son-in-law, Rav Moshe Kann, as *Rosh Yeshiva*. In Vienna, he set up a *Bais Din*. In 1712, he rebuilt the city of Nikolsburg, which had burned down. Rav Shimshon was also in charge of transferring monies to Eretz Yisrael from all of Europe. He also left behind *kisvei yad* on Torah, *Medrash*, and *Kabbola*, (5484/1784).



Rav Avrohom Mordechai Horowitz (Av 17, 5584 / 1824 - 202nd Yahrzeit)

Son of Rav Binyamin Zev Yaakov of Zhmigrod

A disciple in Chassidus of Rav Yechiel Michel the Maggid of Zlatshuv, Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev, Rav Elimelech of Lizensk and after their passing of the *Chozeh of Lublin*

The *Chozeh* was the *shadchan* between Rav Avrohom Mordechai's daughter and his new son in law Rav Yitzchok Isaac of Komarno, and in the *Chozeh's* home the *simchas tenaim* was held.

He testified that he visited some one hundred and twenty *tzadikim*.

He passed away on 17 Av תקפ"ד

Some of his biographical details are cited often by his son in law see the in introduction to *Zohar Chai*

Toldos in *Yad HaMeir* See *Seder HaDoros HaChadash* p57



Rav Shmuel Eibschutz (Av 17, 5600 / 1840 - 186th Yahrzeit)

Born in 5514/1756, Rav Shmuel Eibschutz was the son of Rav Naftali Hertz, related to Rav Yonoson Eibschutz, and a descendant of the *Megaleh Amukos*.

Rav Shmuel learned under Rav Akiva Eiger for a number of years.

After settling in Vorka, he was attracted to the ways of *Chassidus* and traveled to the court of the *Maggid* of Kozhnitz. As was customary among *Chassidim*, they did not wear woolen clothes because it was possible that they contained *sha'atnez*, an *Issur d'Oraisa*. Rav Shmuel, who came from a non-Chassidic background, wore woolen clothing, but upon joining the *Chassidim*, he changed to silk garments.

Later, in Posen, he met Rav Akiva Eiger, who asked him why he wore silk and not wool. Rav Shmuel explained the opinion of the *Chassidim*. At once, Rav Eiger ripped off his woolen garment, exclaiming that he was shocked that he hadn't thought of this issue himself. It is related that Rav Akiva Eiger stood there, waiting until he was brought new garments free of any halachic issues.

Rav Shmuel also went to the court of the *Chozeh*.

He was appointed Rav in Vorka, where he served for thirty-eight years. Later, in 5595/1835, he became Rav in Apta, a post he held until his *petira*.

Rav Shmuel was *niftar* on the seventeenth of *Menachem Av* 5600/1840, at the age of eighty-six. He was buried in Apta.

His sons were Rav Berish, Rav in Zelichov; Rav Efraim, Rav in Piaseczna and Sulifa; Rav Mordechai; and Rav Simcha. Among his famous *talmidim* were Rav Yissochor Ber of Radoshitz and Rav Yaakov Aryeh of Radzimin, who grew up in Rav Shmuel's home.

From the many manuscripts of his *chiddushim*, only the one on Torah was published, under the name *Toras Shmuel*. His *chiddushim* on *Shas* were never published, except those on the *sugya* of *Kavsa* in *Masechtes Shabbos*, which were printed at the back of *Toras Shmuel*. The *sefer* was highly regarded by many of the generation's *Gedolim* and received glowing *haskomos*.

Zecher tzaddik livrachah.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-17-avaugust-13/



Rav Shlomo Chaim Perlov (Av 17, 5622 / 1862 - 164th Yahrzeit)

Rav Shlomo Chaim Perlow of Koidenov, the son of Rav Aharon, the son of Rav Mordechai Yaffe of Lechovitch. They were direct (*ben acher ben*) descendants of the Levush. He was raised by his maternal grandfather, Rav Osher Perlow of Karlin, after his father was *niftar*, and therefore he is also known by the last name of Perlow. After his uncle, Rav Noach of Lechovitch, was *niftar*, all the Chassidim flocked to Rav Shlomo. He had several sons who became great Rebbes in their own rights, (5622/1862).



