

MEOROS HATZADDIKIM

— Lights Of Our Righteous —

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

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)

Parshas Vayikra

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The Medium Through Which Moshe Came Close To Hashem

Rav Chaim Ibn Attar, the Ohr HaChaim

Odom ki yakriv mikem korban Lashem - "If a person should offer a sacrifice from among you to Hashem" (1:2).

The Medium Through Which Moshe Came Close to Hashem

The *Ohr HaChaim* explains that when *Bnei Yisrael* saw how Moshe was chosen

from among them all to be the one who was selected as spokesman, and they observed the great honor and glory bestowed upon *Moshe* to draw him close to the *Shechina*, they realized that the reason for this was because of *Bnei Yisrael* - in their merit and on their behalf was Moshe chosen [rather than on his own merit]. This is how the *Ohr HaChaim* reads our *pasuk*: *Odom ki yakriv* - "If a person is chosen to be drawn close to the *Shechina*" - *mikem* - "because of you and your merit is the reason that he is selected to be drawn close". This can be proven, says the *Ohr HaChaim*, because for some thirty-eight years that *Bnei Yisrael* were distanced from Hashem because of the sins of the *Eigel* (Golden Calf) and the *Meraglim* (Spies), for that duration, Hashem did not speak with Moshe either. (Only afterward, when *Bnei Yisrael* and Hashem were reconciled, did Hashem speak with Moshe, proving that the reason for speaking to Moshe at all was because of *Bnei Yisrael*.)

Kiruv Rechokim - the Deeper Korban Lashem

Our *pasuk* also hints at the idea that all great leaders should draw the hearts of *Bnei Yisrael* close to Hashem and to His *avoda*. This closeness is called a *Korban Lashem* [the word *Korban* is derived from the word *korov* - meaning "close" or "near"].

The *Ohr HaChaim* explains that when a person sins, this separates him from *dveikus* and cuts off the attachment between a *Yid* and his Father in Heaven. *Devorim* 4:4 teaches that we should be *dveikim* (attached) to *Hashem*, yet sin detaches and separates us, cutting us off from Hashem. Sin distances us from Hashem.

Hashem is upset about this and desires our closeness to Him. He therefore commanded that those who are distant should be drawn back close to Him, and rebuked and chastised for their misdeeds in order that they should return and reattach themselves to Hashem.

Hashem even punishes whoever looks away and attempts to ignore his children who have gone astray. The proof of this, says the *Ohr HaChaim*, is the reward promised to those who work in *kiruv* and actively work to draw Hashem's children

back, as the *Tanna in Avos* Chapter 5 says: “Whoever gives merit to the masses – no sin shall come to him”. Hashem guards him from mistakes; the *Ohr HaChaim* says that this is a faithful proof.

Thus, the *Ohr HaChaim* says, *Odom ki yakriv mikem* – If an *Odom*, an important person, will draw close those who are the most lowly from among you, and bring back those who sinned, those who made mistakes and strayed, and distancing themselves and cutting themselves off from Hashem and *dveikus*, this drawing them close and bringing them back is called a *Korban* – an offering to Hashem, an offering of closeness, a sacrifice of nearness, of bringing wayward, distanced children back to their Father, of bringing the wild saplings back to their holy roots. Such a person who is engaged in *kiruv rechokim* need never offer any other offerings – neither vows nor gifts (*neder* or *nedova*), neither sin nor guilt offerings (*chatos* or *oshom*), because, as *Pirkei Avos* teaches, whoever works in *kiruv* and brings merit to the masses – no sin befalls him. For if there are no mistakes there is no need for *korbonos*. Furthermore, the *Ohr HaChaim* emphasizes that any person can do this and draw the masses back to Hashem, not just great *Tzaddikim*. This is our *Korban* to Hashem, offering His children back to Him.

Praises for the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh*

Just Like the *Ba'al Shem*

The *Arye D'vei Illai* of Vizhnitz once remarked, “Although the *Ohr HaChaim* did not follow in the ways of the *Chassidim* and *Tzaddikim* among us here, he nonetheless reached all the same spiritual heights that the *Ba'al Shem Tov* reached, and when necessary he was also able to work wonders and perform miracles. (Gevuras Ari)

Worthy of the *Berocha Shecholak Meichochmoso L'yerei'ov*

Rav Yehuda Ayash, the chief Rav of Algiers and *mechaber* of *Vezos L'Yehuda*, praises Rav Chaim ben Attar very highly. When the *Ohr HaChaim* passed through Algiers, Rav Yehuda wrote a *haskoma* (approbation) to his work. In the *haskoma*

to *Ohr HaChaim* he writes:

We met the perfect sage, the wondrous Rav Chaim ben Attar, who is like an angel, this G-dly man whose scholarship is like Sinai and who can uproot mountains. His Torah is sincere and *lishma*; our own eyes did see and our own ears did hear and bear witness to this and so I wish to make known that he is an example of someone over whom you should recite the *berocha* (recited over a great Torah scholar and *Talmid Chochom*) *Boruch shecholak meichochmoso l'yerei'ov*.

Gedolim Be'misasm Yoser



**Yahrzeits for the 7th of Nissan ~ Begins Friday Night
(04-05-2025)**



Rav Pinchos Zelig - Rav of Lask, Ateres Paz (5430 / 1670 - 355th Yahrzeit)



Rav Chaim Abulafia of Teveria - Chacham Chaim Abulafia of Teveria (5504 / 1744 - 281st Yahrzeit)

(Some say the Yahrzeit is on the 6th of Nissan the 16th of Nissan)

Rav Chaim was born in Chevron in 5420 (1660). When he returned to Eretz Yisrael from Turkey, Rav Chaim was asked to serve as Rav of Tzefat. In the year 5485 (1725), Rav Yisrael Benveniste passed away and Rav Chaim was chosen to succeed him as the Chief Rabbi of Izmir. After serving as Rav of Teveria for four years and rebuilding the *kehillah*, Rav Chaim passed away on 6 (some say 7) *Nissan*.



Rav Yitzchok of Drohobitch - Derhobitsh, Derhovitsher (5504 / 1744 - 281st Yahrzeit)

Rav Yitzchok was the son of Rav Yosef Sprawiedliwy (Polish for ישר - Righteous or Just) and *Yenta Di Nevia* (the Prophetess). When he lived in Ostrog, he was one of the ten Jews who studied in Rav Yuzpa's *Bais Medrash*, among the greatest lamdonim in town. He was also the Maggid and mochiach in Brod in the *Bais Medrash* of Rav Yitzchok of Hamburg during his tenure as Rav of Brod. Although he knew of and approved of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, according to some, he was a colleague rather than a *talmid*.



Rav Avrohom Ragoler (5567 / 1807 - 218th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yissocher Dov of Ziditchov (5592 / 1832 - 193rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Aryeh Leib Yelin of Bialystock - Yefeh Einayim (5644 / 1884 - 141st Yahrzeit)



Rav Aryeh Yehuda Leib Epstein of Oztrov (5688 / 1928 - 97th Yahrzeit)



Dr. Moshe Wallach - Founder of Shaarei Tzedek Hospital (5717 / 1957 - 68th Yahrzeit)

Yahrzeits for the 8th of Nissan ~ Begins Saturday Night (04-06-2025)



Rav Eliyahu Hakadosh of York - Baal HaTosfos (4950 / 1190 - 835th Yahrzeit)

In 4950 (secular year of 1190), the Jews of York, England, were killed by the Crusaders at Clifford's Tower, after they refused to be baptized. Among the *kedoshim* were at least two *Ba'alei ha'Tosafos*, Rav Eliyahu Hakadosh and *Rabbeinu Yom Tov, Hy"d*. This tragedy occurred on a Friday night, leading to the "*Cherem of York*," an English tradition forbidding Jews to sleep in the city of York overnight.



Rav Yom Tov Hakadosh of Yoani (4950 / 1190 - 835th Yahrzeit)



Rav Eliyahu Spira of Prague - Eliyahu Rabba (5472 / 1712 - 313th Yahrzeit)



Rav Mordechai of Neshchiz - Rishfei Aish (5560 / 1800 - 225th Yahrzeit)

R. Mordechai of Neshchiz [8 Nissan 1800] was descended from the Maharal of Prague and Don Yitzchak Abarbanel. He was a disciple of R. Yechezkel Michel of Zlotchov. The ill and the unfortunate came to visit him from long distances. It is recorded that he never uttered a negative word about another person. He actively supported settlement in Eretz Yisrael. He was succeeded by his son, R. Yitzchak of Neshchiz. His sayings were collected in *Rishfei Eish*.



Rav Yaakov Shimon of Zoslov (5591 / 1831 - 194th Yahrzeit)



Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Levov (5648 / 1888 - 137th Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Perl of Zborov (5685 / 1925 - 100th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yechezkel Michel Tikochinsky - Gesher HaChaim (5715 / 1955 - 70th Yahrzeit)

**Yahrzeits for the 9th of Nissan ~ Begins Sunday Night
(04-07-2025)**



Rav Yosef Yuzpa Hahn Neurelingen - Yosef Ometz (5397 / 1637 - 388th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yaakov Tzvi Yalish of Dinov - Molei Haroim (5585 / 1825 - 200th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yaakov Tzvi was born in Reisha in 5538/1778, the son of Rav Naftoli. He received the Chassidic tradition from his Rebbe and mentor, the *Apta Rav*, *mechaber* of *Ohev Yisrael*, as well as the *Kozhnitzer Maggid*, the *Chozeh of Lublin* and Rav Menachem Mendel of Rymanow. Rav Yaakov Tzvi served as Rav in Dynow, Glogov, Huskav and Premisla.



Rav Nosson Feitel Reinitz (5622 / 1862 - 163rd Yahrzeit)

Rav Nosson Feitel, the ancestor of the famed Reinitz family, was the son of Rav Dov Berel, and the *mechaber* of *Divrei Ranaf*. He served as Rav of Tete Vegsing and afterward as Rav of Diandias. Later, he was Rav of Mad, Hungary, for nineteen years, from 5603/1842 until 5622/1861.



Rav Aryeh Levine - Tzaddik from Yerushalayim, Mashgiach Yeshivas Eitz Chaim (5729 / 1969 - 56th Yahrzeit)

Rav Aryeh Levine was born on the 6th of *Nissan* 5645, and passed away on the 9th of *Nissan* 5729 (March 22, 1885 - March 28, 1969). He was known by one and all as "The Father of the Prisoners". Rav Levine was born in Urla, near Bialistock, Poland, to his father R' Binyamin Beinush and his mother Ettel. In *Adar* 5765 (March 1095), he came to live in Eretz Yisrael, where he learned at the *Yeshivas Toras Chaim*. For many decades he served as *Mashgiach* at the *Yeshivas Eitz Chaim* in Yerushalayim. After the State of Israel was established, Rav Levine founded the *Yeshiva* that is named after him - Beis Aryeh. He was known as "The Father of the Prisoners", having regularly visited Prisoners of Zion imprisoned during the time of the British Mandate.



Rav Chaim Meir Hager - Imrei Chaim (5732 / 1972 - 53rd Yahrzeit)

Rav Chaim Meir was born on 15 *Kislev* 5648/1888, the son of Rav Yisrael Hager of Vizhnitz, also known as *Ahavas Yisrael*. Rav Chaim Meir was his father's right-hand man from a young age and they were inseparable. He was appointed Rav of Vilchovitch in Marmorosh. He decided to move to Eretz Yisrael and traveled from Czechoslovakia to Belgium and England. He arrived in 5708 and established Vizhnitz on the soil of the Holy Land. Rav Chaim Meir opened his *Bais Medrash* in Tel Aviv. Eventually, he established the first Chassidic enclave in Bnei Brak, reopened the *Vizhnitzer Yeshiva* and began to reestablish Vizhnitz and Chassidic life in post-war Eretz Yisrael.

**Yahrzeits for the 10th of Nissan ~ Begins Monday Night
(04-08-2025)**



Rav Betzalel HaKohen - Rav of Vilna, Mareh Cohen, Shu"t Reishis Bikkurim



Miriam the Prophetess (2487 / -1274 - 3,298th Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Teomim (5399 / 1639 - 386th Yahrzeit)

Rav Moshe was the son of Rav Shimon Teomim Lemel of Vienna. Rav Moshe Teomim, served as *Av Beis Din* of Moravia (Mehrin) he passed away on 10 *Nissan*.



Rav Shmuel Shmelke - Av Beis Din of Ostroha (5447 / 1687 - 338th Yahrzeit)



Rav Shmuel Yechiel of Botoshan (5622 / 1862 - 163rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Feilshus - Rav Moshe New Yorker (5763 / 2003 - 22nd Yahrzeit)

After he married, he had two children, and fled Germany for America after *Kristallnacht*. He settled on the East Side, where many frum families lived. He continued his *avodas Hashem* privately and quietly without anyone knowing who he really was. The Boyaner and Kapishniczer Rebbes recognized his true colors and they were among the few who really knew him to be a *Tzaddik nistor*.



Rav Shalom Mashash - Sephardic Rav of Yerushalayim (5763 / 2003 - 22nd Yahrzeit)

Rav Shalom was the *Sephardic Rav* of Yerushalayim (1909-2003). Born the Moroccan city of Meknes, a city of Torah known as the Yerushalayim of Morocco. Rabbi Shalom learned under Rabbi Meir Toledano until the age of 14. His father then sent him to learn under the great sage Rabbi Yitzchak Sabag. In 1960 with the *petirah* of the chief Rabbi and *dayan* of Casablanca, Rabbi Dovid Ibn Sussan, Rabbi Shalom became its *raavad* and chief rav, serving there for thirty years. In 1978, he moved to Eretz Yisrael to take the position as Chief *Sephardic Rav* of Yerushalayim.



Rav Alter Chanoch Henich Lebowitz - Rosh Yeshiva Yeshivas Chofetz Chaim (5768 / 2008 - 17th Yahrzeit)

Rav Henoch Lebowitz, an only child, was born in 1918 in Salcininkai, Lithuania. The *Rosh Yeshiva* came to America in 1926 when his father Rav Dovid was hired by *Mesivta Torah Vodaas* as a teacher. In 1933, Rav Dovid left *Torah Vodaas* and founded *Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yisrael Meir HaKohen*. His father's death in 1941 left him in charge of the fledgling *yeshiva* while still in his early 20s.

**Yahrzeits for the 11th of Nissan ~ Begins Tuesday Night
(04-09-2025)**



Rav Moshe - Ramban (5030 / 1270 - 755th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman, known as 'RaMBaN' or 'Nachmanides' [11 Nissan 1270], is accepted as one of the all-time great Talmudic and Scriptural scholars. He was also a master kabbalist, a major link in the transmission of Jewish mysticism. He is well-known as a champion defender of the Jewish faith, as a result of his participation and victory in a famous debate against Christian clergy in 1263. As a result, he was expelled from Spain. Subsequently, he moved to the Holy Land at age 70 where he composed his immortal commentary on the Chamisha Chumshei Torah.



Rav Yeshaya HaLevi Horowitz - Shelah Hakadosh (5390 / 1630 - 395th Yahrzeit)

The holy *gaon*, Reb Yeshaya Halevi Horowitz was born in Lemberg in approximately the year 5230 (1470). Over the years, R' Yeshaya Halevi practiced as rof in various communities: in 5260 (1500) in Dubno, Russia, in 5262 in Ostroa and from 5266 he took over the reins in Frankfurt, leading the prestigious *kehilla* until their expulsion from the city on 27 *Elul* 5274 (1514). The rabbi was exiled together with his flock and he returned to Prague, where he was appointed Rov in 5275 (1515). On 8th *Elul* 5281 the *Shloh* boarded the ship and after a turbulent, difficult journey he arrived in the holy land on 2nd *Kislev*, 5282. Upon reaching Yerushalayim, he was immediately accepted as Chief Rabbi of Eretz Yisroel.



Rav Shlomo Zalman Lifshitz - Av Beis Din Warsaw, Chemdas Shlomo (5599 / 1839 - 186th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Shlomo-Zalman Lifshitz (1765-1839) was appointed Chief Rabbi of Warsaw in 1821. In his influential book *Chemdas Shlomo*, he deals with the problems of his generation, including assimilation. His rulings about conversion still hold great weight today.



Rav Betzael HaKohen of Vilna - Reishis Bikkurim (5638 / 1878 - 147th Yahrzeit)

Yahrzeits for the 12th of Nissan ~ Begins Wednesday Night (04-10-2025)



Rav Menachem Mendel of Bar (5525 / 1765 - 260th Yahrzeit)



Rav Menachem Mendel Zolkover (5556 / 1796 - 229th Yahrzeit)

Rav Menachem Mendel was the son of Rav Efraim Zalman Likover, the *Maggid* of Zolkova. After the passing of Rav Moshe Oster, Rav Menachem Mendel served as Rav and *Maggid* of Brody. He served as *Av Beis Din* Starzeit.



Rav Mordechai Ziskind (5615 / 1855 - 170th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yehonoson Binyomin HaKohen Katz of Selish - Nefesh Yehonoson, Rav & Av Beis Din of Selish (5694 / 1934 - 91st Yahrzeit)

Born circa 1853, to Rav Moshe Aryeh Hakohen, he served as rav and AvBeisDin of Selish.



Rav Eliezer Tzadok Turchin - Matanah Mu'ettes (5758 / 1998 - 27th Yahrzeit)



Rav Shimshon Dovid Pincus - Rav of Ofakim (5761 / 2001 - 24th Yahrzeit)

There was a fire burning perpetually within the heart of HaRav Shimshon Pincus *zt'l*. It was a restless fire, constantly moving and flickering in an array of hues; now bursting into huge upward reaching leaps; now sending out showers of sparks to ignite similar fires within other hearts. What fed this fire? It was no fuel that originates in this world. It was fed from within, by a soul whose sustenance flowed along a direct conduit from Heaven. This spiritual fuel flowed and flowed, freely, generously and bountifully, until the night of the twelfth of *Nisan* eight years ago, when the conduit and the fire suddenly merged into one, becoming a tower of flame joining Heaven and earth, that carried the souls of HaRav Pincus, his Rebbetzin, and their daughter *a'h*, to their yearned for destination.

Yahrzeits for the 13th of Nissan ~ Begins Thursday Night (04-11-2025)



Rav Yosef Karo - Beis Yosef (5335 / 1575 - 450th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yosef Karo was the chief rabbi of Tzfas from 1546. Author of several major works, including *Shulchan Aruch* ("The Prepared Table"--Code of Jewish Law), a compendium of the laws of the Torah governing a Jew's entire life: personal, social, family, business, and religious. Notwithstanding subsequent revisions, it remains the foremost authoritative work on Jewish law and practice and is universally accepted by Jews the world over.

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



Rav Moshe Alshich - Alshich Hakodosh (5360 / 1600 - 425th Yahrzeit)

The Alshich haKadosh was born in Adrianople, Turkey, and studied under Rav Taitatzak in Salonica, he came to Tzefas from Turkey together with other great *mekubalim*. He was ordained with *semichah* as a Rav of that new *Sanhedrin* by Rav Yosef Karo his *rebbe*. He was a *talmid* of Yosef Karo's whose *yahrzeit* is also on the same day 13 *Nissan*. His *kever* is in the ancient Tzefas *Bais haChaim*.



