

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 Tetzaveh & Purim & Parshas Zachor

CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA

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Eight Holy Garments, Four Gold And Four White, For Two Divine Names

Rav Chaim Ibn Attar, the Ohr HaChaim

"You shall fashion the holy garments for your brother *Aharon* for *kovod* (honor) and *tiferes* (beauty)" (28:2).

Eight Holy Garments, Four Gold and Four White, for Two Divine Names

The *Ohr HaChaim* asks why Hashem commanded Moshe to make eight garments: four white and four gold. The answer the *pasuk* gives us is that these garments were made for *kovod* and *tiferes* - honor and beauty.

The *Ohr HaChaim* explains based on the *Zohar* (Tikkunim) that the eight garments allude to the two divine Names of Hashem each spelled with four letters, *YHV"H* and *ADN"Y*. The four white garments hint at the four letters of *YHV"H* and the four gold garments at *ADN"Y*. The name of Hashem (*YHV"H*) is associated with *tiferes* and the name *ADN"Y* is associated with *kovod*.

This is why the *pasuk* tells us that Moshe is told to fashion the garments for *kovod* and *tiferes*; *kovod* refers to the golden garments and *tiferes* to the white ones.

Explains the *Ohr HaChaim*, Hashem commanded us to fashion these eight garments in order to atone for sins and blemishes that our human failings cause on high. Why then, asks the *Ohr HaChaim*, did Hashem only command Aharon and not Moshe to wear these garments? *Chazal* say (Arachin 16a) that the eight garments atone for eight types of sins that *Bnei Yisrael* transgressed. The *Kohen*, whose job is to serve together with his sons and atone for all of *Klal Yisrael*, is therefore commanded to wear these garments, whereas Moshe, who only served once during the seven-day inaugural period called *Yemei HaMiluim*, did so in order to atone solely for Aharon and his sons, to prepare them to serve before Hashem. Because he was not atoning for all of *Klal Yisrael*, Moshe did not need these garments.

Praises For The Ohr HaChaim Hakadosh

Studying Ohr HaChaim Cleanses the Mind

A group of elite *talmidim* of the *Karlin-Pinsker Rebbe* once came together before Rav Moshe Mordechai of Lelov. Among the things they discussed with the *Tzaddik*, they related to the *Rebbe* that they had a *leil shishi* (Thursday night)

session of study where they learned the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* together. The *Lelover* highly praised this practice and told them that he considered it an important thing. Afterward, they asked the *Lelover* for a *berocha* that they should merit engaging in Torah study with *hasmoda* (diligence). To this request the *Tzaddik* responded by saying, “*Az mi’lernt Ohr HaChaim, raynikt dos dem mo’ach un mi’mayleh ken men lernen di heilige Torah* - If we study *Ohr HaChaim*, this cleanses the mind and then you can easily study the holy Torah!” (Perach Mateh Aharon, Tammuz tov-shin-samech-bais)

Three-Day Fast

The *Chida* writes, “I saw the holy *Chassid Rav Chaim ben Attar* fast for three days straight, day and night before *Purim*. This is the *Taanis Hafsokas Gimmel Yomim* mentioned in the writings of the *Arizal*, which he says counts as if it is a forty-day fast. (Kikar La’Aden, p. 124b)

It’s All in the Merit of the Ohr HaChaim

The *Tepliker Gaon*, Rav Shimshon Aharon Polanski, had a special pull toward the *Ohr HaChaim*. He knew the entire *sefer* by heart and on *leil shishi* (Thursday nights) he taught a shiur in *Chumash* with the *Ohr HaChaim*, in the *Bais Yaakov shul* in the Bais Yisrael neighborhood in Yerushalayim for many years. He would say over the *Ohr HaChaim* from memory while the *tzibur* followed along in the actual *sefer*! Whenever he was asked to pray on behalf of a sick person he would go up to Har HaZeisim. There he would prostrate himself in prayer and pour out his heart at the *tziun* of the holy *Ohr HaChaim*. When afterward they would come and report that there had been some salvation or that the patient’s condition had improved, he would always reply, “See how great is his power and how mighty his ability! It’s all in the *zechus* of the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh*!” (Marbitzei Torah M’eOlam HaChassidus, Volume 7, p. 94-95)

The Secret Of Reading Parshas Zachor - To Remember Amalek To Cancel Their Power Of Forgetfulness

Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzatto (Ramchal), Rav Moshe Dovid Walli

“You shall remember what Amalek did to you [on the way, when you went out of Egypt, how he happened upon you on the way and cut off all the stragglers at your rear,] when you were faint and weary, and he did not fear G-d.” (*Devarim* 25:17-18)

The *Ramchal* teaches us that Amalek represents the *klippah* that causes us to forget Hashem *chas ve'shalom*. Correspondingly, Hashem commanded us to remember Amalek, and to remember what they did to us, this conquers them and prevents them for causing us to forget, therefore we are commanded *Zachor* - Remember!

In order to rectify this, we are commanded to read *Parshas Zachor* annually from the Torah as *Chazal* say - Remember vocally with your mouth. This *tikkun* correspondingly defeats the *klippah* of Amalek because it directly repairs the *kilkul* and damage that they caused, their damage is that they caused us to be “faint and weary,” from Torah, this allowed them to grow strong and defeat us in battle, and against them to oppose them directly and defeat the, we therefore read vocally with our mouth from the Torah once a year to achieve this matter, and this helps us defeat and conquer their *klippah*.

“[Therefore,] it will be, when the Lord your G-d grants you respite from all your enemies around [you] in the land which the Lord, your G-d, gives to you as an inheritance to possess, that you shall obliterate the remembrance of Amalek from beneath the heavens. You shall not forget!” (*Devarim* 25:19)

Rav Moshe Dovid Walli teaches us further, from his rebbe the *Ramchal*, that it is well known that there is no more dangerous, powerful and difficult *klippah* than the *klippah* - the husk and shell of impurity of Amalek. The reason for this is that they grasp hold onto the inner essence the *penimiyus* of *kedusha* and prevents the attributes from uniting to achieve *zivug*.

Stories on the Parsha & Purim & Parshas Zachor



Explaining Purim's Non-Jewish Timing To The Priest

A priest once asked Rav Yonason Eibeschitz, the Rav of Prague, a question about *Purim*. He said, "You Jews celebrate all your holidays at night and then the day, because for you, the day follows the night. So why do you celebrate the feast of *Purim* during the night after the day?"

Rav Yonason answered, "I wonder the same thing about you. You celebrate all your holidays during the day and at night, because for you, the night comes after the day. But on the holiday of the birth of your savior, you celebrate beginning the night before. But we're right, and you're right. Our *Purim* came to us through a non-Jew, so we celebrate like your custom. Your holiday came to you through a Jew, so you follow the custom of Yisrael!" (*Chayim Sheyesh Bohem*).

Gedolim Be'misasm Yoser



**Yahrzeits for the 8th of Adar ~ Begins Friday Night
(03-08-2025)**

-  Rav Yosef Yavetz - Yesod Ha'emunah (5267 / 1507 - 518th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Gershon of Lotzk - (5548 / 1788 - 237th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Yitzchok Gershon of Luzk - (5548 / 1788 - 237th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Arye Leib Falk - Pnei Arye (5549 / 1789 - 236th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Yechezkel Yalzahn (5645 / 1885 - 140th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Tuvia of Brigel (5672 / 1912 - 113th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Yosef Yedid (5690 / 1930 - 95th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Avrohom Noach Paley (5692 / 1932 - 93rd Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Moshe Aharon Stern (5758 / 1998 - 27th Yahrzeit)

**Yahrzeits for the 9th of Adar ~ Begins Saturday Night
(03-09-2025)**

-  Rav Mordechai Meisel (5361 / 1601 - 424th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Shlomo Zalman of Volozhin - Reb Zalmele (5548 / 1788 - 237th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Menachem Mendel Stern - Derech Emunah, Av Beis Din of Sighet (5594 / 1834 - 191st Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Yaakov Paket - Emes L'Yaakov (5688 / 1928 - 97th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Yisroel Yaakov Leifer of Chust (5689 / 1929 - 96th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Mordechai Segal Lowy of Tosh (5696 / 1936 - 89th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Shmuel Dovid HaLevi Ungar of Nitra - Neos Deshe, Av Beis Din of Nitra (5705 / 1945 - 80th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Yechiel Michel Schlesinger (5709 / 1949 - 76th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Chaim Efraim Zeitchik (5749 / 1989 - 36th Yahrzeit)
-  Rav Shmuel Auerbach - Rosh Yeshivas Maalos Hatorah (5778 / 2018 - 7th Yahrzeit)

**Yahrzeits for the 10th of Adar ~ Begins Sunday Night
(03-10-2025)**



Rav Pinchas of Voldova (5423 / 1663 - 362nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Gershon Ashkenazi - Avodas HaGershuni (5453 / 1693 - 332nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef Yoel of Stefin (5530 / 1770 - 255th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef Boruch Epstein - The Gutter Yid of Neustadt (5627 / 1867 - 158th Yahrzeit)



Rav Alexander Moshe Lapidus - Avnei Zikaron (5666 / 1906 - 119th Yahrzeit)



Rav Nosson Nota of Oshpitzin - Kenaf Renana (5667 / 1907 - 118th Yahrzeit)



Rav Avrohom Zorach Aryeh Yehuda Leibush of Brezen - Imrei Yehuda (5689 / 1929 - 96th Yahrzeit)



Rav Avrohom Yosef Yoska HaLevi Gottesman of Bucharest - Emunah Shleimah (5708 / 1948 - 77th Yahrzeit)



Rav Sholom Goldstein (5744 / 1984 - 41st Yahrzeit)

**Yahrzeits for the 11th of Adar ~ Begins Monday Night
(03-11-2025)**



Rav Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai - Chida (5566 / 1806 - 219th Yahrzeit)

HaRav Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai, *zt"l*, was born in Yerushalayim in *Sivan* 5484 (1724) within the old city walls where his father, R' Yitzchok Zerachiah Azulai lived. With the ascent of the *Ohr Hachaim Hakodesh* to Yerushalayim (5502-1742), the *Chida* acquainted himself with him, becoming his closest and most devoted follower. In 5535 (1775) he once again set out to travel into *golus* on behalf of the Jews of Chevron and, upon completing his mission, he settled for a time in Livorno. On Friday night, *Parshas Zochor*, 11th *Adar*, the *Chida* returned his pure soul to his maker, bringing a heavy pall of mourning over Livorno.



Rav Eliezer Lipman Weissblum (5573 / 1813 - 212th Yahrzeit)



Rav Mordechai Posner (5583 / 1823 - 202nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Yehoshua Heschel Orenstein - Yam Hatalmud (5584 / 1824 - 201st Yahrzeit)



Rav Shmuel Strashun - Rashash (5632 / 1872 - 153rd Yahrzeit)

R. Shmuel Strashun - the Rashash (1793-1872) was a leading Vilna Torah scholar. Disciple of R. Avraham Danzig, author of *Chayei Odom*. Son of R. Yosef of Zaskevich and son-in-law of the wealthy R. Dovid from the village of Strashun, who moved with his family to Vilna and became one of the leaders of the Vilna community.



Rav Avrohom Borenstein - Sochatchover Rebbe, Avnei Nezer (5670 / 1910 - 115th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Avrohom Borenstein of Sochatchov was a descendant of the Ramah and the Shach. Already a leading authority in Jewish law, in 1883 he became the rebbe of thousands of chasidim and the founder of the Sochatchover dynasty.



Rav Avrohom Abuchatzaira - Ginzei Hamelech (5673 / 1913 - 112th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef Rosen - Rogatchover Gaon (5696 / 1936 - 89th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Yosef Rosen, known as the Rogatchover Gaon [11 Adar, 5696], was an unparalleled genius, whose in-depth understanding of all Talmudic literature left the greatest of scholars awestruck. He authored tens of thousands of responsa on the Talmud and Jewish law, of which many have been compiled in the numerous volumes of *Tzafnat Paneach*. He served for decades as the chief rabbi of the chasidic congregations of the Latvian city of Dvinsk (Daugavpils).



