

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 Nitzavim & Parshas Vayeilech & Elul

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ר' זכרי' שמעון הכהן בן יצחק

One For All And All For One - Kol Yisroel Areivim Zeh Lozeh

"You are all standing today before Hashem, your G-d, the heads of your tribes, your elders and your officers, every Jewish person. Your children, your women and the ger among you, from the wood choppers to the water drawers" (29:9-10).



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The Ohr HaChaim questions the purpose of this *pasuk*. What statement or message is it meant to convey? Why does the *pasuk* specifically mention the different people, such as the heads of tribes and the children – wasn't it sufficient to say "everyone"? There was already a covenant established by the words (*Devorim* 28:69) *eileh divrei habris*; why not just precede that *pasuk* with the first *pasuk* of *Nitzovim*, so that they too would be included in that *bris*?

The Ohr HaChaim answers these questions by explaining that Moshe's purpose was to have all of *Klal Yisrael* enter into a covenant called *Arvus*, to act as guarantors for one another, whereby each person would help his fellow and prevent him from transgressing the *mitzvos*. By making them guarantors, they would now be responsible for each other; such responsibility carries with it consequences and repercussions so that they would be more likely to care about the actions of their fellows and see to it that they protect their well-being and observance.

The testimony to this, says the Ohr HaChaim, is the *pasuk* later on in *Devorim* 29:28: "The hidden things are for Hashem, our G-d – but the revealed are for us". This *pasuk* refers to a guarantee given between *areivim* for each other's behavior or misbehavior. This is not connected to the aforementioned *bris* at the end of *Parshas Ki Sovo*; that covenant was a promise that they themselves made and would be held accountable for, whereas this new *bris* was for each person to be responsible and held accountable for his Jewish brother.

Now we understand why the *pasuk* speaks this way – counting and appointing. *Nitzovim* means "appoint" as in *Rus* 2:5. The *pasuk* is appointing trustees and guarantors over each group of people to share responsibility and accountability for their respective groups that they have been appointed over. "All of you" – these words in the *pasuk* refer to the collective burden we all share and carry, as it says in *Shabbos* 54b – whoever has the ability to protest against wrongdoing and refrains from rebuke is held accountable for those wrongdoings and criminal acts of misbehavior and sin. Whoever can protest against the citizens of his city, or members of his household, or even the misdeeds of the entire world – whoever has the influence to rebuke yet refrains is held accountable for their sphere of influence. This is why the *pasuk* singles out specific groups and their heads and

leaders to delineate accountability and responsibility for the leaders and their respective spheres of influence. The *Gedolim* are accountable for all of *Klal Yisrael*, the tribal heads for their tribes, the elders and officers over their large extended families and *kol ish Yisrael*, each common man over his family and household. This is why the *pasuk* ends with the children, women and *geirim*, because whereas we are responsible for all of them and accountable for them (*Nida* 13), they are not held accountable for us: children because they are minors, women because they hold no public office for reason of *tznius* (modesty) and *geirim* because they are converts and hold no public leadership position due to their status as newcomers (see *Yevomos* 45b).

Stories on the Parsha & Elul



The Two Moshiachs

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

When Rav Chaim ben Attar, *mechaber* of the *Ohr HaChaim*, arrived in Teverya, he went to the *Bais Medrash* and found a group of *talmidim* sitting together and studying under their master and teacher Rav Chaim Abulafia, who sat teaching them Torah and studying with them, supported by many cushions and pillows propped on either side for his comfort. When the *Ohr HaChaim* saw all the cushions and pillows, he said quietly to himself in wonder, “Does the Torah deserve this? [How can he relax and disrespect the *Torah* like that?]”

Rav Chaim Abulafia saw the *Ohr HaChaim* and immediately called out in a loud voice, “The *Chacham Chaim* has come to us!” When the *Ohr HaChaim*

approached, Rav Chaim Abulafia rose to his feet and stood to greet him, reciting the *pasuk*, "Arise before your elders - *mipnei seiva sokum*," and they sat and studied together *sugyas* of *Shas*. Rav Chaim ben Attar was amazed at Rav Chaim Abulafia's great scholarship, erudition and breadth of knowledge in Torah. Then Rav Chaim Abulafia told the *Ohr HaChaim*, "The Torah does deserve this and requires it, due to my advanced age and weakness!" The *Ohr HaChaim* then asked his forgiveness.

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

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

A True Story Regarding Rav Eliyahu Baal Shem Of Chelm

Rav Moshe Duvid Shtrum of Tarnov once told how Rav Shimeleh Zelichover *HY"D* the famed *mashgiach* of Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin once entered the *beis medrash* of Rav Aryeh Leibush of Sanz and he asked the *yungeleit* that were gathered there a question:

He asked them "why is that Rav Aryeh Leib does not recite *LeDovid Hashem Ori*, whereas in *Shinuva* (the son of tthe *Divrei Chaim*) they do recite it?! (the *Divrei Chaim* also did not recite it) they had no answer and he so told them "I will tell

you a true story regarding Rav Eliyahu Baal Shem of Chelm:

"There was a decree of expulsion from the local squire, he was childless and he ordered all the Jews there to pray for him to have children and if they failed he would expel them all from his environs. Rav Eliyahu Baal Shem promised him a son within 12 months." The holy Rav Yisrael Baal Shem Tov retold this tale to his disciples and he told them "don't think that this came easily to Rav Eliyahu Baal Shem. At first Rav Eliyahu turned to the forces of holiness and when this failed he turned to the forces of darkness from the other side when this too failed, he laid his own life down on the line and turned to the leader of all the forces of evil himself," the Baal Shem Tov concluded "and as a punishment for forcing the hand of Heaven as it were, so to speak, don't assume that he was punished by sixty flames, instead he was told that he would lose all his *nefesh*, *ruach* and *neshama*, however since he laid his life down and self sacrificed himself to save the Jews, instead the heavenly decree was that two of the enacted prayers that he had instituted and they were: the recitation of *LeDovid Hashem Ori* and the second was the recitation of *KeGavna*."

