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

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)

⚡ MATTOS ~ MASSEI ⚡

⚡ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ⚡

The *Ba'al Shem Tov* desired very much to go to *Eretz Yisrael*, saying that if he would meet the holy *Rav Chaim Ben Attar*, author of the famed *sefer*, the *Ohr HaChaim*, that together they could bring *Moshiach*. Unfortunately, in *Shomayim* they had other plans and the journey did not succeed. There are many stories regarding the journey that the *Ba'al Shem Tov* undertook together with his daughter *Adel*; here is one that pertains to our *parsha*:

On *Chol HaMoed*, the *Ba'al Shem Tov* hired a boat to take them to *Eretz Yisrael* from *Istanbul, Turkey*. The *Toldos Yaakov Yosef* relates how the *Ba'al Shem Tov's* *Rebbe* and spiritual mentor, *Achiya HaShiloni*, appeared to him and demonstrated to the *Ba'al Shem* where his journey corresponded to the forty-two journeys and encampments of *Bnei Yisrael* in the *Midbar*.

While they were at sea, a great storm struck the ship, the tempest waves tossing it to and fro. According to some versions of the story, his daughter *Adel* was cast overboard and the ship itself was almost lost; according to other versions of the story, it was shipwrecked and smashed to smithereens, leaving only planks. Throughout all this chaos, the sailors turned to the *Ba'al Shem Tov* to save them.

Heaven decreed, however, that all of the *Ba'al Shem's* powers would be taken away and his spiritual capabilities were reduced to naught! He could remember no *tefillos*, no *Torah*- not even the *Alef-Bais*! The *Ba'al Shem* was sorely distressed, until his *Rebbe*, *Achiya HaShiloni*, reappeared to him and showed him through which supernal worlds he was now traveling and which Divine names corresponded to his current place and journey. The *Ba'al*

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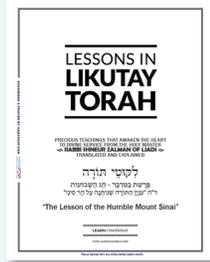
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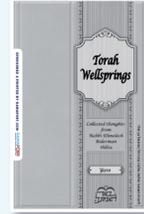
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Shem Tov was comforted and Heaven began to sweeten the harsh decree.

Just then his son Rav Tzvi (others say it was Adel) turned and cried in distress that he too could remember nothing but the *Alef-Bais*. "Quick!" responded the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, "say them with me now!" Attaching his soul to the power of the Hebrew letters of the holy *Alef-Bais*, the *Ba'al Shem Tov* repeated them after his son, "*Alef, Bais, Gimmel, Daled*," until slowly his powers and knowledge returned and he was able to save the travelers. The *Ba'al Shem Tov* never did make it to *Eretz Yisrael*; rather, he returned safely to Europe.

We learn from the *Toldos Yaakov Yosef* that all of our journeys correspond to the journeys and encampments that *Bnei Yisrael* encountered in the *Midbar*. This teaching is further elaborated on by the *Degel Machane Ephraim*, grandson of the holy *Ba'al Shem Tov*, which he writes in his grandfather's name in this week's *parsha* on the following *pasuk*:

"Moshe wrote down their departures, according to their journeys at the command of *Hashem*, and these are their journeys according to their departures" (33:2).

"I heard in the name of my grandfather, the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, that all the journeys together add up to forty-two. Every person in his life, from the day of his birth when he [begins the journey with a point of departure and] leaves his mother's womb which is an aspect corresponding to the Exodus from Egypt as is known, afterward journeys from camp to camp, from destination to destination until he arrives at his destination in *Eretz HaChaim* in the upper, supernal worlds [after he passes on after his *petira*] as I wrote in my commentary to the *pasuk* (*Bamidbar* 9:20): 'According to *Hashem* they encamped and according to *Hashem* they journeyed forth.' . . . Surely all these trips and journeys were recorded in the *Torah* to teach us how to conduct ourselves on our life's journey on the proper path, for each Jew to know the correct way to go all the days of our lives from journey to journey, from destination to destination."

The *Degel Machane Ephraim* is teaching us in the name of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, that just as *Bnei Yisrael* traveled and journeyed forty-two times in the *Midbar*, each of us has to correspondingly also journey and travel to forty-two camps and destinations in our lives. May *Hashem* guide us on the proper path during our journeys through the lessons of His *Torah*, Amen!



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

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

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

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

Others say that it is the custom within *Klal Yisrael* to light a *yahrzeit* candle on the day that a relative or a *Tzaddik* has passed away. The lighting has no accompanying blessing, and

people would like to express themselves in a *tefilla* when lighting the candle. This is not only true on a *yahrzeit* but on every *Yom Tov* as well.

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

Hebrew Tefilla for Lighting a Yahrzeit or Hilula Candle

[תְּפִילָה הַנִּמְצָאת בַּסֵּפֶר אֶלֶף הַמִּגֵּן מִבַּעַל הַפֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ עַל פְּרֻשֵׁת וַיֵּצֵא עֲמוּד כ"ד]

הַרְיֵנִי מִדְּלִיק נֵר זֶה לְמִנוּחַת וּלְעִילוּי נַשְׁמַת אָבִי / אִמִּי מוֹרְתִי / הַצַּדִּיק _____
בֶּן/בַּת _____, יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁתִּקְבַּל בְּרַחֲמִים
וּבְרְצוֹן כָּל מַעֲשֵׂה הַטּוֹב שֶׁאֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה, בֵּין בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה, בֵּין בְּדִבּוּר, בֵּין בְּמַעֲשֵׂה וַיְהִי הַכֹּל
לְזָכוֹת וּלְמִנוּחַת וּלְעִילוּי לְנַשְׁמוֹת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּבְפָרֵט לְנַפְשׁ רֹחַ וְנַשְׁמָה שֶׁל אָבִי / אִמִּי /
צַדִּיק _____ . יְהִי רְצוֹן שֶׁתְּהִינָה נַפְשׁוֹתֵיהֶם צְרוּרוֹת בְּצֵרוּר הַחַיִּים.

Translation:

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

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

4) Study some of his teaching or writings.

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

☞ 26th of Tammuz ~ Begins Friday Night (Jul 17th)

* **Rav Nachman Bulman** (born 1925). His parents, Rav Meir and Ettel Bulman were Gerrer *Chassidim* who had moved to the Lower East Side from Poland. Rav Meir had lost his first wife in childbirth and his second wife in a pogrom. He had also lost two children. In their forties, the Bulmans wrote to the *Imrei Emes* of Ger for a *berocha* for children. The result of that blessing was Nachman, who was born in New York. He attended Yeshiva Rabbeinu Yitzchok Elchonon and then studied in its rabbinical program. He received *semicha* and a B.A. (in philosophy) from Yeshiva College. During the week, he learned in the *Litvishe Yeshiva*. On *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*, he absorbed the atmosphere of his parents' *Polishe shteibel* with a love of *Chassidus*. For years, he was also a frequent visitor at the *tischen* of the *Modzitzer Rebbe*, Rav Shaul Yedidya Taub. In 1950, Rav Nachman married Shaindel Freund, his *aishes chayil* for fifty-two years. He found a position in the town of Danville,

Virginia, a small Orthodox community that consisted of about thirty families. He held the position for three years. From 1953–1954, Rav Bulman served as *Mashgiach* in Yeshiva Rabbeinu Yitzchok Elchonon. He was once again pulled to the world of *Rabbonus* when he became *Rav* in South Fallsburg, N.Y., in 1954. During this time, he founded the National Conference of Synagogue Youth (NCSY), together with Rav Weitman, Rav Goodman and Rav Chait. His next position was as head of *Adas Yeshurun shul* in Newport News, Virginia, beginning in 1957. Rav Bulman then returned to his position as *Mashgiach* in Yeshiva University from 1962–1963, and then worked for Torah Umesorah from 1963–1967. In 1967, he took his next rabbinical position as the *Rav* of the Young Yisrael of Far Rockaway. During this time, he founded Sarah Schenirer High School and Seminary in 1968, and the *Yeshiva* of Far Rockaway (*Yeshivas Derech Eison*), and he taught in both places, (5762/2002);

- * **Rav Yehoshua ben Rav Yosef**, a *Sefardi* sage and the *Av Bais Din* of Cracow, (5408/1648);
- * **Rav Yehuda Moshe Patia**, a *Sefardi* sage and the *mechaber* of the *sefer Bais Lechem Yehuda*, 5702/1942);
- * **Rav Refoel Ochana** from Teverya, *mechaber* of the *sefer Mareh HaYelodim*, (5662/1902);
- * **Rav Sinai Halberstam** of Zhemigrod (born 1870). Rav Chaim of Sanz especially treasured his fourth son, Rav Boruch of Gorlitz, saying that a lofty soul such as his had not descended to the world for the past three hundred years. When he was fourteen, Rav Boruch married the daughter of Rav Yekusiel Yehuda Teitelbaum, the *Yitav Lev* of Sighet and a *talmid* of Rav Chaim Sanzer, and in 1870, Rav Sinai was born to the couple, in Rudnik. After reaching adulthood, Rav Sinai served as *Rav* for several years in Gorlitz and Koloshitz, before taking over a permanent position in Zmigród, a scenic mountain town about 150 kilometers from Cracow, where Jews had lived since at least 1410. Zmigród had a relatively small community; a 1900 census records it having 1,240 Jews out of a total population of 2,249. Nowadays, this region of Austrian-controlled Galicia is part of Poland. He escaped the Nazis by fleeing to Lemberg, Galicia, but was exiled to Siberia by the Soviets. He did not survive the trip, (5701/1941).

Today in History – 26th of Tammuz

- * Saladin's army defeated Crusader army at Karnei Chittin, and signaled beginning of the end for Crusader kingdom, 1187;
- * A pope (Clement V?) banned forced baptism of Jews, 1345. This decree was overturned by subsequent popes in 1597 and 1747;
- * The *Ba'al Shem Tov* and Rav Chaim *HaKohen* Rappaport, the *Rav* of Lemberg (Lvov), overcame the Frankist cult in a public dispute, 1759;
- * Napoleon decreed that all Jews of the French Empire must adopt family names, 1808;
- * Adolf Hitler, *yimach shemo*, published his personal manifesto, *Mein Kampf*, 1925;
- * Jews of Upina, Lithuania, were executed by the Nazis, 1941.

27th of Tammuz ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Jul 18th)

- * **Yosef HaTzaddik ben Yaakov Avinu**;
- * **Rav Yaakov Adess**, born in Yerushalayim (born 1898), the youngest of his father's four sons. He received his early education from his father, Rav Avrohom Chaim Adess. In 1910, his father placed him in *Yeshiva Ohel Moed*, where he learned under Rav Refoel Shlomo Laniado and Rav Yosef Yedid *HaLevi*. There, he stayed as *Maggid Shiur* from 1920–1923,

when the *Yeshiva* closed. He moved with Rav Laniado to *Poras Yosef*, first as *Maggid Shiur* and later as *Rosh Yeshiva*. Most of his writings on *Shas* were destroyed when the Jordanians captured the Old City in 1948. At the end of 1945, Rav Adess was appointed *Av Bais Din* in Yerushalayim. In 1955, he was chosen to serve on the Chief Rabbinat's *Bais Din HaGodol*, (5723/1963);

- * **Rav Shmuel Rozovsky** (born 1913), born in Grodna to Rav Michel Dovid (*Rav* of Grodna for forty years) and Sora Pearl, daughter of Rav Avrohom Gelburd, who had served as Grodna's previous *Rav* for almost fifty years. At a very young age, he began to study in the *Sha'ar HaTorah Yeshiva* of Grodna, under Rav Shimon Shkop, eventually becoming his *talmid muvhok*. In 1935, his father was *niftar*, and the *Gedolei Torah* urged Rav Shmuel to succeed him. However, he was drafted into the Russian army and moved to *Eretz Yisrael*. There he began studying in the Lomza *Yeshiva* in Petach Tikva. In 1944, Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman opened the Ponovezh *Yeshiva* and chose Rav Shmuel, only thirty at the time, to head the *Yeshiva*. Later on, he was joined by Rav Dovid Povarsky and Rav Elozor Menachem Man Shach. Subsequently, he was asked by Rav Kahaneman to head the newly founded Grodna *Yeshiva* in Ashdod, (5739/1979);
- * **Rav Elimelech (Yom Tov) Ehrlich** (born 1914), a seventh-generation Karlin *Chassid*, was born in the town of Kodznahorodok, next to Stolin, not far from the border of Poland and Russia. During World War II, his family moved to Samarkand. There, he composed Yiddish *niggunim* for the many Jewish refugees, cheering their broken hearts. His role in life was thus fixed. After the war, in Paris, Rav Yom Tov discovered a new brand of fire that began to kindle in his heart: Novardok. He later moved to New York, and then to *Eretz Yisrael*, (5749/1989);
- * **Rav Elozor** *ben* Rav Meir Abuchatzaira, assassinated by a deranged individual in the year 5771. He was born in the year 5708, (5771/2011);
- * **Rav Yitzchok Charif** of Sambur, *mechaber* of *Pnei Yitzchok*, (5593/1833);
- * **Rav Shmuel Aharon Rubin**, *Rav* of Kartshin, (5637/1877);
- * **Rav Mordechai Twersky**, Skverer *Rebbe* of Flatbush (born 1924). Born in Kishinev, he moved with his family to America when he was four months old. When his father, Rav Yitzchok, was *niftar* in 1941, Rav Mordechai and his brother, Rav Dovid, ran their father's *Bais Medrash* in Boro Park. Rav Mordechai opened the Skverer *Bais Medrash* in 1970, (5767/2007).

✧ 28th of Tammuz ~ Begins Sunday Night (Jul 19th)

- * **Rav Elozor** of Lizhensk. He was the oldest son of the *Rebbe* Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk. He put together his father's *sefer Noam Elimelech*, which has several letters of Rav Elozor in the back. His sons were Rav Naftoli of Lizhensk and Rav Mendel Ber of Pshevorsk and his son-in-law was Rav Chaim Meir Yechiel Shapira of Moglenitz, (5566/1806);
- * **Rav Moshe** *ben* Rav Tzvi Hirsch Teitelbaum, *Av Bais Din* of Ujhely (Uhel), Hungary (born 1759), *mechaber* of *Yismach Moshe*, founder of Satmar and Sighet dynasties. He was a direct descendent of the *Rema*. He served as *Rav* and *Av Bais Din* of Shinova at the age of twenty-six. He made a *shidduch* for his only daughter with a *Chassid* of the *Chozeh* of Lublin, and shortly thereafter became a follower himself. He taught Rav Yechezkel Shraga Halberstam of Shinova. He said he remembered himself in a previous *gilgul* in Mitzrayim and could even describe what the house that he stayed in looked like. He said that when the *machlokes* of Korach took place he did not take any sides; he stayed in his tent until the

machlokes ended and only then came out, when it was determined who was correct. Rav Meshulam Igra said about him, “*Moshe Emes v’Toraso Emes.*” The Sighet and Satmar dynasties descend from him, (5601/1841);

- * **Rav Shlomo Ganzfried** (born 1804), born in Ungwar, Hungary. His father was *niftar* while he was still young, and he was raised by the *Rav* of Ungwar, Rav Tzvi Hirsch Heller. He is the *mechaber* of *Kitzur Shulchon Aruch*, (5647/1886);
- * **Rav Nachman ben Rav Chaim Arye HaKohen Kahana, Av Bais Din** of Spinka. He was the son-in-law of the first Spinka *Rebbe*, the *Imrei Yosef*. He wrote *Sefer Orchos Chaim* on *Shulchon Aruch Orach Chaim*, (5664/1904);
- * **Rav Yaakov Shaul Elyashar, Sefardi chief Rav** of *Eretz Yisrael* (born 1817). Born to Rav Eliezer Yerucham Elyashar in Tzefas, young Yaakov Shaul moved with his mother at the age of six to Yerushalayim; his father passed away a year later. His mother’s second husband, Rav Binyomin Mordechai Navon, took the boy under his wing. In 1883, Rav Yaakov Shaul accepted the position of *Rishon LeTzion*. At the inauguration, he also received the title of *Chacham Bashi* by the Turkish rulers. Rav Yaakov Shaul authored the *sefer Yissa Berocha*. His son, Rav Nissim Elyashar, founded a *Charedi* community in Yerushalayim and named it Givat Shaul, in his father’s honor, (5666/1906);
- * **Rav Chaim Friedlander** (born 1923), *Mashgiach* in Ponovezh, considered one of the closest *talmidim* of Rav Dessler. *Mechaber* of *Sifsei Chaim* and *Mesilos Chaim B’Chinuch*, (5746/1986).
- * **Rav Moshe Mordechai Chodosh, Rosh Yeshiva Ohr Elchonon**, (5776/2016);

✧ 29th of Tammuz ~ Begins Monday Night (Jul 20th)

- * **Rav Yochanon HaSandlar, Tanna**;
- * **Rav Shlomo Yitzchoki (Rashi) רש"י** (b. 1040). He traced his ancestry through the *Tanno'im* Rav Yochanon *HaSandlar* and Hillel the Elder back to Dovid *HaMelech*. He received his early *Talmudic* training from his father, Rav Yitzchok. At a young age he went to Worms, Germany, to broaden his knowledge under Rav Yaakov *ben Yokor*. At the age of twenty-five he returned to his native Troyes. Amazingly, *Rashi* accomplished all his work during the period of the Crusades, when life was extremely dangerous for the Jews. *Rashi* had three daughters, who were great scholars in their own right, but were also married to men of greatness, and had children known as the *Ba’alei Tosafos*, the most famous of whom, Rav Yaakov *ben Meir*, was known as *Rabbeinu Tam*, (4800/1040);
- * **Rav Yehoshua Boaz**, the *Shiltei HaGibborim*, Italian commentator to *Rif* (1612/5372).