Rav Yehuda Levi Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem (Av 17, 5639 / 1879 - 147th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yehuda Levi (1783-1879). Born in Sarajevo to Rav Menachem Levi, he immigrated to Eretz Yisrael, and became Chief Rav of Yerushalayim in 1845. He was *niftar* in Yaffo, (5639/1879).

Gedolim Be'Masayhem



Stories & Anecdotes

Rav Elyakim Shlomo Shapira (Av 11)

A GENERAL WITH A JEWISH HEART

It was the second night of the *Seder* and a splendid coach pulled up to the house of Rav Elyakim Shapira of Hordona. Out came none other than pułkownik Loryonow! The feared and hated Colonel whom the Jews despised! Yet he was smiling as he entered the home of

the Rav, soon news spread that in fact he had been invited as the Rav's seder guest and he had in fact come to partake of the *Rebitzen's* delicious cooking and sample the wine and *matzos*. How such a strange turn of events unfolded is almost unbelievable!

No doubt about it, if there was one man that the Jews of Grodno (Hordona) feared and loathed it was pułkownik Loryonow. The Colonel had the nickname the wicked Haman foisted upon him by all the local Jewish mothers, as his custom was to be extra harsh on all the Jewish soldiers conscripted into the army. He demanded soldiers to stand at full attention, be dressed in impeccably clean and ironed uniforms free of wrinkles and stains and with shiny polished brass buttons. Woe be it to the soldier who was caught with a stain or wrinkle or a dull button! And even worse was a soldier whose boots were not properly laced up or shined and polished!

If it was bad enough for the average soldier it was worse for the Jews. No one knew why, but pułkownik Loryonow had it in for them. It was therefore no surprise, but with extra regret and pain that they learned that this year all *Pesach* leave was cancelled for all the Jewish soldiers without any explanation given whatsoever at all!

The *shtadlanim* had given up all hope. All but one, Rav Elyakim reasoned that it could not hurt if he was perfrom *shtadlanus* and meet with the fearsome Haman pułkownik Loryonow. What can the Colonel do to me? Call me names and shame me publicly? He already hates the Jews, treats them badly and cancelled their leave, worst case scenario some *tamei arel* will shame me, nu, so what?

And so saying he went off to see and reason with the dreaded Colonel. To everyone's pleasant surprise the news was that the *Rav* had somehow succeeded! *Pesach* leave was granted both on the first two *Seder* nights and also on the last two final days of *Yom Tov*. Additionally no Jewish soldier was forced to eat *chametz* all *Pesach* long and all were free to eat *matzo*!

The pułkownik Loryonow was now here as promised on the second *seder* night his magnificent coach drawn by two powerful stallions arrived and after drinking four cups and partaking of the *matzos* he secreted himself alone with Rav. Periodically he would arrive smiling, bestow great honor and privilege and visit the *Rav*. His secret visits remained a mystery, no one, not the *Rebitzen*, nor any household members divulged what

the two spoke of or why the pułkownik Loryonow came to visit again and again.

One day pułkownik Loryonow arrived in a splendid new uniform clearly displaying his new higher rank and declared, honorable Rav I have been promoted to brigadier general of Sobolki and I am moving there. I will miss you and I wished to thank you for your kindness and honorable friendship. And so ended the mysterious relationship. Rumor has it that pułkownik Loryonow was really a Jew, snatched as a child and conscripted whom the Rav Elyakim Shapira transformed into a *Baal Teshuvah*. The Rav revealed and warmed the Jewish heart of the Colonel turned General and pułkownik Loryonow's visits were secret instructions on how to keep the articles of the Jewish faith under disguise and hidden away.

After the Rebitzen Shapira, Rav Leib Zalman's daughter passed away Rav Shapira left Hordona for Jerusalem and he is buried near the *Maharil Diskin* on Har HaZaisim. Zechuso Yagen Aleinu.

Rav Hillel Reb Hillel Paritscher, Pelach Harimon (Av 11)

TAILOR TO THE RESCUE

Rav Hillel of Paritsch was renowned for his punctilious observance of the *mitzvos*, prepared to risk his life for the merest detail ordained by *Chazal*. The Czarist regime of his day decreed that all Jews were to shave off their *peyos*, and some unscrupulous informer told the local authorities that Rav Hillel's *peyos* were still intact. They decided to shear them off by force, but Rav Hillel covered them tightly with his hands to protect them. The soldiers drew their swords and forcefully began hitting his hands and head, causing him to scream. His neighbor, a Jewish tailor who had a good relationship with the officers in charge, heard him and came running, and after promising them gifts, convinced them to leave. Grateful for his help, Rav Hillel blessed the man, and promised him that "after a hundred and twenty years" he would be rewarded by being buried next to him.