Rav Shimeleh Zelichover concluded: "it is known for example the Rebbe Reb Meilech of Lizensk did not recite *KeGavna* whereas the Apta Rav the Ohev Yisroel did not recite *leDovid Hashem Ori* (in this manner the talmidei HaBaal Shem kept up the tradition of reciting these tefilos enacted by Rav Eliyahu Baal Shem while still the decree was fulfilled)."

(cited from Nezer HaKodesh Minhagei Ropshitz pg147)

Gedolim Be'misasm Yoser



**Yahrzeits for the 23rd of Elul ~ Begins Friday Night
(09-05-2026)**



Rav Yisroel Derbarimdiker of Piko (5558 / 1798 - 228th Yahrzeit)



Rav Uri Klughaft of Strelisk - Imrei Kodosh (5586 / 1826 - 200th Yahrzeit)

Rav Uri was born in 5517/1757 in a small village near Yanov. His father, Rav Pinchas, was given a *berocha* by the Mezritcher Maggid to merit a son who "will light up the Jewish world". In 5552/1792, after the tragic murder of his Rebbe, Rav Shlomo, *Hy"d*, Rav Uri returned to Lvov and opened his own court. He later moved from Lvov to Strelisk, by the name of which town he became known. On the 23rd of *Elul*, 5586/1826, Rav Uri returned his *neshoma* to its Creator.



Rav Moshe Zev Wolf Lipshitz of Vilna (5594 / 1834 - 192nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef Zev Halberstam of Chrzanow (5603 / 1843 - 183rd Yahrzeit)

Rav Yosef Zev was the son of Rav Dovid Halberstam of Kshanov and a grandson of the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz. He was greatly beloved by his grandfather Rav Chaim of Sanz, and he succeeded his father in Keshanov. He passed away on the 23rd of *Elul*.



Rav Yitzchok Menachem Dancyger of Alexander - Akeidas Yitzchok (5703 / 1943 - 83rd Yahrzeit)

In תרפ"ד, he was appointed rebbe. Rav Yitzchok Menachem continued the path of *ahavas Yisroel* as championed by the Vorker Rebbe from which the Alexander Dynasty hails. As rebbe, his influence was immense. His answers to questions were clear and sharp. He established the Alexander Yeshiva which eventually developed into a network across all of Poland named Beis Yisroel named after his grandfather, author of *Yismach Yisroel*. Rav Yitzchok Menachem was lost in the Holocaust in Treblinka, on the 23rd *Elul*, 1942 (תש"ב).



Rav Meir Yehuda Getz - Rav of the Kosel, Rosh Yeshivas Beit El (5755 / 1995 - 31st Yahrzeit)

Rav Meir Yehuda Getz, Rav of the Kosel and Rosh Yeshivas Beit El (1924-1995).



Rav Nachman Dovid Dubinky (5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)

Rav Nachman Dovid Dubinky (1911-2006). He learned in *Yeshivas Eitz Chaim* for decades. Rav Nachman lived in Bais Yisrael and a few other places, before settling in Botei Machsa when he and his Rebbetzin got married in 1932, after which they moved to Botei Natan where he lived for the next 70 years. Rav Nachman's occupation through the years was sitting and learning Torah.

**YAHREZITS FOR THE 24TH OF ELUL ~ BEGINS SATURDAY NIGHT
(09-06-2026)**



Chavakuk Hanavi ben Isha Hashunamis - Chabakuk, Habakkuk

The Zohar (Beshalach 44a) teaches us that Chabakuk was the son of the Shunamite that Elisha HaNavi revived him from death see *Melachim* II 4:16-17, 32-35. His tzion on Route 65 is close to Rabbeinu Bechaya in Kadarim, Israel.



Rav Shmuel Halberstam (5554 / 1794 - 232nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef Moshe of Zolozitz - Bris Avram (5575 / 1815 - 211th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yosef Moshe was born in 1735 (תצ"ה). He served as Maggid in Mesharim Zeborov and afterwards in Zolozitz. Although he was a sickly man, he lived a life of *perishus* (sanctity and purity). He passed away on the 23th of *Elul*, תקע"ה (1815)).



Rav Yosef Babad of Tarnipol - Minchas Chinuch (5634 / 1874 - 152nd Yahrzeit)

Rav Yosef was born on 24 *Elul* in the year 5562/ב'תקס"ב. Rav Yosef served as Chief Rabbi in the towns of Huskov, Zabraz, Sinyatin and Horodenka, and in the year 5617/ז'תרי"ז he was appointed Chief Rabbi of Tarnipol, a position which he held until his final days. He passed away on his birthday, 24 *Elul* in the year 5634 ד'תרל"ד.



Rav Avrohom Yosef of Zshilin - Toldos Avrohom Yosef, Orah V'Simcha (5678 / 1918 - 108th Yahrzeit)

Rav Avrohom Yosef was the son of Rav Aryeh Yehuda Leibush of Turbin. Rav Dovid Moshe of Tshortshkov appointed him as a rebbe in תרנ"ה. All his life, he traveled from place to place. He made his way from Bishtin to Kolomaya to Tarinow to Zhelin, each time, leaving a spiritual legacy in his wake. Later, he spent time in Keshanov, Tshebin and, in his later years, Cracow. He conducted himself with sanctity in all that he did. He was known as a miracle worker. He passed away in Cracow between *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur* ט"תרע"ט. Others says he passed away on the 24th of *Elul*, תרע"ה.