Chacham Chaim Shabsi - Maharchash of Saloniki (5407 / 1647 - 378th Yahrzeit)

Rav Chaim Shabsi was born in 5317/1557. He studied under Rav Aharon Sasson and served in his *Bais Din* as a *Dayan* in 5636. He was *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Kehillas Sholom* in Saloniki and had many *talmidim* who later served as *Rabbonim* of various *kehillos* and authored works of *halocho*. He was chief Rav of Saloniki from the year 5367 and was considered one of the *Gedolei Haposkim* of his generation. Rav Chaim Shabsi Maharchash of Saloniki passed away on 13 *Nissan* 5407/1647.



Rav Dovid Altaras - Deva"sh of Venice (5474 / 1714 - 311th Yahrzeit)

Rav Dovid Altaras of Venice was known by the acronym *Deva"sh* (*Rav Dovid* son of *Rav Shlomo*). He worked in printing and publishing of Hebrew *seforim* in Venice from 5435 until his *petira*. He is a signatory on halachic rulings alongside other *Rabbonim* of Venice and his approbations and *haskomos* are extant on some *seforim*. He passed away 13 *Nissan* 5474/1714.



Rav Menachem Mendel Schneerson - Tzemach Tzedek (5626 / 1866 - 159th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson [13 *Nissan* 5626], the Third *Rebbe* of Chabad, was known as the *Tzemach Tzedek*, after his books of Halachic responsa and Talmudic commentary called by that name. He was renowned not only as the *Rebbe* of tens of thousands of *chasidim*, but also as a leading scholar in his generation in both the revealed and secret aspects of Torah.



Rav Yoel Moskowitz of Shatz (5646 / 1886 - 139th Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Avigdor Amiel - Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv (5705 / 1945 - 80th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yaakov Perlow - Novominsker Rebbe (5780 / 2020 - 5th Yahrzeit)

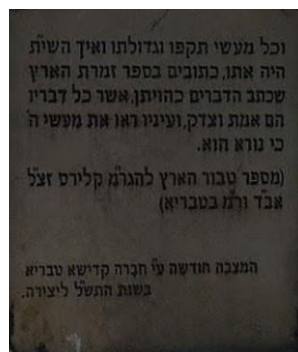
The *Rebbe* was born in New York in 5691/1931. He was the son of the previous *Rebbe*, Harav Nachum Mordechai Perlow, *zt"l*, and Rebbetzin Beila Ruchama, *a"h*. After his father's *petirah* in *Elul* of 5736/1976, he was appointed *Rebbe*. In 1998, after the *petirah* of Rabbi Moshe Sherer, *z"l*, the *Rebbe* was named *Rosh Agudas Yisrael of America*, a position he held for 22 years. He passed away early Tuesday, 13 *Nisan*, 5780 he was 89.

Biographies of the Tzaddikim



**Rav Chaim Abulafia Chacham Chaim Abulafia of Teveria (Nissan 7, 5504 / 1744
- 281st Yahrzeit)**

(Some say the Yahrzeit is on the 6th of Nissan the 16th of Nissan)



Rav Chaim was born in Chevron in 5420 (1660).

His *yichus* traces back to Rav Chaim Abulafia, “*Hamusmach HaZaken*” of Chevron. The *Chida* writes in *Shem Hagedolim* that their *yichus* traces back to *Shevet Yehudah* and *Malchus*.

As a young boy, his family moved to Yerushalayim where he studied in the *Bais Yaakov-Viga yeshiva*, (founded by Rav Yaakov Chagiz) under the auspices of the *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Moshe Galanti. He also studied under Rav Shlomo Algazi HaZaken and along with Rav Chizkiyahu de Silva, known as the *Pri Chadash*, who was a colleague. There he earned his *semichah* ordination and was sent to Tzefat to teach and serve as the rav of the city.

He gave *derashos* every Shabbos and Yom Tov, and published them as *Etz Chaim* in Izmir

and *Mikra'ei Kodesh Chiddushei Halachos*, as well as three volumes of *Yosef Lekach, derushim* on the Torah. He also authored *Yashresh Yaakov* on the *Ein Yaakov aggados* of the *Talmud*, and *Shevus Yaakov* on the same subject. He also authored *Chanan Elokim, derashos* and *pilpulim* (where he included *chiddushim* from *Be'er LeChai* and *Chaim V'Chessed* by his maternal grandfather, Rav Yitzchak ibn Jamil of Hebron).

He left on *shlichus* as a fundraiser to help his poor brethren in Hebron, *travelling* to Turkey at age 29 in 5459 (1699), then to Saloniki and eventually to Izmir. There he met Rav Yisrael Benveniste, the successor to his father Rav Chaim Benveniste, who authored *Shiurei Knesset HaGedolah* on *Shulchan Aruch*. Rav Chaim Abulafia and Rav Yisrael sparred and jostled in *halachah*. One day, the young *shadar* (acronym for *shaliach d'rabbanan*, messenger of the *rabbanim*) would return to Izmir, not as a fundraiser but as its rav.

When he returned to Eretz Yisrael, Rav Chaim was asked to serve as Rav of Tzefat. In the year 5485 (1725), Rav Yisrael Benveniste passed away and Rav Chaim was chosen to succeed him as the Chief Rabbi of Izmir. Amsterdam also sent letters of appointment, but drawn by its peace and quiet, Rav Chaim chose Izmir, and it was there that he published his *sefarim* during his tenure.

He had a profound influence on the *kehillah*, and even the Christian and Muslim populace revered him. As Rav, he looked out not only for their spiritual welfare but for their material welfare as well. Their economic status was very depressed at that time, and he used his many talents to change the face of the *kehillah*.

He had long harbored a wish to rebuild Teveria (which sat desolate with no *shul* or *bais medrash* for some seventy years) and some say that Eliyahu Hanavi appeared to him in a dream and urged him to do so.

After serving as Rav of Teveria for four years and rebuilding the *kehillah*, Rav Chaim passed away on 6 (some say 7) or (Encyclopedia says 16) *Nissan* 5504 (1744) at the age of 84.



Rav Yitzchok Derhobitsh, Derhovitsher (Nissan 7, 5504 / 1744 - 281st Yahrzeit)

Rav Yitzchok was the son of Rav Yosef Sprawiedliwy (Polish for ישר - Righteous or Just) and Yenta *Di Nevia* (the Prophetess).

His mother was a great *Tzadekes*; she would immerse herself several times a day and *davened* wearing a *tallis*.

According to tradition, she would interrupt such mundane household activities as sweeping the house to answer *Kodosh, Kodosh, Kodosh*, to the heavenly hosts' *kedusha*, which she could hear.

She earned the moniker "Prophetess" after her husband complained of her behavior to the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, only to receive the response that she has open eyes and can see and hear things that others do not, and so she became known as *Di Nevia*.

The *Chassidim* treated her like a *Rebbe*, asking for her *berochos*. In return, she asked for gifts of food, which she would distribute to the poor.

Rav Yitzchok was descended from Rav Yitzchok Chaijes, *Av Bais Din* of Prague, *mechaber* of *Api Ravravi*.

When he lived in Ostrog, he was one of the ten Jews who studied in Rav Yuzpa's *Bais Medrash*, among the greatest *lamdonim* in town. He was also the *Maggid* and *mochiach* in Brod in the *Bais Medrash* of Rav Yitzchok of Hamburg during his tenure as Rav of Brode.

Although he knew of and approved of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, according to some, he was a colleague rather than a *talmid*.

The *Ba'al Shem* testified before Rav Yitzchok's son, Rav Michel of Zlotshuv, regarding his father, that Rav Yitzchok "was given such a lowly soul that almost none have ever been given one so low, yet he elevated it to the heights of the Tanna Rav Shimon Bar Yochai!" (*Agra Depirka*)

He passed away on 7 Nissan 5510/1750 (or 5504/1744)

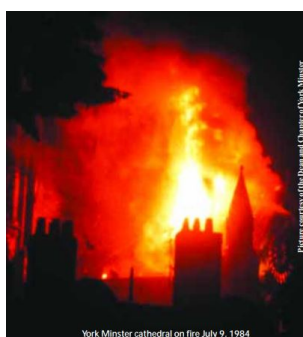
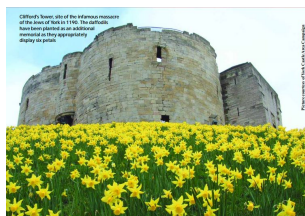
Some of his *Divrei Torah* appeared alongside those of his sons in *Mayim Rabim*.

His son was the famed Rav Yechiel Michel of Zlotshuv.

His sons-in-law were Rav Avner Kasvan and Rav Yochanon Litvak of Radvil.



Rav Eliyahu Hakadosh Baal HaTosfos (Nissan 8, 4950 / 1190 - 835th Yahrzeit)



In addition to the notable Rabbi Yom Tov bar Yitzchak of Joigny, several other *Baalei Tosafos* are thought to have been among those Jews who were martyred in London in 1189 and in York in 1190.

One of these was Rabbi Eliyahu HaKadosh, a *talmid* of Rabbi Yitzchak HaZaken, who died at York, while Rabbi Yaakov of Orleans was said to have died a martyr's death in the anti-Jewish London riots of 1189.

Rabbeinu Yom Tov himself was a former *talmid* of Rashi's grandson, *Rabbeinu Tam*, and the epithet "*HaKodesh*" was frequently added to his name. He also was a *darshan mikra* and a liturgical poet, his best-known work being *Omnam Kein*, a *piyut* sung on *Yom Kippur*.

In one of the few contemporary accounts of the York tragedy, Ephraim of Bonn described *Rabbeinu Yom Tov* as a "person of no ordinary qualifications" and recorded the words of his final speech to the York *bais din*, which began: "Men of Israel! The G-d of our

ancestors is Omniscient, and there is no one who can say 'Why do You do this?' This day He commands us to die for His Torah; for that law which we have cherished from the first hour it was given, which we have preserved pure throughout our exile among the nations, and which, for the many consolations it has given us and the eternal hope it communicates, can we do less than die? ..."

It has been said that it was mainly because of the cruel death of these notables that the *cherem* of York, the tradition in England of forbidding Jews to sleep in the City of York overnight, was proclaimed.

In 1978, as a healing gesture, a plaque was laid a short way down the slope in front of the tower in the presence of the chief rabbi of England, Lord (then Dr.) Immanuel Jakobovits; the Archbishop of York; and a descendent of Richard Malebisse, the leader of the mob that carried out the massacre. It bears this short, sad reminder of York's blackest hour:

"On the night of Friday 16 March 1190, some 150 Jews and Jewesses of York, having sought protection in the Royal Castle on this site from the mob incited by Richard Malebisse and others, chose to die at each other's hands rather than renounce their faith."

This statement is followed by a quote in Hebrew from Isaiah 42:12: "Let them honor G-d and declare His praise in the isles."

The Castle Area Campaign has also been active in maintaining the site and plaque. A field of daffodils (considered an appropriate flower because the petals take the form of a six-pointed star) was planted in 1993 as a memorial to what they describe as a "potent reminder of religious and racial intolerance — an educative force in an unstable world." Despite conciliatory gestures such as the one recorded above, York remains a city that most Jews avoid. It is said that devout Jews who happen to travel by train through the city even desist from eating their sandwiches. It is therefore somewhat ironic and perhaps even significant to note that the world's largest concentration of Jews in a single city today exists in the city of New York.



Rav Mordechai Rishfei Aish (Nissan 8, 5560 / 1800 - 225th Yahrzeit)

R. Mordechai of Neshchiz [8 Nissan 1800] was descended from the Maharal of Prague

and Don Yitzchak Abarbanel. He was a disciple of R. Yechiel Michel of Zlotchov. The ill and the unfortunate came to visit him from long distances. It is recorded that he never uttered a negative word about another person. He actively supported settlement in Eretz Yisrael. He was succeeded by his son, R. Yitzchak of Neshchiz. His sayings were collected in *Rishfei Eish*.

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



Rav Yaakov Tzvi Yalish Molei Haroim (Nissan 9, 5585 / 1825 - 200th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yaakov Tzvi was born in Reisha in 5538/1778, the son of Rav Naftoli.

He was orphaned at a young age and was raised by his grandfather, Rav Yehuda ben Tzvi.

He became renowned for his many gifts and talents, and studied together with Rav Yaakov Orenstein, *mechaber* of *Yeshuos Yaakov*.

He received the Chassidic tradition from his *Rebbe* and mentor, the *Apta Rav*, *mechaber* of *Ohev Yisrael*, as well as the *Kozhnitzer Maggid*, the *Chozeh* of Lublin and Rav Menachem Mendel of Rymanow.

He authored the *sefer Kehillas Yaakov*, where he cites the *Apta Rav* under the headings for *Yeshua* and *Shiluach*.

Rav Yaakov Tzvi served as Rav in Dynow, Glogov, Huskav and Premisla.

He authored many *seforim*, including *Molei HoRoim* and *Kehillas Yaakov* on *Toras Rashbi* and the *Zohar*; *Emes LeYaakov* on *Chumash*; glosses and chiddushim on *Shas* and *Mishnayos*, printed in all the Vilna Editions; *Bais Vaad LaChachomim*, biographies of *Tano'aim* and *Amoro'im*; and *Chinuch Bais Yehuda* on *Chanuka*.

His son Rav Avrohom Eliezer Yehuda Leibush published many of his father's *seforim*. He also had a son named Rav Mordechai of Nizanov. His son-in-law was Rav Avrohom Leib haKohen Troiget, who published *Bais Vaad LaChachomim*.



Rav Nosson Feitel Reinitz (Nissan 9, 5622 / 1862 - 163rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Nosson Feitel, the ancestor of the famed Reinitz family, was the son of Rav Dov Berel, and the *mechaber* of *Divrei Ranaf*.

Rav Nosson Feitel studied in the *Yeshiva* of Rav Tzvi Yehoshua HaLevi Horowitz, *Av Bais Din* of Yemnitz, Treibitsh, Prustitz and Turna, and *mechaber* of *Chiddushei HaRibash* and *Semichas Moshe*. (Rav Tzvi Yehoshua was the son of the *Rebbe* Reb Shmelka of Nikolsberg and son-in-law of his uncle, Reb Shmelka's brother, Rav Pinchas of Frankfurt, *mechaber* of the *Haflo'a*.) He was also a *talmid* of Rav Boruch Frankel Teomim of Leipnik, *mechaber* of *Boruch Taam*.

He married the daughter of Rav Yitzchok Dov. He served as Rav of Tete Vegsing and afterward as Rav of Diandias.

Later, he was Rav of Mad, Hungary, for nineteen years, from 5603/1842 until 5622/1861.

He became a *mechuton* of Rav Asher of Tshenger.

Rav Nosson Feitel used to immerse in the *mikveh* at least twice a day, once before *Tikkun Chatzos* and once before *Shacharis*. Sometimes he *toiveled* before delivering his *shiur* to the *talmidim* in *Yeshiva* and sometimes before *davening Mincha* as well. He once said, "I wish I could cast myself into the fire [for the sake of Hashem's honor and glory], like I cast

myself into the freezing cold waters of the *mikveh!*”

He often gave *tzedoka* in a hidden manner so no one would know he was the source.

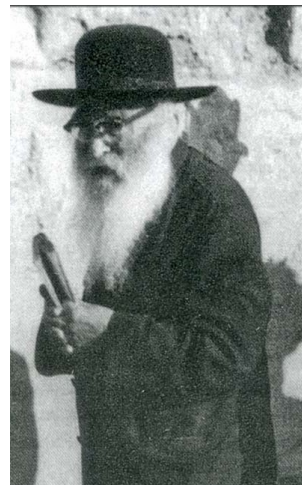
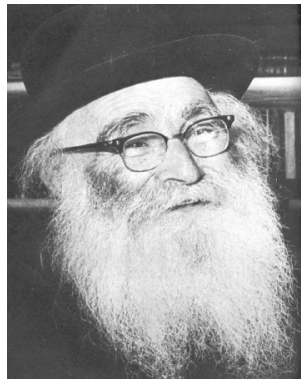
Rav Nosson Feitel was laid to rest in Mad, Hungary.

After his *petira*, the *Liska Rav* eulogized him at the *levaya*, saying that he was shown a vision that he must arise early deliver a *hesped* at the *levaya* of one of the *lamed vov Tzaddikim* of the generation, who had been *niftar* that night. As soon as he awoke, a carriage arrived, waiting to take him to deliver the *hesped* at Mad for the *levaya* of Rav Nosson Feitel. (*Toldos Geonei Hagar* p. 30)

His sons were: Rav Kalonymous Kalman of Lelem; Rav Yehoshua Boruch of Tzetzovitz (Chetchavitz) and Balkan, *mechaber* of *Sefer Hamichtovim* and *Teshuva Mei'ahava*; Rav Yosef Shlomo of Mishkoltz; and Rav Avrohom Yaakov of Balkan and Kapish.



Rav Aryeh Levine Tzaddik from Yerushalayim, Mashgiach Yeshivas Eitz Chaim (Nissan 9, 5729 / 1969 - 56th Yahrzeit)



Rav Aryeh Levine was born on the 6th of *Nissan* 5645, and passed away on the 9th of *Nissan* 5729 (March 22, 1885 - March 28, 1969). He was known by one and all as “The Father of the Prisoners”.

Rav Levine was born in Urla, near Bialistock, Poland, to his father R' Binyamin Beinush

and his mother Ettel. He learned at the Slutzk & Slonim Yeshivoh, and was considered an outstanding, diligent *talmid* and an *illuy* (a genius). In spite of his youth, he was accepted at the *Volozhin Yeshiva*, where he became very close to his rebbe, Rav Chaim Berlin, who was later nominated as *Av Beis Din* (Rabbinical Court Chief Judge) of Moscow and Yerushalayim. In *Adar* 5765 (March 1095), he came to live in *Eretz Yisrael*, where he learned at the Yeshivas Toras Chaim. He was ordained by Rav Chaim Berlin, Rav Shmuel Selant and Rav Avraham Yitzchak HaKohen Kook. Rav Aryeh married the daughter of Rav David Shapira; his brother-in-law was Rav Zvi Pesach Frank, the Chief Rabbi of Yerushalayim. Rav Aryeh Levine's daughter married Rav Shlomo Eliyashiv's grandson, Rav Yosef Shalom Eliyashiv *ztz'l*.

For many decades he served as *Mashgiach* at the Yeshivas Etz Chaim in Yerushalayim, where thousands of boys were nurtured and educated by him like a loving father. His modest ways and magnificent personality are etched in their minds and in their hearts for life. Rav Aryeh was renowned for his wondrous acts of *chessed*; all his actions were done purely for the sake of Heaven, with extreme humility and great respect for his fellowman. He was known as "The Father of the Prisoners", having regularly visited Prisoners of Zion imprisoned during the time of the British Mandate. In his visits, he would encourage them, bringing them letters and greetings from home. He was especially renowned for visiting the underground movement prisoners, and those who were condemned to hanging. Rav Aryeh also made regular visits to the unfortunate patients at the Lepers' Hospital.

After the War of Independence, the bodies of members of the "convoy of 35" were returned to Eretz Yisrael, 18 months after being killed in action. The Military Rabbinate was unable to identify for certain 12 of the bodies, and after consulting with Rav Zvi Pesach Frank, the Chief Rabbi of Yerushalayim, Rav Levine was given the task of drawing "*The Gra's Lot*" in order to identify them. This lot is done using a special *Tanach*, ascribed to the *Vilna Gaon*. The fascinating results were received as conclusive evidence by the bereaved families, the IDF, and the Ministry of Defense.

