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Lag BaOmer with Rav Aharele of Belz

R' Yitzchak Shlomo Ungar related an otherworldly story that he experienced at the table of Rav Ahar'ele of Belz on Lag BaOmer.

R' Ungar was returning from Meron when he stopped at the seudah of Rav Ahar'ele. As he entered, Rav Ahar'ele asked him, "What is happening in Meron? Is Rav Asher Zelig (Margolious) well enough to dance?" In those years, Rav Asher Zelig was known to dance extensively in Meron.

R' Ungar added that those present were astonished that Rav Ahar'ele knew such specific details of what was taking place in Meron on Lag BaOmer, even knowing who the dancers were. They were especially perplexed by his question regarding Rav Asher Zelig.

The next day, R' Ungar reported to Rav Asher Zelig that his name had been mentioned at Rav Ahar'ele's seudah. Rav Asher Zelig reacted with deep emotion upon hearing this.

He explained: "After davening in Meron, I suddenly felt weak—especially in my legs. I was afraid I

wouldn't be able to dance, to bring joy to the crowd as I do every year on Lag BaOmer.

"In that moment, a thought crossed my mind—how I wished I could send someone to Rav Ahar'ele, to mention my name before him, so he would daven for me. Perhaps then I would regain the strength to dance in honor of this holy day.

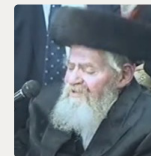
"Almost immediately, I felt a surge of strength return to my body. I knew I would be able to dance again, just as in all the previous years. Now I understand," he concluded, "that my thought occurred at the exact time Rav Ahar'ele was asking about me."

R' Ungar added that Rav Asher Zelig immediately took leave of him in order to travel to Rav Ahar'ele and properly thank him.

MERON

Rav Meilich Biderman notes that when people would tell R' Aharele that they were traveling to Meron for Lag BaOmer, he would ask them to daven for him there. Once, someone told him that he tried to be in Meron for Lag BaOmer, but it didn't work out., R' Aharele replied, "Reb Shimon's kedushah is everywhere!"

ר' יצחק שלמה ז"ר אברהם צבי אונגר



R' Yitzchak Shlomo Ungar (17 Adar II 1921-22 Sivan 2004) was the firstborn to his father R' Avraham Tzvi H"yd, author of Machaneh Avraham.

He was born in Beled, Hungary and then as a young child, the family moved to Kaposvár, where his father, was appointed as the Rabbi. R' Ungar studied under R' Yaakov Yechezkia Grunwald (1882-1941) of Pápa (the VaYaged Yaakov). The Pápa Rav was very close with the rebbis of Belz, and he introduced his start talmid to R' Aharele. R' Ungar remained close with R' Aharele for his entire life. The young R' Ungar received *semichah* from R' Shabsai Shevtel Weiss, who rarely gave *semichah* to *bachurim*. During the War, R' Avraham Tzvi promised his son, that he would survive with some of his siblings, but that he was to open a yeshivah and teach Torah. R' Ungar survived the holocaust, and, in 1946, married Rachel Lowy (d. 1992) in the DP camp of Bad Windsheim, Germany, where he served as the leader of the camp. Upon emigrating to Israel, R' Ungar served as the Rabbi of the Givat Shaul neighborhood of Jerusalem until 1957, when at the behest of R' Aharele and R' Akiva Soer he assumed the leadership of the *Chug Chasam Sofer* community in Bnei Brak. In 1964 he fulfilled the directive of his father and opened a yeshiva "Chug Chasam Sofer - Machaneh Avraham," which over the years expanded. He not only gave shiurim, but was involved with every detail of it, and successfully produced Great talmidei chachamim. He simultaneously was a dayan together R' Wosner and R' Gestetner. Within several years of his passing, three volumes of his Torah were released, entitled *Toras Ish*.



In memory of Meir ben Yaakov Shlomo Deutsch (Fritz) A”H

Meir ben Yaakov Shlomo Deutsch (Fritz) A”H was an only child, born Jan 2 1924, in the 2nd District of prewar Vienna called Leopoldstadt. This section was originally established as a central Jewish community by Rav Yom Tov Lipman Heller in 1625. He was a descendant of Gaon R’ Binyamin Wolf Abeles (*Nachalas Binyomin*) Rov in Tab and a 4th great nephew of Rabbi Akiva Eiger. It was also a family of askanim members of whom were Roshei Kahal in Mattersdorf and Sopron and a cousin who was the leader of the Agudas Yisrael of Vienna – Julius (Yaakov Shlomo) Steinfeld who enabled almost 9,000 Jews to escape the Nazis through emigration including the arrangement of the Kindertransport from Vienna.

After the *Anschluss*, Fritz’s mother, Seren Breuer, became determined to leave Austria by any means possible. She contacted Julius Steinfeld, who informed her of an illegal voyage to *Eretz Yisrael* organized by the Revisionist Zionists (Irgun). When they attempted to register, she was told they could not join because her son—who was 14 at the time—was considered too young. The journey was dangerous, and passengers would likely need to swim ashore, as the ship would have to secretly land them in *Eretz Yisrael* without detection by the British Mandate authorities. Seren refused to accept this decision. She persuaded the Irgun to give Fritz a swimming test, with the understanding that if he passed, they would be allowed to join. He did pass, and they were granted permission to embark on the journey.

Life in *Eretz Yisrael* under the British Mandate was extremely difficult. The British authorities discovered their illegal arrival, and his father, Yaakov

Shlomo, was forced to go into hiding repeatedly to avoid deportation. Then tragedy struck. On September 9, 1940, Italian forces—then allied with Nazi Germany—bombed Tel Aviv from the air, killing 137 people, most of them Jews. Among the victims was Yaakov Shlomo ben Meir Deutsch (6 Elul).

Fritz was highly intellectual; however, due to the financial hardships of those years, he was forced to enter the workforce and was unable to complete even a high school education. An example of his intellectual curiosity was his habit of borrowing a volume of the *Encyclopedia Judaica* each month. He would carefully read through the entire volume before returning it and borrowing the next, continuing this process until he had worked his way through the entire set.

Fritz was also an avid stamp collector. Unfortunately, when his family fled from Hitler, he lost his entire collection. The loss affected him so deeply that he made a *neder* (vow) never to collect stamps again. Years later, while living in America, he found himself missing his favorite pastime. To honor his *neder* while still engaging his passion, he began assembling a stamp collection for a cousin’s child. Over time, he built an extraordinary collection spanning many years and featuring stamps from all over the world.

He regularly attended local Torah *shiurim* and listened to Torah tapes. He also gave generously to *tzedakah*, always doing so privately and without any public recognition.

His mother, Tzivia bas Menachem Mendel, passed away 25 Elul 1974 (5734), while he passed away 13 Iyar 2009 (5769), Yehiyu Zichronum Livaruch.



MEIR (FRITZY) DEUTSCH



YAAKOV SHLOMO DEUTSCH H”YD

רב אהרן רוקח זכור לטוב

Rav Aharon Rokeach was born in 1880 to Rav Yissachar Dov, the third rebbe of the Belzer dynasty. After his father’s passing in 1926, he became the leader of Belz until his passing in 21 Av 1957.

He miraculously escaped the WWII with his half-brother, Rav Mordechai the Rav of Bulgorai (1902-1949). Both of their entire families were murdered. Rav Mordechai remarried and had a son who succeeded Rav Aharon.