✧ 1st of Menachem Av ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Jul 21st)

- * **Aharon HaKohen** (b. 1395) [the only *Yahrzeit* mentioned in the *Torah*]. Aharon, who lived during the Exodus from Egypt, was the brother of Moshe and Miriam. He was chosen to be the first *Kohen* of the newly emerging Jewish nation. Aharon was known for bringing peace between husbands and wives and between neighbors and friends. It pained Aharon to see broken relationships and he, on his own, would do his best to repair any relationship on the verge of breaking. When he explained to one party that the other side regretted the misunderstanding and the argument, it caused that person to want to continue the relationship. Peace is a very important foundation of society. Without peace between man and his neighbor, society could not exist. Without peace between nations, progress and

individual welfare cannot exist. Peace, whether between men or between *Hashem* and men, is of paramount importance, (2488/1272 BCE);

- * **Elozor ben Aharon HaKohen**;
- * **Rav Chaim** of Krasna, (5553/1793);
- * **Rav Yaakov ben Rav Attar**, a *Sefardi* Sage. He wrote the *sefer Bais Elokai Yaakov*;
- * **Rav Shmuel ben Rav Dovid Tzvi Ehrenfeld** (b. 1805), *mechaber* of *Chasan Sofer*, and *Rav* in Mattersdorf. He was also known as the Deer of Arnaflid and grandson of the *Chasam Sofer*, (5643/1883);
- * **Rav Yaakov Moshe Shurkin**, *Rosh Mesivta* Rabbeinu Chaim Berlin, student of the *Chofetz Chaim*, (5723/1963);
- * **Rav Yehoshua Heschel ben Rav Elozor** (*niftar* early 1700s). He was the *Rav* of Dubna after Rav Yosef Yoska, the *Yesod Yosef*;
- * **Rav Nosson Nota ben Rav Yosef** of Averitch, a *talmid* of the *Ba'al Shem Tov* and father-in-law of the *Bas Ayin*. He did not sleep on *Shabbos* because it says *Veshomru Vnei Yisrael es HaShabbos* – “You should watch the *Shabbos*”, (5545/1785);
- * **Rav Osher Ginzburg**, son of Rav Arye Leib, the *Shaagas Arye*, (5502/1742);
- * **Rav Aharon ben Rav Moshe Goldstein**, *Rav* of Breslov. He was one of the main students of Rav Nachman of Breslov. Rav Nachman said that he used his ancestral merits to bring Rav Aharon to Breslov and that Rav Aharon went to his *chuppa* with a "clean garment". He and Rav Naftoli were the two witnesses to Rav Nachman's famous promise to pull out of Gehinnom anyone who gives *tzedoka* and says *Tikkun HaK'lali* at his *kever*. His son, Rav Tzvi Arye, succeeded him. Rav Tzvi's son was Rav Nachman of Tcherin, (5605/1845);
- * **Rav Aharon ben Rav Chaim Halberstam** of Sanz, son of the *Divrei Chaim*, (5663/1903);
- * **Rav Menachem Nachum ben Rav Yehuda Leib** of Kobrin-Bialystok, a *talmid muvhok* of the *Yesod Ho'Avoda* of Slonim, (5678/1918);
- * **Rav Shlomo Halberstam** (b. 1908), son of Rav Ben Zion, grandson of Rav Shlomo, founder of the Bobov dynasty. At the outbreak of World War II, he and his father escaped to Lemberg. On the 4th of Av 1942 his father was killed, and Rav Shlomo escaped to the Bochnia Ghetto. In Bochnia, the *Rav* lost his *Rebbetzin* and two children. He managed to escape with his only surviving child, Rav Naftoli Tzvi, to Budapest, and then to Bucharest. Rav Shlomo is believed to have been the last remaining *Chassidish Rav* to have survived the Holocaust. He remarried after the war and rebuilt Bobov into one of the largest *Chassidish* communities in the world. Born in the Galicia region of central Europe, Rav Halberstam arrived in the United States in 1946, alone and indigent, after his group was largely obliterated by the Nazis. During the war, Rav Halberstam dressed up as a nun in order to rescue other Jews, hiding them in the false bottom of a coal truck. Rav Halberstam is widely credited with rebuilding the Bobover community in the United States. There is a book, *Nor the Moon by Night*, about his experiences during the Holocaust. It was mentioned many times after his passing that it was no coincidence that his *Yahrzeit* is the same as Aharon *HaKohen*'s because he was the consummate *ohev sholom v'rodef sholom* and was loved by all, (5760/2000).

❖ 2nd of Menachem Av ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Jul 22nd)

- * **Rav Aharon ben Rav Moshe Tumim** (b. 1630). A *Rav* in Prague from 1659 to 1672, Rav Aharon became *Rosh Yeshiva* in Worms in 1672. He wrote *Mateh Aharon* on the *Haggoda*. In 1687, he accepted a position as *Rav* of Cracow, but because of political circumstances, he

delayed his departure until 1690. Shortly after he left Worms, the city was destroyed by the troops of King Louis XIV. He served in Cracow for four months before a Polish nobleman, while visiting another region, had him arrested for no reason, and placed on a horse to bring him to jail. On the way, he fell off many times. They put him right back on until, as a result of the torture, he died from his wounds, (5450/1690);

- * **Rav Aharon Yosef Baksht**, known in *mussar* circles as Reb Archik (b. 1863). Born in Iyola, Lithuania (near Vilna), an only child to Rav Yeshayohu Baksht, he left home to study in Volozhin when he was fourteen. After studying under Rav Yitzchok Blazer at *Halvoyas HaMeis Yeshiva* in Slabodka for three years, he transferred to the *Bais HaTalmud* in Kelm and became one of Rav Simcha Zissel's most outstanding *talmidim*. After his marriage, he took his first rabbinical post in Bisgola, near Shavli. Thereafter, he served at Simiatitz (1896–1901), Volgograd (later known as Stalingrad), Shadova, Suvalk, and eventually, in 1926, in Lomza, where he also founded a *Kollel*. In 1937, he moved to Shavli to replace Rav Meir Atlas and founded a *Yeshiva*. He was shot and murdered by the Nazis. Sadly, his many *chiddushim* and commentary on the *Yerushalmi* were also destroyed, (5701/1941);
- * **Rav Gedalia Silverstone**. Born in Eastern Europe in 1871, he studied in the *Yeshiva* of Telshe under Rav Eliezer Gordon. In 1901, Rav Silverstone became chief *Rav* of Belfast, Ireland. In approximately 1906, he moved to Washington, D.C., where he served several congregations, including *Tifereth Yisrael* (which was then Orthodox) and *Ohev Sholom*. During the 1930s he settled in *Eretz Yisrael*. His works include *Bais Meir*; *Yeshua Gedola*; *Pirchei Aviv*; *Sukkas Sholom* and a *Haggoda* commentary entitled *Korban Pesach*, (5704/1944);
- * **Rav Moshe ben Rav Avrohom Stern**, the Debrecziner *Rav*, *mechaber* of *Be'er Moshe*. Born in 1914 in Neuhaizal, Slovakia, on *Hoshana Rabba*, his father, Rav Avrohom, was the *Rav* of Neuhaizal, a historian and *mechaber* of the *seforim Gapei Eish* on the *Shas*; *Shulchan Eish* and *Melitzei Eish*. After learning with his father and grandfather, Rav Moshe left Neuhaizal to study in *Yeshivas Pressburg*, headed by the *Chasam Sofer's* great-grandson, Rav Akiva Sofer, the *Daas Sofer*. Rav Moshe married a daughter of Rav Mordechai Nissan *HaKohen* Strasser, a grandson of the *Chasam Sofer*. After his marriage, he moved to Debrecen, Hungary's second largest city, where Jews had been barred from living until 1840. Debrecen had served as the capital of Hungary twice, once in 1849, and a second time, in 1944. In Debrecen, he was appointed a *Posek* and *Dayan*. By 1941, 9,142 Jews lived in Debrecen and comprised about 7 percent of its population. After the war, about 4,640 Jews returned to Debrecen, making it the largest Jewish community in the area. Rav Moshe restructured the *kehilla*. Together with the *Admor* of Erlau, he even founded a *Yeshiva* in Budapest. In about 1950, Rav Moshe was invited to be the *Rav* of Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he stayed for a year. Soon afterward, Rav Moshe moved to New York and established his *Kahal Yesodei HaTorah*, whose congregants were mostly immigrants from Hungary. In 1969, Rav Moshe began publishing his *sefer* of responsa *Be'er Moshe*. Another of Rav Moshe's *seforim* is his *Kuntrus Ha'Electric* where he discusses the dozens of *shailos* involved with electricity, such as accepting testimony over the phone and setting up alarms to work on *Shabbos*, (5757/1997).

❖ 3rd of Menachem Av ~ Begins Thursday Night (Jul 23rd)

- * **Rav Shimshon ben Rav Pesach** of Ostropoli *Hy"d*, respected by both *Ashkenazi* and *Sefardi Rabbonim* for his explanation of the *Ari HaKodosh* commentary on *Pesach* and the Ten

Plagues in Egypt. There is a famous promise in his commentary on *Pesach* that anybody who reads the commentary even once each year and on *Erev Pesach* will be saved from any accident or strange death for the whole year. Rav Shimshon, along with ten thousand Jews of Polana, died *al kiddush Hashem*, in the Chmielnicki massacres, (5408/1648);

- * **Rav Shimshon Bachrach** of Nicholsburg, son of the *Chavos Yair*, (5481/1721);
- * **Rav Gedalia Aharon ben Rav Yehoshua Rabinowitz** of Monastrich *Hy"d*, killed in a pogrom in Uman with seven hundred others, (5679/1919).;
- * **Rav Dovid Shapira ben Rav Pinchas Leib**, (5694/1934);
- * **Rav Chaim Yechezkel Taub** of Ozorov *ben Rav Yisrael* of Modzitz, (5698/1938);
- * **Rav Yehoshua Heschel HaLevi** *ben Rav Chaim Shmuel Horowitz Hy"d*, a descendant of the *Chozeh* (Seer) of Lublin, (5703/1943);
- * **Rav Moshe Sitrin**, a known *Sefardi* sage. He wrote the *Sefer Be'er Moshe*. He lived in the city of Medabartzin, (5757/1997);
- * **Rav Yaakov Landau**, son of the *Noda BiYehuda*, (5582/1822);
- * **Rav Shmuel Bornstein** (also known as Rav Shmuel Salir), *mechaber* of *Shem Mishmuel* and *Rebbe* of Sochaczew (Sochochow) (b. 1855), son of the *Avnei Nezer*, (5687/1927);
- * **Rav Yitzchok ben Rav Mordechai Twersky**, the first Skverer-Kishinev *Rebbe* in America. Known as Reb Itzikel Skverer, he left Ukraine and came to America, arriving in 1923. Eventually he settled in the Boro Park section of Brooklyn, (5701/1941);
- * **Rav Eliyohu Moshe Shisgal** [Schisgal]. Learned with Rav Shlomo Heiman at *Yeshiva Torah Vodaas*. He married Faye Gittel Feinstein, daughter of Rav Moshe Feinstein, (5633/1973).



❁ HILLULA DE'TZADDIKA ❁

WHAT'S BEHIND YAHRZEIT MEANINGS & CUSTOMS

The *Maharil*, in *Hilchos Taanis*, teaches us that the reason why there is a custom to visit the *Bais hachaim* on a fast is because “this place is the resting place of the *Tzaddikim* and is therefore sanctified, pure and holy and our tefillos are more readily heard, accepted and answered when *davened* on holy ground. When you *daven* there, do not make requests of the dead who are buried there; rather ask *Hashem* to answer you mercifully in their merit. Then circle around the graves and donate charity before reciting tefillos.”

בית הקברות הוא מקום מנוחת הצדיקים ומתוך כך הוא מקום קדוש וטהור התפילה נתקבלה שם יותר, אך אל ישים מגמתו נגד המתים, אך יבקש מהשי"ת שיתן עליו רחמים בזכות הצדיקים שוכני עפר, ויקיף הקברות, ויתן צדקה קודם שיאמר התחינות.

The *Zohar* in *VaYeira* page 71 teaches us that if we suffer any calamity or tragedy we have the custom to go and daven at the kevorim of *Tzaddikim*. The reason for this is that we approach them with fasting, remorse and repentance, and we have in mind that the departed souls ask and *daven* for us before *Hashem* on High, as opposed to the prohibition against speaking to the dead which is an idolatrous practice where the idol worshippers sought out the impure dead souls and bodies using sorcery and witchcraft. Instead, beseech our *Tzaddikim* who, in *gan eden*, are truly alive, and ask through *tefilla* and fasting and *teshuva* alone.

❁ GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM ❁

STORIES & ANECDOTES

Rav Sinai Halberstam of Zhemigrad, 26th of Tammuz

Rav Sinai Halberstam was born in 5630/1870 in Rudnick. When his father, Rav Baruch of Gorlitz, asked his own father, the Divrei Chaim of Sanz, what to name the baby, the Sanzer Rav said to name him after Rav Baruch's maternal great-grandfather, Rav Elazar Nissan of Drohobitch, (the father of his father-in-law, the Yetev Lev of Sighet). But then the Divrei Chaim asked another *Godol* who was present.

"It is the custom," the *Godol* replied, "that one does not name after a person who was *niftar* young." Rav Elazar Nissan had been *niftar* young.

The Divrei Chaim thought for a moment. "Then name him Sinai, for that has the same letters as Nissan, and may he grow up to be a *Sinai V'Oker Horim*, a giant in the depth and breadth of Torah."

At a young age Rav Sinai married the daughter of Rav Naftoli Horowitz of Melitz.

Rav Sinai was known for his *chessed*, even in his early years. While a newlywed still living with his in-laws in Melitz, his *Rebbetzin* noticed that some of his garments were missing. Rav Sinai had been given eighteen undershirts before his wedding, and now he had only ten. He explained to his wife that he had noticed a person at the *mikveh* who had only one tattered undershirt to his name, so he gave him some of his own.

Rav Sinai was appointed Rav of Koloshitz after his wedding. He served there briefly until the elderly Rav of Zhemigrad was *niftar*, leaving his position to "a grandson of the Divrei Chaim". When the post was offered to Rav Sinai in 5664/1904, he was reminded of an incident

that had occurred many years before. In Zhemigrad with his father for a *simcha*, his father publicly offered him a *l'chaim* as Rav of Zhemigrad. The Chassidim of Zhemigrad tried to protest, but the reigning Rav hushed them. "There is nothing to correct," he said.

Rav Sinai accepted the *rabbonus* of Zhemigrad and led the town for over thirty years. He was renowned as a *darshan* and composer of *niggunim*, and for caring for the poor with *mesirus nefesh*. He rose every night at *chatzos* to learn Kabbala until the morning.

Every Purim, Rav Sinai received many *mishlochei manos* containing envelopes with *tzedaka* as a major component. He would match the sum to his list of needy recipients and send out new envelopes with his *gabbai* all over town. By evening, not a penny was left in the house.

When he became ill later in life, he moved to Cracow for treatment. A few years later the Nazis overran Poland, and he fled to Lemberg, Galicia. Tragically, his *Rebbetzin* was *niftar* and was buried in Boberka.

The Soviets exiled Rav Sinai and his family to Siberia on an overcrowded train in which the prisoners were confined for weeks. Rav Sinai did not survive the trip. *Niftar* on the 26th of Tammuz, 5701/1941, he was buried in the forests of Omsk. Clean, white fabric was miraculously procured for use as *tachrichim*, and the family was further privileged to erect a *matzeiva* on his *kever* in the forest.

Sons of his who perished in the Holocaust were Rav Chaim Yehuda, Rav in Oshpitzin; Rav Avrohom Abish of Satmar; Rav Dovid of Radomsk; Rav Aharon of

Zitomir; Rav Yechezkel of Rudnick; and Rav Baruch of Zokilkov. His son-in-law was Rav Boruch of Sanz-Gribov. *Hashem yinkom domom.*

Sons who survived the war are Rav Yaakov of Tchakava-Yerushalayim; Rav Yisrael of Zhemigrad-New York; and Rav

Aryeh Leibish of Zhemigrad-Bnei Brak, and his son-in-law Rav Yaakov Moskowitz of Shotz-Haifa.

Zechusam yagen aleinu.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-26-tammuzjuly-24/



Rav Nachman Bulman, 26th of Tammuz

"Who can imagine ever again seeing such genius and passion joined together in one person?" Rav Noach Orlowek remarked to me at the conclusion of the *levaya* for Rav Nachman Bulman late *Motzaei Shabbos*.

Few people ever lived at the level of emotional intensity of Rav Bulman. The surprise is not that his poor, misshapen heart eventually gave out, but that it could have sustained him for seventy-seven years under the constant strain to which it was subjected.

That too must have been included in the *berachah* of the Imrei Emes. Rav Bulman's father Meir had already buried two wives and two children in Europe and his mother was in her mid-forties when they wrote to the Imrei Emes of Gur for a *berachah* that they should yet be blessed with children. Rav Bulman was the fruit of that *berachah*.

No event in the *Ribbono shel Olams* world ever seemed trivial to Rav Bulman. Everything was cosmic in his eyes, and he responded accordingly. Anything might trigger a welter of emotions, without diminishing his analytical clarity. The Gemara (*Avodah Zara* 20.) relates that Rav Akiva once saw Rufina, the beautiful wife of Turnus Rufus. Rav Akiva spat, then laughed, and finally cried. He spat as he remembered the lowly source of her beauty; laughed out of recognition that she was destined to be a *ger tzedek* and to become his wife after the *petira* of his wife

Rachel; and cried over the thought of the grave that would one day claim that beauty. Rav Bulman had a similar ability to encompass many conflicting emotions at the same time, and to understand the source of each of them.