Rav Yisroel Meir HaKohen Kagan of Radin - Chofetz Chaim, Mishna Berura (5693 / 1933 - 93rd Yahrzeit)

HaRav Yisrael Meir (Kagan) Poupko (1838 - 1933) known popularly as The Chofetz Chaim was an influential Eastern European rabbi, Halakhist, posek, and ethicist whose works continue to be widely influential in Jewish life. As his reputation grew, students from all over Europe flocked to him and by 1869 his house became known as the Radin Yeshiva. In addition to his Yeshiva, the Chofetz Chaim was very active in Jewish causes.



Rav Bentzion Meir Chai Uziel - Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel (5713 / 1953 - 73rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yechezkel Abramsky - Dayan in Slutsk & London, Chazon Yechezkel (5736 / 1976 - 50th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yechezkel Abramsky was born in a small shtetl near Vilna. He learned in the Novardok Yeshiva, and received *semicha* at eighteen from Rav Yechiel Mechel Epstein, the *Aruch HaShulchon*. Later he learned in Telshe and in the Ramailles Yeshiva in Vilna. For a while he served as *Rosh Mesivta* in the Lubavitcher Yeshiva; from there he went on to become a Rav in Smuliyen, and then in Smulevitch, near Minsk, where he stayed nine years. In 5683/1923, he became Rav in the city of Slutsk. He traveled to London, where he became Rav of the Machzikei Hadas kehilla. Later, he became *Rosh Bais Din* in London. In 5711/1951, he reached Eretz Yisrael and settled in Bayit Vegan, Yerushalayim. Rav Yechezkel was *niftar* at the age of ninety on the twenty-fourth of *Elul* 5736/1976.



Rav Chaim Malikovski (5753 / 1993 - 33rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yitzchok Flusberg (5764 / 2004 - 22nd Yahrzeit)

Rav Yitzchak Flusberg (1941-2004). Born in Tel Aviv, he learned at the Chevron Yeshiva in Yerushalayim under Rav Meir Chadash. For a number of years, he served as Rosh Yeshiva at Tiferes Hakarmel in Chaifa. He was among the founders of Gerrer shtieblech in Golders Green in London and in Toronto, and he was one of the primary founders of the Mifal Chessed organization of Ger in Eretz Yisrael.

Yahrzeits for the 25th of Elul ~ Begins Sunday Night (09-07-2026)



Tanna Elozor (3863 / 103 - 1,923rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yechiel Michel of Zlotshuv - Mayim Rabim (5546 / 1786 - 240th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Yechiel Michel of Zlotchov (25 *Elul* 1786), son of Rabbi Yitzchak of Drohovitch, was introduced by his father to the Baal Shem Tov at a young age. He also became a disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch. It is said that his sermons consistently aroused his listeners to repentance. Many of his teachings are collected in *Mayim Rabim*.



Rav Dovid Halberstam of Chrzanow - Darchei Dovid (5653 / 1893 - 133rd Yahrzeit)

He was born in Rudnick in the year, 1818 (תקע"ח), but others say תקפ"א. In תרי"א, he was appointed rav in Kshanov (Chrzanow, Poland) and his father arrived at his inauguration to crown him as rav. He exchanged *Shu"t* (responsa), with his father who described him as "a great luminary-- sharp and a master, a pious chassid." From the year, תרל"ו, Rav Dovid tried to hide his greatness, but Chassidim flocked to him from far and wide and he had no choice but to accede and serve as their leader.



Rav Aharon Abuchatzaira (5661 / 1901 - 125th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yosef Goldman - Av Beis Din of Neupest (5698 / 1938 - 88th Yahrzeit)

The son of Yitzchok and Chaya Goldman. He served as Rav of Neupest for 32 years. He passed away on 25 Elul 1938/5698 תרצ"ח and was laid to rest in Neupest in 1967/5727, and when the local *bais hachaim* was transferred, he was reinterred in Budapest.



Rav Avrohom Horowitz - Orchos Rabbeinu, Devar Halacha (5764 / 2004 - 22nd Yahrzeit)

Rav Avraham Horowitz, *talmid muvhak* of the *Steipler Gaon*. He learned at Novardok Yeshiva in Tel Aviv, then at Eitz Chaim in Yerushalayim.

**YAHARZEITS FOR THE 26TH OF ELUL ~ BEGINS MONDAY NIGHT
(09-08-2026)**



Rav Gershon Shaul Yomtov Lipman Heller - Tosfos Yom Tov (5414 / 1654 - 372nd Yahrzeit)

(Some say the Yahrzeit is on the 6th of Elul)

Born in Wallerstein, Bavaria in the year 5339 (1579), Rav Yom Tov was orphaned from his father before he was born and raised by his grandfather, Rav Moshe Wallerstein. At age eighteen, in 5357, he was appointed as a *dayan* and *rosh yeshiva* in Prague, in the *beis din* of the *Maharal*. His fame spread throughout the entire world as a *gaon*. At age thirty, he authored his magnum opus, the *Tosafos Yom Tov* on *Shas Mishnayos*. In *MarCheshvan* of 5385, he was appointed *Av Beis Din* of Nikolsberg, Moravia, and on *Rosh Chodesh Adar* of 5385 to *Av Beis Din* Vienna. In *Teves* of 5387 (1627), Rav Heller was appointed *Av Beis Din* of Prague. The *Tosafos Yom Tov* passed away on the 6th of *Elul* (Some say the 26th *Elul*).