Rav Shmuel Brudny (5741 / 1981 - 44th Yahrzeit)

Yahrzeits for the 12th of Adar ~ Begins Tuesday Night (03-12-2025)



Rebbetzin Glikcha Eiger (5556 / 1796 - 229th Yahrzeit)

Rebbetzin Glikcha was the wife of Rav Akiva Eiger and mother-in-law of the *Chasam Sofer*.



Rav Shlomo Meyer of Sassov - Mincha Chadosho (5679 / 1919 - 106th Yahrzeit)



Rav Aharon Horowitz of Bytsh (5687 / 1927 - 98th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yehoshua Shapira - Keren Yeshua (5692 / 1932 - 93rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Alter Eliezer of Bytsh (5697 / 1937 - 88th Yahrzeit)



Rav Pinchas Hager - Borsha Rebbe (5701 / 1941 - 84th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef Adler - Turda Rav (5737 / 1977 - 48th Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Pardo (5756 / 1996 - 29th Yahrzeit)



Chacham Chaim Dovid HaLevi (5758 / 1998 - 27th Yahrzeit)

Hacham Chaim Dovid Halevy was born in Yerushalayim's Ohel Moshe neighborhood to Victoria Kracow and Moshe, who emigrated from Turkey to Israel. He was ordained to the rabbinate in 1948 by Hacham Ezra Attiah, and subsequently by the *yeshiva* president, *Rishon LeZion* Hachacham Ben Zion Meir Hai Uziel. In 1951 he was appointed Rabbi of the city of Rishon LeZion. In 1964 he was elected to the Chief Rabbinic Council as its youngest member; in 1973 he was appointed Chief Head of the Rabbinic Courts and Rabbi of Tel Aviv - Yaffo. Hacham Chaim Dovid Halevy passed away on 12 *Adar*, 5758 (1998), and was buried in Yerushalayim's Har HaMenuchos cemetery.



Rav Naftoli Tzvi Halberstam of Bobov (5765 / 2005 - 20th Yahrzeit)

**Yahrzeits for the 13th of Adar ~ Begins Wednesday Night
(03-13-2025)**



Rav Yehuda Klonimus Hachossid - Sefer Chassidim (4975 / 1215 - 810th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yisroel Isserles of Cracow (5328 / 1568 - 457th Yahrzeit)



Rav Shlomo Zalman (5548 / 1788 - 237th Yahrzeit)



Rav Avrohom Menachem Mendel of Rovno (5562 / 1802 - 223rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Betzael of Ostroh - Meir Netivim (5581 / 1821 - 204th Yahrzeit)



Rav Zev Wolf Einhorn - Medrash Tenaim (5622 / 1862 - 163rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Chaim Yaakov Zilberberg (5690 / 1930 - 95th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Chaim Yaakov Naftali Zilberberg [1850-1930] was one of the great rabbis of Warsaw. He studied with Rabbi Yisrael Salanter and the Beis HaLevi. Entrusted by the Netziv of Volozhin and the Chafetz Chaim. Rabbi Elchanan Wasserman was particular to call him "*HaGaon HaTzaddik*."



Rav Moshe HaLevi Gottlieb - Admor of Stanislav (5703 / 1943 - 82nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yitzchok Issac Menachem Eichenstein - Admor of Podheitz (5703 / 1943 - 82nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Langner - Strettiner Rebbe (5719 / 1959 - 66th Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Feinstein (5746 / 1986 - 39th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein was born in the year 1895 in Uzda, near Minsk, Belorussia where his father was rabbi. In 1921 he became rabbi of Luban, near Minsk, where he remained until he came to the United States in 1937. In America he became the *Rosh Yeshiva* (dean) of *Mesivta Tiferes Yerushalayim*, a *yeshiva* in New York. When he passed away in 1986 the Jewish people lost a great and caring leader and one of our last connections to the greatness of European Jewry.



Rav Yochanan Sofer - Erlauer Rebbe (5776 / 2016 - 9th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yochanan Sofer was born in the town of Erlau, Hungary, in the year 5683. His father, Rav Moshe Sofer *Hy"d*, the author of *Yad Sofer*, was a son of Rav Shimon Sofer *Hy"d*, the author of *Hisorerus Teshuvah*. Rav Shimon's father was the *Kesav Sofer*, son of the *Chasam Sofer*. The Erlauer Rebbe's mother was a daughter of Rav Moshe Yochanan Scheinfeld, one of the foremost *talmidim* of the *Kesav Sofer*.

**Yahrzeits for the 14th of Adar ~ Begins Thursday Night
(03-14-2025)**



Rav Menachem Mendel Auerbach - AV Beis Din of Kretchin (5489 / 1729 - 296th Yahrzeit)



Rav Zev Wolf of Zhitomir - Ohr Hameir (5558 / 1798 - 227th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Ze'ev Wolf of Zhitomir [14 Adar 1800] was one of the inner circle of disciples of the Maggid of Mezritch. He is the author of *Ohr Hameir*, one of the early foundation texts of general Chassidus.



Rav Yaakov Kahana - Gaon Yaakov (5586 / 1826 - 199th Yahrzeit)



Rav Shaul Yechezkel Greenfeld of Litshik - Magen Shaul (5609 / 1849 - 176th Yahrzeit)



Rav Dov Berish Ashkenazi of Slonim - Noda B'Shearim (5612 / 1852 - 173rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Tzvi Hirsch Roth (5624 / 1864 - 161st Yahrzeit)



Rav Yitzchok Sternhartz of Tultshin (5630 / 1870 - 155th Yahrzeit)



Rav Menashe Frankel (5725 / 1965 - 60th Yahrzeit)

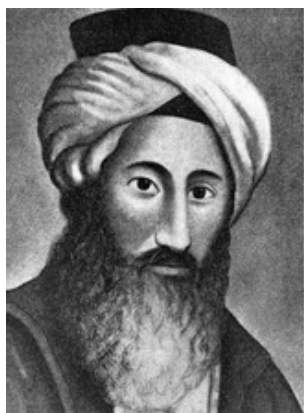


Rav Shimon Schwab (5755 / 1995 - 30th Yahrzeit)

Biographies of the Tzaddikim



Rav Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai Chida (Adar 11, 5566 / 1806 - 219th Yahrzeit)



HaRav Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai, *zt"l*, was born in Yerushalayim in *Sivan* 5484 (1724) within the old city walls where his father, R' Yitzchok Zerachiah Azulai lived. At six years, his toiling in Torah had already begun. He learned with his Rabbi, R' Yisroel Mizrahi in the *beis medrash Beis Yaakov* with his uncle R' Yonah Navon, *zt"l* and with the chazzan Nachum, *zt"l*.

He married the Rabbanit Rochel, daughter of Rabbi Nissim Bracha, *zt"l*, one of the *dayanim* in Yerushalayim.

With the ascent of the *Ohr Hachaim Hakodesh* to Yerushalayim (5502-1742), the *Chida* acquainted himself with him, becoming his closest and most devoted follower. However, those sublime days were cut short when, after less than a year, the *Ohr Hachaim* passed away leaving his close *talmid* following in his footsteps, continuing in his customs and *derech* in Torah that he had learned in this short period of time.

After finishing all he could learn in the revealed part of Torah he turned to learning its mystical secrets of *Kabalah* with R' Sholom Sharabi.

The *Chida* was sent by the *rabbonim* to travel and raise funds for the Jews living in Chevron and his travels took him as far as Spain, France and Germany. He toured many libraries for their Jewish literature and upon finding various handwritten manuscripts of the *Rishonim*, he deciphered their writings and later printed them in his *seforim*.

In 5524 (1764) he accepted *rabbonus* in Egypt. In keeping with the dictum, "And hate the *Rabbonus*," the *Chida* looked forward to finishing the five years he had agreed upon and then he returned to Eretz Yisroel, where he settled in Chevron.

In 5535 (1775) he once again set out to travel into *golus* on behalf of the Jews of Chevron and, upon completing his mission, he settled for a time in Livorno (Leghorn) so that he could print his *seforim* there. He spread Torah and gave *droshos* from a *yeshiva* and *beis medrash* that a wealthy philanthropist placed for his use.

The local Jews tried to persuade him to be their official *rov* but the *Chida* refused, conceding only to speak on four *Shabbosim* of the year - *Shabbos Hagadol*, *Shabbos Shuvoh*, *Shabbos Zochor* and *Shabbos lifnei Shavuos*. However, in practice, he was the spiritual leader of Italy's Jews and particularly so in Livorno. Requests were repeatedly made to the *Chida* from various communities all over that he be their *rov*, from Amsterdam, Tzfas, and, after the *petirah* of the *Rishon Letzion*, from Yerushalayim. The answer was always the same, for the *Chida* truly "hated the *rabbonus*."

His yearning to return to the Holy Land never abated and on various occasions he prepared himself and his family for the long journey home. In 5547 (1787) they were actually ready to leave when they received a message that a terrible plague was rampant in Eretz Yisroel, canceling their trip.

When his son R' Avrohom left for Eretz Yisroel in 5543 (1783), the *Chida* also wanted to join him but was prevented from doing so; many are the thoughts in the heart of man, but *Hashem's* plan prevails and the *Chida* remained in Livorno.

On Friday night, *Parshas Zochor*, 11th *Adar*, the *Chida* returned his pure soul to his

maker, bringing a heavy pall of mourning over Livorno. The rabbonim made an announcement that all Purim festivities that were in preparation should be halted due to the somber news, and fixed a *takonoh* that each year they would mourn the passing of the *Chida*.

His many works, spread over 85 *seforim* on all areas of Torah -- *halacha*, *aggodoh*, *drush*, *sheilos uteshuvos*, *chiddushei masechtos*, *chidushei Shulchan Oruch*, *Seder Hadoros*, and more. Sixty of these *seforim* went to print and the rest remained in manuscripts that apparently have been lost to us over the years.

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



Rav Shmuel Strashun Rashash (Adar II 11, 5632 / 1872 - 153rd Yahrzeit)



R. Shmuel Strashun - the *Rashash* (1793-1872) was a leading Vilna Torah scholar. Disciple of R. Avraham Danzig, author of *Chayei Odom*. Son of R. Yosef of Zaskevich and son-in-law of the wealthy R. Dovid from the village of Strashun, who moved with his family to Vilna and became one of the leaders of the Vilna community. His glosses on the Talmud were printed in the Vilna editions of the Talmud under the title *Hagahos HaRashash*, and they cover the entire Talmud (with the exception of only 8 pages - Gedolei HaDorot, II, p. 683). *Hagahos HaRashash* is a classic work on the Talmud, widely discussed in the books of the Achronim and in discourses of yeshiva deans. His glosses to the Mishnah, Midrash Raba and the Rambam were also printed. His son was the well-known Torah scholar and bibliophile R. Matisyahu Strashun of Vilna whose private collection of books and

manuscripts formed the basis for the Strashun Library of Vilna.

<https://www.kedem-auctions.com/en/content/kreiti-upleiti-%E2%80%93-vienna-1819-%E2%80%93-signatures-rabbi-shmuel-strashun-rashash-vilna-and-gloss-his>



Rav Avrohom Borenstein Sochatchover Rebbe, Avnei Nezer (Adar I 11, 5670 / 1910 - 115th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Avrohom Borenstein of Sochatchov [5600 - 11 Adar 5670 (October 14, 1839 - February 1910 C.E.)] was a descendant of the Ramah and the Shach. Years before his *bar mitzvah* he was recognized as a Torah genius. At age 13, he married a daughter of the Kotzker Rebbe, with whom he learned almost daily for nearly 7 years, until the latter's death, whereupon he became a follower first of his uncle, R. Yitzchak-Meir of Ger, and then of R. Chanoch-Henech of Alexander. Already a leading authority in Jewish law, in 1883 he became the rebbe of thousands of chasidim and the founder of the Sochatchover dynasty. His writings include the classic, *Avnei Nezer* (seven volumes of posthumously-published responsa), and *Eglei Tal* (on the laws of Shabbat). He was succeeded by his only son, R. Shmuel (1856-1926), author of *Shem MiShmuel*.