While still in his early thirties, he was already the most sought after orator in the American Orthodox world. His speeches were not mere entertainments, but intense learning experiences. Even those who could not follow the profundity of his thought felt themselves being transported to higher realms as he spoke. Starting softly, there came a point in every speech where Rav Bulman would become so carried away with his subject that his voice would crack, and with it the hearts of his listeners. At an Agudath Yisrael convention in the late 50's, he spoke of the duty of the Orthodox community to reach out to Jews who had not yet recognized that they were parched for Torah. When the young man finished, the Kopycznitzer Rebbe rushed over and kissed him.



Nowhere was his passion more evident than in his davening. Bochorim would slip out of their yeshivos before *Neilah* to go to the Young Yisrael of Far

Rockaway to hear Rav Bulman plead with the *Ribbono shel Olam* for each and every member of Klal Yisrael. *Kohanim* who gazed upon Rav Bulman's face as they prepared to *duchan* for the last time on Yom Kippur sensed that he was in another world, directly in front of the *Kisei HaKavod* (Throne of Glory). (As recently as four years ago before his *petira*, he still was the *Shaliach Tzibur* for *Kol Nidrei*, *Maariv*, *Mussaf*, and *Neilah* on Yom Kippur.)

Rav Bulman once told a bocher at Ohr Somayach who approached him in Elul with a question in *emunah* to defer the question until after *Mussaf* on Rosh Hashanah. Listening to Rav Bulman speak to *Hashem* in *tefillah* was sufficient to remove all intellectual doubts. To him, davening was a conversation with the Creator. He once explained to Rav Mordechai Pearlman, the long-time *Shaliach Tzibur* at Ohr Somayach for the Yomim Noraim, every place where the *niggun* should go up or down depending upon the different *middah* (aspect) of *Hashem* being referred to according to Kabbalah.

Rav Bulman was a Klal-Yisrael-Jew, whose heart embraced every single Yid. He rejoiced at every Jewish *simcha*, and suffered every Yiddishe *tzara*, whether of the Klal or of an individual. His only personal need was other Jews to whom he could devote himself totally. From the age of twenty-five, he led *kehillos* in Danville and Newport News, Virginia; South Fallsburg; and Far Rockaway. In every place he served, he made a lasting impact. When he arrived in Danville, there was not even half a minyan of Shabbos-observant men. Yet numbered among the youth that he touched in his three years in Danville are *roshei yeshiva*, *rabbonim*, and the wives of *rabbonim* and teachers. Long after he left Danville, the congregants still looked to him as their rav. Twenty-three years after his departure, on the eve of the Bulmans' *aliyah* to Eretz Yisrael, the Danville

congregation made a special farewell party for the Bulmans.

Rav Bulman implanted in the unpromising soil of rural Virginia, the Hirschian Austritt principle of eschewing all connection of anything that smacked of heresy. When the community in Danville was no longer viable, the members razed the shul rather than risk it being taken over by a Reform congregation or a church. When the day school in Newport News that Rav Bulman founded could no longer sustain itself, it simply closed its doors rather than become a community school, in which Torah would be reduced to one of the options. In both cases, the members of the *kehillah* were simply acting according to the principles that they had learned from Rav Bulman.

Upon moving to Eretz Yisrael in 1975, Rav Bulman became the *Mashgiach* at Ohr Somayach. The author of these words is one of hundreds who would likely never find their way into the Torah community but for Rav Bulman.

His office was the address for all those seeking to be convinced of the truth of Torah. He found a way to connect to each student according to his needs. One former student, who went on to become a Hillel rav on several large campuses, recalls that the turning point for him was when he told Rav Bulman that he intended to spend Pesach vacation sightseeing in Egypt. Rav Bulman began crying. Those tears not only marked the end of the travel plans to Egypt, but the beginning of the young man's taking his studies seriously.

Another student was spending the summer at Ohr Somayach prior to commencing studies to become a Conservative clergyman. At their first meeting, Rav Bulman did not begin with a frontal attack on the Conservative movement. Rather he suggested that the young man read the last chapter of *Conservative Judaism* by Marshall Sklare, a sociologist deeply sympathetic to the

movement. After discussing the remarkable growth of the movement in the 1950's and 1960's, Sklare concludes with an assessment of the movement's minimal impact on the spiritual life of its followers. Rav Bulman was wise enough to recognize that the young man would conclude on his own that his idealistic commitment to the Jewish people would find no satisfaction within the Conservative movement. Who but Rav Bulman could have so quickly grasped the nature of someone to whom he was speaking for the first time, or could have known where to direct the young man so that he would feel the decision to abandon his career plans was his own and not forced upon him.

After four years at Ohr Somayach, Rav Bulman devoted the next fourteen years of his life to creating a community in Migdal HaEmek in the Lower Galilee. Kiryas Nachliel was designed for those mostly English-speaking immigrants who had not found their place in the major Orthodox centers of Yerushalayim or Bnei Brak. It was a community of *baalebatim*, firmly anchored by a yeshiva and kollel and with constant *shiurim* for men, women, and children from the rav. The effort to create a community with few parallels since the Frankfurt of Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch sapped Rav Bulman's strength and health. Nevertheless most of those who shared in that ultimately failed experiment with Rav Bulman would look back on the years invested as the richest of their lives.

The list of accomplishments on Rav Bulman's imaginary curriculum vitae is a long one: first editor of the Jewish Observer and long time member of the magazine's editorial board; founder of Sarah Schenirer High School in Boro Park; founder, together with Rav Jechiel Perr, of Yeshiva Derech Ayson of Far Rockaway; translator of Rav Eliyahu Kitov's three-volume classic *Sefer Todaah* (The Book of Our Heritage). But his greatest impact was surely through the thousands of *shiurim* he

taught over fifty years and upon the thousands who sought out his advice.

Years ago, at the first staff meeting of Seminary Darchei Binah, Rav Bulman told the teachers how he had been approached by a middle-aged woman at a Torah Umesorah convention. She asked, "Rav Bulman do you remember me? Rav Bulman confessed that he did not. The woman told him that she had been his student more than twenty years earlier in Newport News. She then pulled back nearby to reveal a large range of children all beautifully dressed in Shabbos clothes. "All these children are yours, she told Rav Bulman, "For without you, neither I nor any of them would be here today.

Knowing that you have the power to influence generations, should be your inspiration, Rav Bulman told the educators. He himself was the best proof of the power of one caring individual to touch hundreds of lives. For over a quarter of a century, his home was the central address in Eretz Yisrael for hundreds of English-speaking immigrants or those contemplating *aliyah*.

He was incapable of guarding his own strength or time. His door was open to all who sought him, and there was no issue that was beneath him. By taking so deeply to heart the problems that were brought to him, he had a unique ability to lift the despair from those who poured out their hearts to him. Because he cared so much they no longer had to.

All those who could not find their place within the Yisraeli religious society found their way to Rav Bulman's door. What they perceived as failure, Rav Bulman assured them, was often a sign of their strengths the result of their quest for truth and purity, of their pain at the failure of the community to live up to its own highest ideals. At the same time, he would gradually show them how to find their place within society.

The last time I spoke to Rav Bulman

at length, he was filled with excitement about a group of young teenage girls in the neighborhood with whom he met every Shabbos. Most of the group suffered from serious adjustment problems after moving to Eretz Yisrael from America at an older age, and Rav Bulman felt that he had been able to help them get over the hurdle.

He understood that different *neshamos* are drawn to different aspects of Torah, and had an uncanny ability to direct different people to the proper path in Torah for them. That he could do only because he himself was so grounded in the full panoply of Torah expression.

Each group claimed him, and in a way they were all right. He was a proud Chassid, with an absolute command of the Chassidic masters. At the same time, he was enamored with Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch. He opened up the eyes of thousands for the first time to the *Kuzari*; to the *Maharal*; to the *Beis Elokim* of the Mabit; to the *Nesivos HaShalom* of the Slonimer Rebbe; to the *Malbim* on *Shir HaShirim*. Each *shiur* would begin with an overview of the topic, and then a reverential word-by-word reading of the text, in the course of which he demonstrated how each word is pregnant with meaning.

With Rav Bulman's passing, a complete commentary on *Tanach* has been lost and another on the *Maharal* and another on Jewish history. His knowledge of the latter was both panoramic and detailed. What delighted him above all was the rich tapestry of Torah as lived by Jews throughout the ages. He knew each thread of Torah thought at its sources, and how all the threads intertwined.

By virtue of his phenomenal breadth and depth of his knowledge, he was perhaps the figure in our time best qualified to carry forth the project begun by Rav Chaim Heller in Berlin between the two world wars of teaching *ma lhashiv lapikorus*.

Such a work for our times will now never be written. Nor will the hundreds of commentaries that Rav Bulman carried around in his head and heart.

A great loss certainly; a failure no. For if Rav Bulman never found the time to commit to paper the synthesis of classical Torah thought that was uniquely his, it was only because he never found it within him to hold back his heart from any Jew in need. He had heart enough to give to everyone but himself.

He never learned to conserve and marshal his strength. As soon as he saw the truth, he acted upon it. "Im a Kotzker" he said of himself.

"He was," says Rav Ben Tzion Kermaier, who worked closely with Rav Bulman in his last years, "the most gallant man I ever met. He sallied forth into battle without calculating the likelihood of success and undeterred by the wounds he still bore from previous battles."

Along the way, there were great triumphs. Shortly after his arrival in Eretz Yisrael, he took the lead in bringing together all the various religious factions to combat former Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kalleks plan to build an amphitheater for sports on Shabbos on land that is today the chareidi neighborhood of Ramat Shlomo.

Well past midnight on *Motzaei* Shabbos, Jews converged upon Ohr Somayach for Rav Bulman's *levaya*, some traveling for four hours to get there. Soon the *beis medrash* was filled to overflowing, and many were forced to stand outside where they were unable to hear a word of the *hespedim*. To those who could not hear the *hespedim*, it barely mattered. For they gathered in groups, often with old friends they had not seen in years, to deliver their own *hespedim* and describe Rav Bulman's impact on their lives.

They felt little need to have their sense of loss aroused by others. For they all knew that they would never again merit to

be touched by someone embodying such a combination of mind and heart.

Hamodia newspaper article by Yonason Rosenblum

www.ohr.edu/yhiy/article.php/9



Yosef HaTzaddik ben Yaakov Avinu, 27th of Tammuz

Yosef HaTzaddik was exceedingly good looking and only seventeen at the time when he was enslaved all alone in a foreign land. Potifar's wife was not Egyptian and had great beauty. She tried everyday to get him to sin - the *Medrash* states she would change her clothing many times a day as well as other tactics. Yet, Yosef not only did not sin he never looked at her even once.

Potifar's wife had her servants tie down Yosef HaTzaddik and they placed a metal brace around his neck with a sharp point right under his chin. Yosef HaTzaddik still refused to look at her and each time he would lower his head and cut open his chin. It therefore says "They bound his legs in rope and metal pierced his soul" (Tehillim 105.) This happened every single day for a period of a year. He never once gave in to his desires.

His biggest test happened on the day of "*Nital*". From ancient times, this day has been a day of worship for the Pagans. It is the shortest day of the year and when the night is the longest. It is on this day that the forces of darkness have the most power. The Christians took this day and use it for



their Xmas. The day is so impure that many *Kabbalists* are afraid to study *Torah* on this night fearing the other side might suck energy from it. Instead they do acts of kindness to overrun the *Dinim*.

The Egyptians - who worshiped the forces of the other side would make a huge celebration for their gods on this day. They would do much demonic worship to receive black power. On that day, the house was totally empty since everybody went to participate in the worship, only the wife of Potifar was home claiming she was sick. On this particular day, Yosef HaTzaddik was at his lowest point since the other side holds much power. The wife of Potifar was on the highest since the power of the snake was ruling.

Due to the tremendous strength of the *sitra achra* (other side), Yosef HaTzaddik almost fell. However, all his previous resistance now came to his aid and he visualized the image of his father Yaakov Avinu. He then meditated on the name containing the Mystery of the *Kesones Pasim*. This was the last thing his father had taught him. With this he overcame his desires - he stabbed his fingers and toes in the ground placing his full weight on them until the desires left him. [*Medresh* states that the seed escaped through his ten fingers. That is one of the reasons that the *Asarei Harigei Malchus* (the ten famous Martyrs) had to repair and atone. That's a testament for the high *madrega* Yosef HaTzaddik was.]

Even when the wife of Potifar tried forcing him to sin, he escaped not delaying there for even a second. To get away from her, he left her grabbing his overcoat. Yosef

HaTzaddik knew full and well that she would now have evidence to accuse him. He also knew the fate of an adulteress slave in Egyptian law - death.

However, Potifar – who was an eunuch - who knew his business dealings had been blessed since the arrival of Yosef *HaTzaddik* and refused to have him killed. After tremendous pressure from his wife, he instead had Yosef *HaTzaddik* thrown into a pit. The wife of Potifar would constantly sneak into the jail and continue to tempt him including offering him freedom and money, and had him tortured when he refused.

Yosef *HaTzaddik* did not give in he won the battle. He earned the title Yosef *Hatzaddik*. He received the position of *Tzaddik Yesod Olam* and *Yesod Sh'Besod*. *Kabbalah* teaches that once an action has already been done in history it carves a path. When this action is repeated, it becomes easier each time. Yosef *HaTzaddik* had the hardest temptations in history, not only because of the circumstances but also because of the strength of his desires which no one ever experienced and no one ever will. When Yosef *HaTzaddik* defeated this and was *Shomer Habris* - he paved a path for future *Shomrei Habris*.

Yosef *HaTzaddik* received much reward in this world and the next. He became viceroy of Egypt - the most powerful country of that age. As it says in

Tehillim 105 "He made him master of his house and controller of all his wealth. He had the power to impress the highest-ranking officials and was able to outsmart even their wisest men."

The *Talmud* in *Brachos* says that the descendants of Yosef *HaTzaddik* are not subject to damage caused by the evil eye. Yosef *HaTzaddik* who did not let his eyes gaze at something they were not allowed to, his descendants rule over the power of the eye.

When the Jews wanted to cross the *Yam Suf* it refused to split, until it saw the coffin of Yosef *HaTzaddik*.

This is what Rebbe Nachman writes about Yosef *HaTzaddik*: "Yosef *HaTzaddik* who was *Shomer Habris* merited to receive the *Bechorah* (title of Firstborne) and this manifests in having the power of prayer. This is the sword with the double blade."

Attached is a prayer from the *AriZal* and the *Ben Ish Chai* that should be said on the yearly anniversary of a person's *bris* that is *mesaken p'gam habris*. It can be said when necessary too. Being that the *AriZal's yahrzeit* is coming up within the next few weeks, we will repost the *tefillah* again at that time. In the *AriZal's tefillah*, he lists tremendous blessings for those who complete the *tikkun Mem Ches* and say his *tefillah*.

May the *zechus* of Yosef *HaTzaddik* always shield us from all harm, *Amen*.



Rav Yitzchok Charif of Sambur, 27th of Tammuz

Mechaber of Pnei Yitzchok

Rav Yitzchok Charif was the son of Rav Moshe of Dregatchin, the *mechaber* of *Maggid Mishneh* on the *Mishnas Chassidim*.

Rav Yitzchok was known as a *Godol* in both *nigleh* and *nistar*. Many of the generation's *tzaddikim* held him in the

highest esteem.

When Rav Yitzchok was appointed Rav of Sambur, the non-Jewish ruler of the region came to receive his blessing.

Rav Yitzchok was well respected and admired by the members of the *kehilla* for his fatherly love and dedication to all their

needs. Despite his lofty level of Torah and *kedusha*, Rav Yitzchok was involved in all that was happening in the city, and thus drew the people close to the Torah.

Many *kehillos* wanted to have Rav Yitzchok as their Rav. Following the *petira* of Rav Meir Berabi, the *kehilla* of Pressburg sought to appoint Rav Yitzchok as their Rav. So as not to delay his decision, they sent a *K'sav Rabbonus* right away to the home of the *Rosh HaKohol* of Sambur. Upon receiving the letter, the *Rosh HaKohol* decided not to show it to Rav Yitzchok, fearing that he would leave the city. When the *kehilla* of Pressburg did not receive any response from Rav Yitzchok, they sent another letter — again to the *Rosh HaKohol* — and again he did not pass it on.

When they realized that Rav Yitzchok was not responding, the Pressburg *kehilla* sent a letter to Rav Meshulom Igra, and in their letter they related the whole issue, that they sent Rav Yitzchok two letters, and since he ignored them, they were now offering Rav Igra the *Rabbonus*.

Rav Meshulom Igra was tempted to accept the prestigious *Rabbonus* of Pressburg, but upon hearing that Rav Yitzchok had declined, he wanted to

discuss the matter with him, and hear his opinion. He traveled to Sambur to meet with Rav Yitzchok. Upon his arrival in Sambur, Rav Yitzchok arranged for a lavish *seuda* to be held in honor of the guest, with the leaders of the *kehilla* attending as well. During the *seuda*, Rav Meshulom asked Rav Yitzchok why he didn't accept the *Rabbonus* of Pressburg. Rav Yitzchok looked up in amazement and said that he had never received such an offer.

The *Rosh HaKohol* stood up and confessed that he was the one who had received — and hidden — the letters, explaining that he did not want Rav Yitzchok to leave the city.

Rav Yitzchok ruled that the *Rabbonus* rightfully belonged to Rav Meshulom Igra, for he was the one to receive the *K'sav Rabbonus*.

Rav Yitzchok wrote *She'eilos U'Teshuvos Pnei Yitzchok* and *Ho'Elef Lecha Shlomo on Shas*.

He was *niftar* on the 27th of Tammuz 5593/1833.

Zecher tzaddik livrachah.

www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-27-tammuzjuly-5/



Rav Shmuel Aharon Rubin, 27th of Tammuz

Rav of Kartshin

Rav Shmuel Aharon Rubin was born about 5584/1824. His father was Rav Tzvi Elazar, a *Dayan* in Cracow. He was a descendant of (and named after) Rav Shmuel Aharon of Kaidonov.