Rav Eliyahu Tzarfati - Eliyahu Zuta (5565 / 1805 - 221st Yahrzeit)



Rav Elyakim Getzil of Ostrog (5584 / 1824 - 202nd Yahrzeit)

Rav Getzil, the son of Rav Yaakov Yosef of Ostrog ("Rav Yeivi"), was a tzaddik who tried to keep his *mitzvos* hidden from public view. Although he himself lived in utmost poverty, he donated vast sums to charity. Because of his great acts of *tzedaka*, he was venerated in Ostrog for many generations. Rav Getzil passed away 26 *Elul* in the year 5584/ד'תקפ"ד.



Meir Avrohom - Av Beis Din of Tshaba (5589 / 1829 - 197th Yahrzeit)



Rav Chaim Pinto of Mogador (5605 / 1845 - 181st Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hagadol ("the Great"), a descendant of Rabbi Yoshiyahu Pinto--the "*Rif*" of *Ein Yaakov*--was born in Agadir, Morocco on the 6th Hilula of Rabbi Chaim Ben Attar. At age 20, he became the head rabbinical judge in Mogador, exercising this function for more than 70 years. The greatest Torah scholars of the generation esteemed him, and Jews and Muslims alike venerated him.



Rav Shmuel Abba Zikelinsky of Zichlin - Lahav Aish (5639 / 1879 - 147th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Shmuel Abba Zikelinsky of Zichlin [26 *Elul* 5639] was an important disciple of Rabbi Simcha Bunim of Pshischah, and subsequently a Rebbe in his own right with a large following.



Rav Aharon Perlow of Koydinov - Nireh Or (5657 / 1897 - 129th Yahrzeit)

Rav Aharon was appointed rebbe in תרל"א at the age of thirty-two. He was a *gadol b'Torah* and a highly organized individual. As the leader of the chassidus, he brought Koidanow to its peak in terms of spirituality and numbers of chassidim. He passed away on the 26th of *Elul*, 1897 (תרנ"ז).



Rav Amrom Blum - Beis She'arim (5667 / 1907 - 119th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yitzchok Alfia (5715 / 1955 - 71st Yahrzeit)

**YAHREITS FOR THE 27TH OF ELUL ~ BEGINS TUESDAY NIGHT
(09-09-2026)**



Rav Moshe Segal of Lvov - Rosh Hagolah U'manhig Ha'medinah (5479 / 1719 - 307th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yitzchok Chiyus - Rav in Skolya, Zera Yitzchok (5486 / 1726 - 300th Yahrzeit)



Rav Nachman of Radvil (5556 / 1796 - 230th Yahrzeit)



Rav Nosson HaKohen Adler (Katz) - Av Beis Din of Frankfurt (5560 / 1800 - 226th Yahrzeit)

Born Sunday 10 Teves 5502 in Frankfurt. A descendant of the author of the *Yalkut Shimoni*. He was a disciple of the Pnei Yehoshua and afterwards of Rav Moshe Rapf, but his Rebbe Muvhak was Rav David Teveli Schiff HaKohen who served afterwards as *Av Beis Din* in London. He never recorded any of his Torah or *chiddushim* because he never forgot any of his learning. He passed away on 27 Elul תק"ס.



Rav Yaakov Aryeh Leib Shapira of Kavla (5598 / 1838 - 188th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yaakov Aryeh, son of Rav Mordechai of Neshchiz, was born in 5539/ט. In the year, תק"ס, he was appointed as Rav of Kovil at the young age of 21. From Kovil he moved to Neshchiz and then Trisk. He passed away on 27 Elul in the year 5598/ח תקצ"ח (some say 5599/ט תקצ"ט).



Rav Sholom Rokeach of Belz - Sar Shalom of Belz, Midbar Kadesh (5615 / 1855 - 171st Yahrzeit)

Rav Shalom was born in Brody 1779 תקלט (others say 1783 תקמג). The Sar Shalom's father Rav Elazar Rokeach was a *talmid muvhak* of Rav Chaim Sanzer of the *Kloiz* of *Chachmei Brody*. After the year תקעה when the Chozeh, the Kozhnitzer Maggid and the Rymanover passed away Rav Sholom continued to subjugate himself before others and travelled to Rav Uri of Strelisk. After the year תקעה when the Chozeh, the Kozhnitzer Maggid and the Rymanover passed away Rav Sholom continued to subjugate himself before others and travelled to Rav Uri of Strelisk. He passed away 27 Elul 1855 תרט"ו.



Rav Yehuda Eizik Eliezer Hirschowitz - Kerem Beis Yisroel (5631 / 1871 - 155th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yitzchok Eizik Eliezer Hirschowitz was born in 5631/1871 in Libau (Liepaja), Latvia. His parents were Rav Aryeh and Liba Devora. In 5666/1906, he became Rav of Talsen in Kurland, where he had grown up. He remained until he was forced to flee in World War I, ending up in Minsk. Part of the Radin Yeshiva had also taken refuge in Minsk, and the Chofetz Chaim asked him to teach them. In Lithuania, he headed Yeshiva Ohr Yisrael of Slabodka. Later he moved back to Telshe as principal of Yavneh Teachers' College for Men. In 5686/1926, he became Rav of Wirballen. On the twenty-seventh of Elul 5701/1941, Rav Yitzchok was taken by the Nazis from the famous *Talmud Torah*. All sang *Adon Olam* together as they marched to their deaths.



Rav Binyomim Tzvi Auerbach (5633 / 1873 - 153rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Nosson Nota Segal Yungreiss (5689 / 1929 - 97th Yahrzeit)

One of the first Hungarian Rabbonim to become a follower of Rav Chaim of Sanz.



