

ME'OROS HA'TZADDIKIM

LIGHTS OF OUR RIGHTEOUS TZADDIKIM



זכות רפואה שלמה
מלכה בת רחל
מיכאל בן שולמית יעקב
משה בן דבורה שירה
ואברהם יהודה בן שרה רבקה



בעזרת ה' יתברך

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)

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PARSHAS LECH LECHA



❖ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ❖

Love Is Supreme

Winter winds swept through the deserted streets of the town of Liadi, but one exceedingly distraught man braved the cold as he trudged to the house of the Rav, the renowned Rav Shneur Zalman, the Ba'al Hatanya.

"Rebbe, please help me," he pleaded. "The government has issued a terrible decree against me. I am ruined."

RavShneurZalman listened carefully to the details of the man's predicament. Then he closed his eyes for a few moments.

"I cannot help you," he said at long last. "But I suggest that you travel to Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev. His heart is full of love for the Almighty and for all His people, and it's quite possible that he may find a way to help you."

"Berditchev is far away," said the man.

"Yes, it is, and I suggest you leave immediately. Remember, this is very important. You must see Rav Levi Yitzchak by 20 Teves."

The man set off that very day, and after a long and arduous journey, he managed to arrive in Berditchev on 20 Teves. He immediately went to the house of the Rav.

"I'm from Liadi," he said. "Rav Shneur Zalman sent me here to seek advice and assistance." He went on to tell Rav Levi Yitzchak about his dire predicament in full detail. "So

can you help me?"

Rav Levi Yitzchak nodded. "Yes, I can. But you must bring me five hundred gold rubles right away."

The man was shocked. "Five hundred gold rubles!"

"A large sum indeed," said Rav Levi Yitzchak.

"Can it be a little less? Even if I were home, it would be very difficult for me to raise such an exorbitant sum, but here in Berditchev ... It seems to me that it would be next to impossible."

"I understand, but that is exactly how it must be. Not one ruble less."

The man sighed. "I'll try. How much time do I have?"

"A few hours at the most. The money must be here by the end of the day."

The man took his leave of the Rav and wandered around the streets of Berditchev in deep dejection. Although he did have friends and family in Berditchev, he did not think he could raise such a large sum of money in less than one day. But if he didn't raise the money, he would be entirely ruined and perhaps worse. What choice did he have? He had to make the effort.

For the rest of the afternoon, he knocked on the doors of the people he knew and asked them for loans. He also asked them to vouch for him to their friends and neighbors so that he could borrow from them as well. Little by little, the coins in his pockets accumulated, and by the end of the day, he had borrowed the full amount.

As he walked to the Rav's house, the heaviness of the coins in his packets gave him pause. Would he ever be able to repay the people from whom he had borrowed? Should he give the money to the Rav and risk becoming a debtor for the rest of his life? He paced back and forth, struggling with his dilemma, as the sun was settling into the western sky. But then the fear of the decree hanging over him tipped the scales. He took a deep breath and knocked on the Rav's door and was immediately shown into his presence.

"Here is the entire amount," he declared as he placed the pile of coins on the table.

Rav Levi Yitzchak shook his head. "You are too late. Take the money back. I cannot accept it."

"But why?"

"The day is over. I can no longer help you."

The man pleaded and wept, but Rav Levi Yitzchak would not relent. He insisted that there was nothing he could do.

Overcome with dread, the man returned the money he had borrowed. Then he returned to Liadi and reported to Rav Shneur Zalman in full detail.

"You have only yourself to blame," said Rav Shneur Zalman. "You saw the sun going down. Why did you dally in the street? You should have run to Rav Levi Yitzchak as fast as your legs could carry you."

"But why? What difference did a few minutes make?"

"I will tell you. You brought this decree upon yourself by your sins when you spoke

disparagingly about a talmid chacham. You really deserved to be put into nidui, to be ostracized. But there was a way out for you. According to the Rambam, you could exculpate yourself by paying a fine of a talent of gold, which is equivalent to five hundred gold rubles."

"So why can't I do it now?"

"Because the Rambam's view is not accepted. But on 20 Teves, the yahrzeit of the Rambam, the higher worlds would accept his view and release you from your predicament. But you waited too long, and you missed your opportunity."

"But if you knew this," said the man, "why did you send me all the way to Berdichev? Why didn't you tell me to donate the money right here?"

"The talmid chacham you insulted was one of my teachers. Therefore, I could not help you. But Rav Levi Yitzchak would have been able to help you if you had followed his instructions."



Dvar Torah

When the Almighty told Avraham to leave home and go off to a distant land, he made him a promise (Bereishis 12:2), "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing." The Gemara explains (Pesachim 117b) that this passuk alludes to the first blessing of Shemoneh Esrei. First, "I will make you into a great nation" alludes to the words "the Lord of Avraham." Second, "I will bless you" alludes to the words "the Lord of Yitzchak." Third, "I will make your name great" alludes to the words "the Lord of Yaakov." I would think, therefore, that the conclusion of the blessing would mention all three Patriarchs. Not so. The phrase "and you will be a blessing" indicates that only Avraham will be mentioned in the conclusion, as we say, "Blessed are You, O God, the Shield of Avraham."

What is the significance of only Avraham being mentioned in the conclusion of the blessing?

According to the Zohar, explains Rav Levi Yitzchak, the Almighty conducts the affairs of the world with three different divine aspects – Love, Power and Majesty. When He conducts the world with Love or Majesty, life is good, but when He utilizes the divine aspect of Power, there can be much suffering.

The three Patriarchs, according to the Zohar, represent these three divine aspects. Avraham represents Love, Yitzchak represents Power, and Yaakov represents Majesty. One might think, therefore, that all three of these divergent divine aspects should be mentioned in the conclusion of the blessing. Therefore, the Almighty revealed to us that only Avraham is to be mentioned in the conclusion. Although the three may appear divergent, all three are meant to converge and conclude with Love, because that is the ultimate goal.





❁ GEDOLIM BE'MISASAM YOSER ❁



Yahrzeits for week starting Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha

http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim_yahrtzeits/MarCheshvan

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

➤ **13th of MarCheshvan** ~ Begins Friday Night (Oct 30th)

- ✳ **Rav Yehuda Hachassid**, author of Sefer Hachassidim
- ✳ **Rav Tzvi Shraga Grossbard** (1916-1993) was born in Visan, Lithuania. His father, Rav Aharon Zev, was an outstanding talmid of the Chafetz Chaim. When Tzvi Shraga was still a youngster, his father was brutally beaten to death by Lithuanian thugs because he refused to inform on a fellow Jew. At the age of nine Tzvi Shraga joined Yeshivas Sha'arei Torah in Grodna. At age 14, Rav Tzvi Shraga entered Grodna's yeshiva gedola and formed a close bond with the famed Rav Shimon Shkop. Afterwards, he became one of Rav Baruch Ber Lebowitz's select students in Yeshivas Kaminetz, and at the beginning of the Second World War he studied for a year and a half under Rav Daniel Movshovitz in Yeshivas Kelm. In 1941, Rav Tzvi Shraga left Europe for Eretz Yisrael. There, he joined the Lomza yeshiva in Petach Tikvah headed by his uncle, Rav Abba Grossbard. Rav Tzvi Shraga also became the head of Tel Aviv's beis mussar and developed a strong friendship with mussar giant, Rav Eliyahu Dessler who was then spiritual mashgiach of the Ponovezh Yeshiva. The two men studied b'chavrusa each week in Rav Tzvi Shraga's home. In 1967 Rav Tzvi Shraga Grossbard became the director of Chinuch Atzmai and he remained at its helm for 25 years,
- ✳ **Rav Baruch** of Kosov (1782). Disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch and of Rav Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk; author of Yesod HaEmunah and Amud HaAvoda.
- ✳ **Rav Haim Nahum Effendi** (1872-1960). Served as Sephardic Chief Rav of Egypt (1925-1960). He was witness both to a vibrant community of 80,000 Jews living in Egypt and also to the community's disintegration after 1948 when government hostility, violence, economic restrictions, confiscation and deportation caused most Jews to leave. Born near Izmir in Turkey, he was sent by his parents to learn in a yeshiva in Tiveriya and later went to a French Lycee for his secondary education, obtaining a degree in Muslim law in Constantinople. He also attended the Sorbonne's School of Oriental Languages, where he perfected his linguistic abilities and also studied history and philosophy. In 1923, Rav Nahum received an invitation from Moise Cattaoui Pacha, head of the Jewish community in Cairo, to become the Chief Rav of Egypt and was appointed to serve as a Senator in the nation's Legislative Assembly.

➤ **14th of MarCheshvan** ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Oct 31st)

- ✳ **Rav Yehuda Lowy**, grandfather of the Maharal (1539)
- ✳ **Rav Leib Baal HaYisurim** in Tzefas (1836) [Hamodia 2005 says 15 Cheshvan]
- ✳ **Rav Avraham Elimelech Perlow** of Stolin-Karlin (1891-1942). Born to Rav Yisrael "the Yenuka" of Stolin, Reb Avraham Elimelech married in 1912. He succeeded his father as Rebbe in 1922; most of his father's Chasidim followed him as he settled in Karlin, while his brother, Rav Dovid of Zlatipol led a flock to Stolin. In 1929, Rav Avraham Elimelech founded a yeshiva in Luninetz. He, his Rebetzin, and his two sons were murdered by local Ukrainian peasants. His actual yahrtzeit is not known. This day has been chosen as his Yom Hazikaron. A collection of his chidushei Torah have been recorded as "Kuntres Pri Elimelech" and printed in Yalkut Divrei Aharon and in Birchas Aharon.





15th of MarCheshvan ~ Begins Sunday Night (Nov 1st)

- * **Mattisyahu** ben Yochanan, Kohen Godol, father of the Chasmonaim (138 BCE, or 165)
- * **Rav Eliezer** ben Yitzchak ibn Archa (1651). Born in Tzefas, he moved to Chevron, where he served as Rav of the small Jewish population for most of his life. According to the Chida, he wrote many works including a commentary on Ein Yaakov and on Midrash Rabbah.
- * **Rav Tzvi Horowitz** of Tchartkov, father of Reb Shmelke of Nikolsburg and the Ba'al HaFlaa (1753)
- * **Rav Shmuel Frenkel** of Dorag, the Imrei Shefer (1881) [Hamodia 2005 says 1921]
- * **Rav Chaim Pinto** the Second was born in Mogador (current Essaouira), Morocco (-1939). His grandfather, Rav Chaim the First, was the great-grandson of Rav Yosef Pinto, who fled from Spain to Rome with 26 talmidim after the 1492 expulsion. However, he had to flee to Damascus after local priests trapped him into a theological debate and soundly lost. When the Jewish population of Mogador began thinning out, Rav Chaim the Second moved to Casablanca, while his son, Rav Moshe Aharon Pinto, stayed Mogador to prevent his father's shul from closing down.
- * **Rav Avraham Yeshaya Karelitz**, the Chazon Ish (1878-1953). Educated by his father, the Av Beis Din in Kosova, Poland (near Grodno)), his first work on several parts of the Shulchan Aruch was published anonymously in Vilna in 1911 under the title "Chazon Ish," by which name he became known. He moved to Vilna about 1920 and moved to Eretz Yisrael in 1933, settling in Bnei B'rak. Upon his arrival in Eretz Yisrael, he devoted vast amounts of time and energy to Seder Zeraim, which deals mainly with laws pertaining to the land, to answer the many halachic problems inherent to a life in the Holy Land consistent with Torah.