After the State of Israel was established, Rav Levine founded the *Yeshiva* that is named after him - Beis Aryeh - and designated his son-in-law, Rabbi Eliezer Platinsky, Rav Noson Zvi Finkel - *the Alter of Slabodka's* grandson - as *Rosh Yeshiva*. Today, the Yeshiva numbers a few dozen *talmidim*, among them renowned *rabbanim* and *poskim*.

Rav Levine passed away on the eve of *Shabbos Hagadol* 5729 (1969), at the Hadassah Ein Karem Medical Center, Yerushalayim, and was buried after *chatzos* (noon). Thus, his last will and testament, that he should not be eulogized at the funeral, was fulfilled (both due to the sanctity of the approaching Shabbos, and since no *hespedim* are said during the month of *Nissan*).

For many years, Rav Levine lived on Har G'rizim Street in the neighborhood of Mishkanot, Yerushalayim. Following his death, the street was re-named after him. The *Yeshiva* that he founded - Yeshivas Beis Aryeh - still stands there, at the courtyard of his home, drawing both scholars and tourists, as a fascinating site among Yerushalayim's narrow alleyways.



Rav Chaim Meir Hager Imrei Chaim (*Nissan 9, 5732 / 1972 - 53rd Yahrzeit*)



Rav Chaim Meir was born on 15 *Kislev* 5648/1888, the son of Rav Yisrael Hager of Vizhnitz, also known as *Ahavas Yisrael*.

He became the son-in-law of Rav Zev Twerski of Rachumstrivka, descended from the Czernobyl dynasty.

Rav Chaim Meir was his father's right-hand man from a young age and they were inseparable. Even after his marriage, when he lived in Rachumstrivka, he often visited his father and eventually the *Rebbetzin* followed him and they returned to live near the

Ahavas Yisrael. His father greatly loved and admired him, calling him a *Ba'al Shem Tov's Yid*.

He received *semicha* from Rav Sholom Mordechai Shwadron, the *Maharsham* of Brezhan.

He was appointed Rav of Vilchovitch in Marmorosh. Even during this tenure he spent more time with his father than he did in his own city. Nonetheless, he was a successful, bright and smart Rav, whose intelligence led him to establish many successful *takonos*.

In 5695 he visited Eretz Yisrael along with his brothers, Rav Eliezer of Vizhnitz and Rav Boruch of Seret. They visited many places and he returned with a positive feeling. After his father's *petira* in 5696 he became his chief successor. He settled in Grossvardein, where his father had lived and had run his Chassidic court and *Bais Medrash*. In 5700 his *Bais Medrash* became a center for refugees fleeing Poland, and all were welcomed, despite the dangers.

Eventually, he went underground and when Grossvardein became too dangerous he fled to Rumania, eventually reaching Arad and Bucharest, where he remained until Grossvardein was liberated and the war ended.

He spent the post-war period reviving, rejuvenating and strengthening his downtrodden brethren and the refugees and survivors, warming their hearts and encouraging them to return to *Chassidus* and to spread *Yiddishkeit* from town to town and from city to city.

He decided to move to Eretz Yisrael and traveled from Czechoslovakia to Belgium and England. He arrived in 5708 and established Vizhnitz on the soil of the Holy Land. His brother Rav Eliezer was *niftar* in Elul 5706. Rav Chaim Meir opened his *Bais Medrash* in Tel Aviv. Eventually, he established the first Chassidic enclave in Bnei Brak, reopened the *Vizhnitzer Yeshiva* and began to reestablish Vizhnitz and Chassidic life in post-war Eretz Yisrael.

Rav Chaim Meir was succeeded by his son Rav Moshe Yehoshua, the *Yeshuos Moshe*. His other son, Rav Mordechai, moved to Monsey and established the Vizhnitz Monsey court.

His daughters were: Hinda, wife of Rav Naftoli Adler, the Rav of Vizhnitz, Netania; *Sheva*

Berocha, the wife of Rav Moshe Ernster, the Rav of Vizhnitz, Tzefas and Bnei Brak; and Tzipora, wife of Rav Yisrael Friedman.

His eldest daughter was married first to Rav Yehuda Horowitz of Dzhikov and then to Rav Yehoshua Greenwald of Chust. After his *petira*, she married Rav Yitzchok Yaakov Weiss of the *Eida Chareidis*.

His *seforim* include: *Imrei Chaim* on the *Parsha* and *Moadim*, as well as *Mayim Chaim* on *Tanach*.



Rav Moshe Teomim (Nissan 10, 5399 / 1639 - 386th Yahrzeit)

Rav Moshe was the son of Rav Shimon Teomim Lemel of Vienna. Rav Moshe Teomim, served as *Av Bais Din* of Moravia (Mehrin) he passed away on 10 *Nissan*.



Rav Moshe Feilshus Rav Moshe New Yorker (Nissan 10, 5763 / 2003 - 22nd Yahrzeit)

After he married, he had two children, and fled Germany for America after *Kristallnacht*. He settled on the East Side, where many frum families lived. His wife complained to the *Rabbonim* of her husband's excessive *kedusha* and *perishus*; despite his *ehrllichkeit*, she requested to end their marriage and so he gave her a *get*.

He continued his *avodas Hashem* privately and quietly without anyone knowing who he really was. The Boyaner and Kapishniczer *Rebbes* recognized his true colors and they were among the few who really knew him to be a *Tzaddik nistor*.



Rav Shalom Mashash Sephardic Rav of Yerushalayim (Nissan 10, 5763 / 2003 - 22nd Yahrzeit)



Sephardic Rav of Yerushalayim (1909-2003). Born the Moroccan city of Meknes, a city of Torah known as the Yerushalayim of Morocco. Rabbi Shalom learned under Rabbi Meir Toledano until the age of 14. His father then sent him to learn under the great sage Rabbi Yitzchak Sabag. Writing in his *sefer*, *Tevu'as Shemesh*, Rabbi Shalom declares, "The fact that I was able to grow in Torah may be credited to my father, who did not yield to the pressures and offers that I pursue lucrative positions in banks....Thus, all the credit for my Torah learning is his, too." His other main mentor was his relative from both his paternal and maternal sides, Rav Yehoshua Birdugo, the *raavad* of Meknes. In 1960 with the *petirah* of the chief Rabbi and *dayan* of Casablanca, Rabbi Dovid Ibn Sussan, Rabbi Shalom became its *raavad* and chief rav, serving there for thirty years. In 1978, he moved to Eretz Yisrael to take the position as Chief *Sephardic Rav* of Yerushalayim. He was *niftar* on *Shabbos Hagadol* 5763 which is the Georgian Calendar year of 2003. - See more at: <http://www.yeshshem.com/hilulanissan.htm#2>

Rabbi Shalom Mashash, Yerushalayim's chief *Sephardi rabbi* for 25 years, died at the age of 90. He served for many years as the head of the rabbinical court in Casablanca. After retiring, he made *aliah* to Eretz Yisrael to serve as chief rabbi of Yerushalayim.

Mashash was among the few *Sephardi rabbis* who dared dispute Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef and staunchly defended the independent customs of Morocco's Jewry. He also supported publishing prayer books in their original Moroccan version. His death further reduces the meager *halakhic* opposition to Rabbi Yosef among the Sephardi Rabbinic deciders.

May the merit of the tzaddik Rabbi Shalom Mashash protect us all, Amen.

<https://dailyzohar.com/tzadikim/326-Rabbi-Shalom-Mashash>



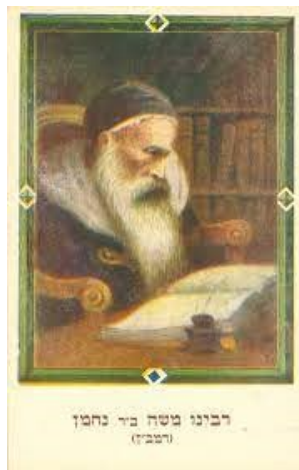
Rav Alter Chanoch Henich Lebowitz Rosh Yeshiva Yeshivas Chofetz Chaim (Nissan 10, 5768 / 2008 - 17th Yahrzeit)

Rav Henoch Leibowitz, an only child, was born in 1918 in Salcininkai, Lithuania. The *Rosh Yeshiva* came to America in 1926 when his father Rav Dovid was hired by *Mesivta Torah Vodaas* as a teacher. In 1933, Rav Dovid left *Torah Vodaas* and founded *Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yisrael Meir HaKohen*. His father's death in 1941 left him in charge of the fledgling *yeshiva* while still in his early 20s. Rav Henoch would spend the rest of his life leading the *yeshiva* as an International Orthodox Jewish icon. Sadly, the *Rosh Yeshiva* left no children.

kevarim.com



Rav Moshe Ramban (Nissan 11, 5030 / 1270 - 755th Yahrzeit)



Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman, known as 'RaMBaN' or 'Nachmanides' [11 Nissan 1270], is accepted as one of the all-time great Talmudic and Scriptural scholars. He was also a master kabbalist, a major link in the transmission of Jewish mysticism. He is well-known as a champion defender of the Jewish faith, as a result of his participation and victory in a

famous debate against Christian clergy in 1263. As a result, he was expelled from Spain. Subsequently, he moved to the Holy Land at age 70 where he composed his immortal commentary on the Chamisha Chumshei Torah, of which there exists an excellent annotated English translation, Nachmanides on the Torah, by Rabbi Dr. Charles B. Chavel.

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



Rav Yeshaya Horowitz Shelah Hakadosh (Nissan 11, 5390 / 1630 - 395th Yahrzeit)



The *holy gaon*, Reb Yeshaya Halevi Horowitz was born in approximately the year 5230 (1470). His father R' Avrohom Halevi was *dayan* in Prague, Cracow and lastly in Lemberg. R' Yeshaya learnt with his father and with the *gaon* R' Shlomo Ben Reb Yehudah Leib *zt"l*, better known as the *Maharshal Hasheini*, the second *Maharshal*. He also learnt with the *Maharam of Lublin, zt"l*.

He married Chaya, daughter of one of the prominent members of the community in Vienna, Rabbi Avrohom Moyal. In an awesome statement, R' Sheftel *zt"l* later wrote about his mother, the Rebbetzin Chaya, "It was said in her generation that she lacked nothing in deeds and traits of the holy *Imahos*, Soroh, Rivka, Rochel and Leah."

Over the years, R' Yeshaya Halevi practiced as *rov* in various communities: in 5260 (1500) in Dubno, Russia, in 5262 in Ostroa and from 5266 he took over the reins in Frankfurt,

leading the prestigious *kehilla* until their expulsion from the city on 27 *Elul* 5274 (1514). The *rabbi* was exiled together with his flock and he returned to Prague, where he was appointed *Rov* in 5275 (1515).

When his *Rebbetzin* passed away on 4th *Adar* 5280 (1520), Reb Yeshaya Halevi decided to make his dream of going to live in Eretz Yisroel a reality. On 8th *Elul* 5281 the *Shloh* boarded the ship and after a turbulent, difficult journey he arrived in the holy land on 2nd *Kislev*, 5282. Upon reaching Yerushalayim, he was immediately accepted as Chief Rabbi of Eretz Yisroel.

Seeing the immense poverty of the settlers in the holy land, the *Shloh* sent messengers to the Diaspora and their Rabbonim, particularly to the communities where he had served as *rov*, initiating a *tzedokoh* campaign which he called "*Yachatz*" -- an acronym in Hebrew for the three cities Yerushalayim, Chevron and Tzfas.

On 11th *Elul*, 5285 (1525), the *Shloh* was imprisoned due to a libel trumped up by the wicked Machmed Ibn Paroueh. On *Rosh Hashonoh*, start of the year 5286 he was freed and he fled to Tzfas and Teveriah. There he established his center of learning and prayer in the ancient *Beis Haknesses* on the shores of the Kinneret in Teveriah.

He was niftar on 11th *Nissan* and is buried in the old cemetery in Teveriah close to the tzion of Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakai.

His holy *seforim* were accepted and beloved by Jews the world over, a fact which is proven by the amount of times his great *sefer Shnei Luchos Habris* had to be printed over and over.

<http://www.chareidi.org/archives5761/vayikra/features2.htm>

His famous *siddur Shaar Hashomayim* is also well known (In Skver they have a *minhag* to *daven* from it) and in reference to it the *Sulitza Rebbe ztzl* of Far Rockaway who himself *davened* from the *Siddur HaShelah* showed me and told me that Rav Yoel Sirkis author of the *Bach* on the Tur wrote in his approbation, "I guarantee that whoever *davens* with this *siddur*, his *tefillos* will be accepted."



Rav Shlomo Zalman Lifshitz Av Beis Din Warsaw, Chemdas Shlomo (Nissan 11, 5599 / 1839 - 186th Yahrzeit)



Rabbi Shlomo-Zalman Lifshitz (1765-1839) was appointed Chief Rabbi of Warsaw in 1821. In his influential book *Chemdas Shlomo*, he deals with the problems of his generation, including assimilation. His rulings about conversion still hold great weight today. He passed away 12 Nissan ט"קצ"ט and was laid to rest in Warsaw.

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



Rav Menachem Mendel Zolkover (Nissan 12, 5556 / 1796 - 229th Yahrzeit)

Rav Menachem Mendel was the son of Rav Efraim Zalman Likover, the *Maggid* of Zolkova, a famed *Mekubol*, and is counted among the famed *Chachomim* of the Kloiz in Brody.

After the passing of Rav Moshe Oster, Rav Menachem Mendel served as Rav and *Maggid* of Brody. He was constantly afflicting himself. His custom was to study day and night standing on his feet. He left the *Bais Medrash* only on Shabbos. Known as a gifted orator, his sermons and *deroshos* made a great impression on people and he inspired others to do *teshuva*. He is counted amongst the sharpest *lamdonim* in his generation and is mentioned in many collections of responsa.

He served as *Av Beis Din* Starzeit. He passed away 12 Nissan 5556/1796.



**Rav Yehonoson Binyomin Katz Nefesh Yehonoson, Rav & Av Beis Din of Selish (Nissan
12, 5694 / 1934 - 91st Yahrzeit)**



(1853-1934)

Born circa 1853, to Rav Moshe Aryeh Hakohen, he served as rav and AvBeisDin of Selish.

He authored a three-volume commentary on Chumash and a fourth volume on the Pesach Haggadah named *Nefesh Yehonoson* (not to be confused with a sefer by Rav Yehonasan Eibschitz by the same name).

He passed away 12 *Nissan* 1934/5694 and was laid to rest in Selish.

His son Rav Tzvi Hirsch served as a rav in Passaic in Paterson, New Jersey.



Rav Shimshon Dovid Pincus Rav of Ofakim (Nissan 12, 5761 / 2001 - 24th Yahrzeit)



There was a fire burning perpetually within the heart of HaRav Shimshon Pincus *zt'l*. It was a restless fire, constantly moving and flickering in an array of hues; now bursting into huge upward reaching leaps; now sending out showers of sparks to ignite similar fires within other hearts. What fed this fire? It was no fuel that originates in this world. It was fed from within, by a soul whose sustenance flowed along a direct conduit from Heaven. This spiritual fuel flowed and flowed, freely, generously and bountifully, until the night of the twelfth of *Nisan* eight years ago, when the conduit and the fire suddenly merged into one, becoming a tower of flame joining Heaven and earth, that carried the souls of *HaRav Pincus*, his *Rebbetzin*, and their daughter *a'h*, to their yearned for destination.

The devastating news stunned the members of HaRav Pincus' *kehilloh* in Ofakim, the other Torah communities of the Negev, the large chareidi centers, and Jews in other locations in Eretz Yisroel and across the world where he had travelled to speak and lecture. Scant days after the tragedy Pesach began, and the feelings of grief that had scarcely begun to make themselves felt, had to be laid aside in deference to the joy of the *regel*.

In the weeks that followed, gatherings were held up and down the country, to eulogize a *gaon* and *tzaddik* who had literally sacrificed every minute of his time and every ounce of his strength towards *kiddush sheim Shomayim*.



Rav Yosef Karo Beis Yosef (Nissan 13, 5335 / 1575 - 450th Yahrzeit)



Rabbi Yosef Caro was born in Toledo, Spain in 1488. He was a small child when his family fled to Constantinople in 1492, after the Jews were expelled from Spain by Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand. His father, Rabbi Ephraim Caro, and his uncle, Rabbi Yitskhak Caro, both important scholars during their time, gave the youngster his Talmudic training.

Rabbi Yosef Karo arrived in Eretz Israel in 1535, after living briefly in Turkey. It is believed that he studied under Rabbi Yaakov bei Rav while in Egypt. After arriving in Tzfas, Rabbi Yosef Karo was appointed to the *Beis Din* of Rabbi Yaakov bei Rav, his teacher. Rabbi Caro supported his teacher and his attempts at restoring the ancient institution of *semichah*, authoritative rabbinical ordination and jurisdiction. Rabbi Caro was one of four rabbis who received *semichah* from Rabbi Yaakov. But other rabbis opposed his tradition and after the death of R' Yaakov in 1546 its use diminished.

Rabbi Yosef became the leader of the Tzfas *Beis Din* after the death of Rabbi Yaakov. It was probably the *Beis Din* held in highest regard throughout the world during its time. Its opinion was sought on difficult issues by rabbis from all over the world.

Rabbi Yosef also had a significant impact on shaping halachah, and his works are used today to decide many points of Jewish law. While living in Turkey, and for the next 20 years, he wrote a commentary to the *Turim* of Rabbi Yaakov ben Asher, which traces each ruling in *Tur*, to its Talmudic source and cites all other opinions relevant to the ruling and

concludes with a decision. The commentary, called *Beis Yosef*, was finished in 1542. After some revisions, it was published in 1551. It was so well received it had to be reprinted.

Although Rabbi Yosef Karo wrote many famous works, he also wrote *Kesef Mishneh*, a commentary on Rambam's *Mishneh Torah*, which was another monumental work. Originally published in 1574, it has been published in almost every edition of Rambam.

As a person, this rabbi was humble, devout, gentle, and ascetic. He was a true *kabbalist*. Rabbi Caro died in 1575.

Source: *The Early Acharonim, The ArtScroll History Series.*

<https://www.jewishgen.org/rabbinic/journal/halachah.htm>



Rav Moshe Alshich Hakodosh (Nissan 13, 5360 / 1600 - 425th Yahrzeit)



Famed author of *Toras Moshe* his *sifrei Derush* were renowned for their amazing depth. The Alshich haKadosh was born in Adrianople, Turkey, and studied under Rav Taitatzak in Salonica, he came to Tzefas from Turkey together with other great *mekubalim*. The Alshich supported Rav Yaakov Beirav's renewal of the *Sanhedrin* and was ordained with *semichah* as a Rav of that new *Sanhedrin* by Rav Yosef Karo his *rebbe*, who himself, had been ordained by Rav Yaakov Beirav. He was a *talmid* of Yosef Karo's whose *yahrzeit* is also on the same day 13 *Nissan*, among the Alshich's own disciples: Rav Chaim Vital and Rav Yom Tov Tzahalon. His *kever* is in the ancient Tzefas *Bais haChaim*. His *shul* originally named *Kamis Istambulia* still stands today, it is the only *shul* that survived the 1759 and 1837 earthquakes and so is unique. Perhaps its *zechus* is that it was built by the *Baalei Teshuva* Marranos, others attribute it to the fact that it never had neither an *ezras nashim* or *bais kisei*.