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



Rav Yosef Rosen Rogatchover Gaon (Adar 11, 5696 / 1936 - 89th Yahrzeit)



Rabbi Yosef Rosen, known as the Rogatchover Gaon [11 *Adar*, 5696], was an unparalleled genius, whose in-depth understanding of all Talmudic literature left the greatest of scholars awestruck. He authored tens of thousands of responsa on the Talmud and Jewish law, of which many have been compiled in the numerous volumes of *Tzafnat Paneach*. He served for decades as the chief rabbi of the chasidic congregations of the Latvian city of Dvinsk (Daugavpils).

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



Rebbetzin Glikcha Eiger (*Adar I 12, 5556 / 1796 - 229th Yahrzeit*)

Rebbetzin Glikcha was the wife of Rav Akiva Eiger and mother-in-law of the *Chasam Sofer*.



Chacham Chaim Dovid Halevi (*Adar 12, 5758 / 1998 - 27th Yahrzeit*)

Hacham Chaim Dovid Halevy was born in Yerushalayim's Ohel Moshe neighborhood to Victoria Kracow and Moshe, who emigrated from Turkey to the Land of Israel. As a child he studied *Torah* at the *Orach Haim Talmud Torah* with Hacham Ezra Hadaya. He continued his studies at the *Porat Yosef yeshiva*, along with Hacham Ovadia Yosef, Hacham Dovid Chaim Shlush, Hacham Zion Levi and Hacham Ben Zion Abba Shaul. He was ordained to the rabbinate in 1948 by Hacham Ezra Attiah, and subsequently by the *yeshiva* president, *Rishon LeZion* Hacham Ben Zion Meir Hai Uziel. He completed his teacher training at the HaMizrachi Teacher Training Seminary concurrently with his *yeshiva* studies.

During Israel's 1948 War of Independence Hacham Chaim Dovid Halevy served in the *Tuvia yeshiva* student battalion. He married Miriam Ouaknine in 1949, after the war ended, and was appointed as rabbi of Yerushalayim's Lifta and Romema neighborhoods. He also officiated as *Rosh Metifta* at the *Shaarei Zion yeshiva* and served as Secretary to

Rishon LeZion Hacham Ben Zion Meir Hai Uziel.

In 1951 he was appointed Rabbi of the city of *Rishon LeZion*. In 1964 he was elected to the Chief Rabbinic Council as its youngest member; in 1973 he was appointed Chief Head of the Rabbinic Courts and Rabbi of Tel Aviv - Yaffo.

Hacham Chaim Dovid Halevy regularly gave Torah classes to laypeople. These classes form the basis of his book *Mekor HaHaim HaShalem*, the first volume of which was published in 1967 and the last in 1974. A year later, the section of the book entitled *Kitsur Shulchan Aruch - Mekor HaHaim*, was published and then chosen as the principal textbook for *Halacha* in state religious schools. In 1997 he was awarded the Israel Prize for Torah Literature.

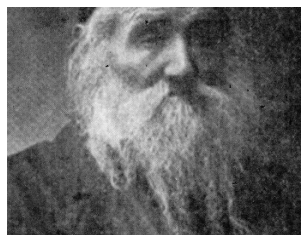
Hacham Chaim Dovid Halevy passed away on 12 *Adar*, 5758 (1998), and was buried in Yerushalayim's Har HaMenuchos cemetery.

He authored numerous books, including *Bein Israel La'Amim*, *Mekor Haim* - on the weekly Torah Readings, *Devar HaMishpat* - Maimonides' *Halachos* on the Sanhedrin, *Netzach Israel* - Jewish thought on the Torah, *'Aseh Lecha Rav* and *Ma'im Chaim*, both collections of his Responsa.

hyomi.org.il



Rav Chaim Yaakov Zilberberg (*Adar 13, 5690 / 1930 - 95th Yahrzeit*)



Rabbi Chaim Yaakov Naftali Zilberberg [1850-1930] was one of the great rabbis of Warsaw. He studied with Rabbi Yisrael Salanter and the Beis HaLevi. Entrusted by the Netziv of Volozhin and the Chafetz Chaim. Rabbi Elchanan Wasserman was particular to

call him *“HaGaon HaTzaddik.”* He dealt with strengthening Shabbos observance and purity, he printed *kol koreh* posters encouraging observance of *halachah*. Printed his father’s, Rabbi Avraham Binyamin, Av Beis Din of Wiershov’s writings, as well as those of his grandfather, the gaon of Kutna, author of *Zayis Raanan*.

<https://winners-auctions.com/en/items/letter-by-rabbi-chaim-yaakov-naftali-zilberberg-the-tzaddik-of-warsaw/>



Rav Moshe Feinstein (Adar II 13, 5746 / 1986 - 39th Yahrzeit)



Rabbi Moshe Feinstein was born in the year 1895 in Uzda, near Minsk, Belorussia where his father was rabbi. In 1921 he became rabbi of Luban, near Minsk, where he remained until he came to the United States in 1937. In America he became the *Rosh Yeshiva* (dean) of *Mesivta Tiferes Yerushalayim*, a *yeshiva* in New York.

Rabbi Feinstein became the leading halachic (religious law) authority of his time and his rulings were accepted worldwide. Rabbi Feinstein was a dedicated and selfless leader for the Jewish people to whom anyone could approach at any time with any problem.

Rabbi Feinstein’s halachic decisions have been published in a multi-volumed collection titled *Igros Moshe* (The Letters of Moshe). He also published several volumes of in depth discussions about the *Talmud*.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein was one of the last of the great leaders and sages from Europe and was a representative of the greatness the Jewish people had before the destruction of the Jewish communities during World War II. We were greatly privileged to have such a giant here in America. When he passed away in 1986 the Jewish people lost a great and caring leader and one of our last connections to the greatness of European Jewry.

jewishvirtuallibrary.org



Rav Yochanan Sofer Erlauer Rebbe (*Adar I 13, 5776 / 2016 - 9th Yahrzeit*)



Rav Yochanan Sofer was born in the town of Erlau, Hungary, in the year 5683. His father, Rav Moshe Sofer *Hy"d*, the author of *Yad Sofer*, was a son of Rav Shimon Sofer *Hy"d*, the author of *Hisorerus Teshuvah*. Rav Shimon's father was the *Kesav Sofer*, son of the *Chasam Sofer*. The Erlauer Rebbe's mother was a daughter of Rav Moshe Yochanan Scheinfeld, one of the foremost *talmidim* of the *Kesav Sofer*.

It is difficult to explain in words the special position that the Erlauer Rebbe occupied in our society. For one thing, he was a spiritual leader who presided over more than one generation. There is no other Chassidish rebbe living today who has held his position for so many years. This made the Erlauer Rebbe the senior admor in Eretz Yisroel. In addition, like the Ponovezher Rov and the Klausenberger Rebbe, he lived through the horrors of the Holocaust and managed, *bechasdei Shomayim*, to reach Eretz Yisroel. Like those other venerated leaders, the Rebbe of Erlau did not give in to despair. On the contrary, he managed to uplift his followers and to provide spiritual succor for the

survivors of the devastation.

The Rebbe was also heavily involved in events in Eretz Yisroel. When he saw fit, he would stand guard to uphold the standards of Torah observance. He was capable of calling a public official and commanding him to join in a struggle that the Rebbe considered important. He had connections with the gedolei Yisroel from every circle and with all of the public figures in the country. He was beloved not only among chassidim, but in the Litvishe and Sephardic communities as well. In fact, his admirers extended to the Dati-Leumi community. He radiated nobility and a sense of responsibility for Klal Yisroel that caused thousands of people to view him as their rebbe.

For many days, the Rebbe lay on his sickbed while the entire Jewish people beseeched Hashem for mercy, but on Monday morning, we received the bitter news of his passing at the age of 93. The Rebbe, who was known for his vast knowledge of the entire Torah, had spent over 70 years teaching Torah to thousands of Jews.

<https://yated.com/the-erlauer-rebbe-rav-yochanan-sofer-ztl/>



Rav Zev Wolf Ohr Hameir (Adar 14, 5558 / 1798 - 227th Yahrzeit)



Rabbi Ze'ev Wolf of Zhitomir [14 Adar 1800] was one of the inner circle of disciples of the Maggid of Mezritch. He is the author of *Ohr Hameir*, one of the early foundation texts of general Chassidus.

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

Gedolim Be'Masayhem



Stories & Anecdotes

Rav Chaim Efraim Zeitchik (Adar II 9)

A SIBERIAN GEMORA

Rav Zeitchik was *Rosh Yeshiva* in Buczacz when he was drafted into conscription in the Russian army. Eventually he was taken to Siberia, where half a kilo of bread and water from the distant, icy ravines were his only means of sustenance and nourishment, since all local water was poisoned and unfit to drink. The people, including himself, were unkempt and dressed in rags and tatters, sick, exhausted and in despair.

One day, Rav Chaim volunteered to draw the water from the far-off well, a distance of over three kilometers of frozen Siberian wasteland. His reason was that he had discovered somehow that a Jew lived in that area. Secretly, he hid the buckets and made his way, sneaking from tree to tree, from grove to grove, until he reached this Jewish family. He edged closer to the house and indeed discerned a *mezuzah* on the doorpost. When the lady of the house answered his feeble knocking and saw a man dressed in rags, she was fearful of him as an escapee from the Siberian camps, but she was compassionate and offered him a treasure: a slice of bread! She was amazed when he shook his head. No, he didn't want the bread. "I am a Jew. I don't want your bread. Please, do you have a *sefer*?"

She called her husband. "I am so sorry," the husband told Rav Zeitchik. "I am not a Rav - I only own one single *sefer* and I am not willing to part with it - it is a *Gemora*."

"Please," begged Rav Zeitchik and began to cry. "Please have mercy on me!" he sobbed. "At least give me just one *daf*! Don't leave me like this!"

And so the *ba'al habayis* tore the *Gemora* in half. It was an edition of *Nedorim* and *Nozir*, and Rav Zeitchik got *Maseches Nedorim*. There was no one happier in the world at that moment!

The disinterested guards and workmen paid no heed to the safety of the working conditions; they did not value the lives of their charges much at all. And so one day as he was working, chopping and sawing wood, a heavy branch fell on Rav Chaim's head and injured him. He fell to the ground, bleeding from the wound. His fellows gathered him up and were about to transport him to the local hospital for medical attention, when he stopped them. Before they took him any further, he directed them to make a stop on the way to the grove where he had hidden his secret treasure that he refused to leave behind - his torn portion of *Maseches Nedorim*, so that he could take it with him to the hospital! (*Hirhurei Teshuva, Maamar 27*)

Rav Yosef Boruch Epstein The Gutter Yid of Neustadt (Adar 10)

L'CHAIM HASHEM, GOOD NIGHT

Once Rav Yosef of Neustadt came to visit the *Tiferes Shlomo* in Radomsk. As the two *tzaddikim* sat side by side enjoying each other's company, Rav Yosef asked if the *Tiferes Shlomo* could share an anecdote from his *rebbe*, Rav Fishel of Strikov since the *Tiferes Shlomo* was one of his disciples. The *Tiferes Shlomo* related how strong was Rav Fishel's *emuna* (faith) in *hashgacha pratis* (Divine Providence). "He always believed that anything and everything that happened was directly related to him and specifically for his sake.

For example, when the weather turned cold, the frost would make immersion in the *mikvah* a formidable ordeal. He would say: "I believe with full faith - *b'emuna sheleima* that this a test from Hashem whether I will immerse despite the cold and discomfort; but know, you Evil one, *yetzer hara* that you will not dissuade me nor block me from serving Hashem!"

Another story the *Tiferes Shlomo* shared was that before retiring to bed each night, Rav Fishel would take a *glezzeleh bronfen* (a glass of brandy or liquor) in hand and wish Hashem, "*L'Chaim! L'Chaim Ribono Shel Olam sheAta MeKor HaChaim veChai HaChaim - a gitte Nacht! L'Chaim, L'Chaim* Master of the World; You are the source of all life; I wish

you a good night!”

He wished Hashem *L'Chaim* and a good night in Yiddish.