He learned under Rav Moshe Wolf Frenkel, Rav of Pshevorsk and *mechaber* of *Meishiv KaHalacha*. After his marriage, he settled in Brigel where his father-in-law lived, and became close to Rav Aryeh Lifschitz, the Aryeh D'Bei Ila'i. Following the *petira* of the Aryeh D'Bei Ila'i, he traveled to the court of the Divrei Chaim of Sanz.

Rav Shmuel Aharon was also close with the leading *Poskim* of his time, especially Rav Yosef Shaul Natansohn, who wrote him many halachic responsa and gave a warm *haskoma* to his *sefer Bais Aharon on Hilchos Gittin*.

In 5625/1865, Rav Shmuel Aharon was appointed Rav of Zvarow, and a short while later, of Kartshin. The Divrei Chaim, together with Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Rimanov, wrote a letter to the *kehilla* of Kartshin in praise of their new Rav.

Rav Shmuel Aharon wrote several

seforim: Bais Aharon on Gittin; Haggada Shel Pesach Lachma Anya; a commentary on P'sikta Rabbosi; She'eilos U'Teshuvos Shem Olom; Droshos Bais Aharon and others.

He was *niftar* on the 27th of

Tammuz, 5637/1877, in Karlsbad, and buried in Cracow, near the *kever* of his father.

Zecher tzaddik livrachah.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-27-tammuzjuly-25/



Rav Shmuel Rozovsky, 27th of Tammuz

Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva Ponovezh

Rav Shmuel was born in Grodna to Rav Michel Dovid (Rav of Grodna for forty years) and Sarah Pearl, daughter of Rav Avrohom Gelburd, who had served as Grodna's previous Rav for almost fifty years. At a very young age, he began to study in the Sha'ar HaTorah Yeshiva of Grodna, under Rav Shimon Shkop, eventually becoming his *talmid muvhok*. In 1935, his father was *niftar*, and the *Gedolei Torah* urged Rav Shmuel to succeed him. However, he was drafted into the Russian army and moved to Eretz Yisrael. There, he began studying in the Lomza Yeshiva in Petach Tikva.

In 1944, Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman opened the Ponovezh Yeshiva and chose Rav Shmuel, only thirty years old at the time, to head the Yeshiva. Later on, he was joined by Rav Dovid Povarsky and Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach. Subsequently, he was asked by Rav Kahaneman to head the newly founded Grodna Yeshiva in Ashdod.

(Dovid Bernstein - Matzav.com Newscenter)

www.matzav.com/rav-shmuel-rozovsky-ztl-on-his-yahrtzeit-today



Some Shidduch Questions from Rav Shmuel Rozovsky

One day, a Yid from Yerushalayim traveled to Bnei Brak to ask the legendary Rosh Yeshiva of Ponevezh, Rav Shmuel Rozovsky, about a boy in the Yeshiva for

his daughter who reached eligible age.

He asked the Rosh Yeshiva how many hours a day the boy learned. Was he punctual in arriving to *Seder* and did he spend his time diligently. Did he come to davening on time and did he actively participate in *Shiur*. Did he ask relevant questions and did he understand the answers.

After receiving a favorable report to his questions, he thanked Rav Shmuel for his time and began to leave. At that point Rav Shmuel in his gentle and noble manner turned to father and said, until now you asked me questions, is it okay if I ask you some questions? The father agreed.

It seems to me that you are inquiring about the boy for your daughter and you seem happy with the report I gave you. You obviously think that all your daughter needs to know is whether he comes on time and he is a *Lamdan*. However, it is entirely possible that your daughter would like to know if he is a *mentch*.

It would seem fitting that you ask me, how often does he brush his teeth? Is he pleasant to sit near? How does he behave in the dining room? Does he arrive first to the dining room and take the biggest portion, or does he linger after *Mincha* for a few minutes to learn with a Chavrusa and eat whatever portion is left?

What does he do when the pitcher is empty on the table, does he sit patiently waiting for someone else to fill it up for him

or does he run to fill it up himself? Does he occasionally go into the kitchen to thank the staff for preparing the food? Does he eat the food even if he doesn't like it and thank them graciously for preparing it or does he just go to the nearby kiosk to buy something he likes?

You came to the conclusion that he is a *masmid*, did you ask what he does when he finishes learning late at night and his roommates are sleeping? Does he take off his shoes and tiptoe in so as not to wake them or does he walk in noisily? Does he make his bed and keep his things neat?

I think, said Rav Shmuel that you need to check these things out. If he is spoiled and he arrives home in the

afternoon and does not like the food your daughter worked hard to prepare, his face will crumple in obvious dissatisfaction. Will your daughter then be happy that her father checked the boy out with the Rosh Yeshiva who told him that he knows every *Ktzos* and *Rav Akiva Eiger* in *Bava Basra*? Will you daughter say, it's true that he has no manners and no social skills but I respect him anyway because he knows all the intricacies of the *sugya* of the bees and the mustard in *Bava Basra*?

This was Rav Shmuel's approach to finding a fine boy for your daughter.

www.revach.net/avodah/bnei-bayscha/Some-Shidduch-Questions-

[From-Rav-Shmuel-Rozovsky/5098](http://www.revach.net/avodah/bnei-bayscha/Some-Shidduch-Questions-)



Rav Moshe Teitelbaum, 27th of Tammuz

The *Yismach Moshe*

Rav Moshe Teitelbaum, known by the name of his *sefer* on *Chumash*, *Yismach Moshe*, was held in high esteem by the *Gedolim* of his day. "The *Gaon HaGodol*, the pillar and tower, the righteous and holy, the Rav of all of *Klal Yisrael*", wrote the Sho'el UMeishiv of Lvov. "*Moshe Emes V'Sorasos Emes*" wrote Rav Meshulom Igra. The Chasam Sofer considered him to be a dear friend and held him in the highest esteem.

The *Yismach Moshe* was born in Premysl in 5519/1759. While the *Yismach Moshe* spread the light of Chassidus to Hungary, he was a staunch *Misnaged* in his earlier years. The biography of the Vilna Gaon by Rav Menachem Gerlitz tells the story how, as a young boy, the *Yismach Moshe* made a journey to see the Gaon in Vilna. He was fortunate to be admitted to speak to the Gaon and even eat the Shabbos *seuda* with him. The *Yismach Moshe* asked the Vilna Gaon if he could remain in Vilna to become his *talmid*. The Vilna Gaon told him to return home

because Hungary needed him. What the Gaon meant is subject to interpretation, but surely had he remained in Vilna the course of Chassidic history would have been altered.

After his daughter married the Aryeh D'Bei Ila'i, Rav Aryeh Leib Lipshitz, the *Yismach Moshe* noticed strange behavior by his new son-in-law. When he realized that Rav Aryeh Leib was a Chassid, he admonished him for his ways. Rav Aryeh Leib agreed to give up Chassidus if the *Yismach Moshe* would travel with him to visit the Chozeh of Lublin, his Rebbe, just once. The rest, as they say, is history. The *Yismach Moshe* not only left his son-in-law alone, he himself became a Chassid of the Chozeh and a Rebbe to thousands, with his base in Uyhel, founding the great Sighet-Satmar dynasty.

Aside from the *sefer Yismach Moshe*, his other *seforim* include *Shailos U'Tshuvos Heishiv Moshe* and *Tefilla L'Moshe on Tehillim*. His descendants include his two sons, the Atzei Chaim of

Sighet and the VaYoel Moshe of Satmar; his grandson, the Yetev Lev, as well as the Kedushas Yom Tov. The Yismach Moshe was *niftar* on the 28th of Tammuz 5601/1841.

Yehi Zichro Boruch.

www.revach.net/stories/gedolim-biographies/Rav-Moshe-Teitelbaum-The-Yismach-Moshe-The-Light-Of-All-Of-Hungary/3942



Choosing a Shidduch – The Mashal of the Yismach Moshe for the Aryeh Dvei Illai

As a young adult, Rav Aryeh Leib, better known as the famous Aryeh d'Bei Illai, married the daughter of a wealthy man from Preimsle. It was agreed that his father-in-law would support the young couple indefinitely in order that his brilliant son-in-law could study Torah undisturbed by the burden of providing for a growing family. Unfortunately, it did not take long before his daughter grew tired of her husband's rigid schedule and lack of interest in anything outside of Torah and serving *Hashem*. Her father was a wealthy magnate who had connections with prominent businessmen and hobnobbed with the elite. At the dinner table, he would enthral his family with tales of trips to far-away places and exotic lands, and his meetings and dealings with the rich and famous. Deep down, she had hoped that her husband would one day too be a successful businessman in whom she could take pride. She began to pester Rav Aryeh Leib, asking him when he would be finished his studies, so that he could get down to the business of building an empire. Incredulous, Rav Aryeh Leib told her in no uncertain terms that he had no interest in empire- building. It became obvious that the two were not compatible, and before long they were divorced.

Soon afterwards, a *shadchan* (matchmaker) suggested that perhaps the

righteous Chana, daughter of the famed tzaddik Rav Moshe Teitelbaum, better known as the Yismach Moshe, would be an appropriate match for Rav Aryeh Leib. The Yismach Moshe spent some time getting to know Rav Aryeh Leib, and was taken aback by the young man's extreme dedication and unparalleled brilliance. There was no doubt in his mind: He would do anything to secure Rav Aryeh Leib as a husband for his daughter. He went as far as to tell the *shadchan* that he was willing to obligate himself in an unusually generous dowry.

His wife, when he informed her of his plans, was not impressed. "Should our daughter take someone else's leftovers? If he wasn't good enough for his first wife... And a dowry fit for a king to boot!

"Let me tell you a parable," he said. "A simple farmer is plowing his field when his plow suddenly grinds to a halt. Upon examination, he discovers a wooden chest buried in the earth. Perturbed by the delay, yet with no choice, he digs out the chest. Inside he finds hundreds and hundreds of precious gems and jewels. Simpleton that he was, he assumes the jewels are seeds, and proceeds to soak them in water in order to soften them. When they become soft he will plant them. To his dismay, the "seeds" just don't seem to soften, even after many days of soaking. He takes them to a neighbour to ask his opinion. His neighbour, somewhat brighter than he, realizes what the "seeds" really are. 'You know,' says he, 'these seeds are old and won't likely bear fruit. Leave them here, and I will give you these other seeds instead. They are fresh and will give you excellent produce!' The simple farmer thanks his generous neighbour profusely for his help. Both the simple farmer and his wily neighbour are thrilled with their newfound wealth."

"If his first in-laws," said Rav Moshe to his wife, "were so foolish as to discard the jewel they had been given in exchange for some simple seeds, should we not have

the cunning to quickly grab up the jewel they've left behind?"

Since Rav Moshe was not a wealthy man, and even after selling most everything he had, he still couldn't come up with the amount he had promised for the dowry, he asked his wife that she sell her jewellery. "Chazal say, after all, that one should sell

everything one has in order to marry his daughter to a *talmid chacham* (Torah scholar) [Talmud, *Pesachim* 49a]! Rest assured that this young man is one of the future giants of our generation." After hearing such an impassioned speech from her husband, she did so without hesitation.

www.torah.org/learning/olas-shabbos/5763/chayeisarah.html



Rav Shlomo (Yitzchoki) ben Rav Yitzchok, 29th of Tammuz

Rashi

Rav Shlomo ben Rav Yitzchok lived from February 22, 1040 to July 13, 1105, 4800 - 4865 in the Hebrew calendar. Interestingly, he was thirty-three generations from Rav Yochanan HaSandlar, whose *yohrzeit* is the same day. He was generally known as Rashi, and is said to have been a descendant of Dovid HaMelech, although he himself made no such claim at all. Rashi was born in the town of Troyes in northern France. His father Yitzchok was a great scholar, but very poor. He made a meager living from the sale of wine.

Rashi was still a youngster when he left his home town and went to Worms and other towns that were known for their great Torah scholars. With great zeal Rashi learnt Torah and Talmud, and after some eight years of ardent study, he returned to his home town again. He was then about twenty-five years of age, and continued to study on his own. Rashi began to write his famous commentary on the Tanach and Talmud at an early age. The Tanach was very difficult to understand properly, and the Talmud was even more difficult. Rashi decided to write a commentary in simple language that



would make it easy for every one to learn and understand the Torah.

Rashi was elected Rav of his town, Troyes, but he did not accept any wages, and made his living from the sale of wine, like his father used to do.

On the 29th day of Tammuz, in the year 4865, Rashi passed away at sixty-five years of age, and was buried in Troyes. Rav Sholom of Belz says that whoever learns and completes Rashi on the *Parasha* each week is assured that he will be able to sit in the Mesivta of Rashi in Olam Habah. The Rebbe of Pinsk-Karlin told over the following story:

There were a group of students traveling to Meron when the car that they were travelling in flipped over, causing the death of three of them. The *chavrusa* of one of these students was extremely saddened by the death of his dear friend. One night this dead friend came to him in a dream and said: "Don't be sorrowful. Remember how we used to learn Chumash and Rashi, every week, with great diligence. Now, when I came to the Upper World, they judged that I should be admitted into the chamber of Rashi in Gan Eden, and therefore there is no need for you to be in sorrow".



RASHI (Rav Shlomo Yitzchoki)

By: Nissan Mindel

Every little child in Cheder knows the name. How the Jewish children look forward to the happy day when they will begin to learn Chumash with *Rashi*! The very script of *Rashi* is fascinating! Once Chumash with the *Rashi* commentary is begun, the children know they have reached a new milestone on their wonderful and enchanting road to scholarship and wisdom.

But who was Rashi? When did he live? Where did he live? How did he live? These are some of the questions that many children ask themselves when they begin to learn *Rashi*, and these are some of the questions that I am going to answer here.

"*Rashi*" is not the full name of that great man. It is merely a combination of the three Hebrew letters: *Resh*, *Shin* and *Yud*, which stand for Rav Shlomo Yitzchoki – Rav Shlomo, the son of Yitzchok.

Rav Shlomo Yitzchoki, or Rashi as he is generally known, was born almost a thousand years ago, in the year 4800. He lived for sixty-five years. Rashi is said to be a descendant of Dovid HaMelech.

Rashi was born in the town of Troyes in

France; some people believe he was born in Worms. His father Yitzchok was a



great scholar, but very poor. He made a meager living from the sale of wine.

A wonderful story is told about the birth of Rashi: His father, Rav Yitzchok, once found a rare diamond. "Now there will be no more poverty," he thought, and went to sell the precious stone to the local

jeweler. The jeweler hadn't enough money to pay for such a large diamond, and suggested to the bishop to buy it. Now, the bishop had been looking for such a diamond in order to put it on his cross. He offered a huge amount of money for it. When Rav Yitzchok heard for what purpose the bishop wanted the stone, he refused to sell it. He knew, however, that if he did not sell the stone, it would be taken from him forcibly – and so he threw it into the sea. A Heavenly Voice then resounded: "For this great sacrifice you will be blessed with a son who will outshine all the precious stones in the world, and the light of his Torah will shine forever." The following year a son was born to him, and he called him Shlomo, saying, "May *Hashem* grant him wisdom like Shlomo HaMelech."

[Another legend has it that Rashi's father was granted such a special soul for a son because he cleaned the shul (even using his beard as a broom)].

Rashi was still a youngster when he left his hometown for Worms and other towns that were known for their great Torah scholars. With great zeal Rashi learned Torah and Talmud, and after some eight years of ardent study, he returned to his hometown. He was then about twenty-five years of age, but he continued to study on his own. Soon he became known as a very great scholar, and thousands of students and scholars flocked to him, to learn from him. Rashi was elected Rav of his town Troyes, but he did not accept any wages, and made his living from the sale of wine, like his father had done.

Rashi began to write his famous commentary on the Tanach and Talmud at an early age. The Torah was very difficult to understand properly, and the Talmud was even more difficult. Rashi decided to write a commentary in simple language that would make it easy for everyone to learn and understand the Torah. But Rashi was very modest, and even after he had become famous far and wide, he hesitated to come

out into the open with his commentary. He wanted to make sure that it would be favorably received. So what did he do? He wrote his commentaries on slips of parchment and set out on a two-year journey, visiting the various Torah academies of those days. He went incognito, never disclosing his identity.

Rashi came to a Yeshiva and sat down to listen to the lecture of the Rosh Yeshiva. There came a difficult passage in the Talmud, which the Rav struggled to explain to his students – but did not succeed very well. When Rashi was left alone, he took the slip with his commentary, in which that passage of the Talmud was explained simply and clearly, and put it into the Gemora of the head of the academy. On the following morning, when the Rav opened his Gemora, he found a mysterious slip of parchment in which the passage of the Talmud was so clearly and simply explained that he was amazed. He told his students about it, and they all decided it must have been sent from Heaven. Rashi listened to their praises of his commentary and was very happy to know how useful it was to the students, but he did not say that it was his. And so Rashi went on visiting various academies of the Torah in various lands and cities, and everywhere he planted his slips of commentaries secretly. The way these slips were received made Rashi realize more and more how needed they were, and he continued to write his commentaries on the entire Chumash, *Novi*, and all the *Masechtos* of the vast 'Sea of the Talmud'. These "mysterious" slips of parchment were copied and widely circulated throughout all the academies of the Torah, but nobody knew who the author was.

One time, Rashi was discovered planting a slip of his commentary in the usual manner, and the secret was out. Immediately he was acclaimed by all as the great author of that wonderful commentary. Rashi's name became known

throughout the world. In every Yeshiva, in every Torah school, Rashi's commentary was used by young and old, and he opened the eyes of all the Torah scholars. No other Rav or commentator gained so much popularity as Rashi. There are very few Chumoshim or Gemoras printed without Rashi, and the study of the Torah and Talmud is now almost unthinkable without the aid of Rashi's explanation.