Chacham Chaim Shabsi Maharchash of Saloniki (*Nissan 13, 5407 / 1647 - 378th Yahrzeit*)

Rav Chaim Shabsi was born in 5317/1557.

He studied under Rav Aharon Sasson and served in his *Bais Din* as a *Dayan* in 5636.

He was *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Kehillas Sholom* in Saloniki and had many *talmidim* who later served as *Rabbonim* of various *kehillos* and authored works of *halocha*.

He was chief Rav of Saloniki from the year 5367 and was considered one of the *Gedolei Haposkim* of his generation, receiving letters from all over the world.

He is known to have had a dispute in *halocha* with Rav YomTov Tzahalon of Tzefas.

Rav Chaim Shabsi Maharchash of Saloniki passed away on 13 *Nissan* 5407/1647.

When he was *niftar* at age ninety, he was succeeded by his son Rav Moshe.

His hundreds and thousands of *teshuvos* were published as *Toras Chaim* in several volumes, including *Kuntres Agunos*.

His son Rav Moshe published some of his father's *chiddushim* on *Shas* in his own *sefer*, *Toras Moshe*.

Among his well-known *talmidim* were Rav Dovid Konforti and Rav Chisdai HaKohen Perachya.



Rav Dovid Altaras Deva"sh of Venice (Nissan 13, 5474 / 1714 - 311th Yahrzeit)

Rav Dovid Altaras of Venice was known by the acronym *Deva"sh* (Rav Dovid son of Rav Shlomo). He authored the work of grammar *Klalei Hadikduk* in his youth, which was printed in the *Tanach* of Venice in 5425. He worked in printing and publishing of Hebrew *seforim* in Venice from 5435 until his *petira*. He authored glosses on the *Mishna* and a commentary on *Rambam*, cited by the *Maasei Roke'ach*. He is a signatory on halachic rulings alongside other *Rabbonim* of Venice and his approbations and *haskomos* are extant on some *seforim*.

His son published the *Devash's* ethical will and *tzavo'a*, as well as a *kina* - lamentation - eulogizing him, published as *Tzuf Devash Koton*.

He passed away 13 *Nissan* 5474/1714.



Rav Menachem Mendel Schneerson Tzemach Tzedek (Nissan 13, 5626 / 1866 - 159th Yahrzeit)



Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneersohn [13 Nissan 5626], the Third Rebbe of Chabad, was

known as the *Tzemach Tzedek*, after his books of Halachic responsa and Talmudic commentary called by that name. He was renowned not only as the Rebbe of tens of thousands of chasidim, but also as a leading scholar in his generation in both the revealed and secret aspects of Torah.

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



Rav Yaakov Perlow Novominsker Rebbe (Nissan 13, 5780 / 2020 - 5th Yahrzeit)



The *Rebbe* was a towering figure in the leadership of American Jewry, and served as *Rosh Agudas Yisrael* of America since 1998. The *Rebbe* was born in New York in 5691/1931. He was the son of the previous *Rebbe*, Harav Nachum Mordechai Perlow, *zt"l*, and Rebbetzin Beila Ruchama, *a"h*. He was named after his great-grandfather, Harav Yaakov Perlow, *zt"l*, the first *Novominsker Rebbe*. His maternal grandfather was Rav Yitzchak Zelig Morgenstern, *zt"l*, the *Sokolover Rebbe*, a descendant of the *Kotzker*.

Even in his youth, it was clear that the *Novominsker Rebbe* was destined for greatness in the Torah world. The *Rebbe's chavrusa* from his *yeshivah* days, Rabbi Aharon Feldman, *Rosh Yeshivah*, *Yeshivas Ner Yisroel*, Baltimore, observed that the *Novominsker Rebbe's* incisive mind, knowledge of *Torah*, *Chazal*, *Halachah* and *Aggadah*, all-encompassing *kavod haTorah* and ability to make decisions with far-reaching consequences propelled him to the highest heights as a leader in the *olam haTorah*.

When he came of age, he married Rebbetzin Yehudis, *a"h*, the daughter of Harav Avraham Eichenstein, *zt"l*, the *Ziditchover Rebbe* of Chicago.

After his father's *petirah* in Elul of 5736/1976, he was appointed *Rebbe*. In 1998, after the *petirah* of Rabbi Moshe Sherer, *z"l*, the *Rebbe* was named Rosh Agudas Yisrael of America, a position he held for 22 years.

The *Rebbe's beis medrash* was on 48th Street and 16th Avenue in Boro Park. The *Rebbe* was the keynote speaker at events related to *Torah Umesorah* and Agudath Israel. His speech was seen by many as the Orthodox Jewish equivalent to the state of the union address. He served as head of *Agudah's Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah*. He passed away early Tuesday, 13 *Nisan*, 5780 he was 89.

Orthodox Union President Moishe Bane said, "The *Rebbe* sought *achdus* (unity) amongst Jews and made great effort to achieve that lofty goal. He was a visionary who thought not only about his own community but also loved and cared deeply about the broader Jewish community, both around the country and around the world."

Gedolim Be'Masayhem



Stories & Anecdotes

Rav Chaim Abulafia Chacham Chaim Abulafia of Teveria (Nissan 7)

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

THE TWO MOSHIACHS

This story was heard from the chief Rav of Teverya, Rav Yaakov Chai Zerihan:

When Rav Chaim ben Attar, *mechaber* of the *Ohr HaChaim*, arrived in Teverya, he went to the *Bais Medrash* and found a group of *talmidim* sitting together and studying under their master and teacher Rav Chaim Abulafia, who sat teaching them Torah and studying with them, supported by many cushions and pillows propped on either side for his comfort.

When the *Ohr HaChaim* saw all the cushions and pillows, he said quietly to himself in wonder, “Does the Torah deserve this? [How can he relax and disrespect the *Torah* like that?]”

Rav Chaim Abulafia saw the *Ohr HaChaim* and immediately called out in a loud voice, “The *Chacham Chaim* has come to us!” When the *Ohr HaChaim* approached, Rav Chaim Abulafia rose to his feet and stood to greet him, reciting the *pasuk*, “Arise before your elders - *mipnei seiva sokum*,” and they sat and studied together *sugyas* of *Shas*. Rav Chaim ben Attar was amazed at Rav Chaim Abulafia’s great scholarship, erudition and breadth of knowledge in Torah. Then Rav Chaim Abulafia told the *Ohr HaChaim*, “The Torah does deserve this and requires it, due to my advanced age and weakness!” The *Ohr HaChaim* then asked his forgiveness.

Afterward, they left together to the *kever* of the Tanna Rav Akiva and, not to waste time, they rented an animal to take Rav Chaim Abulafia, who was some ninety-three years old at the time. When they arrived at the cave of the Tanna, Rav Abulafia dismounted from the donkey and they honored one another to enter first. Rav Chaim ben Attar sat and wept, “Woe are we that both *Moshiachs* have arrived here together at the right time!”

A great fog and mist crept over them and hid them from view. Whisperings and low conversation between them were heard as they both wept quietly. Those present later surmised that it was revealed to both Rav Chaims that they would pass away, one a year after the other. And so it was, that due to our sins Rav Chaim ben Attar passed away on the fifteenth of *Tammuz* 5503 and Rav Chaim Abulafia in *Nissan* of that following year 5504. (*Hillula Kadisha* p. 308 cited from *Yalkut Yosef* p. 42)

Rav Yitzchok Derhobitsh, Derhovitsher (Nissan 7)

TRUE FORGIVENESS

Once, the holy Rebbe Reb Zisha of Anipoli heard a wedding procession passing outside his window. Immediately, he rushed plained his behavior to them with outside and began to dance in wild abandon in front of the new couple to fulfill the mitzvah of *simchas chasan* and *kallah*. When his family members later remarked that this public display did not befit his station as a *chassidic rebbe*, he explained his behavior to them with the following tale:

In my youth I was a disciple of the holy Reb Yechiel Michel, the *Zlotchover Maggid*. Once, he was angry at me and he rebuked me. Later, he appeased me and I offered him my forgiveness. “Zisha, please forgive my angry rebuke and please forgive that I embarrassed you,” he said. “Rebbe, I forgive you,” I answered. Before I retired for the night, he visited me once more and asked again for my forgiveness, “Zisha, please forgive me!” “Rebbe, I forgive you,” I answered.

As I lay down to go to sleep, my *Rebbe’s* holy father, Reb Yitzchak of Drohovitch revealed himself to me. I was still awake when his soul visited me, coming down from the supernal world above. He declared, “I left just one son in This World below, one precious son! And just because he embarrassed you, you wish to destroy him!” “But *Rebbe*,” I protested, “I have already forgiven him with all my heart and soul! What else should I do?”

“You call that forgiveness?” he demanded. “I will teach you the proper way to forgive. Follow me.”

I got up and followed Reb Yitzchak until we reached the mikveh. “Now, go immerse yourself,” he said, “and with each immersion declare that you have forgiven my son!” I did as he asked, and when I finished and came out of the *mikveh*, I saw his face shining with a great luminescence, a light so bright I was unable to gaze at his face. I asked him the cause of so brilliant a light, and he explained that he merited such shining rays of light because he was always careful to fulfill the three dictums of Rav Nechunya ben Hakanah who said his longevity was due to three things: “I never took honor in my fellow man’s disgrace, I never went to bed having cursed my fellow that day, and I was easygoing with my money and possessions” (Megillah 28b). “You should know,” he added, “that what I was able to achieve following these three dictums you can also achieve through joy and simchah.”

Therefore, concluded Reb Zisha, when I saw an opportunity to rejoice together with the *chasan* and *kallah* in their *simchah*, right here on my own street, I hastened to join them in the *simchah* of a *mitzvah*!

WHAT SIMCHA CAN ACCOMPLISH

A wedding procession once passed by the home of the Rebbe Reb Zusha. Upon hearing the music and seeing the procession, the Rebbe Reb Zusha went outside and began to

dance and make merry before the groom and bride. When he had finished and come home, the members of his household berated the *Tzaddik* that it was dishonorable for an elderly Rebbe such as himself to go out and dance in the streets.

“Let me tell you a story,” answered the Rebbe Reb Zusha, (and he spoke of himself humbly, in the third person as was his custom): “In Zusha’s youth, Zusha was a *talmid* of the *Zlotschover Maggid*. Once, during our studies together, the *Maggid* grew impatient with Zusha and he yelled at Zusha. Afterward, he regretted this and asked Zusha to forgive him. ‘Of course *Rebbe*, I forgive you,’ was Zusha’s reply. Then again before Zusha lay down to sleep, again the *Maggid* showed up and asked forgiveness. ‘Yes, yes, *Rebbe* - I forgive you!’ was Zusha’s reply again.

“Then, as I lay down in bed before sleep had overcome me, his saintly father, Rav Yitzchok of Drovitch, may his memory be a blessing, appeared to me. Rav Yitzchok turned to me and said, ‘I left one son, just one precious son in this world before I died, and you wish to destroy him all because he insulted and yelled at you?!’ he accused.

“‘*Rebbe*,’ I entreated him, ‘Zusha has already forgiven him twice with all my heart and soul!’

“‘Humph, you call that forgiveness?’ Rav Yitzchok challenged me back. ‘Come with me and I will teach how to truly forgive someone completely.’

“And so I got out of bed, dressed and followed Rav Yitzchok as he led me toward the bathhouse. When we got there, Rav Yitzchok commanded Zusha to disrobe and enter the waters of the mikve and submerge and immerse myself completely three times under the waters, and with each submersion to recite wholeheartedly that I forgave his son, the *Zlotschover Maggid*. Zusha did so.

“When I finished, I saw that *Rav Yitzchok’s* faced glowed and shone brightly with a blinding other-worldly light. I asked him what the source of such a shining countenance was, and he taught Zusha that he merited such a shining light because he was careful and diligent in fulfilling the three rules of Rav Nechunia ben HaKaneh (mentioned in *Megilla* 28a):

1. I never honored myself through my fellow's shame.
2. I never went to bed before having forgiven anyone who had caused me any pain.
3. I was easy-going with my money for charitable causes.

“Furthermore,’ added Rav Yitzchok, ‘you should know that whatever I achieved through diligence in fulfilling these three rules, can also be achieved through *Simcha* - joy.’

“Therefore,” concluded the Rebbe Reb Zusha, “when I saw the wedding procession and the opportunity to rejoice, I ran outside to dance and grasp the opportunity to rejoice in *Simcha shel mitzva!*” (*Sippurei Chassidim*).

SUCH A LOWLY SOUL UPLIFTED TO SUCH GREAT DIZZYING HEIGHTS

Rav Yechiel Michel of Zlotschov related that when he first came before the holy *Ba'al Shem Tov*, the *Ba'al Shem* asked that he be honored and then told those present, “You should know that he is the son of Yitzchok of Drovitch. Now, let me tell you that his father was given by Heaven such a small soul of such lowly stature, that there is almost no one in this generation who has such a small and lowly, insignificant soul. However, he uplifted this soul to staggering, dizzying heights - to the level of the holy Tanna Rav Shimon bar Yochai!” (*Agra Depirka* by Rav Tzvi Elimelech of Dynow, *Mechaber of Bnei Yissoschor* #29)

Rav Eliyahu Hakadosh Baal HaTosfos (Nissan 8)

FIERY RETRIBUTION OR COINCIDENCE?

The Mysterious York Minster Fire On July 9, 1984, around 2 a.m., just hours after the bones of medieval Jews of York had finally been laid to rest, a massive fire destroyed the only part of the historic York Minster Cathedral which dates back to the time of the infamous 1190 York pogrom.

July 8, 1984, was described at the time as having been a warm summer's day and the spectacular lightning storms that lit up the night sky over York came as something of a surprise. The BBC, North Yorkshire, reported that the cathedral's superintendent of

works believed that a freak lightning strike started the fire. The fire alarm was not activated, probably due to electrical damage to the system, and by the time an on-duty policeman discovered the fire, York's famous old cathedral was well and truly ablaze. The dry oak tinder in the roof of the South Transept burned quickly, much stonework was seriously damaged, and the famous sixteenth-century Rose Window was shattered into thousands of fragments. It took four years to complete the repairs at a cost of £1 million. More than a few observers have viewed this incident, not as a coincidence, but as a possible demonstration of some kind of Divine retribution relating to the sad events of eight-hundred years before visited upon one of the biggest Gothic cathedrals in all of Europe.

LAYING THE YORK BONES TO REST

The chain of events which led to the eventual laying to rest of the bones of Jews from medieval York reads something like a bestselling thriller. A full account was published in the chareidi online magazine *Dei'ah VeDibur* on October 8, 2003 (12 Tishrei 5764). The writer, Rabbi Dov Eliach, obtained his story from the Gateshead *avreich*, Rabbi Yisroel Chaim Levine.

In brief, the story goes that in 1984, Rabbi Levine, on his way back to Manchester, was forced to change trains at York. Recalling the York massacre and the fact that certain Tosafists were involved, and with several hours on his hands, he sought out the tourist information booth to ask if there was a Jewish cemetery in the city. He was surprised to be told by the information clerk that several months earlier an ancient Jewish graveyard had indeed been discovered and that "hundreds of skeletons" had been carted off to the archaeology department at the University of York. He went first to the site of the dig, near an intended parking garage development, and found nothing. Proceeding to the university, he presented himself to the archaeologists there as "a researcher of Jewish law" (as he was a notable *avreich* studying *Gemara*, this was certainly not beyond the bounds of credibility). Rabbi Levine was assured that permission, necessary by British law, had been obtained from the chief rabbi of London to perform the dig at the site, adjacent to "Jewbury" Street.

The cemetery was apparently first used around 1177 and remained in use until the expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290. The remains of nearly five-hundred individuals were recovered. On his return to Gateshead, Rabbi Levine immediately began

to work on the matter of having the bones suitably re-interred. He called Rabbi Chanoch Ehrentrau, who was later to become *av beis din* of London, and also enlisted the aid of other well-known rabbanim, including Rabbi Eliyahu Falk. Lord Immanuel Jacobovits, then Chief Rabbi of England, eventually arranged with the British Ministry of the Interior to have all digging stopped and to bring all the bones to a proper Jewish burial, with the construction company involved at the original site funding the operation. According to Professor O'Connor: "The bones from Jewbury were removed temporarily to a Jewish mortuary in Manchester (apparently it was the closest appropriate facility).

There they stayed while building work continued on the former cemetery site, a period of around 5 to 6 months."

In the final report on the excavation in the journal *Antiquity* (March 1, 1995), the noted York University archaeologist Philip Rahtz gives the date of reburial as July 8, 1984 (8 *Tamuz* 5744). A stone plaque was placed at the entrance to the site, now a Sainsbury's supermarket, with Hebrew and English inscriptions recording the location of the Jewish cemetery and that the human remains were re-interred on the site of the present parking lot in the presence of the chief rabbi and representatives of the Jewish community.

Supervised by the rabbanim present, the hundreds of skeletons were buried in several dozen coffins arranged in three layers in a "crypt" constructed within the new building as close as was practicable to their original burial place. In addition to the memorial stone, a sign was set up to warn *Kohanim* not to enter the building. It remains conjecture as to whether any of the remains re-entombed in 1984 were actually from the victims of the 1190 tragedy.

The next purportedly connected event, a mysterious lightning strike on York Minster Cathedral, took place in the early hours of the following day.

Rav Mordechai Rishfei Aish (Nissan 8)

DOCTOR MAIMONIDIES HELPS HEAL FOR RAV MOTTELE NESHCHIZER

Rav Yitzchok of Neshchiz related about his father Rav Mordechai: One time, the *Rambam* himself appeared before my father and complained why my father did not study his sefer, the *Yad HaChazoka* (also known as the *Mishne Torah*). My father responded that he was

very busy and preoccupied with communal matters and inundated with requests from congregants and other Jews requesting all manner of blessings and salvation. The *Rambam* then told my father that at least he should keep his *sefer* on the table at all times and he promised that if any sick person came before my father or if someone would request his *berocha* to heal the sick, then if my father would open the *Rambam's sefer* and study it, he, the *Rambam*, would send a *refua* and heal him. And so it was that the *Rambam's sefer* was always on my father's table." (*Layeshorim Tehilla* p. 78)

Rav Nosson Feitel Reinitz (Nissan 9)

SAVED FROM HEAVEN

Rav Nosson never ate any food cooked on *Pesach*, only that which had been cooked before *Yom Tov* in his own special *keilim* (This was because before *Pesach* any infinitesimal amount of *chametz* which might have inadvertently entered the food is *batel* - nullified. But in food cooked on *Pesach* itself, not even a *mashehu* of *chametz* is *batel*, even one part in 1000!).

One year, after his *Pesach* food was prepared and heated, someone unwittingly stirred it with a spoon that was not one of his special *keilim*. The entire dish subsequently fell and shattered and all the food was ruined. The mistake with the spoon was later discovered and people saw how from Heaven had saved him from transgressing his own stringencies. Similarly, someone once brought him wine to make *Kiddush* on Shabbos morning and the bottle fell and broke and all the wine was spilled. They later discovered that the wine had not conformed to his strictures of *kashrus*.