Rav Yosef Shmuel Moskowitz (5691 / 1931 - 95th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yehuda Zev Levovitz (5770 / 2010 - 16th Yahrzeit)

**Yahrzeits for the 28th of Elul ~ Begins Wednesday Night
(09-10-2026)**



Shaul Hamelech & his 3 sons (2882 / -879 - 2,904th Yahrzeit)



Rabbeinu Boruch Albali (4886 / 1126 - 900th Yahrzeit)



Rav Saadya (5334 / 1574 - 452nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Moshe Maggid Rivlin (5606 / 1846 - 180th Yahrzeit)



**Rav Nosson Fryde of Tzehlim - Av Beis Din of Tcharna, Tzemach Hasodeh
(5617 / 1857 - 169th Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Yechiel HaLevi Rottenberg - Reb Yechiel'ish (5688 / 1928 - 98th
Yahrzeit)**



**Rav Chaim Yehuda Leib Auerbach - Rosh Yeshivas Shaar Ha'Shomayim,
Chacham Lev (5714 / 1954 - 72nd Yahrzeit)**

Rav Chaim Leib was born in 5647/1887 and grew up in Yerushalayim. At the age of eighteen he received *semicha* from Rav Chaim Berlin of Yerushalayim. Rav Chaim Leib's thirst for Torah was unquenchable. He opened a Yeshiva for *Toras Ho'Ari*, which they called *Sha'ar HaShomayim*. Rav Chaim Leib stood at the helm of the Yeshiva his entire life. Rav Chaim Leib suffered two heart attacks. After the second one, he suffered for some time, and was niftar at the age of sixty-eight on the 28th of *Elul* 5614/1954.



**Rav Aryeh Carmell - Published Michtav M'Eliyohu, Strive for Truth (5766 /
2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)**

Rav Aryeh Carmell (1917-2006) was born in England. At the age of 16 Aryeh was sent to study under Rav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler and became his *talmid muvhak*. Rav Carmell began to compile Rav Dessler's teachings under his guidance. Following Rav Dessler's *petirah* he started Yad Eliyahu in London, where children who studied at public schools were taught *ahavas Torah* and *yiras Shomayim*. Moving to Eretz Yisrael in 1972, Rav Carmell settled in Yerushalayim's Bayit Vegan neighborhood and helped Rav Boruch Horowitz found Yeshivas Dvar Yerushalayim, Yerushalayim's first *yeshiva* for *baalei teshuvah*.

**Yahrzeits for the 29th of Elul ~ Begins Thursday Night
(09-11-2026)**



Rav Naftali Hertz - Rav of Pintchov (5493 / 1733 - 293rd Yahrzeit)



Rav Raphael Landau (5654 / 1894 - 132nd Yahrzeit)



Rav Yerachmeil Yeshaya Mintzberg - Rav of Likova (5665 / 1905 - 121st Yahrzeit)



Rav Eliezer Chaim Deutsch of Banihad - Tevuos Hasodeh (5676 / 1916 - 110th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yaakov HaLevi Lipschitz - Zichron Yaakov, Secretary of Rav Yitzchok Elchonon Spector (5682 / 1922 - 104th Yahrzeit)



Rav Nachum Shlomo Perlow of Kozhnitz - Kozhnitzer Rebbe (5702 / 1942 - 84th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yisroel Rabinowitz - Ohel Yisroel (5731 / 1971 - 55th Yahrzeit)

Biographies of the Tzaddikim



Rav Uri Klughaft Imrei Kodosh (Elul 23, 5586 / 1826 - 200th Yahrzeit)

Rav Uri was born in 5517/1757 in a small village near Yanov. His father, Rav Pinchas, was given a *berocha* by the Mezritcher Maggid to merit a son who “will light up the Jewish world”.

After his marriage, Rav Uri settled in Lvov (Lemberg), where he devoted himself to learning Torah with *hasmoda*.

Rav Uri traveled to the courts of numerous leading Rebbes — the Rebbe Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk; Rav Pinchas of Koritz; Rav Yaakov Yosef of Ostroha; Rav Zusha of Anipoli and

others — until he met Rav Shlomo of Karlin and became one of his foremost *talmidim*.

In 5552/1792, after the tragic murder of his Rebbe, Rav Shlomo, Hy”d, Rav Uri returned to Lvov and opened his own court. He later moved from Lvov to Strelisk, by the name of which town he became known.

Rav Uri was famous for his style of *tefilla*, full of fervor. The thousands of Chassidim who flocked to his court felt his *hislahavus*, which awakened them to *teshuva*.

Every day before going to *daven*, Rav Uri would bid farewell to his household, in case his *neshoma* would leave his body while he *davened* in his usual fiery manner. He would also tell them that the manuscripts in the drawer were not his own, but belonged to his Rebbe, Rav Shlomo of Karlin.

Rav Uri taught his Chassidim to work on their *middos* and uproot from within them any lust for money. It is said that there was not even one wealthy Jew among the Strelisker Chassidim, and Rav Uri himself lived in extreme poverty.

Rav Uri’s foremost talmid was Rav Yehuda Tzvi of Stretyn. The bond between them was extraordinary. Rav Yehuda Tzvi became a Rebbe in Stretyn after Rav Uri’s *petira*.

One of the *talmidim* of Rav Uri was the Sar Sholom of Belz. One time, as he sat at Rav Uri’s *tisch*, he cried out, “Oy, Tatte!”

The Strelisker gave a roar, as was his custom, and shouted, “And maybe He is not your Father?”

Rav Sholom understood that Rav Uri still had lessons to teach him to assist him in his growth in *ruchniyus*. And so he remained in Strelisk for an entire year.

Rav Uri once said: “Whoever said that one must pray with a whole heart? Perhaps it is preferable to pray with a broken heart.”