Rashi had no sons, but he had several daughters: some say two; others say three.

His sons-in-law and grandchildren were famous scholars and commentators of the Torah and *Talmud*. One of his grandsons was Rabbeinu Tam; another was Rashbam (Rav Shmuel ben Meir). Rashi's grandsons and talmidim were the authors of the *Tosafos* known to all students of the Talmud.

In the last years of his life Rashi lived to see troubled times. It was the time of the Crusades, when thousands of Jews were massacred by wild mobs that wiped out whole communities on their way. Rashi's heart was broken and full of sorrow about the plight of his unfortunate brethren, and he wrote *piyutim*, some of which have become part of our *tefillos* (especially in the *selichos*).

In his old age, Rashi's health failed him. He was weak and ailing and could no longer write. His daughter then acted as his secretary, and he dictated to her his answers to the many queries that used to come to him from the greatest scholars of his time.

On the 29th of Tammuz, in the year 4865, Rashi was *niftar*. Rashi, however, continues to live through his works which are studied by all students of *Talmudei Torah* and Yeshivos, and by adult scholars too.

For hundreds of years there stood the ancient Beis Medrash in Worms in which Rashi used to learn. In it stood the

ancient stone chair upon which he used to sit. Many people would come and look with awe upon these ancient relics. But in the beginning of the month of Teves in the year 5698 (1937) some vandals set it on fire and destroyed it.

www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/111831/jewish/Rabbi-Shlomo-Yitzchoki-Rashi.htm



Additional notes on Rashi

Tradition ascribes Rashi's descent from the Davidic dynasty as follows: Rashi was the grandson of Rav Elyakim, who was the thirty-first generation from Rav Yochanan HaSandlar, who was the fourth generation from Rav Gamliel HaZaken (the Elder), who was the son of Rav Shimon HaNasi, who was the son of Hillel HaZaken, who was from the descendants of Shefatia, the son of Dovid HaMelech.

Rashi studied under Rav Yaakov ben Yakar, Rav Yitzchok HaLevi and Rav Yitzchok ben Yehuda, who were disciples of Rabbeinu Gershom.

Beside his commentary, Rashi was the legal expert to whom questions were sent from all over Europe. His answers which are cited in the contemporary Jewish legal literature as coming from his rabbinical academy (*Sifrei D'Bei Rashi*) are included in *Machzor Vitry* (the earliest European Jewish prayer book), *Sefer Ha'Ora*, *Issur V'Heter L'Rashi* and others.

Rashi script was widely used in Spain during the Middle Ages. It was used to distinguish between the Biblical text, and Rashi's commentary but it seems that Rashi never used it.

Although Rashi's commentary is considered as addressing the literal level of the text, no less than two hundred commentaries were written on it. The more well-known ones were written by the Maharal of Prague (*Gur Aryeh*), Rav Eliyahu Mizrahi (*HaRe'em*), Rav Avrohom HaLevi Bakrat (*Sefer Zikaron*) and Rav

Dovid Pardo (*Maskil L'Dovid*).

www.hidabroot.org/en/article/91611

Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchoki – Rashi (4800-4865) By Nissan Mindel

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The House of Rashi

The foundations of Ashkenazic Jewry in Western Europe, and later Eastern Europe, are really essentially the story of one family: the family of Rashi. Many scholarly and more popular books, articles, treatises and biographies have been written about this giant of the ages. Yet to a great extent he remains elusive, almost mysterious in his role as the teacher of *Bnei Yisrael*.

Still, if there is anyone in Jewish life that has achieved immortality, it is Rashi. No Jew who studies the Torah or the Talmud does so without *Rashi*. *Rashi* is the guiding hand, the gentle teacher, the unobtrusive commentator who simplifies, explains and inspires all who study Torah.

Rashi was a vintner; he was involved in the growing of grapes and the manufacture and sale of wine. Even a cursory review of his commentaries will reveal his immense knowledge and intellectual curiosity regarding not only Talmudic traditions, but all fields of human life and nature, including agriculture, animal husbandry, tool making, commercial law and transactions, anatomy, astronomy, botany, rudimentary medicine and mathematics.

The establishment of the Jewish community in France and Germany in the 11th century is nothing short of miraculous. There probably were only 5-10,000 Ashkenazic Jews in the world at that time. (The majority of Jews lived in Spain, North Africa, Babylon and the land of Eretz Yisrael.) France, which was the leading country of Christian Europe, was itself

beset by many internal dissensions, mini-civil wars and the inability to form a strong and lasting government. Due to the lack of a strong central government, the Jews were always subject to the whims of the local warlords. In this fanatical, intolerant and hostile Christian environment Rashi grew up.

Despite of all of these obstacles, Rashi became Rashi and the Jewish community in France built the foundation of all future Ashkenazic Jewry.



Three Legends

Legends need not be true to characterize a person. Even if they are not literally true in all their details they paint a picture of the person and the times. Among the legends about Rashi three stand out. In truth, Rashi is a person of such commanding stature – what he accomplished is so beyond human belief – that it is difficult to speak of him any objective or historical terms. Therefore, these legends are as good as any place to begin to get the picture of who he was.

The first legend has to do with his mother. While she was pregnant with Rashi she visited the city of Worms. One day she was walking down a narrow alleyway when a French knight on a horse galloped through the street. He was about to ride over her when she flattened herself against the stone wall. Inexplicably, a niche opened in the wall and she was saved. [This indentation can still be seen today].

The second legend addresses the question: What merit did the parents of Rashi have to give birth to such a child? Rashi's father was a dealer in precious stones, which was an unusual profession for a Jew at that time. He had in his possession a particular stone that was well-known in the community of Troyes. One day the church nobleman told him that they wanted to purchase the stone and put

it in a crown or crucifix that would be used in the church services. Rather than declining their offer, he denied having it. When they came to search his home they could not find it... for he had thrown it away in the river. That act of monetary sacrifice was the merit that earned him a child like Rashi.

The third legend has several versions. One has to do with Godfrey of Boullion, the leader of the French knights in the First Crusade. He stopped in Troyes on the way to the Holy Land and asked Rashi if he would be successful. Rashi told him that initially he would capture Yerushalayim from the Muslims, but after a period of time the Christians would be driven from Yerushalayim and he would return to France with only three horses. Godfrey told him that if he came back with even four horses he would personally destroy the Jewish community and kill Rashi. The Crusade went just as Rashi predicted, but Godfrey remembered the prediction and made sure that, if nothing else, he returned with four horses. And indeed he did. However, as he crossed under the arch of the city the keystone of the arch collapsed and one of the horses was killed.

These legends emphasize the supernatural and paint Rashi as a miracle worker. However, the greatest miracle was Rashi's accomplishments. That is the first thing that needs to be understood. There is no legend greater than Rashi himself. The legends surrounding him are rooted in the genuine admiration the man and his monumental accomplishments.



The Kuntrus

When Rashi was a young man, he left Troyes and traveled to Worms (that is why today there is a famous Rashi chapel in Worms) to attend the great yeshiva headed by Rav Yaakov ben Yakar, a disciple of the

great Rabbeinu Gershom, the founder of Ashkenazic Jewry. After the *petira* of Rav Yaakov ben Yakar, Rashi studied under a great scholar who was a student of the great Babylonian scholar, Rabbeinu Hai Gaon. In short, Rashi inherited the traditions of the two great streams of Torah knowledge: Ashkenazic and Babylonian Jewry.

When Rav Yaakov was *niftar* in 1064, Rashi continued learning in Worms for another year and then moved to Mainz. By the time Rashi entered the yeshiva in Mainz, it had existed for sixty-five years. Over those years, a general notebook had been composed – the work of three generations of students, called the *Kuntres Mainz* (Notebook of Mainz). But whereas many of the other students adopted the notebook whole, Rashi sought to improve it. From his youth until his last day, he kept rewriting, erasing, and adding words to it. That perfectionism is the hallmark of his supreme intellectual honesty. [In fact, before he was *niftar* – he commented to his daughter that if he had to write the commentary again, he would've used half the words].

Rashi apparently studied close to fifteen years in Worms and Mainz before returning to Troyes. He returned with notebooks full of glosses, and from those notebooks he developed his commentary. In his humility, Rashi distributed his first draft of his commentary to the Talmud anonymously under the simple title of *Kuntrus*. In later generations, Rashi himself would be referred to as *Kuntrus*.



The House of Rashi

While in the academy in Worms-Mainz, Rashi married. He had two daughters, Miriam and Yocheved. There is legend that Rashi had a third daughter, Rachel. However, most current scholars discount the possibility of Rashi having a

third daughter.

Rashi treated his daughters as sons in some ways. It was known that they wore *tefillin*. He taught them Torah in an age when most women were completely and functionally illiterate. His daughters helped Rashi in his transcription and editing of his commentaries and even offered independent opinions of their own on Torah and halachic matters.

Rashi was especially close to his grandsons, and his oldest grandson, Rav Shmuel ben Meir (Rashbam), completed Rashi's third edition commentary to some of the tractates of the Talmud after the *petira* of his grandfather. Rashi's youngest grandson, Ravi Yaakov ben Meir (Rabbeinu Tam) was yet a child when Rashi was *niftar*, but Rashi had a profound influence on him. Rav Yaakov was an exacting critic of Rashi in many areas of commentary – and at the same time he was his staunchest defender against the criticism of outsiders. He felt that only relatives had the right to critique Rashi or have a different halachic opinion.

Rashi's family and descendants were known as The House of Rashi and it was deemed a great honor in all later generations to somehow be associated with that house.



Talmudic Commentary

The primary rule of thumb that Rashi adhered to in all his commentaries was: "A person should always teach in the most concise fashion."

If not for Rashi, the Talmud would be virtually a sealed book. It does not have punctuation and is written in a sixth century Aramaic dialect. Due to its difficulty, the Talmud was not a book of the masses. The man who opened it to a much wider audience was Rashi.

Rashi occupies a unique place in the Jewish world, on par with Moshe

Rabbeinu. Rashi is every Jew's kindergarten teacher. When little children learn his commentary on the Chumash for the first time, it makes perfect sense to them.

Then, as they graduate to Talmud, Rashi takes them by the hand and leads them through that vast sea of unpunctuated words, telling them, "The sentence ends here. This is what it means. This is the question. This is the answer." So as a Jew grows older and hopefully wiser, he realizes that Rashi was not only his kindergarten teacher, but he signed our PhD.

Rashi's love of people shines through every word. There is not one denigrating word in his entire commentary, which is an extraordinary accomplishment. He never criticizes others even when he disagrees with their explanations and decisions.

Rashi is not vindictive even toward Jews who left Judaism. He repeated over and over that "a Jew that has sinned is still a Jew." He allows for the terrible pressures that the medieval Church placed on Jews to convert. Rashi states that "in our exile we are not independent; we must engage in commerce with the non-Jewish society since our living income is from them. And we are justly in fear of them [and cannot provoke them]."



Commentary to the Bible

Perhaps Rashi's greatest legacy to later generations is his commentary to the written Torah itself. Rashi made the Torah accessible to everybody – from the smallest child to the greatest scholar. The entire Torah exists in Rashi's commentary to the Bible, including all the morals, ethics, commandments, explanations and the entire basis for the Talmud and Oral Law. Each person draws out of it what he needs on his level, whether he is kindergarten or

has achieved the highest levels of scholarship.

Rashi's commentary is also interspersed with Talmudic legends, which are our bridge to Biblical times. With all due respect to archaeologists and their attempt to open a window to life back then, they may uncover genuine artifacts, but they haven't got a clue as to what the Jewish people were like. A Jew does not feel a connection to Dovid HaMelech by seeing his sword in the Israel Museum. A Jew connects to Dovid HaMelech through the stories of the Bible, and those stories come to life through the Talmudic stories cited by Rashi.

For nine-hundred years all Jews, from early childhood to mature scholarly maturity, have studied with love, awe and faithfulness the Torah with Rashi's commentary. The phrases in that commentary have entered the everyday language and speech of Jews everywhere. His words and insights remain as fresh and vital and relevant today as they were on the day that they were written.



Amidst the First Crusade

In 1096, toward the end of his life, Rashi witnessed the horrors and massacres of the First Crusade. His mentors and colleagues in Speyers, Worms and Mainz were slaughtered and the great yeshiva of Rabbeinu Gershom disappeared. Yet he writes as though he's sitting in the middle of paradise without a worry in the world except the simple meaning of the text.

Through the efforts of the local bishop, whom Rashi knew and befriended, the Jewish community of Troyes was spared the ravages of that Crusade. However, he mourned the fate of French Jewry, correctly sensing that within two centuries it would cease to exist because of continuing pogroms and eventual expulsions.

At his *petira* in 1105, the Jewish community in France would begin to decline, though his descendants and students would yet continue his

monumental teachings of Torah in France well into the thirteenth century.

www.jewishhistory.org/the-house-of-rashi/



Rav Aharon Halberstam, 1st of Menachem Av

Rav of Sanz, son of the Divrei Chaim

Rav Aharon Halberstam was born in 5586/1826, in Rudnick. His father was Rav Chaim, the Divrei Chaim of Sanz.

He was a *talmid* of his father, and would also travel to the courts of other leading *Rebbs*, among them Rav Tzvi Hirsh of Rimanov, Rav Dovid of Tolna, the Sar Sholom of Belz and Rav Avrohom of Trisk.

Rav Aharon married the daughter of the *nogid* Rav Yaakov Weinberger of Dukla.

In 5617/1857, Rav Aharon was appointed Rav in the city of Sanz.

Following his father's *petira* (25th of Nissan 5636/1876), Rav Aharon was the only son who was not appointed Rebbe. He refused to accept the Chassidim who came to his house.

During his tenure as Rav, Rav Aharon applied a *cherem* against one of the residents of the city, who refused to accept the ruling of his *Beis Din*. This incident led

to Rav Aharon being imprisoned for six weeks.

Rav Aharon wrote down many *chiddushei Torah*, but shortly before his passing, he burned all his manuscripts.

After taking ill, Rav Aharon traveled to Vienna to meet with doctors. He was *niftar* as he made his way home, on Rosh Chodesh Av 5663/1903, at age seventy-seven. He was buried in the *ohel* with his father, in Sanz.

Rav Aharon's sons were Rav Shmuel Shmelke; Rav Shalom, who served as Rav in Pikli and Sanz; and Rav Aryeh Leibish of Sanz-Gribov. His son-in-law was Rav Moshe Halberstam of Bardiov.

Some of his *Divrei Torah* were published in *Megged Eretz*, by Rav Aharon Halberstam of Biale-Bilitz (a great-nephew) and in other *seforim* as well.

Zecher tzaddik livrachah.

www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-1-avjuly-8/



Rav Yaakov Moshe Shurkin, 1st of Menachem Av

Rosh Mesivta of Rabbeinu Chaim Berlin

Rav Yaakov Moshe Shurkin was the younger son of Rav Michel Zalman, born in 5662/1902. He was born in Podobranka, a small village deep in White Russia. His original surname was Shur, which was later changed, most likely to evade the Russian military draft.

He was descended from a prominent *Chabad* family in Podobranka. His maternal grandfather was Rav Zalman

Freidin, son-in-law of Rav Zalman Chaikin of Podobranka.

Rav Levi Yitzchok Schneerson was also a grandson of Rav Zalman Chaikin; he and Rav Yaakov Moshe's mother were first cousins. His son, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and Rav Yaakov Moshe, were second cousins.

When Yaakov Moshe became bar mitzva, Rav Michel Zalman was suddenly

niftar. Now a young orphan, Rav Yaakov Moshe decided to go to Radin, where he learned with extraordinary *hasmada* under the Chofetz Chaim for the next fifteen years. During his years in Yeshiva, his mother also passed away.

Rav Yaakov Moshe was *zocheh* to be one of those who took part in the *tahara* of the Chofetz Chaim. Many years later Rav Mendel Zaks, son-in-law of the Chofetz Chaim and Rosh Yeshiva in Radin, wrote the *nusach* for the *matzeiva* of Rav Shurkin.

In 5693/1933, Rav Yaakov Moshe tried to leave Europe and go to America, but he couldn't get the right papers, so he went first to Eretz Yisrael. In Yerushalayim, he became close with Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer.

Two years later, he went on to America. There, he married the daughter of Rav Yaakov Kantorovich. Rav Yaakov, an uncle of Rav Moshe Feinstein, had been Rav of Timkavitch in Russia. When the communists took over, all Rabbonim were

in danger. Rav Yaakov and Rav Moshe escaped to America, and Rav Kantorovich became a Rav in Trenton, New Jersey. He authored *Tzilusa DeShmaatsa* on the *Shev Shmaatsa*, *Chiddushei HaGra* and other *seforim*. At his *petira* he was buried in Trenton; later, with a *psak* from his nephew Rav Moshe, the *aron* was moved to *Chelkas HaRabbonim* in Beit Shemesh.

Rav Yaakov Moshe was a *Rosh Mesivta* in Yeshiva U'Mesivta Rabbeinu Chaim Berlin from its founding in 5698/1938 until he was *niftar* on *Rosh Chodesh Av* 5723/1963, at sixty-two. He was buried in Beth David cemetery in Elmont, Long Island.

Several volumes of his *shiurim* on *masechtos* have been published as *Shiurei Rav Yaakov Moshe*.

His son, Rav Michel, *shlit'a*, is a Rosh Yeshiva in Toras Moshe in Yerushalayim.

Zecher tzaddik livrachah.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-1-avjuly-28/



Aharon HaKohen, 1st of Menachem Av

Born: Egypt, 1406 BCE. / *Niftar*: Hor HaHar, 1283 BCE.

Prophet, brother of Moshe *Rabbeinu* and Miriam the Prophetess, the first *Kohen Gadol* (High Priest). The chariot for the *Sephirah* of *Hod*.