Rav Fishel even once explained the reason behind this unusual *minhag* (custom) of his:

“You must know that there are sick Jews everywhere in the world, and oftentimes it is at night that suffering intensifies. I attempt to bring some relief to them with my *L'Chaim* to Hashem based on the principle that He suffers in our suffering. I wish Hashem a good night, if He wants a peaceful night free of pain and distress, He must heal all the Jews' suffering first! And so, I drink to Hashem and wish Him a good night - *Gitte Nacht!*”
(*Siach Sarfei Kodesh*)

Rav Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai Chida (Adar 11)

A NEW YESHIVA AND A NEW TALMID OF THE OHR HACHAIM

When the *Tzaddik* Rav Chaim ben Attar came to live in Eretz Yisrael, his main focus was to establish a holy lofty *Yeshiva* and *Bais Medrash*, whose purpose was to study *Torah lishma* on the highest level. Its students would sit all day immersed in their studies, never uttering any mundane words, wrapped in *tallis*, crowned in *tefillin* and unifying the *Shechina* as they studied *Gemora* and *Rambam*, delving into the depths of the *Talmud*, swimming in its seas and immersing in the words of *dvar Hashem zu Halocho*. As he himself testified in a letter written on the 22nd of *Shevat tov-kuf-bais* to the financial supporters of the *Yeshiva* in Mantuba, Italy, he named the *Bais Medrash* “*Heichal Ahava - Medrash Kenesses Yisrael* - the Chamber of Love”, to awaken *Hashem's* love for *Kenesses Yisrael* (*Kenesses Yisrael* alludes to the *Shechina*). From the Diaspora, Rav Chaim ben Attar brought with him *talmidim*, and gained new ones in Yerushalayim - among whom was the great Rav Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai - *the Chida*. (*Ner HaMaaravi*, ch. 24 p. 227)

THE CHIDA'S TESTIMONY ON THE OHR HACHAIMS PREPARATION FOR KIDDUSH

Once, when the *Chida* was on one of his travels in the lands of *Ashkenaz*, one of the *Admorim* asked him to relate a story that described his *Rebbe's* holy *avoda* in *nigla* and in *nistar*, and here is one of the tales he told:

The *Ohr HaChaim* had a special *minhag* to prepare himself to make *Kiddush* on Shabbos. Every *Erev Shabbos* he would sit and study and review with his *talmidim* the laws of testimony and witnesses - *Hilchos Eidus* in the *Rambam*. They would especially review the laws dealing with what things disqualified a witness and rendered him *posul* - unfit to give testimony. They studied this in order to do full *teshuva* [over any of these disqualifications.] Not only did the *Ohr HaChaim* do this as a preparation before making *Kiddush*, but when he picked up the *Kiddush* cup to recite the *berocha* over it, he would be aflame with such excitement and thoughts of *teshuva* and *kedusha* that all those present were also seized with pangs of regret and remorse so great that they would beg and plead that they too should merit to be *eidim keshirim* (proper witnesses) to testify to the Creation of the world in six days! (By Rav Yitzchok Alfaya in *Kuntres HaYachieli* Section *Bais Hashem* Chapter *Middos Tovos* #18)

THE OHR HACHAIM'S BROCHA THAT HE SHOULD BE LIKE AHARON HAKOHEN

Rav Yekusiel Yehuda of Sanz-Klausenberg told the following story one *Sholosh Seudos* [see *Shefa Chaim* on *Parshas Naso tov-shin-mem-daled*] (also found in the *kuntres Tav Chaim* as a prelude to certain editions of the *Chida's sefer Shem HaGedolim*):

Although the *Chida* was counted among the younger of the *Ohr HaChaim's talmidim*, still Rav Chaim ben Attar greatly admired him, drew him close and bestowed upon the *Chida* a special and unique *berocha* that from Heaven the *Chida* should be sanctified with the *kedusha* of Aharon HaKohen!

At first the *Chida* misconstrued his *Rebbe's* meaning and thought he had been blessed with the ability to give *berochos* to *Am Yisrael be'ahava* just as Aharon and the *Kohanim* bless the Jewish people. However, decades later, the true meaning of this special *berocha* was revealed in the following amazing manner:

In his old age, the *Chida* ended up in Leghorn, Italy, which the Jews know as Livorno. He had refused the position of *Rav* again and again, although the various communities' elders and leaders tried to have him take up the post. Instead, the *Chida* preferred to sit and learn Torah uninterrupted except for a four-year stint when he took up the post of *Rav* while he was in Egypt. Nonetheless, although he held no official title or position, all the Jews knew of his greatness and accorded him the honor and respect due to a sage and *Talmid Chochom*, one of the *Gedolim* of the generation.

One day, a community leader came before the *Chida* and complained to him that his wife had been seen alone in the company of another man. "If this is so," said the *Chida*, "you must divorce her, give her a *get* and she loses any rights to collect her *kesuba*."

The *Dayonim* heard his decision and were baffled; how could he decide such a matter without any testimony or evidence? But they dared not contradict his ruling. The *Chida* asked that the wife be summoned to the place in the *Bais Medrash* where he sat and studied, immersed in Torah. The *Chida* tried to persuade her gently and kindly to accept a *get* of divorce from her husband, but the woman was brazen and arrogant. She answered the Rav back with *chutzpa* and as she spat back her arguments to the Rav, the *Chida* remembered the *berocha* he had received from the *Ohr HaChaim*, his *Rebbe*, all those years ago.

Turning to the insulting woman, the *Chida* asked, "Please, I have just one request. Listen as I read aloud to you a portion from the *Parsha* in the Torah."

The arrogant woman acquiesced to this one request and stood still as the *Chida* took out a Torah and began to recite the *Parsha* of *Naso* where the Torah describes the *sota*. As the *Chida* read the *pesukim* the woman began to leave in the middle - but she did not escape in time, for just as she reached the stairs, the *Chida* concluded reading the *Parsha* of the *sota*, and no sooner did he finish the last words than she stopped with her foot resting on the step, while her face contorted and her eyes bulged out of their sockets. With a shriek she collapsed and dropped dead. Hearing her outcry, many people rushed to the scene as she breathed her last, and witnessed this miraculous event.

WHAT DELAYED THE OHR HACHAIM FROM HIS SHIUR IN YESHIVA

Rav Chaim Yosef Arye Prager of Brisk writes how the *Chida* once met the *Gaon* Rav Dovid Ashkenazi of Bichov, who lived in Teverya and was sent by Rav Avrohom Kalisker to collect funds for the nascent and struggling *Chassidishe yishuv* there. Rav Dovid traveled in the west for some seven years collecting, and on one of his travels he met the *Chida* in Livorno. During their discussion about how greatly esteemed his *Rebbe*, the *Ohr HaChaim*, was among the *Chassidim*, the *Chida* replied humbly that he did not consider himself worthy of being called a true *talmid* who knew the *Ohr HaChaim*, claiming that he was just someone who had studied there in his *Yeshiva*. He then related to Rav Dovid the following amazing story about his *Rebbe*, Rav Chaim ben Attar, the *Ohr HaChaim*:

Once, the *Ohr HaChaim* was late to arrive at the *Yeshiva*. This was uncharacteristic of him and all the *talmidim* who had gathered at the appointed time for his *shiur* wondered at this departure from custom. When the hour grew late and the delay continued, the *Chida* gathered his courage and himself went to his *Rebbe's* home to see what the delay was about and to call on the *Ohr HaChaim*. When he got there, he engaged Rav Chaim in conversation and the *Ohr HaChaim* told the *Chida* in a totally nonchalant and dismissive manner as part of the conversation, "I was late because I was stuck on a difficult *Tosafos* which I simply couldn't unravel or understand at all until...*Rabbeinu Yitzchok*, one of the *Ba'alei Tosafos*, came and explained to me what he meant."

IT WAS ONLY L'SHEM SHAMAYIM

The *Ohr HaChaim* used to make frequent trips with his *talmidim* to *daven* at *kivrei Tzaddikim* in *Yerushalayim*. The *Chida* described one such trip that he himself went on and accompanied the *Ohr HaChaim* and what he saw the *Ohr HaChaim* do on that occasion:

"In my youth I merited to travel together with the wondrous holy *Chassid*, our Master, Rav Chaim ben Attar and the students of his *Yeshiva*, to travel to *daven* at the *kivrei Tzaddikim* in *Yerushalayim*. When we reached the *matzeiva* of the Rav, author of the *sefer Pri Chodosh*, we watch as the Rav [the *Ohr HaChaim*] remained there alone for some fifteen minutes or more, *davening* at the *kever*, and his lips moved as he was talking and we understood that he was asking *mechila* from the *Pri Chodosh* that he be forgiven [for Rav Chaim ben Attar, in his *sefer Pri To'ar*, would rule against him and argue on some of his points] and that all that he did was purely *L'shem Shomayim* (for the sake of Heaven)." (*Shem HaGedolim*, Section on *Seforim*, Entry for *Pri To'ar*)

'PLEASE DO THIS TASK BY YOURSELF'

One of Rav Mordechai Eliyohu's early predecessors as *Rishon L'Tzion*, Sephardic Chief Rav of Eretz Yisrael, was Rav Yitzchak Nissim, who had a special appreciation and admiration for the *Chida*. One of Rav Nissim's friends was Dr. Shlomo Umberto Nachon, a native of Livorno (Leghorn), where the *Chida* lived the end of his life and was buried.

In the late 1950's, Dr. Nachon learned that the Italian authorities wished to build a highway through the Jewish cemetery of Livorno. He quickly informed Chief Rav Nissim and, understanding the urgency of the situation, they decided it was time to move the

Chida to Eretz Yisrael. Dr. Nachon made the arrangements with the authorities in Livorno, and in 1960 Rav Nissim commissioned, after much coaxing, the then thirty-one-year-old Rav Mordechai Eliyohu, who was known to be intimately familiar with the *Chida's* writings, to head a team of esteemed Sephardic rabbonim (which included Rav Yisrael Abuhitzeira, the *Baba Sali*, and his brother the *Baba Haki*, Rav Yitzchak Abuhitzeira, chief Rav in the city of Ramle, who was an expert in Jewish burials in his native Morocco) for the reintering of the bones of the *Chida* in Yerushalayim.

Rav Eliyohu related that when he arrived at Lod Airport with the other rabbonim, he met with the agency representative who had brought the bones of the *Chida* in a small wooden coffin. When the Rav saw it, he was appalled "What is this?" he asked. "The bones of the *Chida* are rolling around in a miniature coffin? How can such a thing be?"

He asked that a larger coffin be brought, so that the bones could be transferred to it and be laid out properly for an honorable burial. Then he requested that the *Baba Haki's* driver go with his driver, and that they immerse in a *mikva* [ritual bath], and afterwards buy a Phillips screwdriver to open the coffin.

When they returned, Rav Mordechai Eliyohu made a large hole in the bottom of the new large coffin so that there would be no barrier between the bones and the soil upon burial, but temporarily closed the hole with a stopper. Then the small coffin was inserted into the larger one.

Rav Eliyahu had the small coffin opened, whereupon he put his hand in to arrange the bones. But after a few moments, he trembled and closed his eyes. Saying in a broken voice that he had no power to do it, he asked pleadingly that the *Chida* 'please do this task by yourself' to put his own bones in order!

Immediately, a powerful, almost explosive sound was heard, the coffin began to shake, and a rattling sound - made by the *Chida's* remains striking the coffin's walls -- was heard. All the other *rabbonim* fainted on the spot. Rav Mordechai did not faint, explaining afterwards that his absorption in the *mitzva* helped him remain conscious.

It was beyond belief! The banging and shaking continued until, bone by bone, until the entire skeleton was arranged perfectly - in the merit of the holy Rav, the *Chida*!

"Hashem will grant you special Providence, and bring my remains out of this place."
[*Bereishis* 50:25]

"He said to me, 'Can these bones live?'...As I prophesied, there was a roaring sound, and the bones came together and joined one another.... 'I am going to open your graves; I will take you out of your graves, My People, and bring you to the Land of Israel.'" [*Yechezkel* 37:3, 7, 12]

Thousands accompanied the funeral procession from the Yerushalayim neighborhood of Sanhedria to the cemetery at Har HaMenuchos. At the burial, Rav Eliyohu described the events that had taken place as "*Nisei nissim* - absolute miracles."