MERITING TO SEE THE HOLY LAND

Once, when Rav Nosson was serving as Rav of Tet-Vigsing, he was called to Belgrade on some matter. There was a mountain so high there that it was rumored to be possible to see Eretz Yisrael from its summit. Rav Nosson greatly desired to see the Holy Land and so he climbed for hours to reach the mountain's peak. After a long, arduous journey, he finally reached the top only to discover that the rumors were untrue; he could not see Eretz Yisrael at all. At most, he could perhaps gaze in the general direction that would eventually lead to the land. In his exhaustion and disappointment, Rav Nosson fell asleep. He had a vision in a dream in which he was shown the entire stretch of Eretz Yisrael, from

border to border. He was also shown every holy place - the *Mekomos Hakedoshim*. When he awoke he was full of joy, content that he had indeed merited to see the Holy Land after all (*Toldos Geonei Hagar* pgs. 27-28).

Rav Chaim Meir Hager Imrei Chaim (Nissan 9)

NO BED FOR TWO YEARS

In his younger years, Rav Eliezer sat and studied together with his older brother, the *Imrei Chaim* of Vizhnitz, and their exertion in Torah study was legendary. For two years, the brothers were so engrossed in their studies that they didn't sleep in a bed. Except for Shabbos, they didn't even change their clothes from week to week. When they needed a short rest from learning, they simply lay their heads down where they were, while fully dressed - and thus they could use the entire night for *Toras Hashem*!

ANGER CONTROL

Whenever an opportunity presented itself, the *Imrei Chaim* of Vizhnitz would retell this story about Rav Raphael of Bershad's amazing control over his *middos*. Once after his *tisch* (the chassidic Shabbos banquet over which the rebbe presides), he shared song, stories, and words of Torah with his devoted *chassidim* for a remarkable seven hours. The *Imrei Chaim*, exhausted and weak after the long *tisch*, walked home in the cold and rain. He arrived at home only to discover that his attendant who had the keys, was nowhere to be found! While waiting a wearisome stretch of time for his *gabbai* to show up, the *Imrei Chaim* related this story:

For many years, Rav Raphael of Bershad had a burning desire to acquire pure white wool from the Holy Land to fashion a resplendent, *mehadrin tallis katan* and *tzitzis* that would be, befitting such a precious *mitzvah*.

After great effort, he finally obtained the exclusive wool from Eretz Yisroel! Elated, he passed the wool on to one of his *chassidim* urging him to take extra special care of the wool and to make with it a *tallis katan* and *tzitzis*. The *chassid*, who realized the great lengths the *Rebbe* had gone to procure the wool and the importance of his mission, approached the task with great care. All his good intentions and caution notwithstanding, he accidentally folded the *tallis katan* over twice, so that when he cut the hole in the

middle to create the opening for the head, he ended up with two holes instead of one! When he unfolded the garment and held open the *tallis katan*, instead of one opening for the head, there were now two!

With trepidation he brought the ruined garment before his *Rebbe*. Rav Raphael had been waiting with great anticipation to see the culmination of his efforts and to fulfill this *mitzvah b'hiddur*. When the *chassid* entered the room, the *rebbe* noticed how crestfallen he looked.

“What is it? What is wrong?” the *rebbe* asked, beckoning the *chassid* to come near.

The *chassid* held out ruined garment ashamedly. He couldn't lift his eyes to meet the *rebbe's* as he waited for the *rebbe's* anger and disappointment to cascade over him.

What he heard instead was Rav Raphael's delighted voice:

“Why off course this garment needed two holes! Yes, yes, exactly-- one hole just as any *tallis katan* has for the head; and another hole to teach Raphael to suppress and contain his emotions and not be angry.”

When he concluded the tale, the *Imrei Chaim* said with great emotion, “*Kodesh kadashim!* Holy of Holies! From where can we learn such lofty behavior?! This story shakes me up and excites me much, much more than any miraculous tales you could tell me about the *tzadik!*”

THE CHAZZAN WHO LOST HIS VOICE AND THE CHAZZAN WHO FOUND IT

The *Imrei Chaim* of Vizhnitz once heard a beautiful *niggun* from a chazzan, which prompted his telling the following story:

“Rav Mordechai once passed by a *shul* and out of the windows, wafted the most delightful and soulful melody. He remarked, ‘Master of the World - *Ribono Shel Olam!* If only I had such a voice--I would sing and praise You unceasingly with sweet melodies!’”

His prayers were accepted on High and from then on, that chazzan lost his voice and Rav Mordechai became the famed Zaslover Chazzan with a remarkable voice, full of power

and strength.”

The *Imrei Chaim* concluded: “If you can use such a sweet voice for *avodas Hashem* - isn’t that wonderful?”

OL MALCHUS SHOMAYIM

The *Imrei Chaim* of Vizhnitz once participated in a *vacht nacht* (a *seudah* conducted in order to provide protection a baby boy the night before the *bris milah*, during which, *divrei Torah* and *keriyas Shema* are recited). After all those who were present recited *keriyas Shema* as is customary, the *rebbe* told over the following:

Rav Pinchos of Koretz once approached Rav Mordechai, the *chazzan* of Zaslov, and asked him, “You perform at many *simchas* and recite *Shema* at many *vacht nachts*. Tell me, why do we recite *keriyas Shema* on the night before the *bris*?”

The *chazzan* said to Rav Pinchos as follows: “*Chazal* ask (*Berachos* 13a) ‘Why does the *parsha* of *Shema* precede the *parsha* of *V’haya im shmoa*?’

And they answer: ‘Because first, we accept upon ourselves the yoke of the Kingship of Heaven - and only afterwards the yoke of the *mitzvos*.’

Based on this, we can explain the custom just fine. Since this baby will enter into the yoke of the covenant of *mitzvos* tomorrow, we need to first accept upon ourselves the yoke of G-d’s Kingship; so, we accept *Ol Malchus Shomayim* first by reciting *Shema* on the night before the *bris*.”

FUR COATS LINED WITH ARROGANCE

Rav Chaim Meir, the *Imrei Chaim* of Vizhnitz, was very close with his uncle, the *Ateres Yeshua* of Dzikov, and would often recount stories and teachings from his uncle:

One time, the *Imrei Chaim* noticed a very arrogant person whose self-satisfied smirk attested to his vanity.

“You think too much of yourself and regard yourself too highly!” the *Imrei Chaim* berated him. “If you were in the *beis medrash* of my uncle, the *Ateres Yeshua*, he wouldn’t even be

able to look at you. He so hated *ba'alei gaava* (arrogant people) that he simply couldn't spare them a glance without shivering from repulsion. My uncle used to say, "I am waiting and wishing that the winter would pass already, because during the winter all the *ba'alei batim* are bundled up in fancy coats with fur-lined and velvet collars turned up against the frost. But when they enter the *shul* and *beis medrash*, they leave them on so as to feel important- their arrogance knows no bounds!"

PAST LIVES

Rav Chaim Meir, the *Imrei Chaim* of Vizhnitz, was very close with his uncle, the *Ateres Yeshua* of Dzikov, and would often recount stories and teachings from his uncle:

The *Ateres Yeshua* once observed two people having the following conversation. One said to the other, "Why do you allow your son to play with such unwholesome friends?"

"Ah, it's not so bad!" said the other. "Why are you making such a fuss and a big deal over nothing? He is just a little boy!"

The holy *Dzikover* turned to the astonished man and remarked, "How do you know that he is just a little boy? Maybe he is an eighty-year-old man who has come back to this world to rectify through *tikkun* whatever he ruined in a previous *gilgul*?"

The holy *Dzikover* turned to the astonished man and remarked, "How do you know that he is just a little boy? Maybe he is an eighty-year-old man who has come back to this world to rectify through *tikkun* whatever he ruined in a previous *gilgul*?"

KOL NIDREI

Rav Chaim Meir, the *Imrei Chaim* of Vizhnitz, was very close with his uncle, the *Ateres Yeshua* of Dzikov, and would often recount stories and teachings from his uncle:

Rav Chaim Meir of Vizhnitz once told the following tale before *Kol Nidrei*:

"I heard from my holy uncle, the *Ateres Yeshua* of Dzikov, in the name of the advocate of the Jewish people, the holy Berditchever Rav, *Sanegoran Shel Yisroel*, who said. "Master of the World! -- *Ribbono Shel Olam*," You have a Jewish parliament made up of the sages of *Klal Yisroel* of that generation. You are required by Your own laws of Torah to ask their

permission before You decide to decree anything harsh. If You wish to give them *shefa* and *beracha*--bounty and blessings, then You need not seek their approval beforehand. However, if You wish to act, heaven forbid, in a harsh manner with harsh judgments then You cannot do so without their agreement!

This is how the Berditchever explained the verses, *Devarim* 4:35, "*Ata haresa l'daas ki Hashem Hu haElokim, ayn od milvado.*" The particular name for Hashem, "*Elokim,*" alludes to harsh judgements. Therefore, it reads: If You wish to act harshly (with *midas hadin* hinted at by *Elokim*) - then "*ayn od milvado* (You are acting alone) and the parliament does not agree; You cannot decree so without asking them first!"

"For example," said The *Imrei Chaim* interrupting his own tale, "You would have to ask the holy Berditchever who always sought the best and advocated on behalf of *Klal Yisroel*, or my holy father the *Ahavas Yisroel* of Vizhnitz--You need to ask their advice and have them agree."

The *Imrei Chaim* then continued the Berditsheve's *peirush*: "However (*Tehillim* 136:4) '*L'oseh niflaos gedolos l'vado ki l'olam chasdo,*' - If Hashem, You wish to do great wonders for us and send us *shefa* and *chassadim* (bounty of blessings and kindness) - '*l'vado,*' - You can do so all on Your own."

TIKKUN CHATZOS

Rav Chaim Meir Hagar author of *Imrei Chaim* of Vizhnitz once told his *chassidim* on the occasion of the Czernobler's *Yahrzeit*, that the *Meor Eynaim, SeMacht Lichtig Der Oigen* - It enlightens the eyes! He once told the following story:

During one of the *Meor Eynaim's* many travels he stayed at a Jewish inn and spent the night. The innkeeper and his wife were simple Jews and when the Czernobler began to recite the *Tikkun Chatzos* prayers and when the sounds of his loud sighs, moans and crying reached the ears of his hosts they were startled.

"Surely our guest is not feeling well," declared the innkeeper's wife. "Please go and see to him."

The innkeeper went downstairs with a candle in hand, and as it cast its light in the

darkness he was startled to hear the moaning, groaning, sighing and crying continue to come from the guest room. He knocked and opened the door apologizing, "I am sorry to disturb you, but I overheard your pain, are you not feeling well, how can we help you?"

The *Rebbe* turned to his host and explained, "Thank G-d I am *Baruch Hashem* feeling fine, however I was just reciting *Tikkun Chatzos*." "Hmmm. . .*Tikkun Chatzos*?" asked the puzzled innkeeper scratching his head and pulling at his beard, "what's that?" "It is the prayer recited over the destruction of our holy temple, the *Beis Hamikdash*," explained the *Rebbe* patiently. "What is the *Beis Hamikdash*?" asked the innkeeper. The Czernobler proceeded to explain how all the Jews once dwelled in the holy land, and how Hashem had commanded them to build a temple, and how they had worshipped there before it was destroyed due to our many sins and we were dispersed in the exile. "And soon," explained the *Rebbe* with a note of yearning and longing, "*Moshiach* will come and gather us all in from the exile, bring us back up to Eretz Yisroel, surely you anticipate his coming any day as we all do?"

At this query the simple innkeeper grew even more perplexed, "Hmmm. . .I am not sure. Let me go and ask my wife." He went back upstairs, told his wife about their guest's special prayers of the temple, explained to her what he had said and asked her opinion on the matter. "Go and tell our guest," said the innkeeper's wife, "that we have *Baruch Hashem* saved some money, here we own a flock of geese, some property and we have a way of life, why should we give all that up and move to Eretz Yisroel when *Moshiach* arrives?" The innkeeper turned and relayed his wife's words to the *Rebbe*. "Go and tell your wife that here in *galus*," explained the *Rebbe*, "while we are in exile among the nations, the *goyim* torture and hurt us making our lives difficult and miserable, in Eretz Yisroel that will all end."

Nodding his head in understanding the innkeeper went back to his wife and related to her what the *Rebbe* said adding "Don't you remember what happened last week when Ivan, our neighbor got drunk and smashed all our windows? In Eretz Yisroel the *Rebbe* promises we will not have these problems!" he stated. The innkeeper's wife thought a bit and then her eyes filled with a light of understanding and her expression filled with comprehension.

"Aha, I've got it! Go and tell the *Rebbe*, I have a solution. Here we are comfortable and

settled. We own property and the only problem is the *goyim*. Tell the *Rebbe* that when *Moshiach* comes he will solve all our problems by taking the *goyim* with him to Eretz Yisroel!”

When the holy Czernobler heard the innkeeper's answer, he said “Now I understand the meaning of the verse in *Parshas VaEra Shemos* 6:6 Hashem says “I will take you out from the sufferings of *Mitzrayim*,” I will cause you to no longer be able to suffer and endure the exile and then you will want to go out. That is our sin,” exclaimed the *Rebbe*, “we have become so settled to living in the exile in our complacency we are happy and believe there can be nothing better - how wrong we are!”

I WOULD RECOGNIZE ELIYOHU HANOVI

The *Imrei Chaim* of Vizhnitz told the following stories about his illustrious forebear, the *Toras Chaim* of Kosov:

The *Toras Chaim* once said about the *zemer Eliyohu HaNovi* recited as part of the *Motzo'ei Shabbos Melava Malka zemiros*, “We sing *ashrei mi shero'a ponov bachalom* - happy is he who saw Eliyohu HaNovi's face in a dream - but who knows what Eliyohu HaNovi looks like? If no one knows what he looks like, how would he be able to recognize him in a dream? I, however, concluded the *Toras Chaim*, would be able to recognize him if I saw him in a dream because I once saw him when I was awake, with my father the *Ahavas Sholom*, and this is how it happened:

“When I was a young child,” told the *Toras Chaim*, “I often used to sleep in my father's bed. One night, I was awakened from my sleep to the sound of a conversation taking place between my father and someone else in the room. I looked up and was amazed to see an elderly man with a shining countenance sitting on my father's chair and my father sat at his side. I was upset by this - who dared take my father's seat at the head of the table? My father said to the guest: ‘Eliyohu, here in bed lies my *Chaim'nyu* - I would like you to give him a *berocha*!’

“When I heard that this was none other than Eliyohu HaNovi, I was seized with fear and trembling and hid beneath the covers. Eliyohu HaNovi reached in below the covers, placed his holy hands on my head and gave me a *berocha*. I took a peek from underneath the covers and saw his holy face!”

“And so therefore I tell you,” concluded the *Toras Chaim*, “that if I saw him in a dream, I could recognize him because I saw him when I was awake!” (*Sarfei Kodesh* 429-430)

GRABBING AND SAVING NESHAMOS

On the *Toras Chaim's* *Yahrzeit*, the *Imrei Chaim* of Vizhnitz once remarked, “*Chai* (18th *Iyar* is *Lag BaOmer*, the *Yahrzeit/Hillula* of Rav Shimon bar Yochai. On one side of that calendar date, a week before, is the *Yahrzeit* of my *Zeide*, the *heilige Ropshitzer* (11th of *Iyar*) and on the other side is the *Yahrzeit* of my *Zeide*, the *Toras Chaim* (25th of *Iyar*) – they all grab *neshomos* and pull them out of *Gehinnom*! (*Sarfei Kodesh* p. 451)

IT'S ALWAYS YOM TOV OR CHOL HAMOED HERE

It is well known that all year long Rav Chaim Meir, the *Vizhnitzer Rebbe*, lived in a *Yom Tov* atmosphere. We know that the *Parsha* read awakens the times and the feelings, and so it was that each *Parsha* the *Rebbe* lived the *Yomim Tovim* mentioned therein. There was no *Parsha*, *Haftora* or some connection to the upcoming *Yom Tov* that he ever missed. Whether it was explicit, hinted at in some *gematria* or *roshei teivos* or *notrikon*, he would always connect his *Divrei Torah* to *Yom Tov*, and this would create a holiday atmosphere.

The space in between the *Yomim Tovim* was for the *Rebbe* like *Chol HaMoed* and as soon as one *Yom Tov* ended, the next *Yom Tov* commenced with almost no break between them. As winter began he was already preparing for *Pesach* and at the end of summer the upcoming high holidays of the *Yomim Noro'im* were already beckoning him and found their way into his every nuance and being. *Nissan* and *Tishrei* held hands and embraced as their sanctity permeated one another and spread their ethereal *kedusha* over all and this poured down and descended upon all who basked in the *Rebbe's* light and glory.

When his son printed the third volume of *Imrei Chaim* and gave it to the *Gerrer Rebbe*, the *Bais Yisrael*, telling him that it was Volume 3 on the *Moadim*, the *Gerrer Rebbe* remarked, “And do you mean to tell me that the other two volumes are not about the *Moadim*?” (*Meir HaChaim* II p. 154)

Rav Moshe Feilshus Rav Moshe New Yorker (Nissan 10)

AFTER DAVENING YOU HAVE A DIFFERENT LOOK ON YOUR FACE

Most of the following stories were passed down by the *Chassid* Rav Moshe Chaim Steinberg:

My first meeting with him was to see and meet up close the man whom many respected, while others held him to be a *meshugener*. I arrived on the East Side before *Shacharis*, wondering where to *chap* a *minyán*. No sooner had I entered the *Bais Medrash* than an elderly *Yid* came up to me and said to me straight away, "Go to such and such a *Bais Medrash* - there they are beginning to *daven Shacharis*." This was none other than my first encounter with Reb Moshe New Yorker, and a clear example of his ability to "know" things, perhaps through *ruach hakodesh*, since I had never met him before, never spoken a word to him, and certainly not told him or anyone else that I was looking for a *minyán* and had not yet *davened*. I asked him how he knew I hadn't yet *davened*, and he answered in his characteristic simplicity that "after *davening* you would look different - *nuch davenen hot min an andere punim*."

HE KNEW THE QUESTION ALREADY

Two of my friends had similar incidents. One of them prepared a question on *Sefer Yetzira*. He approached Reb Moshe and before he could even formulate the question, Reb Moshe responded, "Ah, you are asking about the *Sefer Yetzira*?" And my other friend had a question on *Rabbeinu Bachaya* and the same thing happened: he approached and after saying the beginning of the question, Reb Moshe knowingly interrupted him saying, "Ah, the *Bachaya*?!" as if somehow he knew what question they were about to formulate and ask him before they had done so.

HOLY HINTS

One of my other friends who knew him explained that when Reb Moshe spoke, throwing around seemingly strange comments, that it was all related to the *Zohar* and *Medroshim* on that week's *parsha*. Whoever studied them beforehand would make the connection and could see how Reb Moshe's seemingly bizarre, irrelevant comments were all actually hints to the holy *Zohar* and *Medroshim* of that week's *sedra*.

NO FOOLING REB MOSHE

One time before I took a new friend to meet Reb Moshe, I explained that we should prepare by studying a *shtickel* Zohar on the *parsha* in advance. We did so and when I came in I had the *Zohar* turned to the first page of that week instead. Reb Moshe approached and declared emphatically, "No, no, that's not it," and turned the pages knowingly to the topic we had in fact studied together previously as preparation! He then studied this *shtickel* with us and left behind hints and ideas related to it. My friend was absolutely amazed.

HEADLINES

When asked if he reads the newspapers he once remarked, "Yes, yes, I read the headlines and I know all the rest." When he saw that no one got the hint, he stressed, "*Head lines* - the lines on your forehead! I read the lines on your forehead and there everything is clearly written and spelled out."