The *Arizal* says that Aharon HaKohen, was Haran (brother of Avraham Avinu) in his previous life. Haran (same letters as Aharon, without the *Alef*) had to correct an element of idol worship committed by Adam, but he failed. As Aharon he should have also sacrificed his life, like Chur ben Miriam did, in order to stop the sin of the Golden Calf from taking place, in order to do a correction concerning idol worship. Mistakenly, he thought that Chur's death accomplished

that. (*Sha'ar HaGilgulim* page 95, 114)

Though all of his intentions had been pure, trying only to hold off the *Erev Rav* (Mixed Multitude) long enough to give Moshe a chance to return to the camp and restore order, still, it had been his hand that had worked the gold. Aharon HaKohen was punished for his mistake, to lose all his four sons. Moshe prayed for him and succeeded in saving two of them.

Aharon was later reincarnated as Yaabetz HaShofet (another name for Othniel ben Kenaz), he returned again as Tula ben Puah HaShofet, he reincarnated again in Shmuel HaNavi (Samuel the Prophet), reincarnated again in Aviyah son of King Yerovam, reincarnated again in Uriah HaKohen (who was killed by King

Yehoyakim, and by that was atoned for having to be killed in the Golden Calf incident) and reincarnated again in Zechariah HaNavi. (*Shaar HaGilgulim, Hakdama 33*).

Aharon's wife Elisheva was later reincarnated as Batsheva, the soul mate of Dovid HaMelech. (*Kisvei HaAri - Shaar HaPsukim, Shmuel II*)



- * Three good leaders arose for *Bnei Yisrael*, Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam (*Ta'anis 9a*);
- * There were seventy small courts over which Aharon was appointed (*Zohar 3:20:1*);
- * The merit of Moshe and Aharon was enough to redeem *Bnei Yisrael* (*Shemos Rabbah 15:3*);
- * Not all are answered when they fall on their faces in prayer, and not all when they rend their garments. Moshe and Aharon were answered when they fell on their faces, as it is written, Moshe and Aharon fell on their faces (*Bamidbar 14:5*), and whereas Yehoshua and Calev were answered when they rent their garments (*Ta'anis 14b*);
- * He loved peace and pursued it, loved people and drew them close to the Torah (*Avos 1:12*);
- * Aharon never said to a man or woman, "You have sinned". Moshe, however, rebuked them (*Sifra Shemini 1*). When Aharon went on his way and a wicked person encountered him, Aaron greeted him. The next day, that man wanted to commit a sin, but thought, "Woe is to me! How will I raise my eyes afterwards and look at Aharon? I am ashamed before him, for he greeted me" (*Avos d' Rav Nasan 12:3*).

When two people quarreled Aharon went and sat down with one of them and

said to him, "My son, know that your friend has said, 'I am ashamed before him because I have sinned against him.' "Aaron would sit with him until he had dispelled the ill feeling from his heart. Then Aaron would go and sit with the other one and say to him, "Know that your friend is saying, 'Woe is to me! How shall I raise my eyes and look at my friend? I am ashamed before him because I have sinned against him.' "Aharon would sit with him until he had dispelled the ill feeling from his heart. When the two friends later met, they embraced and kissed each other (*ibid. 12:3*);

- * There were thousands in *Bnei Yisrael* who were called by the name of Aharon, for if not for Aharon, they would not have come into the world. Aharon made peace between husband and wife so that they came together, and they named the child that was born after him (*ibid. 12:3*);
- * Aharon tied a rope of iron about his waist and went around to all the houses of *Bnei Yisrael*. To whoever was ignorant he taught *Krias Shema* and prayer, and whoever could not learn *Torah* he taught *Torah* (*Tanna d'Bei Eliyahu Rabbah*, ed. *Meir Ish Shalom*);
- * When Moshe spoke, Aharon would bend his ear to listen in awe, and Scripture considers it as if he heard directly from the Holy One, Blessed is He (*Mechilta Bo 3*).

In one year three righteous people were *niftar* – Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam. Three precious gifts that had been given through them were canceled: the *manna*, which was in the merit of Moshe, the pillar of cloud, which was in the merit of Aharon, and the well, which was in the merit of Miriam. All of them were removed in the same month (*Sifri Devarim 305*).

May the merit of the tzaddik Aharon HaKohen protect us all, Amen.

www.rabbishimon.com/tzadikim/showz.php?p=aharon.htm

Rav Shlomo Halberstam, 1ST of Menachem Av

Bobover Rebbe

Remembering the Bobover Rebbe: 2 Articles (Edited for Length)

Rav Shlomo Halberstam, the Tzaddik that rebuild the Chassidic sect of Bobov, and made it again into a dynasty after World War II. He saw a world in its devastation and presided over its renaissance, teaching the new generation the lessons that had sustained the old. “He never forgot where he came from, never accepted the American way,” recalls one of his chassidim.

“Someone once said something that he disagreed with, and he argued vehemently. ‘How can you express such an opinion? It must be because you grew up here, in the land of Coca-Cola! How can you understand the way things ought to be?’ ”

He strove to create a Bobov that would match the Bobov that had been destroyed, working assiduously to build, that his father would have been proud of. He once jokingly commented that “I strive to preserve my father’s *minhagim*, but I do have one tradition that I haven’t received from my father: my father never owed millions of dollars for his *mosdos*.”

“When I close my eyes and try to relive the image of my father, it is definitely the enthusiasm and *bren* that comes to mind,” said *Rebbetzin* Sara Meishlish, daughter of Rav Shlomo Halberstam, the previous Bobover Rebbe. “It was a privilege for him to do a mitzvah. He lived from mitzvah to mitzvah.”

Rav Halberstam lost his wife and most of his children during the Holocaust. Yet when he came to America with his eldest son, Rav Naftuli, to rebuild his life and the life of Bobover Chassidus, his dedication to mitzvos never wavered. “Whether he was lighting Chanukah *licht*, baking matzos on *Erev* Pesach or shaking a

lulav and *esrog* on Succos, thousands of people were inspired,” she recalled. The Jewish Observer wrote: ‘His *simcha* and fervor were the same whether he was making Kiddush before thousands of people or at his own table with two guests.’

“Once, when he was in his eighties, he was in Florida for a vacation and had to have a cataract removed. Never had he had any medical procedure done on him, and he was frightened. My sister flew down to be with him. The doctor saw his fear and said, ‘Rebbe, don’t worry. I’ve been doing this operation for so many years that I can do it with my eyes closed.’

“My father turned to my sister and his *gabbai* and said, ‘Did you hear that? I’ve been putting on *tefillin* for seventy-two years, and I still can’t do it with my eyes closed.’ Each time he put them on, it was like the first time.”



Rebbetzin

Meishlish also described her father’s love for the mitzvah of *tzedaka*, which had him give away hundreds of thousands of dollars in charity. He taught her the proper use of money at a young age.

Once he took her to the home of a wealthy benefactor. “Ooh, *Tatte*, what a house,” the little girl whispered admiringly. “Does it help?” the Rebbe replied. “Does it help our *avodas Hashem*? The *Eibishter* should save me, my children, my grandchildren and all our generations from such a house!”

The Bobover Rebbe miraculously survived the horrors of the Holocaust. He was confronted with death on many occasions, and was prepared to sanctify *Hashem*’s Name with his own death. He experienced obvious miracles which could

fill volumes, teaching how the hand of *Hashgocho* accompanied him throughout the entire Holocaust, helping him renew the Bobover dynasty after the war.

An astounding chapter of his life during the Holocaust focuses on his rescue of Jewish children. In superhuman ways, with enormous *mesiras nefesh*, he saved Jewish lives, hiding people at the risk of his own life.

Once the Rebbe was caught along with his son, Rav Naftoli, and was certain that he they would be killed in the morning. He approached his beloved son, and with *einayim kedoshos* welling with tears, he said: “Naftoli, my dear son, know that the body of a Jew is corporeal—dust from the earth. Man can be killed, but his soul is eternal, and no murderer or evildoer in the world can harm the soul.

“Today, Naftoli, I am your father and you, my son, can still fulfill the *mitzvah* of *kibbud ov*, which is one of the most stringent laws in the Torah. Tomorrow, apparently, both of us will be sacred souls in *Shomayim*. My son, how great is the merit of a Jewish soul that

fulfills the *mitzvah* of, ‘I shall be sanctified among *Bnei Yisrael*.’

Tomorrow, if such is the will of Hakodosh Boruch Hu,

both of us will merit fulfilling the *mitzvah* of ‘*Venikdashti Besoch Bnei Yisrael*.’ Tomorrow we will fulfill this great *mitzvah*. In these last minutes of our lives I have one request of you, my son. I want you to fulfill yet another *mitzvah* of *kibbud ov vo’eim* before they kill me. I want Naftoli to obey me. Do you promise to obey me?”

“Yes, my father,” Naftoli answered, and the Bobover Rebbe continued: “Naftoli,



my dear one, recall *Simchas Torah* in Bobov and the tremendous *simcha* we felt when we danced during *hakofos* with the Torah in our hands, or the *simcha* of the baking of matzos on *erev Pesach*, and all of the *simcha* with which a Jew should observe every single *mitzvah*, especially that of *kiddush Hashem*. We have only a few more hours in which to live—a few more hours until morning. The only *mitzvah* we can still fulfill is that of *kiddush Hashem* with all our heart. The murderers will torture me with bitter and harsh torments because they will want to know the identities of the smugglers and those who make counterfeit affidavits. I won’t say a thing. I will only shout ‘*Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echod*’ until my soul departs from my body. When you see my tremendous suffering, don’t pay attention to it. Just shout, ‘*Shema Yisrael*’ too, and don’t fear anything in the world. Strengthen yourself and don’t cry then, because if you cry you might confuse me at this great, sacred moment. Naftoli, that is my final request to you. Will you listen to me?”

Naftoli burst into uncontrolled tears, and in a choked voice said: “*Tatte*, I will ask the murderers to kill me first, because I surely won’t be able to watch you suffer.”

They prepared themselves for the *mitzvah* of *kiddush Hashem*. On the way to the scaffold they were saved at the last moment, and returned to the camp in Bochnia.

A Hungarian affidavit in hand, the *Admor* managed to escape from the camp, and in roundabout ways he reached Kashoi and Budapest. After the Nazi Invasion, he went on to Grosswardein. During the days of wrath he truly drank the bitter cup until its last dregs, losing his wife and two of his children.

When he reached Romania he, together with a representative of the Red Armada headed by a Jew disguised as a priest, made valiant efforts to save Jews.

They helped save hundreds of children. During the period in which the Bobover Rebbe was in Bucharest he helped thousands of Jews who had arrived in Romania after the Holocaust: in both *ruchniyus* and *gashmiyus*. While he was in Romania he managed to obtain a certificate stating that he was an Italian citizen, and thus received a permit to go to Bari, a city in northern Italy.

In the camps in Italy, scores of orphaned children and lone young men who had lost their families clustered around him. He arranged for a G-d fearing *shochet* to come from Rome and took care of their material and spiritual needs. He was like a father to them, instilling them with new spirit and drawing them close to him as if he were their father.

In time, he traveled to London to participate in the Agudas Yisrael Knessia and from there continued to America. Immediately upon his arrival in the United States he sent visas to his students and son, and brought them to America.

The Bobover Rebbe's purpose in going to London was to revive the Torah world and the Chassidic Bobov community. The Bobover Rebbe, who agreed to fill the place of his father as *Admor* because his Chassidim begged him to do so, began to lead his flock. Masses of survivors from Bobov began to stream to him, impressed by his *sichos*, which they felt were comparable to those delivered by his illustrious forbears, the founders and leaders of Bobover Chassidus.

Under his leadership, Bobover Chassidus gradually grew and thousands of families numbered themselves among his followers. He established a new generation of *avreichim* and Torah scholars imbued with exalted spiritual aspirations. He led his flock with compassion and endless *mesiras nefesh*, influencing them in *ruchniyus* and helping them with *gashmiyus*.

Jews from all sects and circles streamed to Borough Park to his large Beis HaMedrash. He was a *talmid chacham*, and his gift of speech and humility, he resolutely succeeded in reviving the spirits of many Jews after the Holocaust, drawing them closer to *Hashem*.

www.vosizneias.com/18763/2008/08/01/borough-park-ny-the-legacy-and-life-of-rabbi-shlomo-halberstam-zt%E2%80%9Dl-the-tzadik-that-rebuild-the-bobov-dynasty-in-america/



The Rebbe was known for his tremendous concern to preserve *shalom* and avoid *machlokes*, as can be seen by the following stories.

One time, in the middle of the night, a person who fixed glass professionally received a call from the Rebbe. The Rebbe explained that someone had smashed his window in the middle of the night. (The person did it because he didn't agree with a policy of Bobov.) If the window was not fixed immediately, in the morning, people would see it and be upset, and they would get involved in *machlokes*. To avoid this, the Rebbe felt that it was necessary to have the window fixed right away.

The glacier at first thought it was a prank phone call. After several calls of which he hung up the phone on the Rebbe, he ascertained that it was the Rebbe. After completing the work during the night, the Rebbe wanted to pay him. The glacier refused payment from the Rebbe – just requesting that the Rebbe attend his *simchas*. The Rebbe agreed – on condition that the glacier vow never to reveal the story of the broken window.

For the rest of the Rebbe's life, he attended the *simchas* of the glacier (even though he wasn't even a chassid). Chassidim always wondered why the Rebbe attended the glacier's *simchas* while he wasn't so meticulous with other people's *simchas*. After the Rebbe's *petira*, the glacier came to be *menacham avel* – and

said that now that the Rebbe was *niftar*, he is released from his vow and proceeded to tell the whole story.

Another time, someone had published *pashkevillin* (flyers condemning others) against the Bobover Rebbe. The Rebbe was afraid that this would lead to *machlokes* and he therefore gave the following message at a Rosh Chodesh *tish*: “I have been *mochel* the one who spread these *pashkevillin*. However, if anyone decides to start fighting with those spreading them, I will not be *mochel* them in this world or in Olam Habah.” Of course, after this *shmuess*, nobody continued the *machlokes* and eventually it died down.

The Rebbe was also *moser nefesh* to help Yidden in whatever way possible. Many stories are told of his *mesiras nefesh* to save as many people as possible during the Holocaust.

One such story took place when the Rebbe was in the relative safety (at least at that time) of Romania. He knew that his relatives were still in Hungary and were in grave danger. He received money from Mrs. Shternbuch, which helped him pay someone to take him into Hungary and attempt to save his family. This person said that he would go into Hungary on condition that they would leave the very next day. As it turned out, one family member was missing and the Rebbe wanted to stay another day to try to locate her. The person helping the Rebbe said that he wouldn't do this and that he would leave without them. While the family was discussing what to do, the missing family member showed up, explaining that her father, the Kedushas Tzion, had come to her in a dream, telling her to join with the rest of her family.

After the Holocaust, the Rebbe continued his *mesiras nefesh*, helping many Yidden rebuild their lives, both physically and spiritually. On the West Side of Manhattan, where his *kehillah* was located for a while, he would even clean the

mikvah himself, if necessary, in order to make sure that it would be available for use.

One Shavuot night, people noticed how the Rebbe left the Beis HaMedrash every hour for a couple of minutes. He later explained that this enabled those who felt they had to leave not to be embarrassed, as the Rebbe wasn't in the Beis HaMedrash.

Even when the Rebbe had to give *tochacha*, rebuke, it was done in a way that it was clearly coming from *ahava*, love.

One time, a person did work on the kitchen of one of the Rebbe's chassidim and wasn't paid. When the Rebbe heard about this, he called in the chassid to speak to him, explaining that he (the Rebbe) needed advice about construction on his own kitchen. The Rebbe asked if he could see the chassid's kitchen. When the Rebbe came to this person's house, he saw that the work was done properly and that the chassid didn't have any complaints against the one who did the work. At this time, the Rebbe mentioned that he had heard how the chassid didn't pay, and that if he wanted *Hashem* to bestow on him good things, he should treat other people properly by paying them for a service rendered. Shortly afterwards, the chassid paid up. This episode showed how the Rebbe looked at both sides of the story before deciding what had to be done, and he delivered his *tochacha* in a way that it would be accepted.

Someone once asked him how a rebbe spends his vacation. The Rebbe answered that in the city, he must limit the amount of time he davens so as not to impose on others who are waiting for him to finish. When he goes on vacation, however, he can daven as long as he wants.

The Rebbe was once visiting someone and was served food. After he finished eating and making *brachos*, the Rebbe was asked to give a *bracha* to the one who gave him the food, as that person

hadn't had any children yet. The Rebbe said, "I had you in mind when I said *Borei Nefashos* (which means creating souls). The Rebbe's *gabbai* then asked if he could also get a *bracha*, as he also didn't have any children. Again, the Rebbe answered that he had him in mind when he said the word *rabbos* (meaning many) in the *bracha* of *Borei Nefashos*. A year later, one of these chassidim had a boy and the other had a girl. Eighteen years later, they married each other, fulfilling the *bracha* of *Borei Nefashos Rabbos*.

One of the Rebbe's chassidim was a *yasom* and he mentioned to the Rebbe that he wanted him to be *mesader kiddushin* at his wedding, not knowing that his future in-laws had already honored a different rebbe with this *kibbud*. When the family met with the Rebbe and apprised him of the situation, he said that he would be happy with the *bracha* of *Sos Tosis Vesageil Ha'akarrah* (the barren one should rejoice, referring to Eretz Yisrael and Yerushalayim). One of the family members didn't have any children and answered a loud Amein. About a year later, he had children.

The Rebbe also exemplified the *middah* of *umekarvan laTorah*, bringing people close to *Torah*. The *menahel* in a certain large yeshiva once spoke to the Rebbe and the Rebbe mentioned that he was planning on giving a certain amount of money to the yeshiva. When the *menahel* came back at a later time, he said that he was there to collect the *chov* (debt). The Rebbe said that to give money to a yeshiva is a *zechiya* (opportunity) and not merely an obligation.