At a later date, Rav Mordechai Eliyohu announced that whoever needs personal salvation can go to pray at the grave of the *Chida*.

It is no wonder that when Rav Mordechai Eliyohu passed on to his heavenly great reward fifty years later that he was buried near the *Chida* on Har HaMenuchos!

The *Chida* had finally come home.

His memory continued to live in the hearts of his people. Many Jews used to make pilgrimages to his grave or send *kvittlach* to be deposited there, praying that the saintly *Rav* be an intercessor for them in the Heavenly Court.

(Ed. Note: Rav Mordechai Steiner *Shlita* related that the *B'nei Yisasschar* often was quoted that even if he can't always find the source for the *Chida's Torah chidushim*, he fully believes that they are accepted by the *Bais Din Shel Ma'ala* and his *segulos* are *kodesh* and divine. See *B'nei Yisasschar Tishrei* 4:14:39).

THE CHIDOH IN HONOR OF HIS YAHRTZEIT, 11TH ADAR

It is of interest to note that the *Noam Elimelech*, R' Elimelech of Lizhensk remarked that *Hashem* always keeps things equal. At the time that Mendelssohn came and wrote his heretical explanations on the *Chumash*, *Hashem* sent the *Chida* to counteract, with his holy *seforim*, strengthening our basic beliefs in *Hashem*.

In the *yeshiva* of the *mekubalim* in Yerushalayim Beis El sat the holy *mekubal* HaRav Sholom Sharabi better known as the *Rashash*. Drinking his words of Torah were the future giants of *Kabalah*: Rabbeinu Yom Tov Algazi, the *Chida*, and more.

Once they had learned their fill of the Torah as we see it, they listened as their rov delved into the depths of the secrets of *Kabalah*. These exalted men formed a pact together, working on themselves and taking on certain *takonos*. One of the most prestigious members of these holy groups was the *Chida*.

One day word spread that the *Chida* had taken upon himself to separate from the group and go out into the great world outside Eretz Yisroel to collect funds for the poor and needy of Chevron. The reason too soon became known.

Rabbeinu R' Shalom Sharabi felt that the time was now a favorable one in heaven to *daven* and try to hasten the final redemption. Under his instructions all the members of his holy group cut themselves off from all worldly matters, afflicting themselves in various ways after which they sanctified their bodies with a fast of 3 days without a break. However, the time was not yet ripe and after the three-day fast was over they heard a heavenly voice calling out to them, "My dear sons, my time for the redemption is not yet ripe. You have no right to hasten it by force. Besides one of you will have to suffer the trials of going out into *golus*."

Since there was no mention of who would be the one, they drew lots, the *Chida* being the one picked out. When the men of Chevron asked the *Chida* soon after this if he could travel abroad to collect funds, they were pleasantly surprised at his quick agreement. They had planned to ask him, for his great name and personality and powerful oratory would cause people to contribute handsomely to their worthy cause but they hadn't been prepared for him to accede so easily to their request.

The *Chida* immediately left by way of Egypt and then on to other countries to persuade Jews in foreign lands to donate their money for the poor of Eretz Yisroel. His travels led him to Livorno, the greater part of Italy and over to the German states.

Early on in his wanderings, he was warmly greeted and given great honor, for his name and greatness had preceded him, the rabbonim already learnt from his *seforim* and some of the laymen knew who he was.

In contrast, in the greater part of Europe the name of the *Chida* had not yet spread, causing the people to ask him wherever he went for his letter of proof and approbation. Somewhere along the tiring journey, the *Chida* lost all his documents. Upon arriving at the next city, he went to the rov and introduced himself. However he had no proof to present showing that this was indeed the *Chida* and not an imposter out to trick the people.

Seeing that he had no documents, the rov demanded that he say some *chiddushim* that are written in the *seforim* of the *Chida*. If he knew them really well that would be adequate proof.

Hearing this, the *Chida* refused to speak. His aide the Chacham Shmuel Ben Chaim tried to persuade him to talk for if the locals would not see his greatness they would drive him out in shame and disgrace and no money would be collected for the poor. Moreover in Italy and all the other places the *Chida* had spoken at great lengths teaching Torah wherever he went, and just here he would be struck dumb.

The *Chida* was obstinate, however, insisting he cannot say *divrei Torah* to these people. Degraded and scoffed at by the people, the *Chida* saw he was getting nowhere and had no choice but to write a letter to Chevron suggesting that they quickly send new papers to replace the last once, proving that he was in fact the *Chida*.

As soon as the awaited letter arrived, the elders of the community apologized profusely to the *Chida*, begging him to give public speeches and discussed Torah subjects with him as students to their rabbi. Puzzled, they asked the *Chida*, "Why did *Rabbeinu* not tell us his Torah earlier, thus saving himself all the humiliation. Had we heard a few words out of your holy mouth we would have realized that there stands before us a *Godol Hador* of unique caliber."

"In a place where people know me and ask me to speak the words of Hashem or to stir their hearts and bring them close to our Father in heaven, I do not refuse," replied the

Chida. "For this is the purpose of man -- to glorify the Torah. But to gain personal honor and fame through *divrei Torah* I cannot do. You wanted, through Torah, to test me and discover who I am, forcing me to use the Torah to show my personality and strength which is not allowed. I preferred, therefore, the humiliation of being suspected as a deceiver and a cheat to using the crown of Torah for my personal gain."

The residents who heard his words were extremely impressed and rushed to do his bidding, collecting a large amount of money towards his cause. How great is the Torah of a man who refuses to be personally glorified by it, at the cost of his own dignity.

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

Rav Shmuel Strashun Rashash (Adar II 11)

A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN

HaGaon Maran Rav Ovadia Yosef related the following story about Rav Shmuel Strashun, the *Rashash* of Vilna:

The *Rashash* ran a free-loan *gemach* where he lent handsome sums to needy individuals. He was, however, extremely strict about returning the loans on time. Once there came a G-d-fearing tailor to borrow the sum of one thousand rubles for a period of three months. When the date arrived the borrower entered the *Rashash's* study to repay the loan. The *Rashash* sat engrossed in a deep *sugya* and so the tailor paid his debt and left the money on the page of the *Gemora* that the *Rashash* was studying from.

The *Rashash* was so engrossed in his learning that he paid no attention to the tailor and did not notice the proceedings at all. His attention was completely diverted to the *sugya* at hand and all he noticed was someone standing and saying something; out of habit and courtesy he simply nodded his head in acknowledgment, which the tailor misinterpreted as an acknowledgment of the debt repaid! When the *Rashash* finished his study of the complex *sugya* he closed the volume of *Talmud*, returned the *sefer* to the shelf, with the money unnoticed, still inside!

After another month had passed, when the *Rashash* checked his *gemach's* ledger, he

noted the outstanding loan. He sent word to the tailor that he had an outstanding debt and he was asked to appear and pay up the loan.

The tailor appeared before the *Rashash* and explained that he had repaid the loan a month before. "How can that be?" said the *Rashash*. "Where then is your receipt? I do not remember you coming and paying."

The tailor insisted that he had repaid the loan and since the *Rashash* had been so busy learning he had not troubled him to ask him to write a receipt. The *Rashash* countered that his custom was always to write a receipt to acknowledge the repayment of a loan and record it in his ledger. The tailor stuck to his story and stubbornly insisted that he had paid up the debt in full.

The *Rashash* decided to take him to *Bais Din*, and the matter became public knowledge. As the rumors and stories spread, the majority of the public opinion was in favor of the *Rashash*, and many openly disparaged, shamed and ostracized the tailor for his audacity to cheat and steal from the *gemach* and to further accuse the *Rashash* of lying. The tailor bore the brunt of the people's displeasure and was transformed to the lowliest citizen of Vilna. Many of his customers deserted him, and his livelihood suffered as no one wanted to deal with a good-for-nothing thief! The tailor's son, who was learning in *Yeshiva*, was so embarrassed at his father's ruined reputation, that he left *Yeshiva* and hid his shame.

Time passed and the *Rashash* reviewed his learning and removed the very same volume of *Talmud* to study the same knotty, complex sugya as before. When he opened the *Gemora*, to his amazement, he found money inside! Bills that added up to the sum of one thousand rubles lay there in the *Gemora*. In seconds the matter had resolved itself, and he realized that the tailor's story must have been true! He had come to repay the loan, and seeing the *Rashash* so involved in learning he hadn't troubled him for a receipt. His face paled as he realized the implications of the matter and what he had done to the tailor, his reputation and his family!

He sent for the tailor and admitted his error. He saw the tailor walk in but it was not the same tailor he had previously known. Now, standing before him, was a sad, forlorn, broken individual with a shadow cast over his once fair face. "Please forgive me for my mistake!" cried the *Rashash*. "I will call the congregation together and stand before them,

confess my mistake and publicly declare you guiltless and innocent!”

The sad tailor explained, “Honorable Rav, I appreciate what you wish to do, but what will your confession and admission achieve? Look at me! I am the laughing stock of all Vilna. People hate and despise me, and shame me and my name. My reputation and business are ruined and my livelihood is gone. My son ran away from *Yeshiva*, he is so ashamed. Even if the Rav were to publicly exonerate me, people will just say that the Rav did this as a favor to help me extricate myself from my situation and that I am not really innocent.” He hung his sad head as the *Rashash* pondered the truth of his words and what to do!

The *Rashash* had an idea, his face flushed with excitement and he declared, “Send for your son to come to me, for I wish to take him as my grandson-in-law, a chosson for my granddaughter. Then everyone will see the truth and know that you must be innocent.”

A gleam shone in the once-dull eyes of the tailor as his disbelieving ears heard the words of the *Rashash*. As his eyes shed tears of joy he grasped the *Rashash's* hands and kissed them. He had never, in his wildest dreams, expected this! To be the *Rashash's mechutan*? He departed with true affection.

A few days later the news spread - the debt had been repaid before, the mistake was admitted, the lost money was found and the tailor's son was engaged to the *Rashash's* granddaughter. The community leaders agreed, a match made in Heaven - but who would have had the audacity to suggest such a *shidduch* to the *Rashash* if not for Heaven?

(*Anaf Eitz Avos*, p. 222)

Rav Avrohom Borenstein Sochatchover Rebbe, Avnei Nezer (Adar I 11)

THE BROKEN SHIDDUCH

There was once a *Chassid* from Warsaw whom everyone nicknamed *Der Kleine Moishelch*, who made a *shidduch* for his daughter. Soon after, they discovered that the *chosson* had a lung disease, and when the *kalla* found out, she refused to continue with the *shidduch*. The father of the *kalla* received permission from a *Bais Din* to dissolve the *shidduch*, but when the *chosson* heard this, he suffered such great distress that the *agmas nefesh*

amplified his disease. His condition worsened from day to day, until finally he died, sick and heartbroken.

Afterward, the former *kalla* also grew ill and as she lay in her sickbed, she complained that the departed spirit of her former *chosson* kept vigil at her side, constantly imploring her to follow him and that he was taking her to court...in the *Bais Din Shel Ma'ala* (the Heavenly Court)! This continued for some days and her condition worsened, until her father was worried and the doctors began to despair of her ever getting better! And so her father traveled to Sochatchov to the *Avnei Nezer*. When the holy *Rebbe* heard how the departed *chosson* stood by her bed ordering her to a *Din Torah* in *Shomayim*, he grew excited and roared:

“Heh! The *Halocha* is that we rule that he who sues in rabbinical court must follow the sued to his *Bais Din* in his locale! Now go back home and tell your daughter in my name that if the departed *chosson* returns, she should tell him that back in Sochatchov they say that if he has any reason to sue her in *Bais Din*, they need not take the matter up before the *Bais Din Shel Ma'ala*; rather, they should take the matter up with me right here in Sochatchov and he can take her to a *Din Torah* here! She should repeat this to him three times.”

And so it was. She did so and after the third time he never returned, she recovered and never saw him again.