NO PUSHING

Summer of 5746 and a *Yid* entered the *She'eris Yisroel shul*. He approached where Reb Moshe sat and claimed that he wanted to sit there and could Reb Moshe move. That's how little anyone thought of Reb Moshe - they simply had no idea who he really was. Reb Moshe refused to just get up and move, and so this *Yid* pushed him aside roughly and sat down. A look of anger crossed Reb Moshe's face. "What's the matter? Why do you look so upset?" someone asked him. "You don't just push me; when you shove me aside you are pushing up there," and so saying he pointed up toward Heaven. Everyone chuckled and no one took him seriously...until the next day when that *Yid* who had so callously shoved Reb Moshe didn't wake up. By then they got the hint - too late. They asked him, "What happened here? What have you done?" But he simply pointed up and said, "Up there," as if to say, "I didn't do anything. It wasn't me; it came from On High. From then on no one messed with him and he sat and stood wherever he wanted.

GREATNESS HIDDEN AND CONCEALED

After *davening*, he seemed to simply wander about with no objective, empty day after empty day. However, anyone who paid serious attention caught him constantly secretly studying, so that he was truly a *gaon*. In fact, he made an annual *siyum haShas* on *Bovli*

and *Yerushalmi*. Each day he learned seven *blatt Gemora* with the Mordechai besides his *shiur Yerushalmi*. This alone is a wonder - how he wasn't noticed among people and how others failed to see his greatness and his learning that he managed to conceal. Some people saw him and came in close contact with him for a full decade, never knowing his name. One Jew who *davened* next to him for some forty years knew only the name by which he heard him called to the Torah: *Reb Moshe ben Yitzchok Isaac*; more than this remained unknown.

He seemed never to eat anything all week long besides to *nosh* on whatever food came into the *shul* and *Bais Medrash* at a *l'chaim*. Only one thing was noticeable: that on Shabbos and *Yom Tov* he drank a lot of wine at the *seuda*. He used to joke that no matter how much wine he drank it was *veinig* (Yiddish for "too little"; a play on words - the word *vein* means wine). Yet it never made him tired. Right after, he would go straight to the *Bais Medrash* to study until *Mincha*.

FOR THE BIRDS

Before *chatzos* he headed out of the *Bais Medrash* to the bakery on the same street, and collected the crumbs from the bread machine tray into a bag. With these breadcrumbs in hand, he made his way to the park. As soon as he neared, literally hundreds of birds came from all directions to greet him. He would feed the birds with outstretched hands, breadcrumbs direct from the palm of his hand. He used to say he was tipping them. We understood that they got a tip for uplifting all the *tefillos* among the *inyonim* he achieved this way. He once told us that the birds revealed to him the future and all things that would come to pass. When people wondered where he got certain astonishing information from and how he could possibly know it, he said the birds had told him. He had a special *seder* and *avoda* concerning which bird ate from which hand. Some birds he pushed away and they had to circle and come back. He would sometimes transfer the breadcrumbs from one hand to another and the birds from one hand to the other. Everything with a purpose in mind.

There was once an argument between two gentile nations and their bickering was reported in the press. The papers all had their theories of what war was brewing. Reb Moshe remarked, "They will say that the *goyim* fight and hit one another, and I say that it's not the Russians or anyone else; it's the Nazis!" People thought he was joking, but a

few days later the newspaper headlines all confirmed what Reb Moshe had said. How did he know? "The birds told me," is what he answered.

GOLUS YIDDEN

After feeding the birds, he went for a walk. This was not just any walk. No one was allowed to accompany him; no one was allowed to walk next to him, to honor him, or to show any respect. He fled from *kovod* as from fire. Instead, he walked in *dveikus* with his mind on his private thoughts. When he walked he never talked. You could not ask him anything; if he did need to speak or respond, he stood still, never talking and walking at the same time. He once explained, "When I go off on a walk, I cry in *Golus*, הלך ילך ובכה." In fact, after his *levaya* one of those who had delivered a *hesped* remarked that he had once invited Reb Moshe to attend his *chasuna*. "I am sorry I cannot attend. I am one of the *Golus Yidden* and I am forbidden to attend any *simchas*." In this manner he accepted this suffering on himself for all of Klal Yisrael.

Late at night after *chatzos*, he came home - if you could call it a home. It was a tiny hole in the wall, abandoned, filthy, and unkempt. There he continued his *avoda* undisturbed. He normally never let anyone into his tiny room. Only in his later years when the need arose we came in and saw what went on in there. The holy *Zohar* with the *Ramak*, Rav Moshe Cordevero's commentary, lay alongside the *Sefer Yetzira*, *Siddur Arizal*, *Noam Elimelech*, and other *sifrei Kabbola* that he studied on a regular basis. In his pocket was always a copy of *Raziel HaMaloch*. His *Siddur Arizal* was filled with comments and glosses in the margins, things he wrote while others slept.

RECYCLED CANDLES

His other forms of strange customs were *avodas Hashem*. He used to gather the wax drippings from all the tapers and candles in the *Bais Medrash*. He collected the wax, melted it down, and fashioned new candles from it. He would sit beside the recycled wax candles and recite *Tehillim* until they melted down. He used to tell me that the *neshomos* ask that the wax get used up completely. Around where he sat the smell of melting wax was ever present.

He also smoked cigars, but never allowed anyone to see him do so. If someone knocked or

appeared he immediately put out his cigar. When asked why no one was allowed to see him smoke he replied that the *ketores* was lit and smoked privately.

I once visited with Rav Shmuel Mordechai Portugal, the son of the Skulener *Rebbe*. I asked Reb Moshe to give a *berocha* to the father of the yungerman who stood before him. He replied, "*Sholom al Yisrael*," hinting at the Skulener *Rebbe's* name, a person he had never met.

After my wedding I had children - girls but no boys. I once visited with my brother-in-law, who asked Reb Moshe to bless me with a baby boy. "He has a long way to go," was the answer. It was true - I had my first boy only twenty years after my *chasuna*.

During *Tishrei* of 5789 people spoke about the condition of the *Satmar Rav*. Reb Moshe interjected that "they will let him live out the year," and so it was that only on 26 Av, at the end of the year, the *Satmar Rav* passed away.

KLIPPOS

He had a special *avoda* with orange peels. He used to peel them off the orange in a special manner, saving them, wrapping them around bottles and producing an ashtray. When asked why he did so, he replied, "See how I transform a *klippa* into a *kli* - see how I transform the peel into a useful vessel." When asked jokingly how long he held onto the peels, *klippos*, he replied seriously, "So long as they have even just a bit of orange moisture left, they contain sparks of *kedusha* and I am forbidden to throw them away."

HINTS

THE HOLY BULBS

He used to hint to us deep concepts from mundane things, such as fluorescent bulbs. He claimed that they were invented because first they were round and that couldn't last well and so they made them long. When we did not understand, he said, "They were round, *igulim*, and they broke, *shevirah*. Afterwards they made them straight, *yoshor* - and that was the *tikkun*!" He didn't explain further; those who understood, understood.

THE BRIDGE OF LIFE

He pointed to a bridge and explained that it was invented to allow a person to travel over from one location to another safely, the bridge above, the churning waters of his *tzoros* below, transporting him to safety so that he would come to no harm. So too can we traverse life's *tzoros* safely by crossing on a bridge.

Regarding such inventions and innovations of *ruchniyus*, he simply claimed them as his own - "*Mein patent!*" We later understood that he himself traversed life on such a bridge. He had no family, no life, no identity, nothing independent - we didn't even know his last name at the time. He was the one crossing life using that bridge. It was his *patent* to make it across safely.

He knew all seventy languages. We saw him speaking Chinese to the Chinese and my friend once had an entire conversation with him in French. When he was sick he complained in the hospital that perhaps he was being punished for studying languages and other secular subjects in his youth. Afterwards, he consoled himself that *Mordechai haTzaddik* had known all seventy languages and had used it to help Jews and so would he, during the war years, help *Klal Yisrael*, using his knowledge of foreign languages.

The doctor asked me if I thought Reb Moshe was crazy. When I shook my head and said no, he replied, "You are right - he isn't crazy; he is a genius!"

When they tried to give him intravenous medicine, he refused without being allowed to read the prescription. The doctor laughed to himself and agreed. What could this old Jew know about these technical medical terms? he thought. "Isn't this ingredient non-kosher? Doesn't it come from pork?" he asked after reading them through. "I myself didn't know," admitted the doctor, "and after looking it up I agreed with him" - it was in fact *treif!* Throughout his life he refused medicines, doctors, and treatments, living to the ripe old age of ninety, healthy and strong.

SHEM TOV

His nickname, Reb Moshe New Yorker, came about because of the following incident:

One day in the Satmar *Bais Medrash* around *Mincha* time for Rav Yoel's *minyán*, in walked a stranger and went to the back of the *shul*, where he began reciting *korbonos* with the *tzibbur*.

Only the *Rebbe* seemed to notice him, and he approached the stranger and offered his holy hand in greeting. "*Shulem Aleichem, vi'azoi hayst a Yid - what is your name?*"

He answered simply and enigmatically, "Moshe."

"*Fun vi - from where?*" continued the *Satmar Rav* to inquire.

"*Fun New York - from New York,*" was the simple reply! And as he did not elaborate any further, the nickname stuck - Reb Moshe New Yorker.

Onlookers present remarked how uncharacteristic it was for the *Satmar Rav* to have walked all the way to the other side of the *Bais Medrash* to greet a stranger, unless... implying he was a man of hidden qualities.

Rav Yeshaya Horowitz Shelah Hakadosh (Nissan 11)

I HAVE COME BACK FOR LACK OF MUSSAR

Rav Yosef Shmuel, *mechaber* of the *Mesores HaShas* and *Av Bais Din* of Frankfurt DeMain, had a group of *talmidim*, *Talmidei Chachomim*, whose custom was to each study a topic privately until they had delved into its depths. In the evening they gathered together with their *Rebbe* at their head and he would teach the topic, answer their questions, draw conclusions and remove any doubts. They studied together in this manner until they had completed the entire *Shas* - the whole Talmud. You can only imagine to what depths they delved, studying *Shas*. The *Chida* also testified that Rav Yosef Shmuel studied the entire *Shas* some forty-two times, and that for some twenty-five years he studied Torah while standing on his two feet and that he learned *lishma!*

After Rav Yosef Shmuel passed away and was buried, an awesome and frightening incident took place. As the *chabura* of students came together to study, they all saw their *Rebbe* and teacher, Rav Yosef Shmuel, standing there at his spot where he had always

stood during his life. They were all frightened by this specter, but Rav Yosef Shmuel calmed them and explained his return:

“Do not be afraid or alarmed. I will soon return to my place in the afterlife, but I have returned to tell you what happened to me. After I departed, I came before the heavenly court and immediately the *Bais Din Shel Maala* ruled that I deserved *Gan Eden* and appointed me a spot to be beside the *Tzaddik*, the holy Rav Yeshaya HaLevi Horowitz, *mechaber* of the *Shela HaKodosh*. However, the *Shela HaKodosh* intervened and protested, saying, ‘I oppose this new neighbor, because I authored the *sefer Shnei Luchos HaBris* full of *mussar* and *Yiras Hashem*. It teaches *Bnei Yisrael* to serve Hashem, and I cried many tears over my *sefer* as I composed it, but the *Gaon*, Rav Yosef Shmuel, although he taught the entire *Shas*, did not engage in *mussar* and did not rebuke his *talmidim*.’

“The *Bais Din* heard the *Shela’s* arguments and ruled that although they were justified they could not overrule and remove me from my proper place. They therefore sent me back down to you to rectify my shortcomings in lack of teaching *mussar* and so I am here, concluded Rav Yosef Shmuel, to admonish and encourage you all to study *mussar*. From now on study *mussar* daily before your learning.”

The *chabura* all agreed and accepted his words and his soul departed and was not seen again. (Introduction to *Be’er Yitzchok* on the *Torah*)

The *Shloh Hakodesh* was extremely preoccupied with his Torah studies and duties as rov, and had no spare time at all. However, when he saw how most of the Jews of his time were grossly neglecting their fear of Hashem and their whole attitude in serving Hashem was so lax, he took upon himself as a holy mission to teach *Bnei Yisroel mussar*, ethics and unadulterated fear of G-d. With this in mind, he wrote his holy *sefer Shnei Luchos Habris*, teaching the bypaths of the Torah and exhorting every Rov and teacher to impress *mussar* and ways of serving Hashem upon their congregants and pupils.

The greatness of this work of the *Shloh Hakodesh* and its value is indicated in the following amazing, if not chilling, story:

The *gaon* of Frankfurt a generation later, Rabbi Yosef Shmuel *zt"l*, in addition to carrying

out all his duties as rov of the city, bestowed the Torah world with his immense treasures. In the margins of his *gemora* next to each *sugya*, he would point out all the places where the *gemora* mentions this subject. This column, known as *Masores Hashas* has now been added to every *gemora* so that anyone studying a *sugya* has laid out in front of him a full index of every place in *Shas* where the subject matter is mentioned.

Rabbi Yosef Shmuel had a wonderful method of learning *Torah* with a large group of the cream of *talmidei chachomim* of Frankfurt.

All day they would each learn individually a chosen topic and in the evening they would gather together for the shiur of the rov. Each one would bring up for discussion the questions and comments that had arisen during the day's learning and a great and mighty storm would engulf the beis medrash. From all directions questions and doubts were hurled with gale force and it seemed as though the *sugya* was too difficult to navigate with waves of problems that would drown those studying it.

Until the rov Reb Yosef Shmuel opened his mouth and showed them how to steer a clear way through. He would answer and explain, prove and expound until the *gemora* radiated clarity, like the sun on a clear day.

In this thorough manner the group learned the whole of *Shas* over many years.

The *Chida*, in his biography of R' Yosef Shmuel *zt"l*, wrote that the rov of Frankfurt learned all of *Shas* forty- two times, fulfilling the commandment "*Vedibarto bom*," (the numerical value of *`bom*' being forty- two). He also added that for 25 years he learnt standing on his feet and all his learning was *Torah lishmoh*!

When this holy Rabbi, Reb Yosef Shmuel was *niftar*, all the city joined his *levaya* in great mourning and a long hesped was given.

Upon their return from the *levaya*, his group of *talmidim* gathered in the *beis medrash* to continue their practice of studying together and to their astonishment, in his seat, was their departed Rabbi, sitting ready to learn as in the past. Shaken by the sight, they looked at one another, wondering if they were dreaming.

"Do not be afraid and do not tremble," said R' Yosef Shmuel *zt"l*. "I will soon go back to my eternal rest. I came down to let you know what has been going on with me in the Heavenly court, up there in the World of Truth.

"When I arrived to the Heavenly spheres they called out loud - - "make way for R' Yosef Shmuel" and immediately my court- case proceeded -- the verdict being that my place in *Gan Eden* is next to the *Shloh Hakodesh*. However, the *Shloh* himself arose in protest, refusing to accept the company of his new neighbor. "The reason," he said, "is as follows. I wrote the *sefer Shnei Luchos Habris* which is full of *mussar*, to teach all Jews ethics and the correct way to serve Hashem. Many are the tears that I shed whilst compiling this *sefer*, entreating *Hashem* that it should fulfill its purpose in arousing the hearts of those who learn it to better their ways. However, this Reb Yosef Shmuel here spread Torah to multitudes of people, learned with his distinguished group of *talmidei chachomim* all of *Shas*, yet never once did he teach them *mussar* or exhort them to better their *avodas Hashem*. How can he sit next to me here in *Gan Eden*?"

Reb Yosef Shmuel *zt"l* continued to relate to his mesmerized *talmidim*. "The Heavenly court heard out the *Shloh* and sat in judgment again. They decided that my rightful place, reward for my holy work all my years, cannot be taken away from me; however, the *Shloh* is correct in his argument that I did not teach you *mussar*. They thus decreed that I must correct this misdeed before receiving my just reward and sent me down to you during our usual study hours to instruct you that from now and onwards before your daily learning session you should study *mussar* and *avodas Hashem*. In doing so, you will enable me to rest in peace and enjoy my reward in *Gan Eden*."

Shaken by this heavenly revelation, the *talmidim* immediately took upon themselves strictly to obey his will, studying the *Shloh's* words of *mussar* every day before their shiur.

With that their *Rabbi* disappeared, returning to his seat in *Gan Eden* next to the *Shloh Hakodesh*.

Zechuso Yogen Oleinu. <http://www.chareidi.org/archives5761/vayikra/features2.htm>

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

The *Chida* writes: I heard from Rav Hirsch of Balchov that when the Rebbe Reb Heschel of

Cracow traveled to Vilna, fleeing the Cossacks and Chmielniczki during the riots of Tach and Tat, and he arrived before the *Av Bais Din*, Rav Sheptil Horowitz, *mechaber* of *Vovei HoAmudim* and son of the *Shela HaKodosh*, he did not recognize the Rebbe Reb Heschel or respect his greatness.

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

THE HOLY SIDDIR HA'SHELAH

On Shabbos and *Yom Tov* the *Yeshuos Moshe* of *Vizhnitz* davened from the *Shela HaKodosh siddur* that he inherited from the *Tzemach Tzaddik*. He used to say about this *siddur*, "I remember holding this *siddur* in front of my *Zeide* during *Nishmas!* Holy Jews held this *siddur* in their hands!" Once, when someone tried to hand him a different *siddur*, the *Rebbe* pointed toward the *Siddur Shela*, indicating his preference for *davening* from that *siddur*. He turned to the approbations and pointed out that which the *Tzaddik Rov Yoel Sirkis*, *mechaber* of *Bayis Chodosh* - the *Bach* on the *Tur* - wrote in his *haskoma*: "I promise that whoever *davens* from this *siddur*, his prayers shall not return empty - and not remain unanswered!" (*Sarfei Kodesh* p. 350)

(Translator's note: I remember as a *bochur*, when I asked the *Sulitzer Rebbe*, *zt"l*, of Far Rockaway why he davened from the *Siddur Shela*, he showed me the same *haskoma* of the *Bach* and pointed out these holy words to me as well.)

Rav Menachem Mendel Zolkover (Nissan 12)

BITOCHON TO QUENCH THIRST

Rav Pinchas of Koritz told: Once, the *Ba'al Shem Tov* was traveling together with Rav

Menachem Mendel of Bar, when Rav Menachem Mendel grew very thirsty and the *Ba'al Shem* promised him that if he had true *bitochon* and trusted in Hashem, then Hashem would send him water to drink.

No sooner said than done, and a non-Jew appeared suddenly before them, searching for his lost horses. "I have been searching for my horses now for some three days. Have you seen any trace of them?" The *Ba'al Shem* and Rav Menachem Mendel replied that they had not and asked for some water, which the non-Jew supplied.

Afterward, Rav Menachem Mendel asked the *Ba'al Shem* that if Hashem had arranged this wandering non-Jew solely for his benefit, to quench his thirst, why did he wander for three days?