16th of MarCheshvan ~ Begins Monday Night (Nov 2nd)

- * **Rav Elazar Menachem Mann Shach** (1894?-2001). Born in Vaboilnick, Lithuania, and left for Ponevezh (38km away) at age 7. Learned at Slabodka under Rav Yechezkel Bernstein (Divrei Yechezkel), then under the Alter (Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel, and developed a close relationship with Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer, whose niece Rav Shach eventually married. In 1927, he served as Rosh Mesivta at Kletzk under Rav Aharon Kotler, holding the same position at Novardok from 1932-34. In 1951, he started his career as Rosh Yeshiva at Ponevezh under Rav Yosef Kahanemen.
- * **Rav (Reb) Shlomo Carlebach** (1925-1994), the foremost Jewish songwriter in the 2nd half of the 20th century, who used his music to inspire Jews around the world. Over his 69 years, he lived in Manhattan, San Francisco, Toronto and Moshav Or Modiin, Israel. In a recording career that stretched over 30 years, Reb Shlomo sang his songs on more than 25 albums. Reb Shlomo Carlebach was born in Berlin, where his father, Naftali, was an Orthodox leader. The family, which fled the Nazis in 1933, lived in Switzerland before coming to New York in 1939. His father became the Rav of a small synagogue on West 79th Street, Congregation Kehilas Jacob; Reb Shlomo Carlebach and his twin brother, Eli Chaim, took over the synagogue after their father's death in 1967. He studied at the Yeshiva Torah Vodaath in Brooklyn and at the Bais Medrash Gavoah in Lakewood, N.J. From 1951 to 1954, he worked as a traveling emissary of the Grand Rabbi of Lubavitch, Rav Menachem Mendel Schneerson. His singing career began in Greenwich Village, where he met Bob Dylan and other folk singers, and moved to Berkeley for the 1966 Folk Festival. After his appearance, he decided to remain in the Bay Area to reach out to what he called "lost Jewish souls," runaways and drug addicted youths.

17th of MarCheshvan ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Nov 3rd)

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Rav Menachem Mendel Hager of Kosov (1768-1825), founder of the Vizhnitz and Kosov dynasties and author of *Ahavas Shalom*. The son of Rav Yaakov Koppel Chassid, Rav Menachem Mendel was a student of Rav Moshe Leib of Sassov, Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Nadvorna, and Rav Ze'ev Wolfe of Tcharne-Ostra. His grandson was Rav Menachem Mendel of Vizhnitz;
- 
Rav Reuven Katz, rav of Petach Tikva and author of *Degel Reuven*. His son, Rav Leizer Katz, was a rav in Passaic, New Jersey, for many years until his petira in 2001;
- 
Rav Meshulam Zushe Twersky, the Chernobyler Rebbe of BneiBrak (1917-1987). An eighth generation direct descendent of the Rav Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl, Rav Meshulam Zushe was born in Mozyr, Belarus. He lived and learned with his maternal grandfather, the Admor of Tchetchoy, Rav Yeshaya Halberstam, the youngest son of the Divrei Chaim. In 1959, he moved his court to BneiBrak. He was succeeded by his son, Rav Menachem Nachum;
- 
Rav Tzvi Pruzansky (2005). He helped found the Toronto Kollel, and established, along with his friend, Rav Dovid Hersch Mayer zt"l, Yeshivas Beis Binyomin in Stamford, which was named after Rav Tzvi's father and funded by Rav Tzvi's brothers, ybl"e, Rav Yosef and Rav Moshe.

18th of MarCheshvan ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Nov 4th)

- 
Rav Yisrael Odesser, leader of Breslover *Chassidim*, (5755/1994);
- 
Rav Yeshaya Bardaky. Rav Bardaky was born in Pinsk and taught *Torah* there, but decided to settle in *Eretz Yisrael* after his first wife died. When the ship carrying Rav Bardaky, his son, Shmuel Akiva, and his daughter, neared the port of Akko, it was wrecked, and all the passengers were thrown into the sea. Rav Bardaky, however, was a powerful swimmer, and, with his two children on his back, he swam ashore. Upon reaching Yerushalayim, Rav Bardaky was appointed head of the Ashkenazi community. He also was appointed vice-consul of the Austrian Empire, (5623/1862);
- 
Rav Yaakov Friedman of Bohush-Husyatin, (5717/1956);
- 
Rav Rephoel Boruch Toledano of Morocco, author of the Sephardi *Kitzur Shulchon Aruch*, (5731/1970);
- 
Rav Nachum Pertzovitz (Partzovitz), *Rosh Yeshivas Mir* Yerushalayim. At the age of nine, he attended Ramailles *Yeshiva* in Vilna, and became close to its *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Shlomo Heiman, (5747/1986);
- 
Rav Meir Kahane, assassinated November 5, on a visit to New York City (1932–1990). Born in Brooklyn, NY, to Rav Charles Kahane, who was involved in the Revisionist Zionist movement, and was a close friend of Zev (Vladimir) Jabotinsky, Meir was active in *Beitar*, the militant revisionist youth movement. Kahane received a degree in International Law from New York University, and ordination from the *Mir Yeshiva* in Brooklyn. He edited the Jewish Press, and served as a pulpit *Rav* and teacher in New York until the mid-1960s. His life's work, however, started in 1968, when he founded the Jewish Defense League (JDL), setting out to change the image of the Jew from "weak and vulnerable" to one of a "mighty fighter, who strikes back fiercely against tyrants". Kahane and his family moved to *Eretz Yisrael* in 1971, where he founded the militantly anti-Arab Kach party. His son, Binyamin Zev Kahane, was murdered by Arab extremists in 2001, as he traveled with his family in the West Bank, (5751/1990);
- 
Rav Nechemia Kibel (1952–2005). Born in Memphis, Tennessee, to Holocaust survivors, Rav Kibel entered the newly founded *Yeshiva* of the South, under Rav Meir

Belsky, who was one of the first *talmidim* of Rav Yitzchok Hutner. He served as a *Maggid Shiur* at the *Yeshiva* in Memphis, then founded and taught at RITSS (Regional Institute for Torah and Secular Studies), Cincinnati's *Bais Yaakov* in 1989. A few years later, he played a major role in the founding of Cincinnati's Community *Kollel*, (5766/2005).

➤ 19th of MarCheshvan ~ Begins Thursday Night (Nov 5th)

- * **Rav Naftoli Yitzchok Segal**, author of *Naftoli Seva Rotzon*, (5316/1555);
- * **Rav Yitzchok Avrohom Wallerstein** of Minsk, brother of the *Sha'agas Aryeh*, (5536/1775);
- * **Rav Shimshon HaLevi Heller** of Zhbarizh, (5600/1839);
- * **Rav Eliyohu Rogler**, *Rav* of Slobodka and Kalisch, (5610/1849);
- * **Rav Moshe Michel** of Biala, born to Rav Eliezer Fishel of Strizhov, a *Mekubol*. After his marriage, Rav Moshe Michel settled in Zamoszh, where he and his wife were supported by her father. After the passing of his father in 1812, he became a *Chassid* of the *Chozeh* of Lublin, and then Rav Bunim of Peshis'cha. He eventually became *Rav* of Biala, (5615/1854);
- * **Rav Yehoshua Attiah** (year unknown);
- * **Rav Sa'asa HaKohen** of Djerba, Tunisia, (5665/1904);
- * **Rav Avrohom Tzvi Hirsch Kamai**, the last *Rav* of Mir (1859–1942). Born in the Lithuanian town of Shkod, his family traced its ancestry back to the brother of the Vilna *Gaon*, Rav Avrohom, author of *Maalos HaTorah*. His father was Rav Eliyohu Boruch Kamai, who served as *Rav* of the communities of Shkod, Karelitz and Czechnovtza, following which he served as *Rav* of Mir and as head of the town's *Yeshiva*. His *chiddushim* were published in *Bris Melach*. Rav Tzvi Hirsch's wife, who was a clever and highly educated woman, opened a pharmacy in order to support the family. Rav Tzvi Hirsch assisted her from time to time when she needed help, and he would also prepare medicines for the customers according to the prescriptions that they brought. With his father's *petira*, however, he replaced him as *Rav* and *Rosh Yeshiva* in Mir, (5703/1942);
- * **Rav Pinchas Epstein**, *Av Bais Din* of the *Eida HaChareidis*, [see also 17 *Teves*], (5730/1969).



❁ GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM ❁

STORIES & ANECDOTES

Chazon Ish, 15th of MarCheshvan

Four Days Is A Very Long Time

One day, a man who appeared obviously distraught and worn down, knocked at the door of the Chazon Ish. He told the Chazon Ish that he had felt ill for a few days, and eventually he had felt so ill that he was hospitalized. The doctors performed a battery of tests, and they found a virulent infection which had invaded his body. They sadly informed the

man that he had only four days to live; they did not have any medication that would be effective for this infection. The man broke down sobbing as he finished his story, and the Chazon Ish soothed him and calmed him down.

The Chazon Ish opened a *Chumash Bereishis*, and turned to the first pages of the parsha. He said to the man, "Look what Hashem created on the first day," and the

Chazon Ish began to recite all the things which Hashem created on the first day of creation. "Look what Hashem created on the second day," and again the Chazon Ish read the pasukim, and listed one by one the things which were created on the second day. He continued with the third day, and the fourth day. "So, if the Creator of the World was able to create so many things in four days, don't you believe that in four days He can create a medicine for you which will heal you completely?" The Chazon Ish encouraged the man not to give up hope, but rather he should daven for himself, and plead with Hashem that He heal him from his infection. He reminded him that the gates of Tefila are never locked, especially before the tefila of a sick person, which is tefila at a time of tzara.

The eyes of the man lit up at the Chazon Ish's words. He began to daven fervently for himself, and since he was following the instructions of a holy man, a unbelievable miracle occurred. A new medicine was imported to Eretz Yisroel from America in the following days. This sick man was one of the first people that the medicine was tested on, and it became clear that the medicine was effective for the infection which was ravaging his body. Within a short time, the man was healed completely. (Barchi Nafshi)

www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/Chazon-Ish-Four-Days-Is-A-

[Very-Long-Time/1677](http://www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/Chazon-Ish-Four-Days-Is-A-Very-Long-Time/1677)

If You Can Bring Me Just Two Good Men

An avreich once approached the Chazon Ish seeking his advice on which of two job offers he should accept. The avreich told the Chazon Ish that the first offer was to serve as a maggid shiur in a small yeshiva. He also explained that if he did not accept this offer, there were definitely others who would be happy to accept the position. The second offer was to serve as a kashrus mashgiach for the Rabbanut. The avreich mentioned that if he accepted this position, he would be able to purify the whole country with kosher foods.

The Chazon Ish inquired of the avreich whether he would be capable as a maggid shiur of influencing at least two of his talmidim to continue learning during bein hazemanim exactly as they did during the zeman. The avreich answered that he thought he would be capable of this. The Chazon Ish then said, "You should know that two bochurim who will learn during bein hazemanim as if it was the middle of the zeman is worth far more than purifying Eretz Yisrael with kosher foods!" (Told over by Rav Matisyahu Solomon, Mashgiach Ruchni of Lakewood - Chayim Sheyash Bahem)

[www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/The-Chazon-Ish-If-You-Can-](http://www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/The-Chazon-Ish-If-You-Can-Bring-Me-Just-Two-Good-Men/3064)

[Bring-Me-Just-Two-Good-Men/3064](http://www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/The-Chazon-Ish-If-You-Can-Bring-Me-Just-Two-Good-Men/3064)



Rav Elazar Menachem Mann Shach, 16th of MarCheshvan

Rav Shach Goes To Tel Aviv

A yeshiva bochur in BneiBrak was once found with inappropriate reading material. His Roshei Yeshiva wanted to expel him, but before taking this drastic step, they decided to consult with Rav Shach, the Gadol Hador and Rosh Yeshiva of Ponevezh. Rav Shach requested to meet the bachur before he offered his opinion.

Rav Shach met with the bachur and realized that the bachur was having doubts in emunah. Rav Shach spoke with him at length, and tried to strengthen his emunah. This meeting took place at the end of the winter zeman. Rav Shach asked the bachur, who lived in Tel Aviv, to meet with him again over the Pesach break. After Pesach, the boy's Rebbe asked Rav Shach if the boy

had actually made the effort to travel to BneiBrak to see him. Rav Shach said that they boy did not have to come to him because he himself traveled to Tel Aviv twice to see him over the Pesach break.