When he was building the Bobover *kehillah* after World War II, the Rebbe went to South America to raise money. On Shabbos, he expected to see one of his acquaintances, but the person didn't show up. On *Motza'ei* Shabbos, this person came, and when he was asked where he was on Shabbos, he explained that he went to his company to work on Shabbos. Embarrassed, the person excused his conduct by saying that the company's equipment was very old and he therefore couldn't afford to close on Shabbos. The Rebbe asked how much money it would cost to purchase new equipment and was told an amount that was exactly the same as all the money he had raised during the previous couple of days. Immediately, he turned over all the money to this person. This man became a *shomer* Shabbos and raised a wonderful *Torah'dike mishpacha*.

His home in Brooklyn, New York, was a beacon where he received everyone with a special glow and with unusual nobility of spirit. His pleasantness had a profound influence on all who visited him and was the source of the tremendous admiration people displayed for him.

He was deeply attached to all of the *Gedolei* Yisrael, *Roshei Yeshiva* and *Admorim*, who held him in high esteem. He maintained close contact with them in all the battles for *Kodshei* Yisrael and *Torah*. The *Admor* of Bobov, his tradition and legacy, left a deep impression on the entire generation in America.

www.matzav.com/the-bobover-rebbe-rav-shlomo-halberstam-ztl-on-his-11th-yahrtzeit

Yated Ne'eman - www.vosizneias.com



Rav Aharon Tumim of Cracow, 2nd of Menachem Av

Rav Aharon Tumim of Cracow was born in 5390/1630. His father, Rav Moshe Tumim, was Rav in Mehrin. His paternal grandfather was Rav Shimon Tumim

Lemil, one of the *Gedolim* of Vienna.

Rav Aharon married the sister of Rav Eliezer HaLevi Ettinger, of Holleschau, Austria.

From 5419/1659 to 5432/1672, Rav Aharon was *Darshan* and *Maggid Shiur* in Prague. Later, he became *Rav* and *Rosh Yeshiva* in Worms, Germany. He was an acknowledged *Talmid Chochom* with a phenomenal memory.

After the *petira* of Rav Mordechai Deitcher, *Rav* of Cracow, Rav Aharon was chosen to take his place. He was to move there in 5447/1687, but because of political circumstances, he delayed his departure from Worms by a few years, leaving in 5450/1690. Shortly thereafter, the city was destroyed by the troops of King Louis XIV of France.

Rav Aharon was *Rav* in Cracow for barely four months when a Polish nobleman had him arrested. He was killed on *Shabbos Parshas Mattos Masei*, second of *Av*, 5450/1690, in Chmielnik, and buried in Pintchov, where the local *Rav* was his brother-in-law (his sister's husband), Rav Yehudah Leib Tzintz of Holleschau.

Rav Aharon wrote two *seforim*: *Matteh Aharon on Haggada shel Pesach*, and *Bigdei Aharon on Torah*.

Hashem yinkom damo.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-2-avjuly-29/



Rav Shimshon of Ostropoli, 3rd of Menachem Av

On the bitter day of the 3rd of *Av* in the year 5408/1648, the Cossacks and Tartar forces conquered the fortified city of Polnoa with the help of the Ukrainian guards who were supposed to be guarding the cities from the invaders. According to the testimony of Rav Nosson Nota Hanover, Rav Shimshon was in the city of Polnoa at the time, since many Jews had fled there seeking protection within its fortified walls. The murderous hordes headed straight for the *shul*. Rav Shimshon was in the *shul* with three hundred followers, all of whom are said to have been *Chachomim Gedolim*. They were all dressed in burial shrouds and wrapped in *talleisim*; they were butchered *Al Kiddush Hashem* in the midst of *davening*.

Rav Shimshon of Ostropoli, born in approximately the year 1599, was one of the greatest Torah giants and Mekubolim of his time. He was named after his grandfather, Rav Shimshon of Kremnitz, one of the four brothers who were all Gedolei HaDor, the most well known of whom was the Maharal of Prague.

Rav Shimshon's greatness in both the revealed and hidden parts of Torah, coupled with his exalted levels of Kedusha

and his brilliant mind, caused his fame to spread across Europe. We can catch a glimpse of his greatness by seeing some of the unparalleled praises the Gedolim of his time wrote about him. They testified that he learned with, and merited many revelations in the secrets of Torah from, Eliyohu HaNovi. He also learned with Malochim and Maggidim, who taught him many secrets. Some Gedolim even wrote: "All of his words are prophecy". He also merited many revelations of the secrets of the Torah in dreams. In one place, Rav Shimshon writes how the Megaleh Amukos, Rav Nosson Nota of Krakow, appeared to him in a dream and explained to him a difficult piece of liturgy.



His Torah

Aside from his many letters, Rav Shimshon authored many works, which include: Don Yodin, Machaneh Don, Ben Mano'ach, Nezer Elokim, Shemesh U'Mogen, Shemesh Nogah, VaYizrach HaShemesh, Mincha Shelucha, and Ateres Paz. Sadly, only the small work Don Yodin survived the pogroms of 1648-49. Rav Shimshon's magnum opus was his

Ma'amar Sod Etzba Elokim – The Erev Pesach Letter

Among the letters that survived from Rav Shimshon's correspondence is the well-known "Ma'amar Sod Etzba Elokim". This lengthy and complex, yet enlightening, Ma'amar (exposition) was written to explain a cryptic passage written by the Arizal concerning the Ten Plagues.

The Ma'amar was revealed to Rav Shimshon in a dream. At the end of the Ma'amar, Rav Shimshon writes: "After this (the revelation of the Ma'amar), I was informed of the following secret: anyone who studies this Ma'amar properly at least once a year and especially on Erev Pesach, will merit great things. He will be saved from all misfortunes and will not die a strange death. No man will dominate him, all his enemies will fall before him, and he will tread in all of their high places. In every direction he turns, he will be successful and will prosper in all of his endeavors, until the coming of Moshiach."

Learning through this letter on the Erev Pesach has become a custom of many, as Rav Shimshon prescribes, and many attest to having merited blessings and salvation owing to its study.

In an astonishing testimony, the individual who reprinted this Ma'amar after the Second World War testifies as follows: "I, the one printing this, witnessed with my own eyes, how in the year 1944 in Hungary, the times were very dark because of the Nazis. However, all those who said this Ma'amar were saved."

In fact, the Ga'avad of Erloi, Rav Yochonon Sofer, attributes his salvation from the concentration camps to the merit of learning the Ma'amar. He tells how, on Erev Pesach in the year 1944, due to the panic and confusion that reigned, he and his grandfather, Rav Shimon Sofer, then

the chief Rav of Erloi, forgot to adhere to their yearly practice of reciting the Ma'amar. Rav Yochonon remembered on Erev Rosh HaShana and immediately recited the Ma'amar. His grandfather did not remember – and was murdered by the Nazis.

In the year 1891, Rav Choviv Chaim Dovid Sutton, the Av Bais Din of Teveria and Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Eliyohu HaNovi, published a sefer called Shemesh U'Mogen on this wondrous letter of Rav Shimshon, written solely to explain the deep concepts discussed by Rav Shimshon. These explanations are necessary to fully understand the depths of Rav Shimshon's words in his Ma'amar. This work has recently been translated into English.

It is available upon request to:
maamarsodee@gmail.com



Stories

The Shivchei HaBa'al Shem Tov relates how the Ba'al Shem Tov one passed through Ostropoli and kept on looking intently at a certain garbage heap. He later explained that that site was the place where Rav Shimshon's Bais Medrash once stood and he was able to see the pillar of Rav Shimshon's Torah, which he said rose from the ground to the very heavens.

The Brisker Rav would tell the following story: Rav Shimshon of Ostropoli decided to write a commentary on Chumash (some say Shas) based on Kabbola. After modifying the first few pieces a number of times, he realized that what was staring back at him was none other than Rashi's commentary on the Torah. In fact, there are a few instances where Rav Shimshon explains Rashi's words based on Kabbalistic ideas.



לזכר נשמות אמנו החשובה, נפש יקרה ועדינה
אשה יראת ה' ובעלת מדות טובות מרת זיסל ז"ל
בת הרה"ה מו"ה מאיר זאב הכהן כ"ץ ע"ה הי"ד מעיר נירעדהאז יע"א

Zera Shimshon



Mattos Massei

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

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

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

The following is his passionate request to learn his works.

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

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

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

לזכר נשמת

רבינו שמשון חיים בן רב נחמן מייכאל זצ"ל
בעל הזרע שמשון זיע"א
ויה"ר שיתקיימו בנו ברכותיו של אותו צדיק

לזכר נשמת

יעקב יצחק בן שושנה אסתר

להצלחת
כל ישראל

איש כי ידור נדר (ל' ג')

A man who make a vow to Hashem (30:3).

The Shulchan Aruch (YD 203:4) rules that one should be careful not to make a vow, even with regards to the fulfillment of Mitzvos, such as giving Tzedaka. Two Halachos later, the Shulchan Aruch seems to openly contradict this ruling when he writes that if one accepted upon himself to study a section of Torah and is afraid that he may be negligent – he may make a vow to learn that particular subject in order to urge himself to complete it?

The Taz (ibid 5) reconciles these two rulings by differentiating between giving Tzedaka and learning Torah. He explains that the Yetzer Hara is stronger when it comes to giving away money than when it comes to 'simply' fulfilling a Mitzva with one's body with no monetary obligation. Therefore, one should not make a vow to give Tzedaka since the Yetzer Hara is very strong in this scenario and one may come to transgress his vow. However, regarding the vow to learn Torah – the Yetzer Hara is not as strong and there is much less of a concern that the person will transgress his vow. Therefore, he may make a vow to learn Torah.

Some of the commentaries ask on the Taz's explanation from the Gemara (Brachos 32b) that says that fasting is greater than giving Tzedaka since fasting is done with one's body and giving Tzedaka is with one's money. Seemingly, it is harder to do a Mitzva with one's body as opposed to with one's money?

Therefore, the commentaries explain the contradiction in the Shulchan Aruch as follows.

The Gemara (Ta'anis 8b) says that when the Jewish people merely accepted on themselves to fast to nullify a certain decree, the decree was nullified. From here we learn that when one accepts to do a Mitzva, it is considered as though he did it already (obviously on condition that he actually ends up doing it. However, the merit is already attributed to him from when he accepts the Mitzva upon himself.)

This is where Torah is different from all other Mitzvos. The Gemara (Sota 21a) says that the merit of a Mitzva does not save one from the Yetzer Hara whereas the merit of Torah study does save one from the Yetzer Hara. Therefore, when one makes a vow to give Tzedaka, even though he may have the merit of the Mitzva, it still does not save him from the Yetzer Hara. This is why we are concerned that he may still not end up fulfilling his vow. However, when one vows to study Torah and the merit of Torah study is already attributed to him, that merit will protect him from the Yetzer Hara's influence and he will end up fulfilling his vow.

To answer the commentaries' question on the Taz, the Zera Shimshon says that the Gemara regarding fasting is not a good proof. This is because in Baba Kama (92a) we learn that a person is more comfortable losing money than having his body pained. That is why fasting is greater than giving Tzedaka. It is not a proof that any Mitzva that is done with one's body is harder, it is only a proof to a case where there is bodily pain involved, that one would rather give up money than be pained.

In the case where one made a vow to learn, there is no pain involved, in fact when one learns Torah, he derives enjoyment! This is why we are not concerned that he will not fulfill his vow. On the other hand, when one vows to give Tzedaka, we are concerned that he may justify not fulfilling his vow by saying that he doesn't know if the person he wants to give Tzedaka to is indeed worthy of receiving Tzedaka. Perhaps he is a charlatan or the likes and because of this, he will refrain from fulfilling his vow.

לעילוי נשמת דוד בן תמר

Matot Masei

July 18th 2020
26th of Tamuz 5780

861



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Hilula

26 - Rabbi Ahron Berachya of Modena, author of 'Ma'avar Yabok'

27 - Rabbi Elazar Abuchatzera

28 - Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv

29 - Rabbeinu Shlomo Yitzchaki (Rashi)

1 - Ahron Hakohen, son of Amram

2 - Rabbi Aharon Te'umim of Cracow

3 - Rabbi Shimshon of Ostropoli, hy"d

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

Pachad David

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

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



נס"ח

MASKIL LEDAVID

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

The Soul of Menashe's Tribe Protects the Holiness of the Other Tribes

"They said, "If we have found favor in your eyes, let this land be given to your servants as a heritage; do not bring us across the Jordan" (Bamidbar 32:5)

The Torah tells us that the children of Gad and Reuven had abundant livestock, therefore they asked Moshe Rabbeinu if they could dwell on the east bank of the Jordan and not enter Eretz Yisrael, since the land of Gilad seemed to be most suitable for raising this profuse livestock, as it says, "the place was a place for livestock" (Bamidbar 32:1). Moshe Rabbeinu accused the children of Gad and Reuven for daring to forsake their fellow Jews and not wishing to participate in the long and hard battle to conquer Eretz Yisrael, saying, "Shall your brothers go out to battle while you settle here?" These two tribes accepted Moshe's rebuke and replied that they will first help the rest of the tribes fight against their enemies and inherit the Land, and only once it will be purged from all their enemies, will they return to settle in Gilad, over the River Jordan. Moshe agreed to their proposal and told them that indeed the appropriate approach for the holy tribes who are called "the tribes of G-d, a testimony for Yisrael", is to show responsibility for one another, and only once their brothers are settled safely and tranquilly in the Holy Land, may they settle on the other side of the Jordan.

This matter raises a puzzling question. While we find that Moshe was aggrieved that the two tribes entertained this idea of settling on the other side of the Jordan before conquering and inheriting the Land, we do not find that Hashem displayed any anger towards their request. It seems on the surface that Hashem agreed with the children of Gad and Reuven and did not oppose their settling in Gilad before the rest of the tribes would inherit and apportion the Land.

Moreover, the Rosh Kollel of our Paris branch, Hagaon Rabbi Solomons shlita, asked me why these verses do not mention the children of the tribe of Menashe, who joined the children of Reuven and Gad in their request to settle on the other side of the Jordan. Only after the incident are we told that half the tribe of Menashe were allocated land together with these two tribes. It is also difficult to understand why this tribe split themselves into two parts, with only half settling on the other side of the Jordan and the rest in Eretz Yisrael. Why did they not all remain together, on one of the sides? This is something extraordinary that we do not find with any of the other tribes.

The answer to the latter question could be that originally, the tribe of Menashe was supposed to settle inside Eretz Yisrael, but once the two tribes approached Moshe with their request to settle on the other side of the Jordan and Hashem did not protest, Moshe understood that this was Hashem's wish and he had no power to prevent their request, for they had already conquered this land from Sichon and Og. Despite this, Moshe was concerned about the spiritual fate of these two tribes, that they may come to assimilate with the nations. Looking carefully, we will see that the first letter of these two tribes, Gad (גד) and

Reuven (רְאוּבֵן), spell 'רג', meaning alien, while the last two letters (changing the word order) spell the word 'דנ', meaning wander around. This implies that Heaven decreed that these two tribes would be aliens and wander around in a land that does not belong to them. This might be the reason why they wished to remain outside the Holy Land.

Am Yisrael are responsible for one another, with their souls jointly hewn from the Upper World. The name 'Menashe' (מְנַשֶּׁה) can be re-written to spell 'נשמה', soul, hinting to Am Yisrael's soul which is imbued with mutual responsibility. Due to this, Moshe commanded Menashe's tribe to divide into two, with one half settling in the land of Gilad so as to protect the children of Reuven and Gad from assimilation and strengthening their connection with the soul of Am Yisrael, while the other half of the tribe will dwell within the Holy Land. This means that half the tribe of Menashe who dwelt outside of Eretz Yisrael, would draw holiness and purity from its other half that lives inside the Land, and in this way, they will be able to influence the children of Reuven and Gad who are dwelling on the other side of the Jordan.

This shows us that Hashem did these two tribes a great favor by dividing the tribe of Menashe, that hints to the soul of Am Yisrael, and settling half of them on the other side of the Jordan. While one half dwells in the Land and absorbs its holiness, its other half too draws on this holiness and disseminates it further to the other two tribes, Reuven and Gad. And since Heaven had decided that their fate was to wander around in a foreign land, we do not find that Hashem was angry with them for this request. Moshe Rabbeinu seeing that Hashem was not angered by their request, understood that it was Hashem's will and therefore he too must show his consent.

This teaches us that despite the mutual responsibility and brotherhood that must prevail among Am Yisrael, nevertheless each tribe, group, and community within Am Yisrael must preserve their specific customs and prayer versions. This fact is not a contradiction to responsibility and unity, just as each tribe in the Wilderness had its own specific banner and never camped under a different banner. On the contrary, specifically due to recognizing the uniqueness of each tribe and community, each one is able to assist the other with the gifts with which they were blessed. An example of this is the tribe of Menashe, who hints to the soul. They assisted the two tribes and protected their souls so that they should not assimilate among the nations, even though they could have reasoned that they wish to dwell in the Holy Land together with the rest of their tribe.

This is why Parshat Mattot is read during the Three Weeks, days of sadness and mourning for the exile and the destruction. Reading this Parsha is a message for Am Yisrael, how Hashem, in His great love and mercy, preceded the exile with a remedy, by allowing two and a half tribes to dwell on the other side of the Jordan, for in this way, land outside of the Holy Land would also be influenced by its holiness.



Walking in their Ways

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

A Captivating Prediction

The dear avreich, Mr. Ben-Shimol, related the following narrative in order to sanctify Hashem's Name:

"My dear father was once arrested in France due to a scandal incited by the media. The police were seizing people of stature, in an attempt to extract information regarding specific people whom they were after.