"If you had had *bitochon* and trusted in Hashem immediately before, then your water would have been ready three days ago," explained the *Ba'al Shem*. (*Imrei Pinchas* p. 9 #45)

BOTHERSOME THOUGHTS

Rav Mendel of Bar once related, "In my youth, I once grew excited in the midst of my *davening* and thought to myself, 'How dare you pray before Hashem, since you are so full of sin, besmirched with misdeeds and evil?!' This thought simply shattered my heart and broke me. Afterward, though, I simply could not rid myself of this negative thought, which I had fooled myself into thinking was positive. I rid myself of the delusion when I consoled myself in the following way: 'Why do I never have these thoughts when I sit myself down to eat a good meal?' [Thinking, how dare I eat a good meal before Hashem since I am so besmirched and blackened by sin? Why does my heart not break when I am about to eat?] In this way, I pushed these thoughts away and was rid of them." (*Shivchei HaBa'al Shem Tov HaSholem* #103)

Rav Shimshon Dovid Pincus Rav of Ofakim (Nissan 12)

CHESSED UNLIMITED

Young children would run after Reb Shimshon on the streets of Ofakim and call out their news to him, "Rabbi, Rabbi, We're going to *Savta* for *Pesach* . . ." Though his mind was

immersed in spiritual preparations for the *seder* night, Reb Shimshon would adjust himself to the children's level and take an interest in what was important to them.

One boy, who was laying *tefillin* in preparation for his *bar mitzva*, did not know that the *yud*, the knot of the *shel yad*, should be touching the *bayis*. Reb Shimshon went over to him and in a friendly manner, pointed this out. The boy, noting his companion's extraordinary gentleness, began to argue that it didn't have to.

Reb Shimshon was among the first to own a computer. His laptop was perhaps the first in Eretz Yisroel. He would type *chidushei Torah* of young *talmidim* on it. He used this as an opportunity to guide them as to how to write their *chidushim*. He would polish the language, checking its accuracy, correcting and improving it. "Look here," he told one *avreich*. He went over to the bookcase, took out a Reb Chaim and showed him that every piece opened by presenting a difficulty in the *Rambam*. Reb Chaim also teaches us how to write, said Reb Shimshon. One should start with a *kushya* right at the beginning; then the reader won't be able to leave the piece until he sees the answer.

He would also type the young children's sheet, so that they would develop the desire to write.

Once, at the barber's, he was offered the next turn ahead of the line, but he refused. In the meantime, an elderly man came into the shop. The *rav* rose in his honor and naturally, everybody else rose as well. Seeing how the *rav* had honored the old man, the other customers offered the first turn to him instead.

Reb Shimshon would make light of his wide brimmed hat and say, "When the *Beis Hamikdosh* is rebuilt and we go up to be seen there, I will have somewhere to hide from His glorious greatness ..."

Reb Shimshon's myriad acts of *chesed*, of a thousand different kinds, arouse our wonderment. How was one man able to devote himself to others to such an unlimited extent?

Reb Shimshon himself provides us with an answer, though not in reference to himself. In notes made by one of his *talmidim*, *ylct'a*, Yechezkel Gordon, we find that he posed the

following question: "I have a four year old daughter at home, an innocent and pure child. Does the *Torah* command me, a devoted father, to send her to the local water well and to draw water for the camels belonging to ten Arabs? This however, was the sign that *Eliezer* asked for. The girl who would say, 'Drink and I will also give your camels to drink,' she is the one that You have demonstrated is for Your servant Yitzchok (*Bereishis* 24:14). Does the *Torah* expect such a devotion to others from a young girl?"

The answer which Reb Shimshon gave was: "Avrohom Ovinu was not simply a kind person. He was master of the trait of kindness. For someone who embodies the very trait itself, there is no limit, no boundary and no measure. The essence of *chesed* is the utter abandonment of self for the sake of others."

For Reb Shimshon, the only place where the word *onochi*, I, belonged, was in the *aseres hadibros*. As far as he himself was concerned, no such concept existed.

He opened a *vaad* on *tefillah* with the question, "Why is it that we say *Modeh ani* and not *Ani modeh*? Because first, we offer thanks to the Creator and only then do we relate to the party that was created."

Someone who is totally involved in thanking his Creator, therefore, does not relate to himself at all. Is it any wonder that Reb Shimshon had no time for himself?

RADIATING FRIENDSHIP TO ALL

No wonder, either, that the scope of Reb Shimshon's *chesed* was so broad and its nature so multifaceted. One of its beneficiaries was *Yeshivas Rashi* in Yerushalayim, headed by HaRav C. Miletzky. Reb Shimshon adopted the *yeshiva* as his own. He befriended the *bochurim* and got them to change and to grow. The *shmuessen* which he delivered there were unusual. Everybody sat together around a table and Reb Shimshon began to deliver pearls of wisdom. It was more like a *vaad*, or a council of friends. The warmth and friendliness that he radiated was what made the difference.

There was a time when Reb Shimshon was staying in Yerushalayim. A bochur related that every time that he was assailed by feelings of depression, he would go and watch Reb Shimshon davening. That alone gave him the necessary encouragement.

Reb Shimshon would deliver his *shmuessen* in Yeshivas Rashi in the evenings, after having spoken six or seven times in the course of the day. He would arrive at the *yeshiva* exhausted and drained, yet the moment the *shmuess* began, his eyes would gleam and he was full of energy. "He didn't deliver *shmuessen* in our *yeshiva*; he came and demonstrated what experiencing *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* means!" is one of the comments heard in *Yeshivas Rashi*.

In his enthusiasm, *Reb Shimshon* would look and smile, as if to say, "You don't understand me; you don't know what you are missing . . ." He loved them and they loved him in return.

Reb Avrohom Deutsch relates: "After the accident, a Jew from Gibraltar called me up and cried and cried. I told him, 'Many Jews are distressed.' He dismissed this: 'You loved him but to me he was a father. My father.' Reb Shimshon had travelled to Gibraltar for four days especially to learn with him.

"The real point is that one hears things like this from many dozens of people, to all of whom Reb Shimshon was 'the closest.' "

An *avreich* from Yerushalayim says, "When my father passed away, he was the only one who comforted me. Now that he has passed away, there is no one who can comfort me."

TO EVERY SUPPLICANT

When considering the broad sweep of Reb Shimshon's *tzedokoh*, there are literally thousands of stories that can be told that simply do not seem to belong to our world and frame of reference. Vast sums passed through his hands, yet he was still able to raise his fingers heavenward and say, "*Ribono Shel Olom*, You know that I have labored over Your Torah and have not benefited personally in the slightest!"

His son, Reb Yaakov Moshe, says, "We knew that one mustn't put money into Father's hands. It would simply leave them. People were amazed. They said to themselves: 'Rav Pincus travels all over the world. He must be a tycoon, who rakes in millions.' We had to send people to explain to them that Rav Pincus himself was a pauper!"

Reb Avrohom Deutsch relates: "I approached one of the people who used to invite him to

speaking at seminars. I asked him, 'Why don't you pay him anything?'

"He replied, 'I pay him, but he doesn't take it. I give him a check and he tears it up. What shall I do with him? I told him, "Let me at least pay you for your travelling expenses." He replied, "What, for the gasoline? It's embarrassing to take for that."

When recently a large sum of money was offered to him, a sum to which he was rightfully entitled, he at first refused it. In the end he gave in and said, "Perhaps for Miriam's wedding . . ." But Hashem took her.

A WOMAN'S MERIT

"How do women merit [a portion in *Olom Haboh*]? They wait for their husbands to come from the *beis hamedrash* . . ." (*Brochos* 17). Nobody in our generation fulfilled this to a greater extent than Rebbetzin Pincus *a'h*.

Her husband's *beis hamedrash* was as vast as the world and was bound by neither time nor space. She valiantly shouldered the full burden of running their home. "We do not share much time together in this world," Reb Shimshon would say to her, "but in the next, we'll be together a lot."

She also fulfilled the second thing that the *gemora* mentions: "and they take their sons to the *beis haknesses* [to learn]." Reb Shimshon never complained about anything, except for one thing, "I ache from longing for my children." His comfort was that the children were in his *rebbetzin's* pure and faithful hands. He would repeatedly mention his merit in being able to rely upon her completely in everything relating to the children's upbringing and education. "She knows about each child, where they are every minute." He would say that it was her pure hearted prayers "that maintain every child. Everything that we have is due to *Imma's tefillos!*" There was not one *Shemoneh esrei* that she did not weep copiously. She trained the children to say *Tehillim* in their spare time, in a special chant.

Her self-effacement before her husband was well known. Her daughters related that they only knew her as a strict headmistress in school; at home, she always deferred to her husband. Once, she called somebody up to request that they undertake a particular errand. She had to use considerable powers of persuasion to get the person's agreement. When Reb Shimshon came home, he took a different view. She immediately ran to the

phone and called the person back, using all her powers of persuasion to convince them that earlier on, she had been mistaken.

A CLOSE FRIEND FOR YEARS

Rav Avrohom Deutsch, Reb Shimshon's very close friend and right hand man, is a member of the Ofakim town council.

"When my wife fell ill," Rav Deutsch begins, "Reb Shimshon travelled abroad with her several times for operations; he spoke English. I remained at home to look after the children. Think about it for a moment: a rov leaves everything and travels abroad for extended periods. At first, I tried to say no to the idea but he told me, "I'm not asking you what to do anyway!" He went to Santiago, near the Mexican border, for seven weeks, to some place off the beaten track. The whole time, he sat by himself in a room and learned. My sister was with my wife and he was their chauffeur and attendant for two months! He also purchased the food. Show me one other Jew in the world who would do such a thing.

"Professor Schreiber of Bar Ilan University called me up and told me that he was in Santiago at the time and that he was impressed with the Deutsch family's good driver and he used him himself. Now he called me in tears: 'What did I do? Who was I using?'

"Before one of the operations, the doctor recommended that she go out to get some fresh air. He took them to a park and arranged to return for them five hours later. After half an hour, my sister found him writing *chidushei Torah* under a tree. When the five hours, plus a few minutes, had passed, he arrived panting and apologized for the delay.

"One of the operations took place in Manhattan. That morning, he drove to *Shomrei Shabbos* in Boro Park for *tefillah*. My sister told me that she received a call from a friend who wanted to know what tragedy had taken place in the Pincus family? This friend's brother-in-law had gone that morning to ask Reb Shimshon to speak in Flatbush and had seen him taking forty-five minutes over the *Amidah*, and shedding rivers of tears. She was convinced that something terrible must have happened. My sister told her that my wife had undergone an operation that day and that he'd simply gone to daven. She didn't believe her. 'It can't be. He was crying like a baby.' That was Reb Shimshon.

"Nobody realized the levels he attained. When a youngster came to his house, he would

offer him snack foods as though they were the same age. 'Want some Bissli? Some cola?' with such a good heart. His broadness, his openness of spirit in relation to others, were extraordinary. Would you like to see what he gave me?" asks Reb Avrohom, as he gets up and goes over to a glass case. "Look at these beautiful silver candlesticks. He gave to others as though he was a rich man, or a noble; but for himself, nothing. Take a look at his rundown home, you'll be amazed.

"He gave me his apartment and he went to live in the other entrance." Reb Avrohom gives me a guided tour and points out to me, "Here is the second apartment. One day he told me that my house was going to be extended over there and that he would move. I complained and told him that here, we were close to one another, we lived together — we were closer than brothers — but if you move, I won't see you. This was how the problem was solved," says Reb Avrohom, pointing at a door. "Can you see this door? It joins the two apartments. Reb Shimshon said, 'If you or I need anything, we'll just give a knock and come in.' "

The short time that had elapsed since Reb Shimshon's *petiroh* and Reb Avrohom's emotion, led me to wonder how Reb Avrohom was managing to keep a grip on himself. "Are you made of steel?" I asked him.

"It's *siyata deShmaya*. They called me up on that terrible night at two-thirty a.m. to check whether there had been any more children in the car. The police were concerned. From that moment, until the following night, I was on the go. I felt superhuman strength, unparalleled *siyata deShmaya*, that enabled me to cope with something like that."

EACH ONE AN INDIVIDUAL

Reb Shimshon was once advising an *avreich* about public speaking. He told him, "Usually, speakers look at the size of the gathering and they therefore speak 'big,' and are not focused, with the result that the audience remains unmoved and apathetic. I spoke at a function where there were fifty thousand people. My eyes locked onto one big, broad *bochur* and I delivered my entire speech to him. And every one of the fifty thousand felt that I was speaking to him personally."

Anyone who has an inkling of Reb Shimshon's great heart, knows that he really was speaking to each one of the fifty thousand people in the audience!

HELPING OTHERS BEAR THEIR BURDENS

An *avreich*, who had not yet had children, approached Reb Shimshon on *Purim* night and asked him to *daven* for him and his wife. Reb Shimshon chastised him, “Do you think that there’s a single *tefillah* when I don’t mention your name and your wife’s name?”

A year later, on *Purim* night, Reb Shimshon called the *avreich* and asked him whether they had not yet received an answer to their prayers. The *avreich* said that, no, they had not. Reb Shimshon asked him again and the answer was once more in the negative.

After a while, Reb Shimshon called the *avreich* and became annoyed with him. “Haven’t you been answered yet? If I don’t have to rip the heavens open — and it’s extremely difficult — then don’t do it to me!”

The *avreich* broke down and told Reb Shimshon that because they were worried about *ayin hora*, he and his wife had decided not to tell a living soul that she was expecting. “Reb Shimshon felt that the prayer had been answered,” commented the *avreich*.

A MATZO SANDWICH OF CHOMETZ

Reb Shimshon’s originality was well known. He could find ways to reach people where others could not. Once, while ‘selling’ the *aliyos* on *Purim*, the *gabbai* announced, “Fifty shekels for opening the *Oron hakodesh*.” Reb Shimshon leaped to the *bimah* and said, “*Pesichoh*, for saying *asher yotzar* word by word for one month.” When someone undertook to do this for three years, Reb Shimshon awarded him the *mitzvoh*.

A woman once consulted him about a pill that was made from *chometz* that she had to take on *Pesach*. Reb Shimshon was concerned that she might not take the medication even though she had to and he wanted to make it clear to her that it was permitted. “What’s the problem?” he said, “Put *matzoh* all around the pill and then it’s absolutely okay.” The woman did as he said, and was reassured.

Once, the *Toldos Aharon* institutions held a fund raising drive in Ofakim. In a piercing voice Reb Shimshon called, “I know that you have no connection to *Toldos Aharon*. But don’t give to *Toldos Aharon*, give to the *Ribono Shel Olam*! Where is a Jew’s sense of self-sacrifice?”

The *rebbe* of *Toldos Aharon* said that the collection was an unbelievable success. Tens of thousands of dollars were collected!

When a collection was organized for a communal worker who had become enmeshed in debt and people were not overly enthusiastic about giving money to pay debts, Reb Shimshon got up and said, "It's really the other way around! When someone asks for money so that he can do worthy things with it, people give, although it's not certain that his endeavors will succeed. Here, we're dealing with a case where we know that what he did was a success. Can we give any less?" The collection was successful.

During an election campaign, Reb Shimshon called the mayor whom he opposed and told him: "Elections are war and one takes out all one's ammunition. I propose to you that you fight us to the end, but that you don't fight against *Hakodosh Boruch Hu*."

Towards the end of the campaign, the mayor was drawn to anti-religious areas. One of the communal workers relates, "I approached him after the victory and asked him, 'Is the rav pleased?'

"He replied. 'You see that in the end he did come out against *Hakodosh Boruch Hu*. Perhaps none of it was worthwhile.' Then he added, 'Let him think whatever he thinks about religion inside, but to come out with it . . . We learn in *maseches Negoim*, "If a house is dark, one doesn't make windows . . ."

EVERY MOVEMENT ACCORDING TO SHULCHAN ORUCH

Reb Shimshon's oldest son, Rav Yisroel Yaakov, who now serves as rav of the chareidi community in Ofakim, says, "The thread that ran constantly through Father's life was, *Shivisi Hashem lenegdi tomid*, I have set Hashem before me always. Throughout the twenty-four hours of the day, he deliberated what Heaven wanted. If it was to be firm, then he was firm; if it was to show kindness, he showed kindness. When he had to yell at someone, he yelled. Everything he did, was in accordance with Hashem's will . . . Every movement was in accordance with *Shulchan Oruch*. Every utterance, with no exaggeration.

"On *Chanukah*, he would walk round the yards of the houses to check whether the *chanukiyos* were within a tefach of the entrances. He had something to point out at almost

every house.

“Abba held that one could not give chewing gum a *hechsher* because of the gelatin it contains. There was a store in Tifrach that started selling gum. Abba went in and bought up the whole stock. This happened many times, until the storekeeper gave in and stopped bringing gum.

“It is well known that he was active and that he alerted people to the problems of *shatnez*. I remember that he would not accept payment from people. He would tell people to pay half a shekel and to have the intention of fulfilling the *mitzvoh* of paying a worker on the same day. And I know that his whole involvement with *shatnez* was as atonement for a settee that had been in the house in which *shatnez* was found.

“He always taught us that hitting was forbidden by Torah law. He would take out the *Rambam* and read it out to us. When we hit each other, he would make us copy out the *Rambam’s* words. I remember that we used to protest that the blows we gave were not “in a manner that shames” as the *Rambam* says.

“It can be said about him, ‘The very place of his greatness, is the place of his self effacement.’ With all his greatness, he knew how to cloak it all in simplicity.”

{*Rephoel Gartner-Dei’ah veDibur*}

WHY?

There was once a terrible boating accident and a young man was killed. His non-observant mother, devastated, found herself in *shul* for the first time in her life and confronted Rav Pincus with the age-old question: Why? “Why did Hashem do this to me?!”

Rav Pincus did not bat an eyelid and responded on the spot, “For eighteen years you had and loved this young child. In all of that time, did you ever just once thank Hashem for that gift?” Knowing that the answer was no, he continued, “If you had done so perhaps he wouldn’t have been taken from you...My purpose is not to cause you more pain,” explained Rav Pincus. “My purpose is to make you realize that you still have other children and a good life left. You have much to be thankful for – thank Hashem for what you have and appreciate it. Start asking yourself – why, why did Hashem bless me with all

these gifts? – and thank Him while you have them and it's not too late.” (Haggoda Tiferes Shimshon p. 353)

SPARKS OF FIRE GLOWING EMBERS FROM THE LIFE OF HARAV SHIMSHON PINCUS ZTL

By Rephoel Gartner

There was a fire burning perpetually within the heart of HaRav Shimshon Pincus *zt'l*. It was a restless fire, constantly moving and flickering in an array of hues; now bursting into huge upward reaching leaps; now sending out showers of sparks to ignite similar fires within other hearts. What fed this fire? It was no fuel that originates in this world. It was fed from within, by a soul whose sustenance flowed along a direct conduit from Heaven. This spiritual fuel flowed and flowed, freely, generously and bountifully, until the night of the twelfth of *Nisan* this year, when the conduit and the fire suddenly merged into one, becoming a tower of flame joining Heaven and earth, that carried the souls of HaRav Pincus, his *Rebbetzin*, and their daughter *a'h*, to their yearned for destination.

The devastating news stunned the members of HaRav Pincus' *kehilloh* in Ofakim, the other Torah communities of the Negev, the large chareidi centers, and Jews in other locations in Eretz Yisroel and across the world where he had travelled to speak and lecture. Scant days after the tragedy *Pesach* began, and the feelings of grief that had scarcely begun to make themselves felt, had to be laid aside in deference to the joy of the *regel*.

In the weeks that followed, gatherings were held up and down the country, to eulogize a *gaon* and *tzaddik* who had literally sacrificed every minute of his time and every ounce of his strength towards *kiddush sheim Shomayim*.