At the beginning of the new zeman, the bochur returned to yeshivah and reported to his rebbe that his emnuah was now strong and steadfast. He said, "If Klal Yisrael includes a person who is so caring that he traveled twice to Tel Aviv to see me, I have no more questions in emunah."

[www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/Rav-Shach-Goes-To-Tel-](http://www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/Rav-Shach-Goes-To-Tel-Aviv/497)

[Aviv/497](http://www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/Rav-Shach-Goes-To-Tel-Aviv/497)



The Old Chazzan Who Gained & Rav Shach

A shul in Eretz Yisrael installed air conditioning for the first time, and the shul members were enjoying the relief from the heat. However, the long awaited air conditioner also created a problem – the voice of the chazzan could not be heard

over the din of the air conditioner. The chazzan had served in the shul for many years, and due to his advanced age could not project his voice any louder. With no choice, the shul members approached the chazzan and gently brought up the topic of ending his contract and hiring a younger chazzan in his place. The chazzan was not too pleased, and refused to resign from his post. Eventually the shul members brought their dispute to Rav Shach. Rav Shach told them that he could not resolve their dispute and they would have to go to a Beis Din. However, Rav Shach also said that he does know one thing – that whoever gives in will ultimately gain.

The chazzan was impressed by Rav Shach's words, and he resigned from his post. That year, his son who had been childless for many years was zocheh to a baby, and his daughter, who had never married due to various health issues, became engaged. (Peninei Avi Ezri)

[www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/The-Old-Man-Who-Chilled-](http://www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/The-Old-Man-Who-Chilled-With-Rav-Shach/3760)

[With-Rav-Shach/3760](http://www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/The-Old-Man-Who-Chilled-With-Rav-Shach/3760)



Rav (Reb) Shlomo Carlebach, 16th of MarCheshvan

Reb Shlomo Carlebach was one of the great Jewish teachers of this century. His music can be heard in synagogues and at Shabbos tables all over the world. These melodies are so much a part of Jewish tradition today, they have already become classics. He performed for hundreds of thousands of fans all over the world and was adored by Jews and non-Jews alike. Indeed, he was a phenomenon that changed the face of modern Judaism.

When Reb Shlomo passed away, in 1994, thousands of mourners attended his burial in Jerusalem. His followers were incredibly diverse, from the most Orthodox, all in black with fur lined striemels (top hats), to the most flamboyant who wore tie-dyed t-shirts and

psychedelic, Rastafarian berets. Reb Shlomo had touched each and every one of them with his music and his enormous heart.

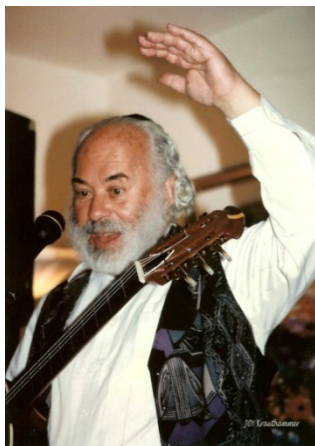
Reb Shlomo always arrived late. He lived in his own time zone. This zone would expand or contract depending upon what was happening in the moment. Whenever he was on his way to a teaching or a concert, he could be distracted by anyone who seemed to be in need. He was like a motorist who could never pass a car pulled off to the side of the road without offering assistance. Thus a normal fifteen minute trip could take hours. He would stop for every beggar: "Holy sister, times are hard!" or "Holy brother, what can I do to help you?"

Moreover, he would not simply give money, like the rest of us, and then pass by. No, Reb Shlomo would stop for a short conversation because each neshama (soul) called to him. Each person was treated as if he or she were a saint. As a mystic, Reb Shlomo believed that the world was balanced on our ability to help each other. Should someone fail to assist another person, the world could be destroyed. He really believed this.

When Shlomo entered a room, no matter how crowded, he would try to physically touch every person in the room. Sometimes a handshake but usually a hug would accompany his wide-eyed look of pleasure in every greeting. Whenever he saw me, it did not matter if it had been a day or a year since we had last been together, each time we met he seemed overjoyed to reconnect. Usually his greeting was a characteristic Shlomoism that mixed Hebrew, Yiddish, and hip English. It was usually something like, "Mamash! Heligeh bra-the!" (Wow! Holy brother!)

I often did not completely understand what he was saying, but who cared? The smile and hug could melt diamonds.

On one occasion I remember in the late 1980's, Reb Shlomo arrived at a Jerusalem Old City apartment at 10:00pm, even though it had been rumored that he would be there two hours earlier. The living room of the apartment was filled to capacity. Word had been spreading since three in the afternoon that he would be teaching this night. This is the way he usually arrived in Jerusalem: no flyers, no posters, no formal announcements. The



grapevine was extraordinary when Reb Shlomo was in town. On only a few hour's notice, he would invariably teach to a packed audience.

This night he told the group a story that has become one of my favorites:



THE SNUFF BOX

"Everybody knows that holy beggars hold the world together. Never, never pass a holy beggar. Walk across the street, go out of your way. Many times it is Eliahuha Navi [Elijah, the prophet], and oh, if you only knew, if you only knew..."

"Our holy teachers tell us--did you know this?--that we must give to a beggar according to his or her previous station. A person who was rich should be given more than someone who was poor. The secrets of the universe are hidden in that teaching. Think about it as I tell you the story of the snuff box.

"One day a beggar came to see the Ba'al Shem Tov. You should have heard him. He yelled, he moaned, he complained loudly to the Ba'al Shem Tov, saying, 'What is Hashem doing to me? I used to be rich, I helped many people, I never turned anyone away, and now, look at me. I am in rags. I have nothing. This is my reward?'"

"The holy Besh"t [Ba'al Shem Tov] looked at this man closely. Everybody knows that the Besh"t could see into the future and into the past. He said to the beggar: 'Moshe (you see, he knew his name just by looking at him), Moshe, why do you rail at the Holy One? All you need do is look carefully at your life, and you will understand.'

"The Besh"t continued, 'Do you remember Yom Kippur two years ago?' He stopped and looked at Moshe now that he had his attention. How could the Ba'al Shem Tov know what Moshe did two years earlier? Do you believe this? But he knew,

he knew. He said to Moshe, 'Two years ago, when you were the wealthiest man in town, you went to shul on Yom Kippur with your snuff box.'

"Many of you know," Reb Shlomo said, "that although we must fast on Yom Kippur, we can nourish the soul by bringing a fragrance into the body. So, in the old country, they used to carry snuff into the shul, and every so often they would pass the snuff box around so that people could be revived, especially in the afternoon when the fast gets the hardest."

[Reb Shlomo did not mention that these days some people at the Western Wall on Friday night pass snuff around just after the evening service. Some of these snuffs have pungent, fruity fragrances. One in particular is noted for its ripe banana odor, another smells like passion fruit, yet another like mango.]

Reb Shlomo continued with the story. "So the holy Ba'al Shem Tov, said to Moshe, 'You went around the shul that day giving snuff to everyone. Do you remember? And there was a shlepper [someone heavily burdened] in the back of the shul [synagogue], lying on a bench. You said to yourself, "Why should I walk back there for him when he could come to me for his snuff?" So he did not get any. Do you remember?'

"Moshe nodded his head. He did remember! The Besh"t continued, 'That shlepper had been fasting for three days. If you only knew how much he needed some snuff! He was so deep, so deep in his prayers that the heavens were wide open for him. When the heavenly angels saw that you did not walk over and give him a pinch of your snuff, they closed the judgment book on you. Do you know what they wrote into that book? They wrote that you should lose all of your money and that the shlepper should become wealthy in your stead.'

"Moshe jumped up, outraged,

saying, 'You mean to tell me that that shlepper has all of my money! Whatchutzpah [audacity]! How do I get it back?'

"The Ba'al Shem Tov said to him, 'If you can find a time, any time at all, when you ask him and he refuses to give you a pinch of snuff, all of your wealth will be returned.'

"Can you imagine what went through Moshe's mind? He searched out the richest man in town and when he saw him he knew it was the shlepper. He began to follow him around. Moshe learned everything about the man, when he left in the morning and when he returned at night; when he went to the shul and where he bought flowers for his wife. Moshe sought to discover the times when the man would be most rushed, most harried and most irritable.

"He planned for the perfect time. It was just before Shabbos and the wealthy man was loaded with packages, hurrying home because his wife was anxious to finish her cooking. Moshe waited in the bushes and as the wealthy man came past, Moshe jumped in front of him, and asked, 'Could you spare a pinch of snuff?'

"The wealthy man stopped abruptly, hesitated a few seconds, and began to put down his packages one by one. It took a minute. Then he reached into his pocket and pulled out his snuff box. Moshe, terribly disappointed, took a pinch and walked off, not even helping to load the man up again with his packages.

"Moshe tried again a few times in the next couple of months. Once, he caught the wealthy man in a downpour of rain, when everyone around was running for cover, but the wealthy man had stopped and, although his snuff was ruined by the rain, he still offered it.

"Moshe caught the wealthy man on the way to an important business meeting, loaded with papers, but he offered his snuff nonetheless. Moshe caught him in shul, in

the middle of prayers; he caught him in the bank, making a deposit; he caught him in a public building on his way to the bathroom and, of course, the snuff was always offered without delay.

"Finally Moshe thought of a foolproof idea. He waited one Friday morning in the mikveh, the community pool of living water--connected with a natural source--where men



traditionally immerse themselves to prepare for Shabbos. After the wealthy man had removed all of his clothes and was dripping from the shower, as he was about to enter the mikveh for his submersion in the pool of water, Moshe approached him and asked for a pinch of snuff. Believe it or not, the most amazing thing happened. The wealthy man stopped what he was doing, towed himself off, and went back to the dressing room to get his snuff box.

"Disheartened, Moshe almost gave up. But he had one more opportunity. In two weeks the wealthy man's daughter was going to be married and Moshe figured that he could trap him at his daughter's wedding.

"On the special day, Moshe walked to the wedding. You know, my friends," Reb Shlomo added, "it is always important to bring poor people into a wedding. In those days, people would go out looking for a stranger they could invite. They knew it would bring the married couple good luck. We do not think about things like this these days, but maybe we should. Anyway, Moshe stood there in his dirty clothes waiting for an opportunity. When the music started, he saw the wealthy man begin to dance with his daughter, the new

bride, and Moshe knew this was the perfect time to interrupt. So he walked onto the dance floor, tapped the wealthy man's shoulder, and asked him for a pinch of snuff.

"Yes, this was the perfect time. But it did not matter. The wealthy man stopped dancing with his beloved daughter, reached into his pocket, and offered Moshe a pinch of snuff. Moshe was overwhelmed. Awed by this man's incredible spirit of generosity, he got dizzier and dizzier; then he fainted right there on the dance floor.

"When he was revived, Moshe told the wealthy man the whole story. He told about the Ba'al Shem Tov, and how he had learned about his own failure to offer snuff

on Yom Kippur. The man said to him, 'You know, Moshe, I never doubted for a minute that everything that happened to me, especially during the last few years, was a message from the Master of the Universe. But now I see that you have suffered so much, I must tell you I will equally share with you all of the wealth I have.'



"It came to pass that this town became famous for its two wealthiest men who gave more and more tzeddaka (charity) throughout the years. The spirit of generosity grew to unknown heights in those days. And by the way, there was more snuff given away in that city than ever before or ever after."

From GOD IS A VERB

www.rabbidavidcooper.com/hasidic-teaching-stories/2010/10/15/2252-rabbi-shlomo-carlebach-as-a-story-teller-print.html

Rav Mencham Mendel of Kossov, 17th of MarCheshvan

Ahavas Shalom

Rav Chaim Meir of Vizhnitz once related how his ancestor Rav Menachem Mendel of Kossov, author of Ahavas Shalom was a disciple of Rav Meshulem Feivish of Zaberazh author of Yosher Divrei Emes and was once travelling to visit his Rebbe. Due to his poverty he travelled on foot and he stopped at a local inn and asked the innkeeper for some lodging for a weary Jewish soul. "Please," inquired the Kossover, "perhaps you have some small morsel for me before I lie down for the night, as I have not tasted any food all day," explained the impoverished Rav Menachem Mendel to the kind innkeeper. The innkeeper, however shook his head sadly, "unfortunately, I myself have not eaten today at all, neither have my little ones and I do not even have any food for them for tomorrow either," he explained sadly. That night, Rav Menachem Mendel slept fitfully, it was not hunger however that bothered his sleep, it was his feelings of sadness for the innkeeper's poor starving children.