THE REBBE'S AHAVAS YISROEL

Rav Moshe Duvid'l once took the place of the usual *shamash*, Rav Avrohom Yitzchok, who was called to Warsaw for an important matter, and he tended to the *Avnei Nezer's* needs. Once, early in the morning, the *Avnei Nezer* approached Reb Moshe Duvid'l and told him, “Quick - bring me some water to wash, but hurry, now the air is pristine and clean of all sins and crimes and from all worldly desires. It is an opportune time to learn Torah. Take care that no one disturbs me at all. Even if a person should come with a golden crown, do not bring him before me!”

And so the *Tzaddik* sat himself down to learn, aflame with the fire of Torah! Soon a person arrived in modern dress, clean-shaven and wearing a short jacket and asked to see the *Rebbe*. Moshe Duvid'l laughed at him. “Right now you want to see the *Rebbe*?” Especially

since the *Rebbe* had expressly forbidden him to bring anyone in. The guest offered Moshe Duvid'l fifteen gold rubles for his trouble, a vast sum. Reb Moshe Duvid'l was struck with awe. He took the gold fifteen-ruble coin, entered the *Rebbe's* study and told the *Tzaddik* what had transpired, showing him the coin he stood to earn.

The *Rebbe* wondered aloud, "What?! Do you mean to say that you can earn such a vast sum through me? Bring him in! Just remember - three minutes and no more!"

Reb Moshe Duvid'l pocketed the coin and brought the guest before the *Rebbe*. He waited. After about ten minutes, he could no longer hold back and came in to extricate the man from the *Rebbe's* room. What he heard was the *Rebbe* telling him, "Remember to fulfill these three things that I said, and she will have a *yeshua!*"

The man left and that was that.

One day Moshe Duvid'l was in Kalisch, when a frum, bearded Jewish stranger in a long coat approached him and asked, "Do you come from Sochatchov?" When he applied in the affirmative, the stranger asked further, "And do you sometimes attend to the *Rebbe*?"

"Yes," answered the bewildered Moshe Duvid'l, whose bewilderment and wonder only grew when the Jew grasped him warmly and said, "If so, you must come to my house to celebrate with us and enjoy a fancy meal."

So saying, he steered Moshe Duvid'l off to his home. When the stranger entered, he ordered his wife to quickly prepare a lavish feast. "Prepare a *seuda* for the man who saved your life - here he is!"

And so it happened that our bearded, long-froked friend was none other than our formerly beardless, short-jacketed stranger, who had once paid Moshe Duvid'l handsomely to get in to see the *Rebbe*. He explained that his wife had been very sick, almost at death's door, and he had traveled to Sochatchov to seek the *Rebbe's* blessing and advice. Among the three things that the *Tzaddik* had told them to do to save his wife's life was to transfer all his children from the modern schools into the traditional *cheder*. At first, his wife had resisted, but eventually she agreed, and as soon as she did, she got better and better.

“And now she is as fit as a fiddle and healthy as can be!”

They gifted Moshe Duvid'l handsomely and sent him off to Kalisch in style. See just how much *Ahavas Yisrael* the *Rebbe* had, concludes the *mechaber* of the *sefer Abir HaRo'im*. In order that Moshe Duvid'l earn a nice tidy sum, the *Tzaddik* the *Rebbe* gave up a few precious minutes of his holy morning learning!

THE VALUE OF THE AVNEI NEZER'S TORAH IN SHOMAYIM

Just how precious that time was in the story above can best be illustrated by the next two tales:

Once, Rav Gronim of Gur, the *ba'al koreh* for the *Sefas Emes*, told of how he visited the *Avnei Nezer* for *Sukkos* when he still lived in Kroshnivitz. He was the *Rebbe's* guest and he slept in the *Rebbe's sukka*.

“The *Rebbe* himself made the bed and patted down the sheets and blankets to guarantee a comfortable and warm repose. I lay down to sleep and the *Rebbe* sat down to learn, aflame with excitement and *hislahavus*! The *Rebbe* kept checking to see I was asleep and so I made myself as if I was sleeping and just then torrential rain began to fall. It was so strong and buffeted the *sukka* so hard that the floor was already full of water. I peeked out and saw the *Rebbe* approach the window in the *sukka*. He opened the window and called out, saying, “What *chutzpa* these clouds have, that they dare *mevatel* me and disturb my learning!!!”

No sooner had the *Tzaddik* uttered this admonishment, than the rain stopped and the clouds discontinued their downpour!” See how precious the *Tzaddik's* Torah study was in the Heavens!

THE UNDERVALUED TORAH OF THE AVNEI NEZER TO THOSE WHO SOUGHT HIS BERACHOS

It is also a well-known fact among all who came to Sochatchov that the *Rebbe* would often repeat this saying: “If people only knew and realized what good favors I could accomplish for them through my Torah study, no one would ever dare cross my threshold again [to ask for a *berocha*].” (*Abir HaRo'im*, Volume II, 283, 288, 291-292)

THE AVNEI NEZER AND THE EGLEI TAL

The *Avnei Nezer's* father, Rav Ze'ev Nachum, was the Rav in Biala. The *Avnei Nezer's* future father-in-law, Rav Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, once revealed to Rav Ze'ev Nachum how he merited having such a holy son:

It was *Purim*, and all over the world the *Yidden* rejoiced. So much so that even all the greatest *lomdim*, those *Yidden* who always sat and studied Torah, were also busy with preparations and joyful *Purim* business. There was no one studying Torah! No one, that is, except Rav Ze'ev Nachum. Since the world cannot exist if no there is no Torah, Rav Ze'ev Nachum was at the time supporting the entire world!

Meanwhile, in Heaven, there was a great uproar. No one was studying Torah! ... until they discerned Rav Ze'ev Nachum, and it was decided on high that his reward would be a gifted son, a child whose light of Torah would illuminate the entire world that he had saved. This was the reason his first-born son would be the *Avnei Nezer*. So revealed the *Kotzker*. (Abir HaRo'im 7)

Even in his youth, the *Avnei Nezer's* power of Torah was already apparent. He once sat learning Torah in the *Bais Medrash* when a crowd of crying *Yidden* came in. The crowd began to tearfully recite *Tehillim* and daven for the refua of a terribly sick Jew whose end was near. Perhaps Heaven would have mercy! Their cries and loud tefillos disturbed the *Avnei Nezer's* learning. "Listen," he told them, "if you promise to daven quietly and not disturb my study, I in turn promise you that he will recover." The crowd heeded the young Torah scholar and, amazingly, the dying man recovered!

The *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz tested the young genius as a possible suitor for his daughter. Afterward he remarked that "he learns like the *Noda BeYehuda*, but I cannot take him as a *chosson* for my daughter - he is too sharp for me!"

The *Seraf of Kotzk*, Rav Menachem Mendel, took him instead for a son-in-law, and as he stood under the *chupa*, the *Kotzker* declared, "May it be Your will, Hashem, that his sick, weak body be able to hold such a great, genius mind!"

Not long after they were married, the *Kotzker's* daughter, the *Avnei Nezer's* wife *Sora*, burst into her father's home, crying uncontrollably. Amid sobs she explained that her

young husband had contracted pneumonia and was coughing up blood.

“No need to worry,” the *Kotzker* told her, “he will live a long life. He is named Avrohom and you are Sora - the *pasuk* says, “Avrohom and Sora were old, coming along in days.”

Sure enough, this *berocha* was fulfilled, until age seventy-two, when the *Avnei Nezer's Rebbetzin* passed on. He then grew weak and sick, and realized that because his father-in-law had blessed him through this *pasuk*, it had tied him to Sora's long life. Now that hers had ended, his *berocha* was up as well. When the *Imrei Emes* of Gur came to console him on his wife's passing, he related the above story, his father-in-law's blessings, and the explanation of how he realized that now his end was near as well.

On the last day of his life, he arose early and his son and family were at his bedside. His condition had rapidly deteriorated since his wife's passing and they saw he was breathing his last. He motioned them to help him and he prepared himself, purified himself, and donned his *tefillin* for the final time. As he *davened Shemone Esrei*, he grew weaker, and during the *berocha* of *mekabetz nidchei amo Yisrael*, he motioned for them to remove his *tefillin*. A light of peace and tranquility shone from him as he recited this *berocha*, and he passed away with a heavenly kiss. May his merit shield us. (Al HaTzaddikim ve'al HaChassidim, p. 186-191, B'darchei Polin HaAveilos)

Rav Moshe Feinstein (Adar II 13)

THE ADMIRATION OF RAV MOSHE FEINSTEIN

On the *Pnei Menachem's* first visit to the US, he was to participate in the *Aguda* Convention, at which the *Gaon* and *Godol*, Rav Moshe Feinstein, was to present him as a guest of honor. Rav Moshe, however, was in a quandary as to how to present the *Pnei Menachem*. A standard introduction, explained Rav Moshe, was out of the question; on the one hand, how can you introduce the son of the *Imrei Emes* and the brother of the *Bais Yisrael* of Ger as just any honorable guest? On the other hand, Rav Moshe did not know the *Pnei Menachem* personally at all. The solution was that although Rav Moshe had a packed schedule, a single hour was set aside for the two *Torah* giants to meet beforehand. This single solitary meeting slated for a short one-hour slot extended to many hours. When Rav Moshe exited, he told those close to him, “I couldn't believe my ears! [He

knows] the entire *Torah*, and I mean the entire *Torah mamash!*" Suffice it to say that at the convention, Rav Moshe heaped praises upon the *Pnei Menachem* and was able to say to the audience assembled that he testified to these praises from personal experience.

Years later, the *Pnei Menachem's* son, Rav Yehuda Arye, married the daughter of the *Mishne Halochos*, the *Ungvar Rav* in America, and his father asked him to be tested for *semicha* from *Gedolim* and *Rabbonim* in the US. The first one on the list that the *Pnei Menachem* gave his son was Rav Moshe.

Rav Yehuda Arye, however, was disappointed to hear from Rav Moshe's family that due to his advanced age and weak constitution, the *Godol HaDor* had already ceased testing and giving *semicha*. When Rav Moshe heard what was happening at the door he agreed with the statement, but also inquired as to the identity of the young man. When he introduced himself, Rav Moshe asked whose son he was. Upon hearing the *Pnei Menachem's* name, he responded that his decision had not been made in all circumstances. "For your father, the *Gaon*, I am making this special exception because I hold he is a *Ge'on Olom mamash!*" And so, as a rare exception, Rav Moshe tested him and gave him *semicha*. (*HaMevaser HaTorani Adar tov-shin-ayin-alef* by Rav Yaakov Heizler)

HACHNOSAS KALLA

Rav Elimelech Biderman related:

Rav Mordechai of Zvhill, before he became *Rebbe*, needed twenty-six thousand dollars for an upcoming *chasuna*. He went to the office of the *Eitz Chaim Yeshiva*, where he studied, and asked the director of the *Yeshiva* to give him the addresses of wealthy donors in America, because he wanted to send them letters, asking for money for the *chasuna*.

The director did not want to give him the addresses (because he wanted their support for the *Yeshiva*) so he gave Rav Mordechai Zvhiller some old addresses from people who used to support the *Yeshiva*, but hadn't given a donation for a long time.

When Rav Mordechai returned home with the list, his wife rebuked him, "Do you really think that these are going to help you? The director certainly gave you the addresses of people who don't have money any more." Rav Mordechai explained to her that he was doing *hishtadlus*.

“If your goal is *hishtadlus*, why do you have to send letters to all of them? Just send one letter, and that will be your *hishtadlus*...” she chided.

Rav Mordechai replied, “You’re right. I’ll send only one letter.”

He sent off one letter and soon received an envelope in return with a check for twenty-six thousand dollars inside. Rav Mordechai went to the director to thank him for the addresses.

The manager was shocked. “You mean your letters were answered?”

“Not the letters. I only sent one letter, and I received twenty-six thousand dollars.” And he told him the name of this *ba’al tzedoka*.

The manager called up this *ba’al tzedoka* and asked, “I see that you have money, because you just gave one of our *talmidim* twenty-six thousand dollars for *hachnossas kalla*, so why did you stop sending money to the *Yeshiva*?”