[Rav Hillel once explained that his dedication to maintaining his *peyos* and beard came from having seen a hand-written essay of the *Tzaddik* Rav Pinchas of Koretz, in which he wrote that adopting non-Jewish clothing styles and appearance was the fiftieth Gate of

Impurity, which would have rendered the Jews unable to be redeemed from Egypt, had they fallen one more level (into it).

Similarly, in the times preceding the revelation of *Moshiach*, there will be an endeavor to make the Jews change their clothing and appearance, and unfortunately it will succeed. Only in the merit of those individuals who refuse to change their appearance even at the risk of their lives will all the Jews be blessed with the *Ge'ula*. Rav Hillel concluded, "Anyone who had this manuscript would of course be willing to give up his life for the sake of traditional Jewish dress and appearance."]

Many years passed. Rav Hillel, in the meantime, became Rav of Babruisk, and would travel every year around the provinces and to the cities of Kherson and Yekatrinoslav, teaching *Torah* as well to the farmers of the Jewish agricultural colonies, who greatly admired him. In the summer of 1864, at age sixty-nine, he suddenly fell ill while staying in Kherson - which is very far from Babruisk and Paritsch in White Russia - and was *niftar* there.

On the following day, amidst widespread mourning, he was brought to burial, and his *talmidim* and admirers flocked there for many years thereafter to *daven* at the graveside of this *Tzaddik*.

Sometime later, on a bitterly cold and stormy day, an unknown elderly traveler passed away in the town's communal hostelry. The *Chevra Kaddisha* (Jewish Burial Society) prepared his body and took him to be buried, intending to place him in the section for unknown people. However, due to the fierce winter snow, they unknowingly buried him near Rav Hillel. A day or two later, it was noticed that the new grave had been dug right next to the resting place of the illustrious Rav Hillel. When the facts came to light, a great hubbub arose in town: was it proper that an unknown traveler whom no respectable citizen even knew, a nobody who had passed away in the communal poorhouse - that such a one should be buried next to the *Tzaddik*?

It was too late, though, to change things: the Torah would never allow it. At least let them find out just who this individual was. His identification papers disclosed his name and that of his father, and the fact that he came from Paritsch. The communal worthies of Kherson therefore wrote to their counterparts in Paritsch, asking to be told at least whatever they

knew about this man.

The answer from Paritsch identified him clearly: he was a retired tailor, who had been traveling in order to live with one of his children. They added that this same tailor had many long years earlier been promised by Rav Hillel that “after a hundred and twenty years” he would be brought to rest next to his own resting place.

And so, the decades-old promise of Rav Hillel of Paritsch came to fruition.

Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from *Lma'an Yishme'u* #78, and from *Sipurei Chassidim*, as translated by Uri Kaploun in A Treasury of *Chassidic* Tales (Artscroll).

THE ANGUISH OF SHABBOS

Rav Hillel of Paritsch used to spend a substantial part of every year traveling through the towns of the southern parts of Russia in order to give instruction in the applied ethics of *Chassidus*, and to arouse people to repentance wherever the need arose.

He once arrived in a town where the Jewish tavernkeepers kept their businesses open on Shabbos. Rav Hillel was shocked to hear this, and invited them all to meet him. When he had explained to them what a serious matter this was, they all undertook to conform to proper observance - on one condition: that he persuade a certain wealthy tavern-keeper, whose turnover was the highest in town, to do likewise, for otherwise they would not be able to survive competition with him. The *Tzaddik* thereupon sent for that man - once, twice, three times - but the wealthy tavern-keeper ignored the invitation.

Rav Hillel stayed on in the town for Shabbos. In the morning, the wealthy tavern-keeper suddenly suffered increasingly severe pains in the stomach, and his wife, fearing that they were brought on by the disrespect her husband had shown the *Tzaddik*, hastened to seek him out, so that he should intercede on his behalf. While Rav Hillel was at the Shabbos midday meal surrounded by a large company of *Chassidim*, she burst into the room, and, with tears in her eyes, implored the *Rebbe* to give her husband his blessing for a speedy recovery.