Then next day after bidding a sad farewell, he embarked on the next leg of his journey when a large coach happened by. The wealthy Jew in the coach had spotted the traveler and hastened his driver to halt the fine horses so that he might ask the traveler where he was headed. "You there, Reb Yid, where are you headed?" "I am travelling to visit my rebbe, Rav Meshulem Feivish in Zaberazh," explained Rav Menachem Mendel to the wealthy man. "Why, what a stroke of Divine Providence!" exclaimed the wealthy man, "I too am headed in that direction to visit the Rebbe myself. Allow me the honor of doing a mitzvah and of inviting you to travel with me rather than on foot."

The Kossover began to think, and he quickly came up with a plan to help the poor innkeeper and his starving family. "Reb Yid, I would be honored to travel with

you if you will also give me one hundred gulden," remarked Rav Menachem Mendel to the surprised wealthy man. The wealthy man was beside himself, "what does he think this beggar? What chutzpa?! I offer him a ride and he ask for such a large sum as a donation!" he said to himself. Nonetheless not wanting to offend the poor man and not wishing to give up on the mitzvah he replied, "Listen I will be happy to give you five gulden as well, now come and climb on," he invited. But Rav Menachem Mendel stubbornly refused, "Sorry but in that case I will continue on foot," and so saying he began walking.

The wealthy Jew was stunned, he ordered his driver to draw level with the pauper and he made a second offer, "Listen, I wish to take you with me, why should you travel on foot for such a long journey, here, I am reasonable I will offer you twenty gulden, OK?" He finished with a smile expecting Rav Menachem Mendel to join him and climb on. However the Kossover's reply quickly wiped the smile off his face, "I am sorry but if you cannot give me a hundred gulden, and no less, we will part ways, thanks but no thanks," and so saying he continued on foot. The wealthy man was incensed, what chutzpah! At the same time he was impressed, somehow this poor man's impudence seemed to stem from something other than sheer stubbornness, his holy visage shined with an otherworldly light, and his shining countenance moved something in the wealthy man. He realized that they were both travelling to the rebbe, he wanted the mitzvah of taking this obviously poor man with him and so he relented and agreed, "Alright have it your way, one hundred gulden, now please climb on and let's us be on our way."

If he was incensed and surprised before, it was nothing to the shock he

received when Rav Menachem Mendel replied, “Thank you for your generosity, Reb Yid, but I cannot accept unless you turn your coach around and accompany with the money back to the village behind us to the local inn,” and he explained what the money was intended for. The coach man was dumbfounded, on the one hand he was impressed that the sum was for charity and to feed starving children, and that this obviously poor man was not interested in any himself, on the other hand this entire episode was delaying him and now the stranger wished him to turn around! However he relented and did so. Rav Menachem Mendel entered the inn together with the wealthy Jew and he handed the delighted innkeeper, the gift of one hundred gulden, “Go and purchase some brandy and spirits so that you can do business, make a living and feed your family, but please keep tabs on your earnings,” whispered the Kossover to the innkeeper, “for one day you will need to share your wealth with this man here with me today.”

And so it was that the wealthy man

and Rav Menachem Mendel arrived in Zaberazh and were enthusiastically received warmly by Rav Meshulem Feivish whose gabbai came out to greet them with calls of “Beruchim haBaim, Osay Mitzvah – Welcome o’ doers of good deeds!”

Many years later, Rav Menachem Mendel now Rav of Kossover and a leader and rebbe in his own right spotted the formerly wealthy merchant as a beggar begging for alms and charity in Kossov. The wheel of fortune had turned and he had become poverty stricken, while the formerly destitute innkeeper had become wealthy. Now the Kossover called his gabbai over and had him escort the formerly wealthy Jew into the Rebbe’s chamber. There the Rebbe wrote him a letter of introduction reminding the innkeeper of his promise and of the Kossover’s instructions years before. “Go to this inn and claim your share,” instructed the Kossover. The formerly wealthy beggar did so and his Mazal was overturned and he too prospered. “And that,” concluded the Imrei Chaim of Vizhnitz, is how my ancestor helped other Jews!”



Rav Ezriel Halevi Horowitz, 17th of MarCheshvan

The “Eizener Kop” of Lublin

The Tisch: Crossing swords with an Iron Head

The holy Rav Yaakov Yizchak HaLevi Horowitz (1745-1815), commonly known as the Chozeh (Seer) of Lublin, was the first Chassidic master to serve in a major city, albeit in a suburb. He was an extremely popular leader, and can be considered one of the fathers of Polish Chassidism.

While many of his fellow Chassidic masters crossed swords with the misnagdim, the rabbinic opposition to the nascent Chassidic movement, the Chozeh came into direct contact with a leading misnaged in Lublin: one of the renowned

talmudists of his era, Rav Ezriel HaLevi Horowitz (niftar 1818). Though the two adversaries shared the same surname, they were apparently unrelated.

Rav Ezriel was known by the Yiddish moniker “Eizener Kop” (iron head), for his talmudic acumen. While the Eizener Kop did not publish his writings, in 1969 a compilation of his novellae and responsa was published under the Hebrew title Rosh Barzel (iron head).

Despite the reputation of a sharp mind, in Chassidic lore he is portrayed – as could be expected – in a rather different light. The Eizener Kop is remembered for the disdain he felt toward the unlearned.

He despised chassidism, especially its local representative, the Chozeh of Lublin.

Seeing the Chozeh's popularity wax, the Eizener Kop called the Chozeh to his office and said to him: "We both know that you are not a learned scholar, and hence the respect accorded to you is entirely misplaced. It is time to remedy the situation. On Shabbos, I want you to announce to all that you are nothing more than an ignoramus, unworthy of attention, and people should stop treating you with such deference."

The Chozeh readily agreed to the Eizener Kop's suggestion and carried out the plan. Unfortunately for the Eizener Kop, the cunning plan backfired; seeing the Chozeh's humility, people felt even more admiration for the master, and his popularity continued to grow.

The Eizener Kop called the Chozeh once more, this time with a new demand: "Clearly our plan failed; we need a different solution. This Shabbos I want you to publicly announce that you are the most learned scholar in town and are worthy of being treated with the highest esteem."

The Chozeh demurred: "I readily agreed to your initial suggestion to declare that I am unlearned. But to get up and publicly lie – I am not willing!" Years later, the Eizener Kop approached one of the Chozeh's prime students – who incidentally had the same first name as his master – Rav Yaakov Yitzchak Rabinowitz (ca. 1766-1813), known as the Yid HaKadosh of P'shischa, the holy Jew from Przysucha. The Eizener Kop said to the Yid HaKadosh: "I hear that your master the Chozeh takes extra combs with him whenever he goes to the bathhouse. He offers these combs to others, so that he is able to do acts of loving-kindness, even in a place where Torah study is forbidden. While the Chozeh's intention is indeed laudable, his solution would appear to contradict the Talmud!" The Eizener Kop cited the Talmud passage (Menachos 43b)

recounting that when King David entered the bathhouse, he bemoaned that he was naked of mitzvos. When he noticed his circumcision, he realized that he always carried a mitzvah with him, and his mind was put at ease.

The Eizener Kop wondered: "Why didn't King David simply take combs with him to distribute, rather than feeling naked without mitzvos?" The Yid HaKadosh replied: "I am surprised that a scholar like you would forget a Mishna! The Mishna states that a king should not be seen naked, and no one should go into the bathhouse with him (Sanhedrin 2:5). Moreover, a king may not forgo the honor that he is to be accorded (Kesubos 17a). To whom could King David have given combs in the bathhouse?"

The writer is on the faculty of Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies and is a rabbi in Tzur Hadassah.

www.jpost.com/Magazine/Judaism/The-Tisch-Crossing-swords-with-an-Iron-Head



Once, on Erev Yom Kippur, the Eizener Kop met the Chozeh on the way to the mikvah. The Chozeh remarked to the Eizener Kop, "You have a lot more teshuva to do on Yom Kippur than me." When the Eizener Kop asked why that is so, the Chozeh stated, "I might've issued a lenient ruling with regards to the kashrus of questionable meat that was bought by a woman for a sha'a'ila. It's possible that the meat wasn't mehadrin in line with all the poskim, and for that I'll have to ask Hashem for forgiveness for my rulings. You however, were very strict in your rulings, and it's very possible a sha'a'ila that was brought before you was deemed treif - when in fact it might've been kosher l'mehadrin. That means a Jewish family had monetary damages due to your rulings – and for that Yom Kippur doesn't cleanse."

[Interestingly enough, the Chozeh

was extremely stringent with himself with

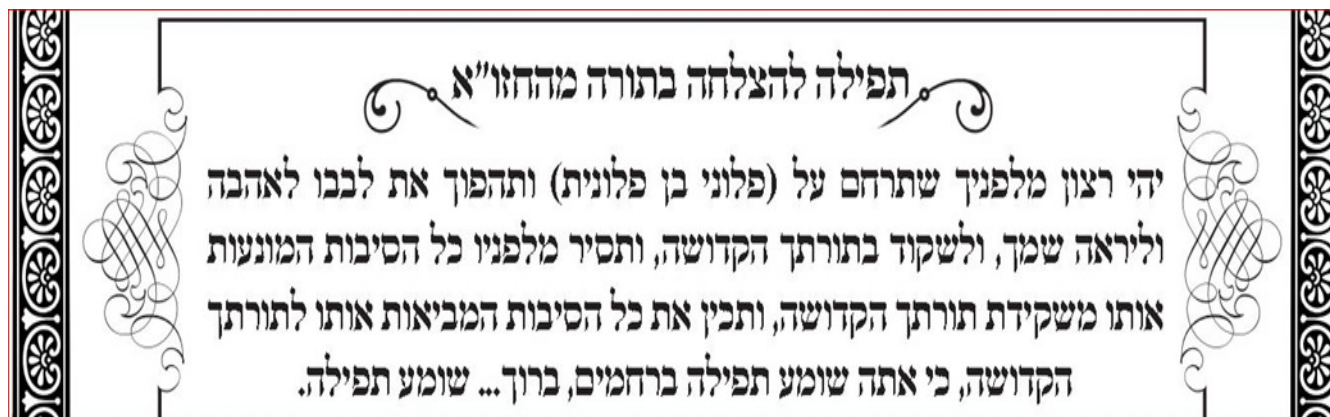
matters of shechita.]



**A prayer for success of one's children in Torah study by the Chazon Ish whose
yahrzeit is 15th of MarCheshvan**

May it be Your Will Hashem, our G-d and G-d of our forefathers, that You have mercy on my son [name of son] son of [mother's name], and direct his heart to love and fear Your Name, and to be diligent in the study of Your holy Torah. May You remove from

before him all circumstances that may deter him from diligent study of Your holy Torah and may you make ready all the conditions that will bring him/her closer to Your holy Torah.