This account has been compiled from the memories of family members and friends. It is a kaleidoscopic picture, a shifting succession of times and places, but the variety merely serves to heighten the realization that at the core of everything was the fervent desire to emulate Hashem and to reveal His greatness to people.

A Communal Sacrifice

From an Address Delivered by a Member of the Family

. . . It was an unblemished sacrifice, that went up in a tempest to Heaven as an atonement for *Klal Yisroel*. It's obvious that this is a signal to *Klal Yisroel* -- such an accident, the like of which has not taken place for tens of years. The clearest proof is that they were people who belonged to the entire community. The whole concept of self simply did not exist for them. They only gave to others, without taking anything. They gave and gave, without any personal agenda.

All his life, *Abba ztvk'l*, was on the move all over the world, from one place to another. We asked him, "*Abba*, how do you have the strength?" and he didn't even understand what the question was. One does what needs to be done!

Lately, he was in South Africa as well. One day, a Jew who had moved from South Africa to Gibraltar called him up, and from what he said, it sounded as though he needed him. Immediately he said, "I'm coming to you," and he reserved a seat on a plane. It's not a direct journey. One has to fly to Spain and then take another plane to Gibraltar, and he did it all for one faraway Yid . . . People said that he used to deliver thirty talks in fourteen days. He spread the *devar Hashem* everywhere in the world.

Whenever he drove his car he looked around to see if there was anyone to whom he could give a ride. No matter where they were going, it was "on his way." My sister related that just this *erev Pesach*, we travelled to the shopping center in Ofakim and he met an *avreich* and told him, "When you finish, call me -- I'm here anyway -- and I'll take you home." In the meantime, the family finished the shopping and *Abba* had sat down to start learning with the boys, when the mobile phone suddenly rang: "*HaRav*, I've finished my shopping." Without a word, *Abba* left the house and went to bring this *Yid* home.

Not long ago, he was driving together with an *avreich* from the community and as they were travelling, the *avreich* asked, "Perhaps our *rebbe* will say something, a *devar Torah* maybe."

Abba said, "I think that one Jew who doesn't give to another as freely as he would to his own son, is lacking something in his Jewishness."

This *avreich* knew that whenever *HaRav Pincus* said something, his own conduct was already on that level. He couldn't understand it. How can one possibly fulfill such a thing?

He went to one of the Rav's close neighbors and requested an explanation. How could the Rav say that? Does he actually care about every Jew as much as he cares about his own son? If he said it, he must do it!

The neighbor replied, "Rav Pincus was already conducting himself like this fifteen years ago. There was a case then involving an *avreich* whom Rav Pincus didn't even know very well. From a conversation, he realized that the *avreich* was in a problematic situation, to extricate himself from which he needed two thousand-four hundred dollars. The Rav immediately wrote out a check for that amount and gave it to him."

This neighbor, who found out about the incident afterwards, did not understand it. He knew that Rav Pincus' own financial situation at the time did not allow him to make such a donation. He didn't hold back and asked Rav Pincus to explain. The Rav took issue with him and retorted, "Wouldn't you do as much for your own son? A Jew who doesn't give to another Jew and to his son to exactly the same degree, is lacking something in his Jewishness."

Abba's connection to *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* was something tangible and straightforward. *Abba* would speak about making one hundred *brochos* each day. A hundred *brochos* extend over the entire day -- there is a constant connection with *Hakodosh Boruch Hu*. The way he used to make a *brochah* . . . we would enjoy watching how he cleaved to Hashem as he made it. He would laugh and ask, "Are you watching to see whether I do what I say in my talks?"

The stories are endless. All through *Chol Hamoed*, people didn't stop coming in. Each one knew him from somewhere else and had a different story to tell. We feel as though we have lost not only our own personal parents but parents of *Klal Yisroel*.

Imma z'l, shared this characteristic too. She never thought about herself. Every *erev Shabbos*, she would prepare fish, not only for her own family but also for her father *zt'l*, who lived in Bnei Brak. In the early years, there was no direct transportation there and she would stand by the road looking for people to take the fish along with them. Every week was a miracle of its own.

The fish production expanded to include the family of a neighbor, for whom *Imma* thought

preparing her own was hard because of her family, and then to another woman and another. And then she would always get on the phone: "I have too much. Perhaps you'd like some?" We never heard a word from her about the hardship.

Imma's prayers were uttered word by word, just as one counts money. When she was in the middle of *bircas hamozon* nothing else interested her. Let the cab wait. Let the minivan wait -- right now, she is *bentching!*

She would rise every morning at six and *daven* word by word, crying. Our neighbor though at first that it was an *avreich* who'd returned from *vosikin* and was praying aloud. Later she realized that it was *Imma* who *davened* every day early.

Abba's opinion was the one that was followed at home. Only when *Imma* started working as the principal for the girls did we discover that she also had opinions. In school she was the one who said what to do but never at home. "Go to *Abba*." Her self effacement was absolute.

Miriam z'l, too, lived her entire life for others. When we came home for *Shabbosos* and *Yomim Tovim*, she would gather all her nieces and nephews and send their parents off to have a nap. When would she sleep? That didn't concern her. She volunteered regularly for *Yad Eliezer*. She made sure that all the volunteers would arrive. We never once heard from her the name of a single needy family. When they arrived at the families' homes she would hide, so that they wouldn't be embarrassed to take if they saw her.

They devoted their entire lives to serving Hashem.

Imma never pressured *Abba* to stay and not to travel, not to leave her alone. He would always console her, "Here in *Olom Hazeih*, there's no time. In *Olom Haboh*, we'll be together a lot." And, *Imma* didn't object to a single moment.

Somebody said that, were it to be announced that a calamity was hovering over *Klal Yisroel*, and that a communal sacrifice was needed to stave it off, who would be prepared to be that sacrifice? Rav Shimshon Pincus would of course jump to be first.

There is no cause for concern for the welfare of the deceased. It is very good for them

where they are. But their task in this world is still incomplete. Their mission was to increase spirituality in the world. Whoever continues with this mission is assured that the souls of the departed will assist him. We must prove to *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* that we have understood -- that the sacrifice was not for nothing!

We sat on the Friday before *Pesach* which was the only day we had for sitting *shivoh* for *Abba*, *Imma* and *Miriam*. We couldn't come to terms with the enormity of the tragedy. Suddenly, *Miriam's* friends came in and my sister burst out crying and gave a fearsome shout: "Do something that will make *Moshiach* come today!"

That cry echoes in my ears. Everyone should genuinely accept something upon themselves, so that another week doesn't just go by in which we continue life as normal. It can't be harder than this. May there be no more reasons for such terrible blows. May this sacrifice not have been in vain! "Do something that will make *Moshiach* come today!"
<http://www.chareidi.org/archives5761/behaaloscha/BHLfeatures2.htm>

Rav Yosef Karo Beis Yosef (Nissan 13)

THE HOLY MAGGID

Rav Yosef Karo had an angelic *Maggid*, who came and spoke to him, and taught him many deep, esoteric mysteries. These teachings are gathered in the *sefer Maggid Meishorim*. On *Shavuot* night, as he studied with Rav Shlomo Alkabetz, the *mechaber of Lecha Dodi*, the *Maggid* revealed itself and spoke through Rav Yosef Karo, saying that he was the angel of the *Mishna*, the Oral Law which Rav Yosef studied by heart.

Once, when the *Bais Yosef* sat and wrote his magnum opus on the *Tur*, the same angelic *Maggid* revealed to him previously in Saloniki reappeared to him again in Tzefas and Biriya, telling him that the souls of the *Rambam* and *Ba'al HaTurim* rejoiced in how his commentary elucidated their opinions and upheld their arguments and *piskei halocha*.

The *Maggid* praised the *Bais Yosef's* halachic rulings as pure and faultless, promising him that he would merit spreading them across the entire Jewish world. "The Torah rejoices as on the day it was given on Har Sinai and I shall place you above my nation and exult and uplift you and your *Yeshiva* and its stature. You shall merit to see Eliyohu HaNovi face to

face and to one day see your descendants in the *Sanhedrin* in the *Lishkas HaGozis*, teaching the laws of *kemitza*, because each *Yeshiva* and study hall here below has its corresponding counterpart in the Heavens above - and on high is where they are studying the *Mesivta* of *Atik Yomin* to which your *Yeshiva* corresponds.”

Indeed it is so, for no other author has even merited that his work on *Shulchon Aruch* should be considered as the basis of the code of Jewish law universally like the *Shulchon Aruch*, and no other author merited the appellation *Maran*, “our master”, the *Mechaber*, “the author”. (*Moron*, p. 177).

Rav Moshe Alshich Alshich Hakodosh (Nissan 13)

A SOUL FOR PESHAT AND NOT SOD

Rav Moshe Alshich greatly wished to study the secrets of Kabbola, especially since word of the *Arizal's* teachings began to spread. He was distressed that others had been chosen while he was neglected and tearfully he came begging before the *Arizal*, kissed the hem of his clothing. He fell before his feet, kissing them, and wept, “Master, what sin have I committed? Of what crime am I guilty that you do not draw me close as a *talmid* like Rav Chaim Vital and Rav Yitzchok Falcon?”

The *Arizal* answered him that his soul had not come down into this world to study Kabbola and the secrets of Torah; rather, he was to master and disseminate the simpler, revealed form of Torah called *peshat*, because in a previous *gilgul* (incarnation) his soul had already mastered Kabbola, for he was a spark of the soul of *Chutzpis the Meturgemon* (translator).

“If you think I am just making excuses to put you off,” said the *Arizal*, “I shall give you a sign that will prove my words true: tomorrow, as I pass by on the road with my *talmidim* to go and greet Shabbos and accept the Shabbos day - if you see us passing by, it is a sign that I have been putting you off with excuses. If, however, you fail to see us pass you by on the road, it is a sign that I am telling you the truth.”

And so it was that Rav Moshe Alshich prepared himself, purchased provisions for Shabbos, dressed in Shabbos clothes and sat all ready and prepared by midday at the

roadside, waiting eagerly for the *Arizal* and his *talmidim* to pass by. Finally, after waiting some time, a great, overwhelming tiredness passed over Rav Moshe and he fell asleep. He slumbered on as the *Arizal* passed by with his *talmidim* and did not wake and did not see them. After they had passed him, the *Arizal* sent back some *talmidim* to wake him so that he would not be left at the roadside alone and in danger. When he awoke, he was startled, confused and upset at having somehow missed the *Arizal* when he had passed right by!

“Didn’t I tell you,” admonished the *Arizal*, “that your soul has not come to the world this time to study Kabbola? Do not burden yourself with this matter any longer! Instead work on your *seforim* to teach *peshat* and they will become famous worldwide and generations afterward will study them.” From then on the *Alshich* did not seek to study Kabbola with the *Arizal* any more. (*Shivchei HoArizal*)

Similarly, the *Chida* writes in *Shem HaGedolim* #101 that when the *Arizal* refused to teach the *Alshich* Kabbola the *Alshich* complained and the *Arizal* responded that Rav Moshe Alshich’s soul in its present gilgul came to perfect the aspect of derush and not sod - sermons and not secrets.

A TRUE CHEAT AND SWINDLER AGREES TO THE ALSHICH’S DEROSHA

The *Minchas Elozor* of Munkacsz told the following story:

The *Arizal* testified that he witnessed the entire heavenly host - the *pamalya shel maala* - all go together to hear the *deroshos* of Rav Moshe Alshich and therefore he also went to hear his holy words when he sat and sermonized in public.

One time, the *Arizal* was present when Rav Moshe Alshich was giving a *derosha* about Lovon HaArami and how he swindled, tricked and hoodwinked Yaakov. The *pasuk* says he cheated *Yaakov aseres monim* (*Bereishis* 31:8 & 31:41) and this, explained the *Alshich*, meant ten times ten, or a hundred times over! He then proceeded to explain and detail each of the hundred ways in which Lovon cheated Yaakov this way and that. The audience sat mesmerized and transfixed, enjoying the *derosha* and how the *Alshich* enumerated again and again the tricks that Lovon had employed against Yaakov one hundred different ways. During this *derosha*, the *Arizal* laughed and left.

Afterward, they asked the *Arizal* why he had laughed. The *Arizal* explained that he

actually saw Lovon HoArami standing beside the *Alshich* as he spoke and gave his *derosha*.

“With each explanation of the hundred deceptions, Lovon nodded his head, agreeing with the *Alshich* saying, ‘Yes, that’s it...that’s true...that’s exactly how I did it and tricked Yaakov and cheated him that time. Yes, and that’s the other way I cheated him again...uh huh...’ That’s what made me laugh,” explained the *Arizal*. (*Maso’os Yerushalayim* Day 9 Footnote 17 p. 190)

Rav Menachem Mendel Schneerson Tzemach Tzedek (Nissan 13)

A HOLY LOAN

The Rebbe Rayatz used to relate as follows:

Following Rav Schneur Zalman’s passing, the young Rav Menachem Mendel continued to enjoy the guidance of his grandfather and mentor, who would appear to him in his dreams and in visions during the day to answer the questions that arose in the course of his studies, both in the “revealed” part of Torah - the Talmud and Jewish law - and in the esoteric teachings of Kabbola and Chassidus.

But then the visits suddenly ceased. Rav Menachem Mendel had accumulated a number of questions that he was unable to resolve to his satisfaction, and was growing quite eager to see his grandfather. But the *Rebbe* did not appear to him. This caused Rav Menachem Mendel great pain.

Early one morning, Rav Menachem Mendel was making his way to the *shul* of his uncle and father-in-law, Rav Dovber of Lubavitch (who had succeeded Rav Schneur Zalman as the leader of Chabad Chassidus). Rav Menachem Mendel’s path took him through the marketplace of Lubavitch, which was just coming to life at that early hour. There he was approached by Rav Mordechai Eliyohu, a simple but G-d-fearing man who earned a meager livelihood by buying and selling in the marketplace.

“Please, Rav Menachem Mendel,” Rav Mordechai Eliyohu was saying, “can you loan me five rubles until this evening or tomorrow morning? Today is a market day; if I had a few

rubles in hand, I could hope to earn something, with Hashem's help."

"Of course, Rav Mordechai Eliyohu," replied Rav Menachem Mendel. "Come to my home after the morning *tefillos*, and I'll give you the money."

Rav Menachem Mendel arrived at the *shul* and began to prepare for his *tefillos*. His *tallis* was already folded over his shoulder and he was examining its *tzitzis* prior to putting it on, when the thought occurred to him: "Why did I tell Rav Mordechai Eliyohu that I'd give him the money after I've finished my *tefillos*? Today is market day; surely every moment is precious to him. I should have given him the money immediately."

Removing the *tallis* from his shoulder, he rushed home, got the money, and went to look for Rav Mordechai Eliyohu. By this time, the marketplace was already teeming with people, animals and merchandise; wagons were parked everywhere and stalls were being set up. After a lengthy search, Rav Menachem Mendel located Rav Mordechai Eliyohu, gave him the loan, and returned to the *shul*.

And when Rav Menachem Mendel had put on his *tallis* and wrapped his *tefillin* around his arm and head, he saw his grandfather standing before him, his face radiant with joy.

Thirty years later, Rav Menachem Mendel related the events of that morning to his youngest child, Rav Shmuel of Lubavitch. "When one helps a fellow earn seventy kopeks on the sale of a calf," said Rav Menachem Mendel, "the gates of the heavenly chambers are opened before him."

Rav Shmuel subsequently told this story to his son, Rav Sholom Dovber of Lubavitch. "Do we even know," he mused, "where to find the 'gates to the heavenly chambers' that are opened to us every time we do an act of charity? But no matter. The main thing is that we extend ourselves with a complete heart and true feeling. What greater joy can there be than the joy of being privileged to help a fellow man?"

THE HOLY BA'AL SHEM TOV

They say that the *Tzemach Tzedek* could speak about the holy *Ba'al Shem Tov* no more than about five seconds before he was so overcome that he would burst out in a torrent of tears and emotion due to the *Tzaddik's* holiness!

TWO MIRACLES WITH ONE UTTERANCE

There once came before the *Tzemach Tzedek* an *aguna* (a woman whose husband has vanished). She pleaded with the *Tzaddik* to find her missing husband and release her from her bondage, and she handed a *kvittel* petitioning for her son who was unfortunately dumb. The *Tzaddik* turned to the lad and said to him, "Tell your mother that *Tatty* will be here soon," and miraculously, so it was!

(*Otzar Yisrael*).

WHERE IS ZEIDY

When the *Tzemach Tzedek* was a young child, his grandfather, Rav Shneur Zalman, the *Alter Rebbe* of Chabad, once held the young lad in his arms and the child stroked his grandfather's beard, saying, "*Zeidy! Zeidy!*"

"No," said the *Alter Rebbe*, "that's just *Zeidy's* beard. Where is *Zeidy*?"

The child pointed to his grandfather's head, and said, "*At du iz Zeidy!* - Here is Grandfather!"

"No, that is just *Zeidy's* head - but where is *Zeidy*?"

The child pointed to various places but each time received the same answer. Eventually, he jumped off his grandfather's lap and went to play. He then pretended he hurt himself and cried out, "*Zeidy, Zeidy!*"

"What is it?" came the *Alter Rebbe*, all concerned.

The *Tzemach Tzedek* smiled and pointed to him, "*At dos iz der Zeidy!* - Now this is the *Zeidy* for sure."

Rav Rafoel Nachman Kahn concluded this story and added, "When someone answers to his name being called, that is his essence - that is who he is." (*Shemuos Vesippurim* Vol. 1 p. 53)

HASHGOCHA PROTIS

Once, when the *Tzemach Tzedek* was in Petersburg for some matter, a Jew, a stranger, did him a favor. Some time later this Jew came before the *Rebbe*, the *Tzemach Tzedek*, and explained that it was he who had done him the favor.

“And what favor can I do for you in return?” asked the *Rebbe*.

“Please explain *hashgocha protis* to me.”

And so the *Tzemach Tzedek* explained in detail the whole concept, yet the Jew still did not understand.

“Come, I will show you.” The *Tzemach Tzedek* took him and they approached the window together. “See that village and the wagon full of bales of hay in the distance, driven by a non-Jewish wagon driver? Now see behind them there is a Jew holding a small toothpick, using the fallen hay to pick his teeth? This Jew had something stuck in his teeth and he couldn’t *daven*. He is one of the *lamed-vov Tzaddikim*. In *shomayim* they await his *davening* but he couldn’t *daven* because of his teeth. Now that village, the wagon driver, his wagon and the hay were all created so this *Tzaddik* can pick his teeth and *daven*. That is *hashgocha protis*.

“Now I understand,” concluded the Jew. (*Shemuos Vesippurim* Vol. 1 p.54-55)

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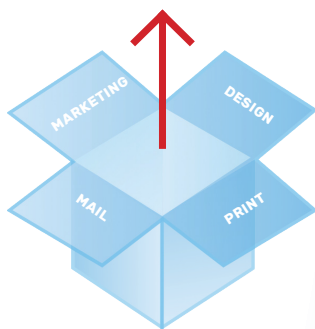
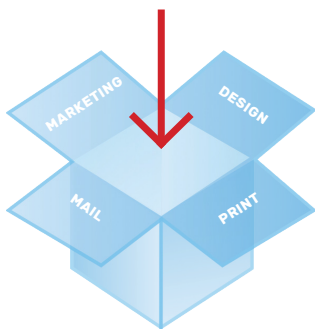


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