The *Tzaddik* remained silent.

His *Chassidim* were dismayed: “*Rebbe*, at least give the blessing that is traditional in such cases on the holy day - ‘It is Shabbos, when one may not cry out; healing will come soon!’”

But Rav Hillel said not a word. The woman left bitterly disappointed, and her husband’s pains grew worse.

On *Motzo’ei Shabbos*, the *Tzaddik* was discoursing with his *Chassidim* at a table on which stood a samovar, in fulfillment of the *Talmudic* dictum: “Hot beverages after the departure of *Shabbos* serve as a cure.” In ran the same woman, weeping and wailing, begging the *Tzaddik* to have pity on her husband and to *daven* for him.

Rav Hillel simply said: “It is Shabbos, when one may not cry out; healing will come soon.”

The *Chassidim* were amazed. On Shabbos itself the *Tzaddik* had said nothing - and now, when the holy day was over, he said these words usually uttered only on Shabbos!

Rav Hillel continued: “If Shabbos itself will no longer have cause to cry out against him, then healing will come soon! Go along and tell him that if he gives a solemn handshake in the presence of three witnesses that he will close his business on Shabbos, then he will be cured.”

Three *Chassidim* hastened to his bedside to convey the Rav’s message - and he earnestly gave his word of honor.

His illness passed, and the sanctity of Shabbos in that town became something noteworthy indeed.

Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from the rendition in A Treasury of *Chassidic* Tales (Artscroll), as translated by the incomparable Uri Kaploun

Rav Yitzchak Blazer Rav Itzele Peterburger, Kochvei Or (Av 11)

MASTER OF SILENCE

Rav Chaim Berlin dreamed that Rav Itzele Peterburger thanked him for not saying a

hesped at his *levaya*. He then posed the following question to the departed *tzaddik*: "What was the Heavenly tribunal - the *Beis Din Shel Maalah* most stringent and *machmir* on. Rav Itzele replied that a human being cannot imagine the judgments of the Heavenly Tribunal. They are especially exacting on the purity of a person's speech. This was coming from a person who had mastered the art of silence!

Rav Mordechai Bennet Har Hamor, Rav of Nikolsburg, Magen Avos (Av 13)

THE SIGN LANGUAGE OF TZADIKIM

The *Chofetz Chaim* related regarding Rav Mordechai Benet - that Rav Benet's *talmidim* noticed how he had the custom to draw the shapes of letters with his finger in the air. They paid careful close attention and realized that he was drawing the *pasuk* (from *Tefillos Yomim Nora'im*): *Ashrei Ho'Ish She'Lo Yishkachecha U'Ven Adam Yis'ametz Boch* - "Happy is he who does not forget You (Hashem), and the man who strengthens himself in You", reminding himself never to take his mind off his Creator.

THE KSAV YAD (HANDWRITING) OF THE CHASAM SOFER BRINGS TREMENDOUS YIRAS SHOMAYIM

The *Chasam Sofer* was known to write his responsa very quickly without any afterthought or regret. Once, an issue with an *aguna* was presented to him, and as was his custom he wrote a quick response and handed his response to his son, Rav Shimon, to deliver it to the *Bais Din* in Nikolsburg. Rav Shimon thought that since this was a grave and important matter, he would delay fulfilling his father's errand, because perhaps his father rushed the response and might want to clarify or change it later. A few days later, the *Chasam Sofer* asked his son if he had delivered the responsa. His son replied in the negative and explained his reasons. The *Chasam Sofer* proceeded to tell his son the following: "In every generation, Hashem puts a *Godol HaDor* who has *Siyata dishmaya* and the *halachic* responsa will be in accordance with Hashem's will. In this generation, I was chosen for this task. Please deliver the *responsa* immediately."

When the lengthy responsa was received by Nikolsburg's *Bais Din*, Rav Mordechai Banet opened up the letter and just read the last few lines of the *halachic* decree. When the *Bais Din* questioned Rav Mordechai about why he had not read the whole *p'sak din*, he replied, "In reality, I only need to see the last line, if the *Chasam Sofer* said *muttar* or *ossur* - and

that would be enough. However, I read a couple of the last lines because reading the *ksav yad* (handwriting) of the *Chasam Sofer* brings about tremendous *Yiras Shomayim*.