The man replied, “I don’t have money any more. The money was from my daughter, who is a *kalla*. After her engagement, we discovered that she has an illness. We went to Rav Moshe Feinstein, and asked him whether we must tell the *chosson* and the *mechutonim* about it. Rav Moshe inquired as to the nature of the illness, and then ruled that we don’t need to say anything. ‘However,’ Rav Moshe advised, ‘if your daughter has some money of her own, it is a good idea for her to give it for *hachnossas kalla*. In the merit that she helps another *kalla* go to the *chuppa*, she will also merit going to her *chuppa*.’ Just then, we received Rav Mordechai’s letter, and his request for *hachnossas kalla*. My daughter works, so she had some money saved up. She emptied her account, and immediately sent it to Rav Mordechai, for his daughter’s wedding.” Rav Mordechai had *bitochon*, and received all the money he needed with one letter.

This story is an example of *hashgocha protis*. Immediately after Rav Moshe advised them to donate money for *hachnossas kalla*, Rav Mordechai’s letter arrived in the mail.

(Wellsprings, *Parshas Teruma*, by Boruch Twerski)

HARAV MOSHE FEINSTEIN IN HONOR OF HIS 15TH YAHRTZEIT 13TH ADAR

A strong tree has healthy roots. So too were the roots of R' Moshe Feinstein, strong and special from the start. His father, R' Dovid Feinstein, *zt"l*, was a grandchild of the *Be'er Hagolah* and of the brother of the *Gra*, R' Avrohom. His mother was Feige Gittel, daughter of the *Gaon*, R' Yechiel *zt"l*, rov of Kopolia.

He was born on 7th *Adar*, 5655 (1895), a date which in his own words gave him the feeling that he was obligated to follow in the ways of Moshe Rabbeinu in Torah and in *middos*.

R' Dovid invested much time, money and effort into the education of his son Moshe, asking the *melamed* who usually learned with a group of ten *talmidim* to make Moshe's a group of five and he, R' Dovid, would subsidize the rest of the money from his own pocket. Even before he started to learn in the local *cheder*, R' Moshe learned the entire *Chumash* with his father and by the time he was *bar mitzvah* he was fluent in more than two *sedorim* of *Shas*.

He joined the *yeshiva* of R' Isser Zalman Meltzer in Slutzk at the age of twelve, where he also learned under the tutelage of HaRav Pesach Pruskin, *zt"l*. When the latter opened his own *yeshiva* in Shklov, R' Moshe went with him and recounted that at the grand opening ceremony of the new *yeshiva*, R' Isser Zalman himself was present.

At the age of sixteen, R' Moshe completed *Shas* and *Shulchan Oruch*. During this period he was called to serve in the army. R' Moshe traveled with his father to the *Chofetz Chaim* in Homil to request his blessing. "Heaven had originally decreed that you join the army," said the *Chofetz Chaim*. "But since you took upon yourself wholeheartedly the *ol Torah*, the *ol Malchus* has been removed from you." R' Moshe was never conscripted.

In the year 5676 (1916) he was appointed rov in Uzdah in order to avoid army service and, after two years when the laws were changed he returned to his father in Strobin.

From 5681 (1921) to 5696 (1936) he was rov in Lyuban, after which he decided that this was not the right place to bring up his children and educate them in the Torah's ways. He traveled to Riga and there he obtained visas to go to America.

An impressive delegation met R' Moshe as the ship docked at the port at Ellis Island. He was immediately offered numerous positions as *maggid shiur* in various existing yeshivos, but refused all the offers until, in 5697 (1937), he became a lecturer in *Yeshivas Tiferes Yerushalayim*, where after a year he became head of the *yeshiva*. From this position he disseminated Torah for the rest of his life and his shiurim are printed in his *sefer Dibros Moshe*.

Aside from the *yeshiva*, R' Moshe did not take on any official rabbinical position. Nevertheless, he became a center point, a point to which people turned from all directions from all parts of the world to hear the word of Hashem. Thousands of *teshuvos* in *halochos* were issued by him, many of these being printed in the eight volumes of *Igros Moshe*. There wasn't one matter in the world of Torah and *halochoh* that wasn't brought to him for his opinion.

The *gedolei haTorah* were all in awe of him, as seen in an example: HaRav Yonoson Shteif of Budapest used to put on his hat out of respect for R' Moshe whenever he spoke to him on the telephone!

Towards the end of his life, when the doctors wanted to insert a pacemaker in his heart, R' Moshe only agreed after he had made sure there was no halachic problem involved, that the insertion does not inflict the type of blemish in his body that would render him unfit to be a member of *Sanhedrin* should *Moshiach* come.

On the night of *Taanis Esther*, 5746, R' Moshe was *niftar*. The *levaya* on *Taanis Esther* morning in New York City was like none that New York had never seen; about one hundred and fifty thousand people accompanied R' Moshe on this step of his final journey. Even the American flag on the East Side was flown at half-mast as the non-Jews' sign of mourning that the leader of the Jews had died.

His *oron* was brought to Eretz Yisroel and on *Shushan Purim* in Yerushalayim, hundreds of thousands of Israeli Jews from all walks of life accompanied the *levaya* to *Har Hamenuchos* where he is buried close to the *Gaon of Tchebin*, the *Belzer Rov*, in the portion near his *Rebbe*, R' Isser Zalman Meltzer, *zt"l*.

"R' Moshe." Just that, without any extra titles or descriptions. So was R' Moshe known by all Jews: *Ashkenazim* and *Sephardim*, *Chassidim* and *Misnagdim*, *Rabbonim*, *Roshei Yeshivos* and *Admorim*, *Rabbis* and laymen; all knew R' Moshe and all saw in him their rabbi and leader - whether in a complicated halachic query such as permitting an agunoh to remarry, or a private instruction for a *yeshiva bochur* or an *avreich* - to all the address on the East Side was the place to which to turn.

It is impossible on a single page to describe even a fraction of his greatness in Torah and *halocho*. However, we cannot with this dismiss the whole subject. Let us at least take a glimpse into the sparks of his greatness in *middos* and try to emulate his wonderful and refined ways.

The following fact once slipped out when R' Moshe was trying to impress on his family the right approach to Torah.

As a child of eight he was playing chess with a friend, when he suddenly realized that he was concentrating deeply, so engrossed in his game that it was no longer a form of relaxation but an effort. If it requires effort, isn't it better to use these powers of concentration for Torah learning? From then on, he never played chess again.

He once added that since he was of short build, he was afraid to play with friends his age for they were taller and stronger than he was. "I saw this as *Hashgocho protis* for due to this, I spent more time delving into Torah."

It is no wonder, therefore, that he had finished *Noshim* and *Nezikim* by the time he was eleven years old.

Once, his uncle HaRav Eliyohu Pruzhiner, *zt"l*, came to visit their house and when the eleven year old Moshe entered the room, his uncle arose to his full height, saying, "For a boy who knows two *sedorim*, one must stand up."

His father, R' Dovid immediately sent the boy to bring something for the guest to eat. "When I left the room," R' Moshe would recount, "I caught my father admonishing my uncle: Do you want to ruin my son? To turn him into a *baal gaavah*, *chas vesholom*?"

His words had a profound effect on the young boy who internalized their lesson of humility forever.

In his later years too, when his name was mentioned with awe and respect by all, he remained as unassuming as Moshe Rabbeinu himself, his humility even preventing him from visiting *Eretz Yisroel*. When he came to the Holy Land in 5724 (1964), thousands flocked to his door, individuals with private *sheilos*, *rabbonim* with halachic queries that were rocking the rabbinic world, the brokenhearted to pour out their problems and ask for practical advice - twenty-four hours a day they came in a steady stream.

Upon returning to New York, R' Moshe was heard to say, "To receive all the people who wanted to see me was impossible, yet who am I to turn away a Jew? I can no longer go on a short-term visit to Eretz Yisroel!" He was even absent at the wedding of his grandchild that took place in Yerushalayim for this reason.

His family related a remarkable incident that took place after R' Moshe *paskened* a famous *sheilo* as permitted. There were *rabbonim* who disagreed with his *psak* as is often since we are in *golus*. "We have no *novi* . . ."

A follower of one of these, a man of bad *middos* stood up publicly against R' Moshe's *psak* and even degraded R' Moshe himself. R' Moshe, true to the Torah's command, "You shall not fear any man," did not sway from his *daas Torah*, and held his own.

Not long after, this man was caught by the American authorities for a minor crime. His court case was imminent and he knew that he could receive a very harsh sentence if the court was against him. He turned to R' Moshe, not to apologize and beg forgiveness, for perhaps this happened because he had humiliated a *godol hador*, but to request that the rabbi write a letter in his favor to the judge, as even the non-Jews respected the rabbi's word.

Immediately, Reb Moshe took out a paper and pen and wrote a warm letter which, after reading it, one would think was written about a close friend, and handed it to his adversary saving him from a harsh verdict.

His astonished family explained their wonder: how could he so wholeheartedly help

someone who had besmirched his name only a short while earlier? The wonder of wonders was that Reb Moshe was not working on his middos in writing this letter; he did it naturally and in total innocence did not understand his family's amazement. "If I am in a position to help this man, how can I refuse to extend a helping hand to a fellow Jew in need?"

His wonderful *middos* did not allow him to even slightly harm the feelings of another, even at his personal cost. His sister, the Rebbetzin Chanah, related that when Reb Moshe was *rov* in Lyuban, before he was married, a woman was appointed to cook for him. The food she cooked was literally inedible, but to Reb Moshe, embarrassing a Jewish woman was even more inconceivable and he always finished his meals to the last crumb.

Thinking that the *rov* enjoyed her food so much, the cook served him even larger portions and these too were finished each time. "One day I went to visit my brother and joined him for lunch. I just about tasted the food and almost threw up the bit that I had swallowed, so nauseating was the taste. 'How could you eat such disgusting food?' I asked my brother. His answer was simple. 'I force myself in order to avoid embarrassing the cook.'

Reb Moshe once told his sister that she did him a great favor that day by stuffing all the food into her bag so at least one day he didn't have to eat it.

On another occasion a *talmid* of Reb Moshe took him home in his car. He opened the door of the passenger seat and Reb Moshe got out, whereupon the *talmid* slammed the door on his hand. The pain was unbearable, but Reb Moshe contained himself with superhuman control in order not to alert the *talmid*, who would surely be mortified by his mistake.

Indeed, how appropriate are the words uttered by Reb Moshe himself, not long before he was *niftar*: "As far as I know, to the furthest extent of my memory, I never harmed anyone, nor did I ever hurt a person's feelings."

This short, concise admission coming from the holy mouth of Reb Moshe himself is sufficient testimony and the greatest *mussar* book for us. <http://www.chareidi.org/archives5761/tezave/features.htm>

Rav Zev Wolf Ohr Hameir (Adar 14)

REGAINING THE PRIVILEGE TO SEE THE REBBE

In Zhitomir lived a *mohel* (one who performs circumcisions) and *shochet* (kosher slaughterer) who was a close follower of the well-known *Rebbe*, Rav Ze'ev Wolf of Zhitomir, one of the inner circle of disciples of the *Maggid of Mezritch*. Once he was invited to be the *mohel* at a *bris mila* (circumcision ceremony) in a nearby village. Since the *bris* was scheduled to take place early on Sunday morning, he decided to travel there on *Motzo'ei Shabbos*. On the way, however, he got lost when the path went through a dark forest.

After a long time wandering about, he saw in the distance a shining light. Immediately he set out in that direction. As he got closer, he saw a house. He went in, and there was a crowd of men sitting around a long table, with a distinguished-looking old man at the head. The latter was expounding Torah, and everyone was listening intently. The *Chassid* listened too, and was quite impressed by the brilliant insights.

Shortly after, several of the listeners came over to him and said, "Nu? How do you like our *Rebbe's* words of Torah? Do you approve?"

"Yes!" answered the *Chassid* enthusiastically. Several times now they approached him, and the same dialogue was repeated. Finally, he left and found his way.

The *mohel's* custom was to go to his *Rebbe's* house every day, in order to gaze at his holy face. That Sunday, upon his return, he went directly there. This time, however, the *Rebbe's* attendant did not allow him to enter. Then, on Monday and Tuesday, he again refused to let him in. Surprised, the *Chassid* finally asked him, "What is going on? Why won't you allow me to see the *Rebbe*?"

"Because the *Rebbe* told me not to," replied the attendant.