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

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

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

(מתוך אמונה טהורה) בדרך המסורה (והתנהגה כאשה כשרה) לכל משפחתה,

היא הודה היא הדרה - נקיה וטהורה היוצר וצר צורה (וקיבלה הגזירה)

נפטרה בש"ט בת תשעים שנה

ביום כ"ד לחודש כסלו (ערב חנוכה) שנת תשע"ח לפ"ק

תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה

ותקים לתחיה לקץ הימין מהרה ת'נצ'ב'ה'

Zera Shimshon

Lech Lecha

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 מיכאל זצ"ל

בעל הזרע שמשון זצ"א

ויה"ר שיתקיימו בנו ברכותיו של אותו צדיק

לזכות רבקה נכון בת חנה ואברהם
יוסף בן חנה לרפואה שלימה ולזיווג
הגון בקרוב ממש ולשנה מבורכת
עם כל הברכות הכתובות בתורה

לעילוי נשמת הרב חיים שאול בן
בנציון זצ"ל

לזכות זיווג הגון בקרוב ממש
לשושנה נחמה בת חנה פעסא
ורקבה רוזא בת פייגא
יוכבד בת דבורה לרפואה שלימה

היה דבר ה' במחזה לאמר אנכי מגן לך (טו' א')

Hashem spoke to Avraham in a vision saying, "Do not fear etc. I am your shield" (15:1)

On this passuk, the Medrash (Bereishis Rabba 44:1), brings the following passuk (Tehillim 18:35), *The word of Hashem is pure (and) serves as a shield to all those that seek His protection.* The Medrash intends to say that Hashem told Avraham that he should not fear for He (Hashem), would serve as a shield to protect Avraham. The Medrash brings a passuk that teaches that the same hold true to all those that seek protection in Hashem - that Hashem serves as their shields.

The Medrash continues to elaborate on the passuk in Tehillim and explains that 'the words of Hashem' that the passuk refers to as 'pure', are in reality a reference to the mitzvos that He commanded us to do. All the intricate details that each and every mitzva involves, were intentionally added by Hashem as part of the mitzva - to purify those that fulfill them. Thus, the passuk is in reality saying that the word of Hashem purifies those that fulfill them.

With this concept, the Zera Shimshon explains the following mishna.

The mishna says (Avos 2:8), "Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai received his Torah knowledge from Hillel and Shammai. He used to say, 'If you have learned a lot of Torah, do not take credit for yourself, for this is what you were created for'".

The Zera Shimshon asks - what does 'a lot of Torah' mean? The Torah is endless, how can one measure 'a lot' of Torah?

The Zera Shimshon explains that Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai was a student of both Hillel and Shammai. To be a student of both of these Torah Giants is truly a feat since Hillel and Shammai argued about the halacha on countless occasions and each one had compelling proofs and strong reasoning to their respective opinions. Thus, a student of both of them would need tremendous amount of labor to sift through the different arguments, proofs and reasoning to decide how to properly keep the mitzvos. Unlike other students of both Hillel and Shammai, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai was able to do so.

What Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai was trying to impart in this mishna is that even one who can mentally work through all the various sides and come to the proper conclusion, something that would be extremely mentally taxing, should nevertheless not hold of himself better than others. This is what is meant by if one has learned 'a lot of Torah', he should nevertheless not take credit.

Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai gives a reason for this as well - for this is what you were created for. As mentioned, the mitzvos and all their intricate details were given to purify those that fulfill them. Thus, if one has the intellectual capacity to do what Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai did when fulfilling the mitzvos, he has to know that this toil of his in order to properly fulfill the mitzvos is part of his purification process. The proof is that Hashem created him with the mental capacity to do so.

For us the lesson is, any effort of ours to keeps the mitzvos purifies us!

זכות רבינו יעמוד לר' חיים דוד בן טויבא חוה וכל משפחתו

להצלחה ברכה שפע רב וסייעתא דשמיא מרובה בכל מעשה ידיו ובכל הענינים

The (English) Sefer, *'Zera Shimshon on the Torah'* with an unprecedented biography on the Zera Shimshon is available at Lulu.com. or by calling 1844.212.0689 and ask for 'Zera Shimshon on the Torah', ISBN 978-0-359-85606-0.

Lech Lecha

October 31st 2020
13th of Cheshvan 5781

875



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Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

Pachad David

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

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

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



MASKIL LEDAVID

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

A Spiritual Building Must Rest on Firm Foundations

"And he trusted in Hashem, and He reckoned it to him as righteousness" (Bereishit 15:6)

Avraham Avinu's a"n entire way of life serves as a living mussar sefer for us. Just as faith in Hashem was implanted in his heart already from his early years, and from when he was a young child he loved Hashem Yitbarach and served Him with self-sacrifice, so too every person must learn from his ways and follow in his footsteps. If he does so, he too will merit the blessing that was given to Avraham, as the Midrash says (Tanchuma Lech Lecha 11) on the words "Fear not, Avram, I am a shield for you": "Not on you alone but also for your children, if they engage in My Torah just as you engaged in it, I will be for them as a shield as it says (Shmuel II, 22:31), 'The promise of Hashem is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in Him'".

We will now study Avraham Avinu's a"n holy ways in some small measure. We can see the degree of love that Avraham had for his Creator by the Chazal that tells us (Tanchuma 4), "Rabbi Chanina said, he was three years old when he recognized his Creator as it says (Bereishit 26:5), 'Because (בְּקֵט) Avraham obeyed My voice'. The word 'בְּקֵט', 'because', has a numerical value of one hundred and seventy-two. Since Avraham Avinu lived for one hundred and seventy-five years, we conclude from this that he was three years old when he recognized his Creator."

As we know, during those three years Avraham Avinu engaged in investigating and examining his understanding of who created and directs the world. At first, he supposed that the sun was the master of the world, but once the sun set he understood that it could not be the master. After that, he innocently thought that the moon must be the director, but when dawn broke, the moon disappeared and the sun took its place, shining brightly in the sky. Then Avraham understood that the moon too could not be the director of the world. And so it went on, Avraham observed and examined until at three years old he came to the conclusion that there is a Master of the World and it is impossible for the sun, the moon, or the stars to fill this role. At that point, the Master of the World appeared to him and announced, "I am the Master of the World."

I was wondering if Avraham Avinu received reward from Hashem for those three years in which he investigated and searched to discover the Master of the World. For during that time, he did not actually serve the Creator but only searched for Him, therefore it is questionable whether he was deserving of reward for this. According to the Midrash that we quoted above, Avraham Avinu a"n served Hashem for only one hundred and seventy-two (בְּקֵט) years, so in what way did Hashem consider those three years in which he searched for Him?

With siyata dishmaya, I would like to suggest the following answer. To illustrate, when a person stands facing a massively tall building which rises skyward, does he see its foundations?! Of course not. But without a doubt, this enormous building stands on strong, firm foundations which are concealed deep in the ground, and it is these very foundations which allow the building to remain in position.

So it was with Avraham Avinu a"n. Those three years in which he inquired, investigated and searched for the Creator of the World, constituted the basis and foundation for the rest of the one hundred and seventy-two years of his life, in which he served Hashem with self-sacrifice and sublime strength. During those three years, Avraham Avinu a"n implanted firm foundations deep in his soul to know and recognize the truth, and when he found that Truth, he immediately made a firm decision and was determined that this is the correct path and there is no other way. These strong foundations are what implanted in him an immense power to remain strong and not lose heart when facing all the wicked people of his generation, such as Nimrod and his cronies.

In contrast, if we consider the life of Lot, Avraham's nephew, it seems on the surface that he followed Avraham's path and learnt from him to observe Torah and mitzvot. As an example, Lot's hospitality was exemplary, to the extent of self-sacrifice. He risked his life to host the angels who came to his home in Sodom, and also was particular to eat matzot and not chametz on Pesach. However, all his deeds were insincere and hypocritical, lacking foundations and roots.

Lot did not see Avraham Avinu's way as a definite path that has no other alternative. Rather, with his distorted intellect, he came to the erroneous conclusion that there could be another way, the way of lawlessness, abandonment and corruption through the temptations of This World. This is why his faith in Hashem and his mitzvah observance were no more than an unsteady building established on unstable foundations. When this is the case, in a moment of challenge the entire building obviously falls to the ground. That is why Lot stumbled and fell spiritually until he befriended the people of Sodom and Amorah and learnt from their ways. To what is Lot compared? To a tree that does not have many roots, when the wind comes it uproots it. That is why Lot degenerated and became sinful, and Hashem despised him to the extent that He did not wish to speak to Avraham as long as Lot was in the vicinity. This, in fact, is the abysmal difference between Avraham Avinu a"n and Lot, considered by some as a rasha.

Avraham Avinu followed the path of life, walking in the way of Torah and mitzvot and cleaving to faith in Hashem. With his utmost strength, he strove to sanctify Hashem's Name in the world, among the rest of mankind.



Walking in their Ways

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

Lucrative Investments

I know of a wealthy man who owns tremendous amounts of property. He has bank accounts in Switzerland and other countries. I do not know if he himself is aware of how wealthy he is. However, he behaves like a pauper in every respect. He dresses in regular clothes, lives in an apartment building like ordinary people, and eats simple foods.

One day, my curiosity got the better of me. I asked him, "Why do you live like a poor man? You are already seventy. You never married and do not have children who will continue your name. You know that the banks will take all your money after you pass away. Why do you live so eccentrically? Don't you at least want to enjoy your hard-earned money, before the government seizes it for themselves?"

The man was quiet, so I went on. I suggested that at least he should fund the writing of a Sefer Torah, which would stand in his merit.

"How much does a Sefer Torah cost?" he inquired.

"Two hundred thousand francs," I replied.

"Two hundred thousand francs? That's an astronomical sum!" He had no intention of parting with such a considerable amount of money. I personally did not think it would make a dent in his bank account.

"Isn't it a shame that the banks will have a field day with your millions after you die? Don't you see that although you are loaded, you are really very poor, because you are not concerned with funding yourself for your future!"

"What a shame, my dear brother! None of your wealth will accompany you when you come to the World Above. It will all remain in This World. To your dismay, you will then realize how many merits you could have acquired with your vast assets, and arrived in the Next World rich in merits and mitzvot."

And with that, I left my penetrating words to seep into his Jewish heart.

The Haftarah

"Why do you say, O Ya'akov" (Yeshaya 40:41)

The connection to the Parsha: The Haftarah speaks about Avraham's battle with the four kings, as it says "Who inspired [the one] from the east, at whose [every] footstep righteousness attended? [Who] delivered nations to him, and subdued kings [before him]?" This battle is described in the Parsha.

Guard Your Tongue

Laxity in Mitzvah Observance

It is forbidden to relate that someone is lax in observing certain mitzvot. Therefore, it is forbidden to say that someone dedicates only a small amount of time to Torah study or that he does not try to do good to others.

This applies even if both the one relating and the one listening do not spend much time studying Torah themselves or are not known for their generosity to others, and they admit this without any embarrassment. Since the Holy Torah considers Torah study and acts of kindness as foremost priorities, it is forbidden to say that someone else is lax in these areas.



In Our Father's Path

Why Should You Kiss My Hand?!

"I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse" (Bereishit 12:3)

Rabbeinu Chaim ben Attar zya"a, in his sefer 'Ohr Hachaim', asks the following remarkable question:

Why does the verse change its terminology and in reference to those who bless it says, "I will bless those who bless you", implying that Hashem's blessing to them precedes their blessing to Avraham, while in reference to cursing, the person's curse precedes Hashem's curse, as it says, "the one who curses you I will curse"? This implies that Hashem will curse them only after they curse Avraham. Should it not say 'I will curse him who curses you', the term used for those who bless?

But, explains the Holy Ohr Hachaim, the reason for the change is that Hashem intentionally wished to precede His blessing to those who bless Avraham, so as to give validity to their blessing and allow it to have an effect. This is why it says, "I will bless those who bless you". Before others bless Avraham, Hashem blesses the words of their mouths so that they should have an effect and be fulfilled.

The Gaon Rabbi Reuven Elbaz shlita, Rosh Yeshiva of 'Ohr Hachaim', relates the following personal story:

More than forty years ago I used to give a lecture in a neighborhood in Yerushalayim. I was then a young man and could easily have been a grandson of the elderly participants...

On one occasion when we completed a masechta, I invited the Yerushalmi darshan, the Gaon Rabbi Shalom Schwadron zt"l, with whom I had a close relationship, to share words of Torah and inspiration. The Beit Haknesset was crowded and the Rav was extremely happy that so many people had come to participate in the siyum of the masechet. He addressed the participants and after the shiur some of the participants came over to me, wishing to kiss my hand. I immediately pulled my hand away and said to them, why do I deserve this?!