Rav Uri said: “There are four separate courts in Heaven: a Sanhedrin of seventy-one; a smaller Sanhedrin of twenty-three, a Heavenly *Bais Din* and an earthly one. Rav Yechiel

Michel of Zlotchov served in one of these *Botei Din*, but since he was so punctilious and strict, he was promoted to the greater Sanhedrin. He left a vacant place in the *Bais Din*, which awaits a Tzaddik to occupy it."

Those who heard his words did not dream that he was foretelling his own imminent *petira*. But a mere two days later, on the 23rd of *Elul*, 5586/1826, Rav Uri returned his *neshoma* to its Creator.

Some of the *divrei Torah* of Rav Uri were compiled by his *talmid*, Rav Binyomin Zev Sheinblum of Lvov, and published under the name *ImreiKodosh*.

Zechuso yogen oleinu.

www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-23-elulaugust-29/



Rav Yosef Zev Halberstam (Elul 23, 5603 / 1843 - 183rd Yahrzeit)

Rav Yosef Zev was the son of Rav Dovid Halberstam of Kshanov and a grandson of the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz. He was the son-in-law of Rav Menachem Mendel Rubin of Glogov, a scion of the Ropshitzer dynasty.

He was greatly beloved by his grandfather Rav Chaim of Sanz, and he succeeded his father in Keshanov.

His sons were Rav Asher Meir of Buchnia, Rav Naftali Hirsch of Picolo-Sanz, and Rav Aharon of Bial-Bilitz.

His *matzeiva* (tombstone) bears the epitaph, "Unique in his generation, excelling in the attribute of *hishtavus* (equality)." He passed away on the 23rd of *Elul*.



Rav Yitzchok Menachem Dancyger Akeidas Yitzchok (Elul 23, 5703 / 1943 - 83rd Yahrzeit)

Rav Yitzchak Menachem was raised and educated by his grandfather, Rav Yechiel of Alexander, founder of the dynasty; by his uncle, Rav Yerachmiel Yisroel Yitzchok, author of the famed *sefer, Yismach Yisroel*; and by his father.

In תרפ"ד, he was appointed rebbe. At the time, Alexander was the second largest chassidus in Poland. Its adherents numbered in the thousands, and they all accepted his authority unquestionably. Only a small number clung to his uncle Rav Betzalel Yair of Lodz. Rav Yitzchok Menachem initially refused to serve as rebbe insisting that his brothers were more worthy, however, the rabbonim among Chassidei Alexander, numbering some seventy sages, insisted that he accept the mantle of leadership, and so he agreed.

Similar to the rebbes in the Gerrer Dynasty, he refused to sit at the head of the table and also refused to sit in the same seat for *davening* that his father or grandfather had previously occupied.

Rav Yitzchok Menachem continued the path of *ahavas Yisroel* as championed by the Vorker Rebbe from which the Alexander Dynasty hails. Every person was greeted with love and affection. His prayers were accompanied by tears and heart-rending sighs. The same occurred during the singing of *zemiros*.

As rebbe, his influence was immense. His answers to questions were clear and sharp. His memory was phenomenal and was able to recall by heart entire pages of *Shas*. He also remembered the names of thousands of his followers, and their families. He kept in touch with chassidim from distant places by sending letters on a consistent basis. He was punctilious about *davening* with a minyan and he wrote much about this topic to the chassidim.

He established the Alexander Yeshiva which eventually developed into a network across all of Poland named Beis Yisroel named after his grandfather, author of *Yismach Yisroel*. The yeshiva's student body consisted of more than 300 students. At the head of the yeshiva stood the rebbe's brother, Rav Avrohom Chaim Dantziger. A similar yeshiva was established in Yerushalyim as well. Especially well-known was the Lodz branch of the yeshiva which became the center for all of Alexander chassidus. The yeshiva published several newsletters and pamphlets. After the death of Rav Yaakov Pinchos Shraga, the

rebbe's son, the newsletter was named in his memory: "*Nehora Shraga*."

As did his father before him, he refrained from any politics and Chassidei Alexander were known to be neutral during all the elections. Wherever they were concentrated and their vote carried power, they formed their own party. In תרצ"ז, the rebbe participated in the Third World Congress of Agudas Yisroel and he was welcomed with great fanfare. When he spoke there, he cried: "What should we say; *Am Yisroel* is at a very low state, physically and spiritually and there are evil decrees against us that touch upon the primary precepts of our religion. It is just as at the Exodus where there was a wall of fire against us, and we have no were else to turn but to set our eyes up to the heavens."

When the Nazis entered Poland, he fled Alexander for Lodz where the greatest concentration of chassidim were to be found. From there, he fled to Warsaw, and for two years he lived in the ghetto officially employed as a shoe cobbler at the Schultz store which was operated by the chassid, Reb Avrohom Hendel. By the year תש"ב during the *Yomim Noraim*, he sent a letter to his chassidim that read: "Repentance, Prayer and Charity - *Teshuvah, Tefillah u'Tzedakah*, correspond to the shared *gematria* of *Tzom, Kol, Mamon*. In our days of privation, how can we gain merit to come and stand before the King of the world? With repentance and fasting? Heaven forbid! It is a *mitzvah* for each person to eat and keep himself healthy and strong. Should we give money to charity? We have no money we are impoverished! All we have left is davening. We have nothing left but to call out to our King with our voice through tefillah and beseech Him!"

At the Italian consul he received a permit to emigrate to Eretz Yisroel but he refused to leave his flock behind with no shepherd. In response to the urging of his chassidim for him to escape, he said, "What do they want from me?" That I should save myself while all of *Klal Yisroel* is in danger?"