"Oh, no!" exclaimed the *Chassid* in dismay. "Why not? Surely there is a reason. Please, have mercy on me! Ask the *Rebbe* what I have done. What is my sin to deserve such a terrible punishment - to be denied access to the *Rebbe*?"

The attendant went in, and soon returned with a reply. "The *Rebbe* said to tell you that the house in the forest belongs to the Evil Forces. Since you approved and accepted their words, you became connected to them. Therefore, he cannot admit you in his presence."

The *Chassid* was crushed. "But the *Rebbe* must know how I can rectify this," he said to the attendant. "Please, please go in again and ask him what I should do."

Back came the answer, "You have to go again on a *Motzo'ei Shabbos* to that forest and find that house. Then, each time they expound Torah, respond, 'Feh, feh, feh,' and spit. That is how you can escape their clutches."

The *Chassid* set out that very *Motzo'ei Shabbos*. He found the house in the forest, and the same people were sitting around the same table with the same elder again saying amazing words of Torah. Again, the students approached him to ask what he thought. Although the depth and creativity of the Torah were overwhelming, he thought of his beloved *Rebbe* and his wretched exile from him and regained control of himself. "Feh, feh, feh! Impure, impure, impure!" he screamed and spat emphatically.

Everyone froze. There was absolute silence. All heads turned toward him, and a few approached him menacingly. "Wait," their leader said to them. He addressed the *Chassid*, "Who are you to dare to speak thus?"

"I am a follower of the holy *Rebbe*, Rav Ze'ev Wolf of Zhitomir." The leader turned again to his ranks.

"Bring the record books of our Torahs," he exclaimed. "All the Torahs that were spoken and written with improper, self-serving intentions are contained there. If his *Rebbe's* name appears in our books, this follower of his is ours to do with as we wish. If not, we have to let him go."

Two huge tomes were brought out. Every page was turned and examined. Nowhere appeared the name of Rav Ze'ev Wolf of Zhitomir. Incredibly, he had never once wavered from learning Torah purely for the sake of Hashem and His commandments.

The *mohel* left the house in the forest in peace, trembling in excited anticipation of his

return to Zhitomir, and to once again be privileged to see the *Rebbe's* holy face.

(Source: Living Jewish: Translated and adapted by Rav Yerachmiel Tilles from Rishimas Devorim Vol I - Rav Yehuda Chitrik's four-volume series. [I also heard an almost identical story told by someone who heard it from a Vizhnitz Rebbe, but the Rebbe in the story was Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk, not the Zhitomirer. I added some details from that lengthier version. —Y.T.]

Segulos Yisroel



SEGULOS FOR PARSHAS TETZAVEH & PURIM & PARSHAS ZACHOR

Shovavim

See Appendix Below

Segulah For Taanis Esther

The *Kav HaYashar* tells us that on *Taanis Esther* we should recite *Tehillim* Chapter 22 and pour out hearts before *Hashem* and mention the merits of Mordechai and Esther just as *Hashem* opened the Heavenly gates of mercy for them and accepted their prayers so should he do so for us as well.

את הפסוקים הללו יש לומר כל יום בימי השובבים :

לקט עצות קלות של הרב מוצפי מדברי רבותינו הקדמונים
כדי לכפר על העוונות בימים גדולים אלו :

(1) לְעוֹלָם יְהוָה דְּבָרָךְ נִצָּב בַּשָּׁמַיִם: 12 פעמים (מכפר על דיבורים אסורים)

(2) אֹר זָרַע לְצַדִּיק וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֵב שְׂמוֹנָה: 17 פעמים (מכפר על העוונות)

(3) וְהוּא רְחוּם יְכַפֵּר עֲוֹן וְלֹא יִשְׁזוּת וְהִרְבָּה לְהָשִׁיב אָפוֹ וְלֹא יַעִיר כָּל זָמַתּוֹ: 3 פעמים

(4) בֵּן פָּרַת יוֹסֵף בֵּן פָּרַת עָלִי-עֵין בְּנוֹת צְעָה עָלִי-שׁוֹר:
וַיְמַרְרוּהוּ וְרָבוּ וַיִּשְׁטַמְּהוּ בְּעַלֵּי זֹצִים:
וְהָשִׁיב בְּאִתָּן קִשְׁתּוֹ וַיִּפְּזוּ זָרְעוֹ יָדָיו מִיַּדֵּי אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב מִשָּׁם רֵעָה
אֲבֵן יִשְׂרָאֵל:
מֵאֵל אֲבִיךָ וַיַּעֲזֹרְךָ וְאֵת שַׁדֵּי וַיְבָרְכֶךָ בְּרַכַּת שָׁמַיִם מֵעַל בְּרַכַּת
תְּהוֹם רַבְּצַת תַּנּוֹת בְּרַכַּת שָׁדַיִם וְרוֹזִים:
בְּרַכַּת אֲבִיךָ גָּבְרוּ עַל-בְּרַכַּת הַזֵּרִי עַד-תַּאֲוֹת גְּבַעַת עוֹלָם תְּהִלָּין
לְרֵאשׁ יוֹסֵף וּלְקַדְקַד נָזִיר אֲזוּזִיו: 3 פעמים

(5) לומר את השם יוסף. 24 פעמים

(6) לומר המילה יסוד. 24 פעמים

(7) לכוון בתפילה בברכת מקבץ נדוזי עמו ישראל שהקב"ה יוזיר את כל
העוונות למקומם ואת כל הזוטאים שזוטא למקומם העליון.

(8) לומר וידוי בכוונה.

(9) מעל הכל אמירת *קריאת שבע עשרה במטה בכוונה* מכפרת את כל עוונותיו
של אדם.

סגולה לתענית אסתר

ביום תענית אסתר יאמר פרק כ"ב בתהילים, ישפוך שיחו לפני השם ויבקש בקשתו, ויזכיר את מרדכי"
"ואסתר אשר בזכותם נעתר הקדוש ברוך הוא, ויפתח לו שערי רחמים ויתקבל תפילתו"



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Segulah for Taanis Esther



The Kav HaYashar tells us that on Taanis Esther we should recite Tehillim Chapter 22 and pour out hearts before Hashem and mention the merits of Mordechai and Esther just as Hashem opened the Heavenly gates of mercy for them and accepted their prayers so should he do so for us as well.

מובא בספר "קב הישר": "ביום תענית אסתר יאמר פרק כ"ב בתהילים, ישפוך שיחו לפני השם ויבקש בקשתו, ויזכיר את מרדכי ואסתר אשר בזכותם נעתר הקדוש ברוך הוא, ויפתח לו שערי "רחמים ויתקבל תפילתו

תהלים פרק כב

- (א) לְמַנְצָחַ עַל אֵילַת הַשְּׁחַר מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד ()
- (ב) אֵלֵי אֵלֵי לָמָּה עֲזַבְתָּנִי רְחוֹק מִיִּשְׁוּעָתִי דַּבְרֵי שְׁאֲגָתִי ()
- (ג) אֱלֹהֵי אֶקְרָא יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה תַעֲנֶנּוּ וְלִילָה וְלֹא דוֹמְיָה לִי ()
- (ד) וְאַתָּה קְדוֹשׁ יוֹשֵׁב תְּהַלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל ()
- (ה) בָּדַד בְּטַחוֹ אֲבַתִּינוּ בְּטַחוֹ וְתַפְלִטְמוֹ ()
- (ו) אֱלֹהִים זַעֲקוּ וְנִמְלָטוּ בָדַד בְּטַחוֹ וְלֹא בּוֹשׁוּ ()
- (ז) וְאַנְכִי תוֹלַעַת וְלֹא אִישׁ חֲרַפְתָּ אָדָם וּבְזוֹי עָם ()
- (ח) כָּל רֹאֵי יִלְעָגוּ לִי יִפְטִירוּ בְּשִׁפְהָ יִנְיְעוּ רֹאשׁ ()
- (ט) גַּל אֵל ה' יִפְלִטְהוּ יִצְיִלְהוּ כִּי חִפֵּץ בּוֹ ()
- (י) כִּי אַתָּה גֹחִי מִבְּטָן מִבְּטִיחִי עַל שְׂדֵי אֲמִי ()
- (יא) עֲלִידָה הִשְׁלַכְתִּי מִרְחֹם מִבְּטָן אֲמִי אֵלֵי אַתָּה ()
- (יב) אֵל תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי כִּי צָרָה קְרוּבָה כִּי אִין עוֹזֵר ()
- (יג) סִבְבוּנֵי פְרִים רַבִּים אֲבִירֵי בָשׁוֹן כְּתִירוּנֵי ()
- (יד) פָּצוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם אֲרִיִּה טִרְרָ וְשֹׁאֵג ()
- (טו) כַּמֵּים נִשְׁפַּכְתִּי וְהִתְפָּרְדוּ כָּל עֲצָמוֹתַי הִזָּה לִבִּי כַּדּוֹנָג נִמְסַ בְּתוֹךְ מַעֲי ()
- (טז) יָבֵשׁ כַּחֲרָשׁ כַּחֲי וּלְשׁוֹנֵי מִדְּבַק מְלִקּוֹחֵי וְלַעֲפֹר מוֹת תִּשְׁפָּתֵנִי ()
- (יז) כִּי סִבְבוּנֵי כְּלָבִים עֲדַת מְרַעִים הַקִּיפּוּנֵי כְּאֵרֵי יְדֵי וְרִגְלֵי ()
- (יח) אֲסַפֵּר כָּל עֲצָמוֹתַי הֵמָּה יִבִּיטוּ יִרְאוּ בִי ()
- (יט) יִחַלְקוּ בְּגֵדֵי לָהֶם וְעַל לְבוּשֵׁי יִפִּילוּ גוֹרָל ()
- (כ) וְאַתָּה יִקּוֹק אֵל תִּרְחַק אֵילוֹתַי לְעֲזָרְתִּי חוֹשָׁה ()
- (כא) הַצִּילָה מִחֲרָב נִפְשִׁי מִיַּד כְּלָב יַחֲדִיתִי ()
- (כב) הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי מִפִּי אֲרִיִּה וּמִקְרָנֵי רַמִּים עֲנִיתָנִי ()
- (כג) אֲסַפְּרָה שְׁמִידָה לְאֶחָי בְּתוֹךְ קִהָל אֲהַלְלָךָ ()
- (כד) יִרְאֵי ה' הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל זֶרַע יַעֲקֹב כַּבְּדוּהוּ וְגוּרוֹ מִמֶּנּוּ כָּל זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל ()
- (כה) כִּי לֹא בָזָה וְלֹא שִׁקֵּץ עֲנוֹת עֲנִי וְלֹא הִסְתִּיר פָּנָיו מִמֶּנּוּ וּבִשְׁוֹעוֹ אֵלָיו שָׁמַע ()
- (כו) מֵאַתָּה תִּהְלֵתִי בְּקִהָל רַב נְדָרֵי אֲשַׁלֵּם נֶגֶד יִרְאֵי ()
- (כז) יֹאכְלוּ עֲגוּוֹם וְיִשְׁבְּעוּ יִהְלְלוּ יִקּוֹק דְרָשׁוּ יַחֲי לְבַבְכֶם לְעַד ()
- (כח) יִזְכְּרוּ וְיִשְׁבּוּ אֵל יִקּוֹק כָּל אֲפָסֵי אֶרֶץ וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְפָנֶיךָ כָּל מְשַׁפְּחוֹת גּוֹיִם ()

- (כט) כִּי לֹהַ' הַמְּלוּכָה וּמִשָּׁל בְּגוֹיִם ()
(ל) אָכְלוּ וּישְׁתַּחֲווּ כָּל דָּשָׁנֵי אֶרֶץ לְפָנָיו יִכְרְעוּ כָּל יוֹרְדֵי עֶפְרַיִם וְנִפְשׁוּ לֹא חֲזִיקָה ()
(לא) זָרַע יַעֲבֹדְנוּ יִסְפָּר לֵאדֹנָי לְדוֹר ()
(לב) יבאו ויגידו צדקתו לעם נולד כי עשה)



לעילוי נשמת לזכר עולם יהי' צדיק



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