FIRST IN LICHTENSTADT THEN IN NIKOLSBURG

Rav Mordechai was the Rav in Nikolsburg and in the last years of his life, he fell sick and moved to Lichtenstadt (near Carlsbad) for treatments.

When he was *niftar*, the people in Lichtenstadt buried him quickly because they wanted him to stay in their town. When the people in Nikolsburg found out what had happened, they caused an uproar - until the question if they should reinter him came before the *Chasam Sofer*. In his *teshuva* (responsa), he ultimately gives three reasons why it is *mutar* to reinter him in Nikolsburg (even though it was a very unpopular thing to do - because it gave the non-Jews ammunition to reinter bodies at their own discretion).

He also notes in his lengthy responsa, that the people in Nikolsburg are not to be believed that Rav Mordechai wanted to have his body returned - because he states that Rav Mordechai had affirmed in his lifetime that whoever will need salvation after his *petira*, should just come to his *kever* and his *tefillos* will be answered - and that incentivizes the people of Nikolsburg to try to have him buried near them. However, while he was writing the responsa, the *Chasam Sofer* fell asleep. In his dream, Rav Mordechai appeared to him and told him that he did indeed want to return to Nikolsburg - but Hashem wanted him to be buried in Lichtenstadt for the following reason:

When he was a young man, the *shidduch* to the girl that he was to marry was broken. This girl suffered embarrassment due to this fact and later married the Rav in Lichtenstadt. Rav Mordechai further related that with the help and *tefillos* of the Rav of Lichtenstadt, it was determined that the only *kappora* (absolution) that he could get was by being buried next to her in the cemetery for six months. And so it was: after six months his holy body was removed and re-interred in Nikolsburg.

Following is the text of his *matzeiva* - denoting part of this story:

[Editor's note: Several years ago, I made the trip to Nikolsburg to daven at his *kever*. We arrived very late at night in the bitter cold and wandered the cemetery aimlessly searching for his *kever* in the near-pitch darkness. We were almost at the point of leaving,

when we quickly davened to be *zoche* to say a few chapters of *Tehillim* at his *kever*. Within seconds, we turned to the next row, and there, right in front of us, was his *kever*. I can attest that there is a palpable spiritual high at his *kever*].

AVOS CHAPTER 1 MISHNA 16

Rabban Gamliel said, "Make a rav for yourself and distance yourself from doubt and do not tithe by estimating."

When Rav Ovadia Yosef used to teach *Pirkei Avos* he would illustrate the above *Mishna* with the following story:

Rav Mordechai Bennet was once in the resort town of Carlsbad vacationing at the spa, when he met a reform rabbi. The German reformer bragged to Rav Mordechai how all matters of Jewish ritual and law were under his auspices and how his ruling on all matters of *halacha* was the final word.

When Rav Mordechai tried to discuss Torah with him, he was horrified to discover that the reform rabbi was nothing but a complete *am ha'aretz* who knew absolutely nothing when it came to Torah and *halacha*!

"Tell me rabbi," Rav Mordechai probed, "What then do you do when matters of kashrus are brought before you for a ruling? Let us say a chicken or fowl with a needle piercing its gizzard or a broken wing joint is brought before you. How do rule whether it is kosher or treif; how can you tell?"

"Well," answered the flustered rabbi, "I just rule stringently and declare it treif every time; I leave no room for doubt and I am *machmir*!"

"Let me tell you a story, said Rav Mordechai with a smile, "There was once a simple country bumpkin, a Jew who lived far away from the city in a rural village. He raised geese, fowl, and duck, and when they were brought to the slaughter, he would take them to the local *shochet*. The country Jew would then sell the meat and fat on the market and earn a living. Whenever they encountered a *shaila* - a halachic question as to the kashrus of the fowl (like the aforementioned cases of a needle or broken wing), he would saddle up his horse and ride into town to ask the rav to *pasken* and rule on the kashrus of the bird.