Rabbi Shalom Schwadron zt"l noticed and did not hide his displeasure.

"What are you doing?" he asked me. "Does it not say, 'Do not withhold good from its rightful recipients' (Mishlei 3:27). Why if so, are you preventing yourself from being blessed? Are you not aware of what the Holy Ohr Hachaim writes in Parshat Lech Lecha on the words "I will bless those who bless you"? When a person is asked to give a blessing, Hashem first blesses him so that his blessing should have an effect. And concerning pride? What is there to feel proud about? Your brethren wish to receive a blessing, do not withhold it from them!"



Pearls of the Chag

Personal Lesson in Torah and Acts of Kindness

"But Malchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine; he was a priest of G-d, the Most High" (Bereishit 14:18)

The Sefer 'Marganita d'Rabbi Meir' offers a wonderful explanation of this verse, according to the account of Rabbeinu Meir of Parmishlan zt"l who once met up with the tzaddik Rabbi Shlomo Kluger zt"l. Rabbi Meir zt"l told him that the intention of this verse is to teach us that when two tzaddikim meet, each one must learn from his fellow what he himself lacks.

This is how the tzaddik explained the verse: "But Malchizedek", this refers to Shem who was the Minister of Torah, "brought out" (learnt) from Avraham the attribute of "bread and wine", referring to Avraham's attribute of hospitality.

And "he", referring to Avraham Avinu a"h, absorbed from Shem the attribute of "priest of G-d", of studying Torah day and night, for this was Shem's quality.

Why Did Pharaoh Wish to Take Sarah?

"Why did you not tell me that she is your wife? Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?" (Bereishit 12:18-19)

To be precise, Pharaoh's main claim against Avraham was "Why did you not tell me that she is your wife?" So why did he continue to assert, "Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?" a statement that seemingly does not add or detract to the claim.

Rabbi Avraham Brudo zt"l of Istanbul, in the sefer 'Birkat Avraham', reconciles this difficulty in light of the Gemarah (Baba Batra 110a) that says: "Rava said, one who weds a woman should examine her brothers, as it says, 'Aharon took Elisheva daughter of Aminadav, sister of Nachshon, as a wife' (Shemot 6:23). What do we understand from the words 'daughter of Aminadav', do I not know that she was the sister of Nachshon? What is the verse coming to teach us by saying, 'sister of Nachshon'? From here we learn that one who marries a woman must check her brothers. We learnt in the Mishna, most children are similar to the mother's brothers."

In light of the above, it could be that Pharaoh had two claims:

Firstly, "Why did you not tell me that she is your wife?" because due to this I almost transgressed the prohibition of taking a married woman. Furthermore, since you said, "She is my sister", this was another reason that tempted me to take her for a wife so that the children born to me will be similar to you!

Magen David or Magen Avraham?

"Fear not, Avram, I am a shield for you" (Bereishit 15:1)

We are all familiar with the famous symbol of 'Magen David', a symbol with six points. The question is, why is it called 'Magen David' and not 'Magen Avraham'? Was it not Avraham to whom Hashem said, "I am a shield (magen) for you"?

The 'Kovetz Hama'asef' offers a wonderful explanation:

The Gemarah (Sanhedrin 95a) tells us that Yishvi brother of Goliath wished to kill David in revenge for killing his brother. The Satan brought it about that David arrived in the land of the Philistines and when Yishvi saw him, he bound him and placed him under the beams of the winepress. But when he pressed down the heavy beams, a miracle occurred for David and the ground under him became soft and so he sunk into it.

Later on, it says that Yishvi threw David to heaven and inserted his spear in the ground so that David would fall down onto it. At that moment Avishai son of Tzeruyah came, pronounced the Holy Name, and suspended David between heaven and earth. In this way, he saved him from Yishvi.

Concerning Avraham Avinu, we find that Hashem protected him in the way that a king protects his warriors, from the four directions that surround them, north, south, east and west.

However, Hashem protected David Hamelech Hashem from six directions. From the four directions as in all battles, and additionally from above and below. From above, when the heavy beams of the winepress almost crushed him, and from below, when he almost fell down and would have been pierced by Yishvi's spear.

The symbol is called 'Magen David' since David was protected from six directions, as depicted in the symbol!

Treasures

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



Raise Your Eyes on High and See Who Created These [Things]!

"And said to him, 'I am E'l Sha'ddai; walk before Me and be perfect' (Bereishit 17:1)

The Gemarah tells us (Makot 24a), "Chabakuk came and established Am Yisrael on one foundation: 'But the righteous person shall live through his faith'". This is the entire foundation of man, perfect faith, without reservations, in the Creator of the World.

In truth, belief in Hashem, the G-d of Israel, does not require considerable depth and understanding. It is sufficient to merely see and contemplate the wonderful creation that Hashem formed and irresistibly the exclamation, "How great are Your works, Hashem, You make them all with wisdom" erupts from our mouths. If a person contemplates his amazing bodily systems and the manner in which all his limbs and sinews function, he will certainly be utterly overwhelmed and understand that there is a Master Creator. This contemplation will bring him to an immediate belief in Hashem, with his entire heart, and it will strengthen his faith.

When I merited visiting Maran Harav Shacha zt"l, the Rav told me, "If a person would only reflect on his body when he awakens in the morning, how he is able to open his eyes, move his hands and legs, communicate using the power of speech with which he was endowed, faith in Hashem will immediately fill his heart"...

This is what Hashem commanded Avraham Avinu a"h (Bereishit 17:1), "walk before Me and be perfect". Perfect faith without investigations and inquiries. For one who tries to achieve faith in Hashem through investigating, questioning and querying, can lose everything. This is because the Satan never rests and will never cease trying to make man stumble, so even when all his questions have been settled, the Yetzer will uncover new questions and claims. Until eventually he will abandon Torah and mitzvot with the claim that he was not able to resolve all his difficult questions, and so he may even die in that state of his wickedness.

To what can this be compared? To a gravely ill person whose doctor prescribes medications to heal his illness. But in his foolishness he says, "As long as I do not understand how the medications work I cannot agree to take them"... Sooner or later he will obviously die from his illness. On the other hand, a wise person trusts his doctor and believes him that these are the most suitable medications for him, and does not try to research what they are and how they function.

This is exactly the manner of one who possesses perfect faith. If a person tries to investigate and declares that as long as Hashem's existence is not perfectly clear to him, he is not interested in observing the mitzvot, he will die in that state of wickedness and cut himself off from the land of the living. On the other hand, one who believes with complete, simple faith in the Eternal G-d and has a clear recognition that the Creator of the World is the One who directs every step of his way in life and is the One who assists him, he merits peace of mind in This World and tranquility in the World to Come. This is the reward of one who merits cleaving to faith in Hashem.

Lineage of the Pinto Family



The ancestry of this illustrious family, which produced generations of great Torah scholars, righteous and devout men, who possessed true awe of Hashem, has its roots in the ancient Jewish kehilla in the city of 'Pinto', in Spain.

According to several versions, the ancestry of the Pinto family can be traced back to Rav Sherira Gaon, who lived in the times of the Geonim and was the Rosh Yeshiva of Pumbedita and the Rosh Hagolah of Ariel. He returned the glory of Torah to its former magnificence, reestablishing its grandeur among Am Yisrael.

In 1492 (5252), the era of Spanish Jewry came to an abrupt end, due to the devastation of the Expulsion. The resulting persecutions and torturous murders were felt by all the Jews in Spain, leaving them with no option but to leave behind their high positions, their professions and all their wealth and emigrate to nearby countries. They emigrated to Morocco, Syria, Portugal, Turkey, Holland, and other European countries. The Pinto family were among those who left Spain.

Originally, the Pinto family name was 'De Pinto', and some of the family members who emigrated to Holland, appear in the records as the De Pinto family. The shortened family name was adopted mainly by those family members who emigrated to Western countries, in order to prevent confrontations and friction with their Gentile neighbors who did not look kindly at the addition of 'De' to those they hated, and so their name remained as their city of origin was called, Pinto.

Many stories have been written about the wondrous tzaddik, the holy mekubal, Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hagadol, zya"á. Some of them appear in the well-known sefer Shevach Chaim, which was written in Arabic by Harav Makhluף Mazal Tarim, zt"l. It was recently translated to Hebrew by Rabbi David Cohen, shlita, a student of Moreinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto shlita.

Harav Makhluף Mazal Tarim quotes the words of the Holy Zohar in the foreword to this sefer:

It is incumbent upon every person to always be conscious that he is in Hashem's Presence and publicize the miracles that Hashem does because such words ascend on High and all the Heavenly Hosts gather and thank Hashem for these wonders. Consequently, the Shechinah of Hashem resides upon them Above and below.

Recalling the Kindnesses of our Patriarchs

In honor of the hilula of the holy tzaddik, Maran Rabbeinu Chaim Pinto zya"á, we offer a selection of the wondrous ways of the tzaddik, miracles which he performed during his lifetime and miracles that we experience still today, in his merit. We enjoy the merit of basking in the radiance of his grandson who continues the illustrious legacy of the Pinto family, Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Rabbi David Chananya Pinto shlita, who arouses the merit of his ancestors to hasten salvation and relief for those who reach the fringes of his holy cloak and wish for deliverance in times of trouble and hardship.

As believing Jews, zechuat avot is a tradition which we grasp strongly, as we beseech in our prayers and mention the merit of our Forefathers before the One who dwells on High, "Who recalls the kindnesses of the Patriarchs and brings a Redeemer to their children's children, for His Name's sake, with love". The following story, related in the sefer Shenot Chaim, illustrates our outlook on zechut avot.

The great tzaddik, Rabbi Yosef Benvenisti, zt"l, from the holy city of Yerushalayim, scion of the gaon who authored the sefer Kneset HaGedolah, traveled to Morocco several times as a messenger of the Kollel HaSefaradim in Yerushalayim, to collect money from the Jews of Morocco.

While in Morocco, he was careful to pray each day at the grave of Rabbi Chaim Hagadol. Moreover, when he returned to Yerushalayim, every month, he would send a letter to his grandson who lived in Morocco with a sum of money, asking him to pray for his welfare at the grave of Rabbi Chaim Pinto. He continued to do so until the end of his life.

Once, several Yerushalmi people asked Rabbi Yosef why he troubled himself so much to honor the memory of Rabbi Chaim Pinto. What was the reason for his behavior?

Rabbi Yosef answered, "One who possesses zechut avot appreciates its enormous value. Since I have zechut avot, I recognize its great worth. This is why I send money as a pidyon so that people should pray for me by the grave of Rabbi Chaim Pinto".

You Are Still Young

The tzaddik and mekubal Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hakatan, son of the well-known tzaddik Rabbi Hadan, was born in 1865 (5625), in the city of Mogador. Already at a young age, he dedicated himself to Torah study and Avodat Hashem, which was his sole aspiration and joy. He became known as an outstanding gaon, well versed in all the Rishonim and Acharonim. He was likened to "a cemented cistern that loses not a drop."

Rabbi Chaim labored diligently to draw from the Torah of the Rishonim and clarify

the Torah of the Acharonim, in order to understand the practical application of the halachah. He rejected all worldly vanities and sat in the halls of Torah. With great effort and diligence, he learned Shas and Poskim and was fluent in all areas of the Torah. In addition, he devoted a substantial amount of time, despite his tight learning schedule, to doing acts of charity and kindness, as will be described below.

An interesting testimony was given by R' Ishua, the attendant of Rabbi Chaim Hakatan, about the daily schedule of the tzaddik. This is what he said:

I would go to his house early in the morning and already find him praying in the Beit Hakeneset, on the top floor. After praying, Rabbi Chaim went downstairs to his wife and asked her what she planned to cook that day. He would give her a sum of money to purchase the necessary provisions and then immediately went on his way, going from house to house to collect money to distribute to the poor people of the city.

His feet literally led him to the houses of the sick, poor, and needy. He shopped for them himself and then brought them whatever they required.