On the 23rd of *Elul*, תש"ב, he was sent to the death camp Treblinka. In the same group was Rav Menachem Mendel Alter of Pabyanitz, the son of the *Sefas Emes* and his (Alexander Rebbe Rav Yitzchok's) own son Rav Yisroel. Eyewitnesses say that when they arrived at the extermination camp, the rebbe wrapped himself in the burial shrouds he brought along with him and commenced began reciting the *vidui* confession crying uncontrollably and in the midst of this, his soul departed. All of his children and grandchildren perished in the Holocaust, not one of them survived.

His Torah was collected and published as *Akeidas Yitzchok*. After the war, the survivors among the Alexander Chassidim gathered together and elected his cousin Rav Yehuda Moshe Tyberg as rebbe.

His only son, Rav Yerachmiel Yisroel Yitzchok, was son-in-law of Rav Noson Dovid Rabinowitz of Partzov.

His sons-in-law were Rav Alter Chaim Baumgarten of Lodz; Rav Yaakov Rabinowitz, son of Rav Noson Nachum of Krylov; Rav Yosef Shternfeld Horowitz, son of Rav Baruch Kalonymous of Chentshin Piltz; Rav Mendel, grandson of Rav Yaakov Moshe of Komarna; Rav Chaim Holshtuk, son of Rav Yechezkel of Ostrovta; Rav Tzvi Hirsch Bornstein, son of Rav Shmuel of Sokatshuv; and Rav Shlomo Dovid Yehoshua Weinberg, the Slonimer Rebbe.

Rav Yitzchok Menachem was lost in the Holocaust in Treblinka, on the 23rd Elul, 1942 (תש"ב).



Rav Meir Yehuda Getz Rav of the Kosel, Rosh Yeshivas Beit El (Elul 23, 5755 / 1995 - 31st Yahrzeit)

Rav Meir Yehuda Getz, Rav of the Kosel and *Rosh Yeshivas Beit El* (1924-1995). After one of his sons, a paratrooper, was killed in the battle for Jerusalem during the 1967 Six Day War, Rav Getz moved to the Old City and settled in the Jewish Quarter. He established a yeshiva there, and took up the duties he held until his death. In July 1981 Rav Getz was constructing a new synagogue behind the Wall that would face the Temple Mount. While the construction was going on, workers accidentally discovered Warren's Gate and an open area behind it that they believed to be from the First Temple period.



Rav Nochum Dovid Dubinky (Elul 23, 5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)

Rav Nachman Dovid Dubinky (1911-2006). Born in The Old City of Yerushalayim, where his father came after leaving Russia as a Breslaver chossid. His father was *niftar* when Rav Nachman was 16 years old. He learned in *Yeshivas Eitz Chaim* for decades. There, he

heard *shiurim* from Rav Issur Zalman, Rav Aharon Kotler, as well as the *Gidulei Shmuel*, Rav Shmuel Gedalya Neiman, and the Darkei Dovid, Rav Mordechai Dovid Levine. Rav Nachman lived in Bais Yisrael and a few other places, before settling in Botei Machsa when he and his Rebbetzin got married in 1932, after which they moved to Botei Natan where he lived for the next 70 years. Rav Nachman's occupation through the years was sitting and learning Torah.



Chavakuk Hanavi ben Isha Hashunamis Chabakuk, Habakkuk (*Elul 24,*)



The Zohar (Beshalach 44a) teaches us that Chabakuk was the son of the Shunamite that Elisha HaNavi revived him from death see *Melachim* II 4:16-17, 32-35.

The *Gemara* in *Makkos* 23b-24a teaches us that Rabbi Simlai taught: There were 613 mitzvos given to Moshe in the Torah, consisting of 365 negative transgressions that correspond to the number of days in the solar year, and 248 positive mitzvos corresponding to the number of a person's limbs. Rav Hamnuna said: What is the *pasuk* that hints at this? It is written: "Moshe commanded to us the Torah, an inheritance of the congregation of Yaacov" (*Devarim* 33:4). The word Torah, in terms of its numerical value [*gematria*] is 611 plus the two we heard directly from Hashem equals 613. . . Chabakuk came and established the 613 mitzvos upon one foundation, as it is says in the *pasuk*: "But the righteous person shall live by his faith" (*Chabakuk* 2:4).

In *Sotah* 49a we learn: If it were not for the prayer of Habakkuk, two Torah scholars would have to cover themselves with a single cloak (Rashi due to poverty) and engage in Torah study dressed that way, as it is stated: "Lord, I heard Your report and was afraid; O Lord, revive Your work in the midst of the years" (*Habakkuk* 3:2).

His tzion on Route 65 is close to Rabbeinu Bechaya in *Kadarim, Israel*

16 And Elisha said, "At this season next year, you will be embracing [*chovekes* - hugging like the name Chabakuk (Zohar BeShalach 44b)] a son." She replied, "Please, my lord, man of God, do not delude your maidservant."

17 The woman conceived and bore a son at the same season the following year, as Elisha had assured her.

18 The child grew up. One day, he went out to his father among the reapers.

19 [Suddenly] he cried to his father, "Oh, my head, my head!" He said to a servant, "Carry him to his mother."

20 He picked him up and brought him to his mother. And the child sat on her lap until noon; and he died.

21 She took him up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and left him and closed the door.

22 Then she called to her husband: "Please, send me one of the servants and one of the she-asses, so I can hurry to the man of God and back."

23 But he said, "Why are you going to him today? It is neither new moon nor sabbath." She answered, b "It's all right." -b

24 She had the ass saddled, and said to her servant, "Urge [the beast] on; c see that I don't slow down unless I tell you."