"Once, a prankster wandered into the village and met this simpleton. He realized that this was an opportunity to have a good laugh. 'Listen my good man; let me give you some good advice,' said the joker to the simpleton. 'Why waste time and expense of traveling all the way to the city of Frankfurt to ask the rav your kashrus questions, especially in winter when the roads are in disrepair! Listen to me; you should let the dog decide and save yourself from traveling. You see, it says clearly in the Torah regarding *treifos*: "*L'kelev tashlichin oso* - throw *treif* to the dogs.'" So, this pasuk proves that all *treif* meat really is the property of the dog. That's your litmus test. Any fowl that has any doubt regarding its kosher status, just place the meat in front of the dog. If the dog eats it, this proves it is *treif* since it is his. If he leaves it alone, this will 'prove' that it is kosher!' The simpleton's face lit up, 'What a great idea!' And so the dog became the *posek* and amazingly, whenever a fowl with any question was placed before him, the hound quickly devoured the meat. After a month like this went by, our simpleton decided that enough was enough and he saddled his horse and headed off to the city of Frankfurt to see the rav. The rav inquired about his long absence. "Why have I not seen you for weeks? Did you not have any kashrus questions?"

"I did Rabbi, but you see," answered the simpleton "I had many *shailos* with the chickens and I let the dog resolve them."

"I see," said the rav, "and so why did you come here now?"

"Well, that's just it; the thing is, my dog is just too *machmir*; he only knows how to rule that the chickens are *treif* each time!" explained the simpleton.

Rav Mordechai concluded his tale and turned to the reform rabbi. "Looks to me like you share the same methodology with that dog in ruling stringently that all questions in kashrus are *treif*, eh?" (*Anaf Etz Avos* pp. 61-62)

Nochum Ish Gamzu (Av 15)

THE STORY OF NOCUM ISH GAMZU

(The stories appear in *Maseches Taanis* 21A.)

A story is told that Nachum Ish Gamzu was blind in both eyes, missing both legs, missing both hands and his entire body was covered in boils. He was lying in a dilapidated house with the legs of his bed in buckets of water so that ants could not crawl onto him. Once his *talmidim* wanted to remove his bed from the house and then remove the furniture. Nachum Ish Gamzu said to them, "My children, first remove the furniture then remove my bed because you may be assured that as long as I am in this house it won't collapse." They listened to him and removed the furniture, then the bed, and the house collapsed after Nachum Ish Gamzu was outside it.

His *talmidim* asked of him, "Rebbe, since you are completely righteous, why did this happen to you (the boils, no arms etc...)?"

He replied, "My children, I brought it upon myself. I was once traveling on a road to the house of my father-in-law and I had three donkeyloads of food items: one of food, one of drink, and the last one of delicacies. A poor man approached me and said, '*Rebbe*, sustain me.'

"I replied, 'Wait until I unload some food from the donkey.'

"Before I had a chance to unload the donkey the man's soul departed. I went and fell on my face and said, 'Let the eyes that took no pity on your eyes become blind; let my hands which took no pity on your hands be cut off; let my legs which took no pity on your legs be cut off.' And my mind did not find rest until I said, 'Let my entire body be covered with boils!'"

Nachum Ish Gamzu said to his *talmidim*, "Woe to me had you not seen me like this."

The *Gemora* then goes on to ask why they called him Nachum Ish Gamzu? It answers that whatever happened to him he would reply, "*Gam zu letova* - This, too, is for the best."

HERE IS ANOTHER STORY ABOUT NOCHUM ISH GAMZU

Once the Jews wanted to send a gift to the court of Caesar. They decided to send Nachum Ish Gamzu to deliver it because he was accustomed to have miracles performed on his behalf. They sent him with a chest filled with precious stones and pearls. On his way he spent a night at a certain residence. During the night the residents arose and took all the

stones and pearls from the chest and replaced them with sand. The next morning he saw the dirt and said, "This too is for the good," and went on his way to Caesar. He went to the palace and untied the chest. After the emperor saw the dirt he wanted to kill the Jews, as he thought they were mocking him. Nachum Ish Gamzu thought, "This too is for the best."

Then Eliyohu HaNovi appeared as a Roman official. Eliyohu said to Caesar, "Perhaps this sand is from the sand of Avrohom Avinu (which was used in the battle of the four kings)." When Avrohom threw the sand at an enemy it turned into swords and when he threw straw it turned into arrows.

There was one city the Romans could not conquer. They tested some of this dirt against that city and they conquered it. After this they went to the emperor's treasure vault and filled the chest of Nachum Ish Gamzu with precious stones and pearls in gratitude for his gift and off he went.