In this manner, the tzaddik would walk for hours, going from one end of the city to the other, to practice kindness and charity. This was his custom in his young years, and he continued doing so until old age.

At night, the tzaddik would engage in tikkunim and the study of the holy Torah. "Who may ascend the mountain of Hashem, and who may stand in the place of His sanctity? One with clean hands and a pure heart."

Rabbi Chaim's extraordinary efforts to assist the poor and needy made him popular among the people. They sensed that all his actions were entirely for the sake of Heaven. Whoever searched for the tzaddik knew that he would be found among the poor and wretched people. He would spend time talking to them, offering words of encouragement so that they would not become depressed, but continue serving Hashem joyously.

In Prayer

When describing Rabbi Chaim's zya"á productive life, it is fitting to devote a section to his heartfelt prayers.

Every detail of how he prayed is worthy of a thorough review since all his prayers and blessings were said with intense concentration, as one who counts precious jewels, with pleasure and precision. This exemplified the statement, "All my limbs will say, Hashem, who is like You?"

It was not surprising that Rabbi Chaim merited that his pure prayers penetrated the Heavens and bore fruit, and his blessings came true, one by one. The many stories

of miracles effected by his prayers, recounted by the subjects of the incidents, attest to this.

The words of Chazal were fulfilled through him: "A tzaddik decrees and Hashem fulfills his wish."

Through all his prayers and supplications, for the general public as well as for the individual, he would beg for mercy in the merit of the saintly Tanna Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, zy"a.

Rabbi Chaim would often refer to himself as "the lowly servant of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai." He would utter this frequently, and it was often heard by many of his close relatives, whether he was in the middle of learning the secrets of the Zohar Hakadosh or supplicating Hashem.

Customary Fast

Rabbi Chaim Hakatan customarily fasted from Motza'ei Shabbat Kodesh until the following Erev Shabbat. He neither ate bread nor drank water.

Every Erev Shabbat, his wife, the Rabbanit, a"h, would prepare for him some hot soup with meatballs for the Friday night meal, in order to revive his soul and strengthen his weakened body for the service of Hashem.

On this matter, we recall the amazing account of Rabbi Moshe Benisti, principal of a school in Nice, France, which he heard from his mother, Mrs. Chanina, tichyeh, and told over to Moreinu v'Rabbeinu shlita.

Take the Soup Away!

Once, the Rabbanit went to the butcher to buy meat, as usual, for the Friday night meal. That day, the butcher deviated from his regular habit and gave her meat which was kosher but not chalak (glatt), as she generally bought each week.

The Rabbanit, who was not aware of the change, brought the meat home and prepared the soup and meatballs for the Rav as usual in honor of Shabbat, to revive the tzaddik's spirit after fasting the whole week. When the Rabbanit placed the plate of soup on the table, Rabbi Chaim suddenly called to her, "Take the soup away! It is prohibited to eat from it; it contains worms..."

The Rabbanit glanced at the soup and saw that it was clear, with no worms. She innocently assumed that the Rav did not like her soup and just mentioned the worms as a joke. The Rabbanit went to the kitchen and brought her husband the second course, the meatballs.

The Rav again called out to her, declaring that worms were crawling in his plate. "Do you want to feed me food that is prohibited? The Torah states that whoever eats worms transgresses five prohibitions. Why then did you serve me meatballs with live worms crawling in them?"

Rabbi Chaim took the whole pot of soup with the meatballs and threw it in the garbage. Consequently, after a week of fasting, he ate only bread and water for his meal, without tasting the meat at all.

Immediately upon the conclusion of Shabbat, the Rabbanit hurried to the butcher and inquired about the meat that she had bought from him. Where did it come from, and who was the shochet?

The butcher explained that the shochet was a G-d fearing Jew; however, the meat that she had bought that week had not been chalak, as she usually bought. It was considered just kosher since there was a question of sircha (adhesion) concerning the animal's lungs, which rendered it kosher, but not chalak, glatt.

Then the Rabbanit understood that Hashem had prevented her husband from eating meat whose kashrut was questionable. This story illustrates the importance of Sefardim adhering to the ruling of Maran Beit Yosef, zy"a, to only eat chalak meat. Furthermore, we see that when a person guards himself against eating prohibited foods, Hashem protects him from stumbling unintentionally, as it says, "He guards the steps of His devout ones."

Inspiration for Strengthening Our Emunah

As we mentioned at the beginning of the article, in our generation too we hear many miraculous stories which are attributed to the merit of the tzaddik and miracle worker. Many of these stories have been published in the sefer 'Men of Faith' which describes the illustrious dynasty of the Pinto family, and also in the sefer 'Walking in Their Ways', whose pages are interwoven with stories adorned with the utter faith of those who merited salvation, as related to Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto shlita.

The sefer 'Walking in Their Ways' and the stories that are published in a regular column in the weekly 'Pachad David' magazine, serve as a weekly dose of inspiration and encouragement for thousands of readers who are exposed to a revelation of Hashem's glory through these moving stories that inspire a strengthening of emunah in Hashem Yitbarach and in Moshe His servant, and in our Sages who guide their holy congregations throughout the ages.

The following is but one of the many stories that come to our desk, a deeply moving record that describes the power of salvation as a result of complete faith. Salvation that was an outcome of the mitzvah of belief in the power of tzaddikim and acceptance of the yoke of Heaven.

We bring you the story in the writer's own words:

I Decided to Publicize the Story to Sanctify G-d's Name.

I never recorded the story of this miracle because it is very personal, but after reading the new book 'Walking in Their Ways', I decided to go ahead and in doing so sanctify G-d's Name.

I was born in Agadir, Morocco, to parents who always respected and honored the tzaddikim. We were not religious and received a very minimal Jewish education, but we had complete faith in the tzaddikim and sincere values instilled in us by our parents.

When we were young, the only vacation we took was when we went to Taroudant in Oulad Berhil, to the gravesite of Rabbi David Ben Baruch, since my maternal grandfather, Messaoud Assaraf, was a close friend of Baba Dido, (the two graves are opposite each other in the cemetery in Taroudant). We also went to Essaouira to the gravesite of Rabbi Chaim Pinto, because my father was born in Mogador and is called after Rabbi Chaim HaKatan who was his sandak. Also, we regularly visited the gravesite of Rabbi Khalifa Ben Malka (who married the sister of Rabbi Chaim Pinto), in the cemetery of Agadir.

We were familiar with Rabbi David but from afar. When our daughter Sarah was eight months old, in November 1996, my husband took her to Rabbi David for a blessing.

I Knew That He Was Holding on to the Truth

We observed Shabbat, kashrut and family purity. During the first year of our marriage, my mother-in-law suddenly passed away. This was a catalyst for my husband to embrace a completely religious lifestyle. Knowing that he was doing so as an elevation for the soul of his mother, I did not object. Each time he asked me what I thought about regularly wearing tzitzit or a kippah, I thought that it was only right to encourage him since it would be an elevation for his mother's soul.

However, his progress in Judaism worried me slightly because I felt that it was creating a distance between us. But deep inside I knew that he was holding on to the truth...

We married in 1994 and in 1996 our daughter Sarah was born. In 1998 I gave birth to another daughter, Shirel, and in 2000, our third daughter, Ora, was born.

In June of 2001, I went to my parents in Agadir, without my husband but with my daughters, to recuperate from the birth.

I began dressing more modestly and wore a skirt, but instead of encouraging me, my husband who was more stringent than I, would tell me that it's not enough and each time this caused me to regress.

The day we arrived in Agadir, I took Sara who was then five years old, and Shirel who was three, to the local pool, since the Mayor was my brother's friend gave us permission to use the pool.

We had been in the pool for less than an hour and I was keeping an eye on Shirel who was playing with a little girl. Sara sat by the pool's edge, without armbands, since one of the armbands that I had bought at the hotel's store was faulty.

I wish to point out that I am a responsible mother and far from being reckless. I was waiting for my sister-in-law to come and watch the girls so that I could go and change the armbands.

I was watching Shirel when suddenly a woman got up and jumped into the pool... to pull out my daughter Sarah. She was purple and unconscious. Everything happened so quickly, I didn't understand what was going on. I tried

to wake her and was suddenly pushed to the side.

I shouted and called out to the tzaddikim from the depths of my heart, that their merit should help us. It was a heart-rending sight for all the spectators.

They threw water on me so that I shouldn't faint, while time passed and my daughter still remained unconscious.

The woman who pulled her out of the water was a nurse. A doctor who happened to be there began massaging her heart. (The doctor and nurse who had come here for a vacation were from Portugal, where my father's family, the Ziri family, originated from. They left Portugal for Essaouira in the fifteen hundreds at the time of the Inquisition, seemingly like the Pinto family...).

Her situation remained bleak. Suddenly I began to pray from the depths of my heart. "My G-d, give me back my daughter and I will take upon myself to dress modestly and cover my hair (something I had never thought of doing)."

As soon as I made this silent vow, I felt movement in the air and my daughter began to throw up. The doctor put her over his shoulder and ran with her to the entrance of the hotel where an ambulance was waiting.

Sara's eyes were open but it seemed that she had no idea what was going on or even what I was telling her...

The thought passed through my mind, "My G-d, if my daughter is handicapped, what will be?"

After joining them in the ambulance the doctor reassured me and said that Sara was beginning to react and knew her name.

Everything happened so quickly; ambulance, hospital, examinations.

By a miracle, the water had not entered her lungs. During the night, every time I took my daughter, who was hooked up to an intravenous, to the bathroom, she repeated, "Ima I called you and you didn't hear me!" How could I hear her cries from inside the water?

She explained to me that she had gone down one step and then slipped into the deep water.

I was in shock, but I did not tell anyone about my vow.

I told my mother: "It happened because I walked around there with a bathing suit." But she retorted, "No way, you are a good person, you observe Shabbat, where do you get this idea from?"

I phoned my husband and told him what had happened while minimizing the severity of the situation and not revealing what I had promised.

I would like to point out that I later found out that my husband had taken upon himself to complete the entire sefer Tehillim within a week, from one Shabbat till the next Shabbat. The combination of his mitzvah together with the mitzvah of modesty interceded in heaven in favor of my daughter and our family.

It Is Time to Cover Your Hair

After Sara's miraculous recovery, I went to thank the Portuguese doctor. He told me, "Madam, I was not supposed to be by the pool right then. Every day I go to the beach but today my son insisted that I stay here by the pool..."

A few days after I returned to Paris, my husband went to Rabbi David Pinto to ask for a blessing for myself and for Sara. Rabbi David told him, "Call your wife, I need to speak to her."

I will never forget this meeting. At that time, Rabbi David did not receive people where he receives people today.

Accompanied by my husband, I went to Rabbi David, dressed modestly and complete with a head covering, out of respect for the tzaddik.

We entered the office together and Rabbi David was sitting there. This was the first time I had seen him so close up. Behind him were many Torah volumes. His face was serious and closed.

In a harsh and stern tone, he told me, "It is time to cover your hair!"

My husband was paralyzed with fear. I began crying, remembering the kindness that Hashem did for me and my daughter. Had I been asked to cover my hair with a pot, I would have agreed! Had my daughter not survived, what would my life have been like? Would our marriage have survived?

Rabbi David continued: "Are you not embarrassed to walk around half-naked in the presence of men when your husband is a tzaddik?" I felt that I was being judged. I wanted to recount my qualities in my defense, but I knew that Rabbi David was right. What answer did I have for him??

He handed me a sefer and asked me to open it. I opened it up and right there on the page were the words, 'Hashem saved them from death'.

He then said, "You don't know from where Hashem saved you and your daughter, from where you are coming back..."

But I knew well. I saw with my own eyes how Sarah's life was saved miraculously. I asked Rabbi David two questions: "How should I cover my hair, with a headscarf or a wig?" I was afraid that he would tell me to wear a headscarf, which would make problems for me at work. My second question was, "We still have a television in our bedroom, is this a problem?" (We gave up the TV in the dining room several years ago)

To my first question he answered that I should do as I wished, the main thing is to cover my hair. In answer to the second question, he said that it is not urgent and that in a few years I should give it up, which indeed was a natural consequence.