My father was one of those they harassed and since he was completely innocent, they could not extract from him the information they sought. Instead, they embittered his life and kept him imprisoned for a full nine months, without informing him of the reason for his incarceration. The lawyer representing him attested that the whole episode seemed extremely suspicious as there was no substantial pretext for his incarceration. However, he was unable to help my father who was kept under lock and key, while his family was sick with worry over his fate.

When Rabbi David Pinto, shlita, arranged to receive people in Paris, my sister approached him to ask for a blessing on behalf of our father's unusual situation. She later related his words at that meeting, "In another day or two, your father will be released. B'ezrat Hashem, in the merit of the tzaddik, Rabbi Chaim Pinto, everything will be straightened out."

The truth is, when my sister heard these words, she found herself experiencing inner turmoil. On the one hand, she believed wholeheartedly in the merit of the tzaddikim and had perfect faith that her family would witness great miracles. But on the other hand, it was difficult to believe that her father would suddenly be a free man.

However, the unbelievable indeed took place, as per the concept "Whence will come my help? My help is from Hashem". The very next day, Father was called to stand before the judge, who informed him that his case was closed. He was vindicated and could return home!

Father phoned the family and asked them to come immediately and take him home. They were full of questions. Who, what, where, and how did he obtain his release? He only said that with Hashem's kindness he was freed, and he himself had no explanation. The news of his release soon became public knowledge, to everyone's delight and joy.

I have no doubt that from the moment Rabbi David prayed for my father's deliverance, in the merit of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Pinto zya"a, and declared that my father will be set free, Hashem immediately fulfilled his request and set my father free."

This is Mr. Ben-Shimol's story, an account that generated a tremendous Kidush Hashem.

The Haftarah

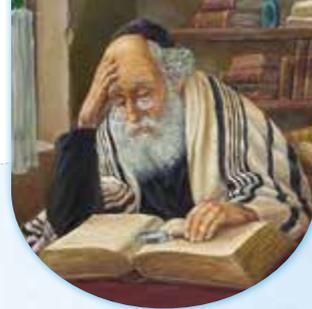
"Hear the word of Hashem" (Yirmiyahu 2)

The connection to the Parsha: This Haftarah is the second Haftarah of the three special Haftarot that Chazal established to be read during the three weeks leading up to Tisha B'Av. They talk about the prophecy of calamity that Yirmiyahu the Navi prophesized, concerning the destruction of the city Yerushalayim and our glorious Beit Hamikdash.

Guard Your Tongue

Accustomed from Youth

Speech and middot are matters that require much practice. Becoming accustomed to a certain form of behavior is what empowers us with control in that area. If we think about it, we will realize that violating this terrible sin of lashon hara is due to the fact that from our earliest days, we become accustomed to speaking as we wish, and no one protests. Therefore, it does not enter our mind that this way of speaking might comprise some prohibition.



In Our Father's Path

How Much do you Value Laying Tefillin?

"Moshe spoke to the people, saying, "Arm men from among yourselves for the legion that they may be against Midian to inflict Hashem's vengeance against Midian" (Bamidbar 31:3)

Rashi quotes the Sifri who says that even though Moshe knew that he would die after this war, he proceeded with alacrity and joy.

The tzaddik Rabbi Eliyahu Rata zt"l, a distinguished Torah scholar from Yerushalayim, was a talmid of Rabbi Shlomke of Zvhil zt"l. Early one morning, Rabbi Eliyahu approached a young avreich who stood in the corner of the Beit Knesset with his folded tallit on his shoulder, in intent preparation for donning tallit and tefillin and beginning the Shacharit prayer. He approached him and said: "Dear avreich, I have an interesting proposal for you which will earn you a small profit. Just for today, forget about your tallit and tefillin. Agree not to put on your tallit and tefillin for just one day, and in exchange I will pay you fifty dollars!"

The avreich was stunned, he could not believe his ears: "R' Eliyahu!" he cried out with emotion, "what came over you? Do you really think that I will agree not to lay tefillin today?"

But R' Eliyahu retained his position: "I will give you a hundred dollars, even five hundred dollars or more, as long as you agree not to wear your tallit and tefillin today!"

The avreich realized that he had not been decisive and clear enough, so he raised his voice and shouted:

"R' Eliyahu! I do not understand what you want from me today. Even if right now you would place a million dollars on the table, even several million dollars, I promise you that I will not relinquish this mitzvah for even one day. It simply doesn't come into question at all!"

When R' Eliyahu heard this, his face lit up and he said, "I will now explain my intention and what I wanted from you. You clearly pronounced that you willingly give up several million dollars for the sake of laying tallit and tefillin! If so, I am wondering why, when you are about to put on tallit and tefillin, you do not radiate great joy, at least as much as if you had just earned several million dollars?" This was R' Eliyahu empowering message!



Pearls of the Parsha

Can it Be? He Gives Charity and is Called a Rasha!

"If a man takes a vow to Hashem" (Bamidbar 30:3)

Onkelos adds a significant word: "If a man takes a vow before Hashem".

Rabbi Yeshayahu Chadad zt"l from Tiberius, in his sefer 'Vayomer Yeshayahu', offers an explanation based on the words of the Mishna (Avot 5:13), "There are four types of donors to charity: (a) One who wishes to give himself but wants others not to give, he begrudges others; (b) that others should give but that he should not give, he begrudges himself; (c) that he should give and that others should give is pious; (d) that he should not give and that others should not give is wicked".

The difficulty is, if the wicked one does not give charity and he does not want others to give either, why is he included among donors to charity?

It could be that the Tanna is referring to a collection undertaken in the Beit Knesset in support of Torah or another cause. In such cases, it is appropriate to publicly announce the amount one wishes to donate, for this causes others to also participate in the appeal. This kind of person is referred to as 'pious'. But there is also the 'pious' person who does not give publicly. Rather, after the appeal he goes over to the Gabbai and quietly hands him his donation, thinking that it is preferable to donate privately. But the opposite is true! It is only better to give secretly when one is giving one's own charity. But when there is a public appeal, if he gives without others knowing about it, he is preventing others from giving, for they will say, since so and so did not donate, I too will not donate. This is the Tanna's intention when saying, 'that he should not give' implying 'in public', he only gives privately, and therefore he causes 'that others should not give', therefore, how frightening, the Tanna calls him a wicked person.

According to this explanation, it could be that by adding the word 'before' Hashem, Onkelos is implying that when one makes a public appeal in the Beit Knesset, the place of Hashem's presence, then "he shall not desecrate his word", meaning he should not remain quiet and say, I will give the Gabbai afterwards privately, but "according to whatever comes from his mouth shall he do", he should publicly announce the amount he wishes to donate, and this will cause others to give too.

A Battle for Hashem's Sake Only

"Arm men from among yourselves for the legion that they may be against Midian to inflict Hashem's vengeance against Midian" (Bamidbar 31:3)

The word 'Arm' can also mean 'remove', as in "she shall remove his shoe from on his foot" (Devarim 25:9).

According to this, the Sfat Emet explains the above verse that Moshe Rabbeinu was telling Bnei Yisrael to remove from among themselves any personal association. Their intention when fighting this battle should not be for their own honor or for any personal reason, rather for the honor of Heaven alone, "to inflict Hashem's vengeance against Midian".

This is why, the Ktav Sofer emphasizes, Rashi translates "men", as "righteous men". Since Moshe Rabbeinu wanted this war to be carried out for the sake of Heaven and not out of personal feelings of revenge, this required an army of righteous men. This being the case, it was necessary to draft them against their will, as it says (ibid 31:5), "So there were delivered", which Rashi explains "against their will" since they did not believe that they were indeed righteous and could actually have intent solely for Heavens' sake.

An Exact and Powerful Reckoning

"Moshe sent them, a thousand from each tribe for the legion, them and Pinchas" (Bamidbar 31:6)

It was Midian's force of evil that caused twenty-four thousand men from the tribe of Shimon to sin, whose actions then added even more power and strength to this force of evil.

This is why, points out the 'Malei Ha'Omer', when Bnei Yisrael wished to fight against this force of Midian, they required a powerful, opposing strength, of not less than twenty-four thousand righteous men.

How did they arrive at this number? The entire army numbered twelve thousand men (one thousand from each of the twelve tribes), and together with Pinchas who was equal to all of them, it amounts to twenty-four thousand...

Treasures

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



Suffering as a Means of Growth

We will consider the connection between the Parshiot of Mattot and Masei, which are adjacent to each other.

These Parshiot are read during the Three Weeks. Mattot is an expression of blows, while Masei comes from the term 'to journey'. I would like to suggest a connection. So that man should be aroused to journey and grow in Torah, Hashem sends him blows, and then due to the pain and suffering man searches his soul and comes to the conclusion that only the power of studying the Holy Torah can redeem him from his troubles. If this situation has come upon him, it is a hint from Hashem that he must arouse and strengthen himself by journeying towards the Holy Torah.

Today's generation is one where abandonment reigns supreme. Man acts as he pleases as if he is not held accountable for anything. But the Torah was given to Bnei Yisrael in the Wilderness which is ownerless property, to hint to man that he must surrender his very being and all his desires for the sake of studying Torah. Unfortunately, the situation today is the complete opposite. Instead of a person surrendering himself to the Torah and its way of life, do-as-you-please is the predominant ruler, and it is man's Evil Inclination that leads him to the very gravest of sins.

I was contemplating the fact that in This World when a person feels different aches and pains in his body, he takes a painkiller or some kind of pill which brings him relief for his problem. But on the other hand, in the Next World, there is no possibility of alleviating the many afflictions which is the lot of one decreed to suffer in Gehinom. For This World is the world of action and rectification, while the Next World is where we pay for all our deeds.

Imagine a person who leaves the supermarket without paying for his bagful of groceries. When he is asked to show his receipt, he tells the guard that he will pay now. Clearly, this person will be punished doubly, since, besides the cost of his purchase, he will have to pay a fine for not paying for his goods inside the store. So it is with This World, where a person must work on his middot and rectify his ways. If he neglects this obligation, he will not have the opportunity to rectify later on, for death is a one-way street. Therefore, Hashem 'hits' a person while he is still in this world so that he should wake up and search his ways, whereby he will journey and cleave to the Torah and merit inheriting eternal life.

A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA



The passing of Aharon the Kohen signifies the end of a glorious period for Am Yisrael, where their beloved leader carried aloft the symbol of peace between all the tribes of G-d.

Over thousands of years, Aharon's spiritual inheritance has permeated various individuals who deem it a merit to be counted among Aharon's talmidim, those who love peace and pursue peace.

We choose to focus on a wonderful story related by Rabbi Aharon Tvisig shlita, an exceptional and delightful tale, involving a wedding invitation and intense Ahavat Yisrael (taken from K'vodam Shel Yisrael).

One of the neighborhood's residents was about to marry off his oldest child. About two weeks before the wedding, on Shabbat Kodesh after the prayers, a friend approached him and said: "You are about to make a wedding. I wish to tell you something that with G-d's help, will help you greatly. It is something that I personally heard from the esteemed Admor, the Imrei Chaim zya"a.

When a person celebrates a joyous event, the Satan simply cannot bear it. He is unwilling to allow a Jew to make a simcha, therefore he tries his best to introduce problems in the simcha, G-d forbid. For example, as a person leaves his home to go to the simcha, the Satan approaches him and says, 'Oh no, look what happened! You forgot to invite your best friend to your simcha! How can such a thing have happened?'

The Imrei Chaim continued: If the one making the simcha is an intelligent person, he shouts out to the Satan: 'Go away from me! You don't interest me at all!' But if, G-d forbid, he is not sensible, he feels enormous distress and his joy is no longer complete.

I, Baruch Hashem, already have much experience in making smachot," the neighbor concluded. "You should know that sometimes even before the wedding, several invitations that were sent to close friends return unsent because the postal service could not locate their address for all kinds of reasons and mistakes. It could even happen that you actually forget to send someone

you know an invitation. But in any case, don't forget the words of the Imrei Chaim and take care not to allow this Yetzer Hara to affect you!"

The day of the wedding arrived and the family were already sitting in the van that had been ordered to take them to the hall, when suddenly they noticed that one of the girls was still in the house and was not coming out to join them.

The mother left the van to check on her daughter and she found her in the house, crying hard.

"What happened?" she asked in alarm.

The girl pointed to an invitation that was lying on the table. The mother glanced at the name and was filled with dismay. This invitation was addressed to one of the father's close friends, they had previously been partners in Torah study for six and a half years. This daughter, who was responsible for posting the invitations, had forgotten about this invitation, and just now came across it lying forlornly on the table.

There was no time for phone calls. The father was beside himself with aggravation. His family reminded him of what he himself had related two weeks ago in the name of the Imrei Chaim, that it is not appropriate to spoil the simcha because of forgetting to invite a friend; it is simply a ploy of the Yetzer Hara.

Suddenly, in the middle of the wedding, the father spied his friend, the one whom he had forgotten to invite, entering the hall dressed in Shabbat clothes. He was simply delighted and danced with him with great elation. He sat next to him and was ecstatic when his friend stayed even after the meal was over.

When his friend was about to leave, the father plucked up the courage and asked him, "Tell me the truth, did you receive an invitation from me?"

"No."

"So how did you know that my son was getting married tonight?"

The man cleared his throat and explained: "The truth is that until tonight I had no idea. But tonight, as I was standing by the bus stop next to my house, one of our mutual friends approached me and asked if I was travelling to Yerushalayim to the wedding. 'Which wedding are you referring to?' I asked in surprise.

'How come you don't know? So and so, your good friend, is marrying off his oldest son today!'

I could not believe it. 'Are you sure?' I checked with him. He told me that he is quite sure, but since I had not received an invitation, I claimed that it could not be. In the end, I was convinced and I returned home to check out the matter.

I asked everyone, did we receive an invitation from my friend, so and so? No one had seen this invitation. I told them that I just heard that his son was getting married today, and my wife's reaction was: 'Do you think that he intentionally did not invite you? I have no doubt that he indeed sent you an invitation, but due to a postal error, the invitation did not arrive. I think you should quickly get dressed and travel to Yerushalayim to join in the simcha!'"

"I will tell you the truth," the father of the chatan told his friend. "Even if you would have given me a thousand dollars towards the wedding expenses, you would not have made me as happy as you did now. You should know that by coming to participate in my simcha, you caused my joy to be complete!"

Although it is impossible to lay down a clear rule, for this is something that is much dependent on the feelings of each individual, one must still know, that even in the case where one did not receive an invitation to a simcha to which you feel you should have been invited, one should still make an effort to attend the simcha. Anyone who has ever had to use their services is aware of postal disruptions, therefore it is very important to overcome one's feelings, and participate even if one did not receive an invitation.

We must leave behind our pettiness and personal feelings, and try and relate, if only in a small way, to the feelings of others, as the Holy Imrei Chaim taught us. The one who forgot to send the invitation is so distressed, therefore it is incumbent on the friend to take his feelings into consideration. How can he think of his own honor, and not understand his friend's pain?

Of course, if one truly cannot participate in the simcha, one can ask someone to express one's regret to the one making the simcha or wish him mazal tov by phone, but G-d forbid, one should never ignore the occasion, and certainly not because of specific personal calculations.

NEDARIM

And Moshe spoke to the leaders of the tribes (*Matos 30:2*)

The *Ramchal* tells us that the reason this *mitzvah* of *Nedarim* was given to the tribal leaders was because they stand in symbolically for the intellect or spiritual attributes of the mind called *mochin*.

This is why the Hebrew name for tribal leaders is *Roshei haMatos* – heads of staff or chiefs of staff. Whoever receives any type of leadership position receives it from the head. And now that Moshe had to command them regarding vows he was to rectify the spiritual mind of *mochin* and this the secret of the statement of *Chazal* regarding vows that “Whoever takes a *neder*, it as if he vowed by the very life of the King!” Therefore, it was the heads and chiefs of staff - *Roshei haMatos* that were commanded regarding *Nedarim*.

And the Egyptians were burying (*Maasei 33:4*)

The *Ramchal* tells us that the secret of the plague of the firstborn is that *Hashem* struck them to conquer the *mochin de'kelippa* – the spiritual mind of the forces of darkness known as the *kelippos* – the shells and husks of impurity. At that very moment their corresponding forces of sanctity were in a state of awakening and the *mochin de'kedusha* were revealed.

This is why *Bnei Yisroel* left Egypt on the 15th of the month. As it says “on the morrow, the day after *Pesach*” because the lights of the supernal attributes of *Chochmah* and *Binah* – Wisdom and Insight enlightened the *Partzuf of Zeir Anpin* which is the secret of the Divine Name *Y"ab* (whose *gematria* is equal to 15).

Afterwards the plague struck the Egyptian gods, and since the four letter Divine Name has the nature to do good and *chessed* – acts of loving kindness, sometimes the wicked by their evil deeds transform this instead into harsh judgments. As *Chazal* say that the wicked transform the attribute of mercy into the attribute of harsh justice. And this is why the name *Hashem* was used to punish them. *Asah Hashem Shefatim* which *Onkelos* translates as *Dinin* – harsh judgments. Normally the name *YH"VH* does *chessed* and loving kindness but at that time they caused it to be transformed into harsh judgments against them. As it says also at the splitting of the sea that “*Hashem* is a G-d of war,” even though again the Name *Hashem YH"VH* does acts of mercy at that time He became a Man of War to act with harsh strict justice to the extent of His force against the forces of darkness and to prepare the proper *tikkun* and repairs necessary.

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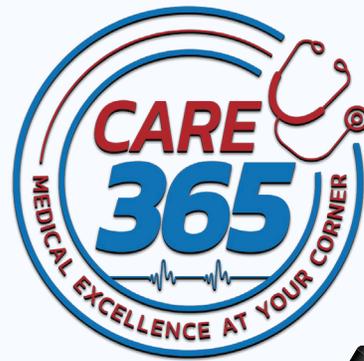
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