When they returned and spent a night at the same residence as before (where he had been robbed) the residents asked, "What did you bring to Caesar that he gave you such honor?"

Nachum replied, "Whatever I took from here (the residence)."

The residents immediately demolished their houses and brought the rubble to the palace. They said to Caesar, "The dirt that Nachum brought was from our residence." They tested it in battle and, finding it contained no special powers, they executed the residents for attempting to defraud them.

Rav Amram ben Diwan (Av 15)

Please note that this story is repeated another date due to a discrepancy in the Yartzeit Date

YESHUOS FOR THOSE ZOCHES TO DAVEN AT RAV AMRAM BEN DIWAN'S KEVER

There are many fascinating stories of the *yeshuos* of those who were *zoches* to daven at the *kever* of the great *tzadik* and *mekubal* Reb Amram Ben Diwan in Morocco. His *kever* has become a place of pilgrimage for all Moroccan Jews. Each year on Lag BaOmer, thousands of Jews come to Wazan to make the pilgrimage to the *tzion* of the *tzadik*. Numerous

miracles are said to have occurred there: Incurable illnesses have been healed, the blind have regained their sight,, the mute have found their voice, the paralyzed have returned home on their own, and infertile women have had children after having prayed there.

They tell that a French military sergeant had a son who remained paralyzed after a serious illness. This sergeant had a Jewish friend that advised him to take his son to the tomb of Rabbi Amram Ben Diwan in Wazan. At first, the sergeant was skeptical and refused, but then later promised that if a miracle were to happen and his son would be healed, he would build a road with his own money in order to facilitate access to the tomb of the Tzaddik. The miracle occurred: As soon as his son approached the *kever* of Rabbi Amram, he was healed. The happy father kept his promise and constructed a road that leads to the tomb of Rabbi Amram.

Yet another story comes from a couple in Monsey, NY who were not zoche to have a child for 15 years. They were told to go and *daven* by the kever of Reb Amram. After finishing the entire *tehillim* at the kever, the husband heard the sound of a baby crying. Nobody else in the vicinity heard this wondrous sound. Nine months later this couple had a child.

UNBELIEVABLE STORIES

One anonymous source tells the following stunning story:

“I was zoche to hear this story from the father and I actually held this miracle baby in my arms. After hearing this story, I called two friends who were having a challenging time with shidduchim. I told them we need to book tickets and go *daven* by this great tzadik’s tomb.

We booked and headed out to Morocco. En route we decided to spend Shabbos in Gibraltar. We ate our Shabbos meals by the president of the Community Mr. Solomon Levy. He told us about his nephew who was crippled from birth. The parents of the boy decided to go to the tzion of Reb Amram. After praying, they went for a walk and left the boy in his wheelchair to continue praying by the Tzadik. The boy prayed a little then drifted off into a slumber. In his dream a man with a white beard appeared.

He said, “What are you doing in a cemetery? You are a Kohen. You must leave at once.” The boy replied, “I can’t walk. How can I leave?”

Reb Amram replied, "Just pick yourself up and walk out." The boy awoke and, miraculously, he used his own two feet to wobble out of the *kever*. He continued with physical therapy and today is walking like a normal person.

After shabbos, we traveled from Gibraltar to Morocco. We prayed and recited the full *tehillim* by the *Kever*. We stayed a few days and toured Fez, then returned to the US. The following Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan, I made a Lechaim and got engaged. The following two weeks, one after another, my two friends got engaged.

On a recent trip to Israel, after praying by Kever Rochel an Israeli looking man asked me for a ride into Jerusalem. As we were riding in the car, wanting to make light conversation, I asked his name. He said, "My name is Amram Biton." Stunned, I asked if he was from Moroccan descent and if he ever had heard of Reb Amram Ben Diwan. He turned to me in awe and said, "I am named after him. My mother was childless for many years and made the journey to his kever. She promised the Tzadik that if she had a baby, she would name him Amram. I am that baby."

These stories are truly beyond the scope of our imagination. Reb Amram of Diwan's yartzeit is coming up this Tu B'Av and people from all over the world are traveling to his kever to daven.

לעילוי נשמת לזכר עולם יהי' צדיק



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

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