I continued crying out of a combination of reasons: emotion, gratitude and fear.

When we got up to leave, Rabbi David's face was calmer. In an encouraging tone he said to me with a smile; "It will be okay, it will be okay".

And indeed everything worked out well. After recovering from the shock of the meeting and

its repercussions on our life, I noticed that from the time I began covering my hair, it brought many blessings to our family.

The problem was that I had not been prepared for this change and owned neither a headscarf, hat or wig. I only had a sunhat that did not cover my hair fully so I did not dare to leave the house. Due to the importance of this mitzvah and the salvation that it brought us, I could not take it lightly.

Today, when I think about it, the headscarf has become almost like a fashion accessory, with the variety of beautiful styles that the market offers today!

I Learned to Understand his Words

From that day, we grew closer to the Pinto family. We participate in the hilula of Rabbi Chaim Pinto in Essaouira and when I call on him for help he answers me. We consult with Rabbi David concerning every important decision in our lives. On several occasions, he prevented me from going in the wrong direction. For example, when I wanted to make Aliya, he told me not to do so and he was right, for at that time we were still not ready for it. I learned to understand him and read between the lines when he speaks (he speaks concisely and chooses his words carefully before opening his mouth).

Like a father full of patience for his children, he accompanies us with the goodness of his heart and with patience, (unlike him, I am a big talker...). Every time we come to him, he blesses us, gives us advice, cautions us and offers words of encouragement. He is very humble and one can sometimes forget his true level of a Gaon and spiritual guide because he lowers himself so that each person can understand his guidance.

He sacrifices himself in an exceptional way for the sake of Am Yisrael, by spreading Torah and mitzvah observance throughout the world, hastening the coming of Mashiach and the final redemption, may it be speedily in our days.

May it be Hashem's will that this merit grants him long life and health, and protect him, his wife, his children and grandchildren. Amen.

The year 1844 (5604) was a very difficult one for the Jews of Mogador. Many harsh decrees were levied at the Jews. The French bombed the city from the sea, and many Jews were either slaughtered, died of starvation, or fell captive. It was a period of mourning for the House of Ya'akov.

The esteemed Rabbi Chaim Hagadol fought valiantly to save his brethren who were plundered and looted, and in the merit of his Torah and prayers, he succeeded in preventing the enemies from entering the city.

Moreover, Rabbi Chaim's faithful shamash, Rabbi Uzi Saliman Ben Chaim, zt"l, testifies that from then on the Angel of Death was not permitted to enter Mogador unless Rabbi Chaim Pinto zya"l authorized it.

ZECHER TZADDIK LIVRACHA

RABBI CHAIM PINTO "HAKATANE"



This week (Monday 15th of Cheshvan - November 2nd) we mark the hilula of one of the great Torah giants, a descendant of the distinguished Pinto dynasty from Morocco, the tzaddik and miracle-worker, Rabbi Chaim Pinto HaKatan zya"a. The tzaddik Rabbi Chaim zya"a brought merit to the public, both spiritually and materially, not only while he was alive but also after he passed away, by returning the hearts of his people to their Father in heaven.

This very week in which we read in the Torah about the exceptional deeds of Avraham Avinu a"h, the pillar of kindness, we will depict a digest of the distinguished personality of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Pinto zya"a, focusing on his acts of kindness which were only one facet of his exemplary ways and righteousness with which he illuminated the world.

Thousands of people benefitted from the charitable activities of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hakatan. Some were those who donated charity and some were the recipients of his charity. Rabbi Chaim vigorously engaged in gemilut chassadim, one of the pillars that support the world, following in the ways of his Creator, "who bestows beneficent kindnesses upon His people Israel", by dedicating his entire being in support of the destitute and needy of his town.

His daily schedule began after the Shacharit prayers, when he would visit the grave of his grandfather the tzaddik and mekubal Rabbi Chaim Hagadol, in the old cemetery. He would always mention his name while blessing people, saying, "The merit of my honorable, holy grandfather, should protect you."

Afterward, he would go to the new cemetery and prostrate himself over the grave of his father, the holy tzaddik Rabbi Yehuda (Hadan) zya"a. Then he would set out in the direction of the stores, to purchase the necessary provisions for the poor.

He would instruct his attendant to visit a needy widow or underprivileged family, in order to deliver the food. For some, he would instruct his attendant to deliver meat and pastries, and to others, fruits and vegetables. In this way the attendant shared in the mitzvah of distributing food among the needy, preventing the poor people of the city from starving.

R' Itzchak Abisror relates that Rabbi Chaim Hakatan called him several times to accompany him on his rounds of collecting money from the people of the city and distributing the charity among the poor. Not everyone merited accompanying Rabbi Chaim when he collected money since it was a special privilege. However, R' Itzchak was chosen for the mission.

Every Friday, Rabbi Chaim would go and collect food from people so that he could distribute it among the poor in honor of Shabbat Kodesh. He would not collect money on Fridays since he knew that time was limited, and the poor would not have sufficient time to buy provisions for Shabbat. Conversely, on other days, he would collect money and distribute it to the poor.

The impressive image and shining countenance of the tzaddik made a lasting impression on each and every Jew who visited Mogador. Rabbi Chaim Hakatan would sit at the gates of the city and wait for guests arriving from other cities, in order to grant them the opportunity of sharing in the mitzvah of tzedakah.

There were those who actively searched for Rabbi Chaim, passing in front of him intentionally, so that he should request of them to donate a specific sum of money for tzedakah. They believed that if they would fulfill the request of Rabbi Chaim Pinto, they would meet success and thereafter experience good fortune in all their endeavors.

It was a known fact among the Moroccan Jews that if Rabbi Chaim would bless them for their donation, everything would go well for them that day. Furthermore, they would see wondrous miracles in the coming week.

Complete Joy

During the chagim, and especially before Pesach, when expenses were greater than usual, Rabbi Chaim did not hesitate to burden the wealthy people with supporting the impoverished people. Prior to Pesach, Rabbi Chaim Pinto would go from house to house, asking everyone to open their hearts and pockets to give charity and gladden the hearts of the poor people, widows, and orphans on the upcoming chag. In this way, they could also rejoice during the festival, and the happiness of Am Yisrael would be complete.

Anyone who donated money for charity merited the blessings of the tzaddik, issued from his holy mouth and the depths of his pure heart.

Twenty-six Years

Rabbi Chaim zya"a would instill faith and hope, crucial for every Jew, in every person no matter his origin; Jews and non-Jews alike. The sefer 'Anshei Emuna' (Ch. 19) brings the following story:

Rabbi Chaim once came down with a severe case of typhus and was at the brink of death. The members of the Chevrah Kadisha assembled around his bed, and when they saw him taking his last breaths, they began to recite Tehillim.

Suddenly, Rabbi Chaim opened his eyes and raised himself slightly. He told the members of the Chevrah Kadisha, "You can leave now. I am fine. I was granted by Heaven another twenty-six years of life."

After everyone recovered from their shock, the tzaddik explained to them that just as he was about to die, his grandfather, Rabbi Chaim Hagadol, suddenly came from Gan Eden to stand before the Heavenly Court. He tearfully pleaded, "You must add more years to Rabbi Chaim's life since he has not yet accomplished all that he has to do. He must live longer in order to increase people's faith in Hashem."

Rabbi Chaim Hagadol continued pleading his grandson's case and advocating for him. In the end, the Heavenly Court accepted his appeal and added another twenty-six years to Rabbi Chaim Hakatan's life. During these years, he dedicated himself to strengthening his brethren with faith in the Master of the World.

MeOros Ramchal Lech Lecha

Nimrod attempted to Burn Avraham the Champion of *Chessed* in the Fires of *Gevurah* but failed

“And He said to him, "I am the Lord, Who brought you forth from *Ur Kasdim* - of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it.”” (*Bereishis* 15:7)

The *Ramchal* teaches us the secret of *Ur Kasdim* – he explains that the fulfillment of the attribute of *Chessed* – Loving Kindness is when *Chessed* Overrules *Gevurah* – might and strength, if however the opposite is true and *Gevurah* stands above *Chessed* and overrules it, then the forces of evil and darkness known as the *sitra achra* the other side and the nations of the world rule over us.

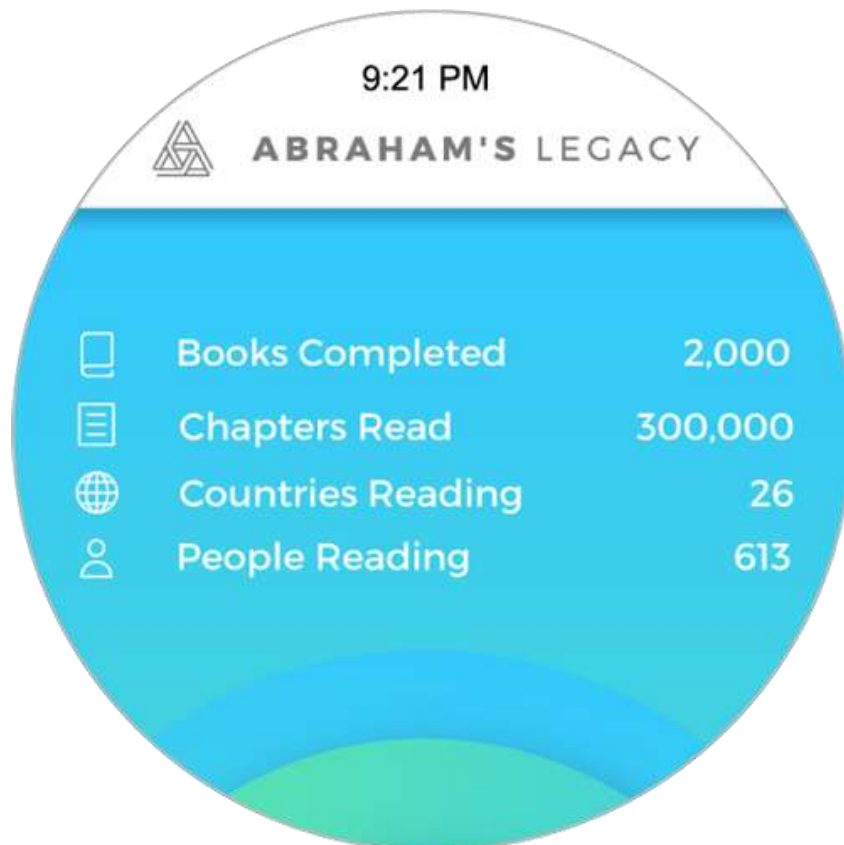
This is why the wicked king Nimrod tried to cast Avraham into the fiery furnace – *Ur Kasdim* – he was attempting that the fires of *Gevurah* should overcome and rule over Avraham *Avinu* – the epitome of *midas Chessed* – loving kindness. If he would have succeeded *chessed* would have remained subservient to *midas haDin* - the attribute of harsh judgment and then the power and forces of darkness of the *sitra achra* would be strengthened.

Hashem however, overturned the entire episode and changed it into something positive, so that when Avraham *Avinu* overcame the flames of the fiery furnace of Nimrod, Avraham's corresponding attribute of *Chessed* defeated and overcame the fires of *Gevurah* of Nimrod.

This was Avraham's first *nisayon* – his first trial or test, and it was the first *tikkun* he rectified. It served as the root of all future *tikkunim* that he needed to accomplish and repair where *Chessed* would triumph over *Din* and Loving Kindness would triumph over Harsh Judgment. When *chessed* rules, says *Ramchal* that all things move towards *tikkun* and repair – *kedusha* rules, *Bnei Yisroel* dwell in their land, and rule it, this is why *Ur Kasdim* is connected by our *pasuk* to *Eretz Yisroel* – the land which Avraham will inherit.

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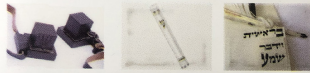
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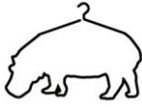
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