25 She went on until she came to the man of God on Mount Carmel. When the man of God saw her from afar, he said to his servant Gehazi, "There is that Shunammite woman.

26 Go, hurry toward her and ask her, 'How are you? How is your husband? How is the child?'" "We are well," she replied.

27 But when she came up to the man of God on the mountain, she clasped his feet. Gehazi stepped forward to push her away; but the man of God said, "Let her alone, for she is in bitter distress; and the LORD has hidden it from me and has not told me."

28 Then she said, "Did I ask my lord for a son? Didn't I say: 'Don't mislead me'?"

29 He said to Gehazi, "Tie up your skirts, take my staff in your hand, and go. If you meet anyone, do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him. And place my staff on the face of the boy."

30 But the boy's mother said, "As the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you!" So he arose and followed her.

31 Gehazi had gone on before them and had placed the staff on the boy's face; but there was no sound or response. He turned back to meet him and told him, "The boy has not

awakened.”

32Elisha came into the house, and there was the boy, laid out dead on his couch.

33He went in, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the LORD.

34Then he mounted [the bed] and placed himself over the child [The Zohar (BeShalach 44b-45a) says that this hug or embrace was the second hint at Chabakuk's name] . He put his mouth on its mouth, his eyes on its eyes, and his hands on its hands, as he bent over it. And the body of the child became warm.

35He stepped down, walked once up and down the room, then mounted and bent over him. Thereupon, the boy sneezed seven times, and the boy opened his eyes.

36[Elisha] called Gehazi and said, “Call the Shunammite woman,” and he called her. When she came to him, he said, “Pick up your son.”

37She came and fell at his feet and bowed low to the ground; then she picked up her son and left.

HIS SEGULOS:

Tefilas Chabakuk Segulah For Yishuv Hadaas

**** See Appendix Below**

Rebbe Nachman of Breslov teaches in *Sefer HaMiddos* that it is a *segulah* if “Someone whose mind is confused should frequently say the prayer of Habakuk”

Many have the custom to recite it on *Yom Kippur*.



Rav Shmuel Halberstam (Elul 24, 5554 / 1794 - 232nd Yahrzeit)

He became the founder of the Matchuber *Kloiz*, which later became a center for Belzer *Chassidim* in Brody.



Rav Yosef Moshe Bris Avram (Elul 24, 5575 / 1815 - 211th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yosef Moshe was born in 1735) תצ"ה). He was a disciple of Rav Dov Ber the Maggid of Mezritch, Rav Yechiel Michel of Zlotshuv, Rav Avrohom Chaim of Zlotshuv, and Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev. He met many of the second-generation leaders of chassidus and cites *divrei Torah* in their name from first-hand witnesses. He served as Maggid in Mesharim Zeborov and afterwards in Zalozitz.

Although he was a sickly man, he lived a life of *perishus* (sanctity and purity). His son-in-law testified that, "We never saw him enjoy any worldly pleasure; we barely saw him eat, drink, or sleep." The miracles that he wrought became well-known and it was said that Hashem did not act until He revealed the secret to His servants who fear Him.

Two years before he passed away, he got sick and "Yosef" was added to his name based on the advice of Rav Avrohom Chaim of Zlatshuv.

His *derashos* on the Torah were printed in the *sefer, Bris Avram*. His commentary to the Haggadah of Pesach was printed as *Be'er Mayim* and also as part of the *Pri Chaik* of Rav Avrohom Chaim of Zlotshuv.

His sons were: Rav Yosef Elkana and Rav Aryeh Leibush Shapira.

His daughter was Freyda Royza, the wife of Rav Zev Wolf Blenk of Skalit.

He passed away on the 23th of *Elul*, 1815) תקע"ה).



Rav Yosef Babad Minchas Chinuch (*Elul 24, 5634 / 1874 - 152nd Yahrzeit*)

Rav Yosef was born on 24 *Elul* in the year 5562/תקס"ב. He was a descendant of Rav Yehoshua Heschel of Tarnipol (author of a volume of responsa entitled *Sefer Yehoshua*). Through his first marriage, Rav Yosef became the brother-in-law of the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz, and his second wife was the daughter of Rav Dovid of Zavlituv. Rav Yosef served as Chief Rabbi in the towns of Huskov, Zabraz, Sinyatin and Horodenka, and in the year 5617/תרי"ז he was appointed Chief Rabbi of Tarnipol, a position which he held until his final days.

After a fire destroyed almost all the manuscripts of his *chiddushim*, he printed his remaining work: a commentary on *Sefer HaChinuch*. The *sefer* became very popular throughout *Klal Yisroel* (as his brother-in-law, the Tzanzer Rebbe, had blessed it should) and Rav Yosef is still known today as the *Minchas Chinuch*.

He passed away on his birthday, 24 *Elul* in the year 5634 תרל"ד.



Rav Avrohom Yosef Toldos Avrohom Yosef, Orah V'Simcha (Elul 24, 5678 / 1918 - 108th Yahrzeit)

Rav Avrohom Yosef was the son of Rav Aryeh Yehuda Leibush of Turbin and grandson of Rav Meshulem Igra of Pressburg.

He was the son-in-law of Yitzchok Koton of Tismanitz, and in a second marriage, the son-in-law of Rav Mordechai of Nadworna.

He studied Torah under his uncle, Rav Duvid Meshulem Yissacher Horowitz, *Av Beis Din* Stanislaw, author *Shu"t Bar Livayi*.

In chassidus, Rav Avrohom Yosef was a disciple of Rav Elazar of Kozhnitz.

After his marriage to the daughter of Rav Mordechai of Nadworna, he moved to Galicia where he became a chassid of Rav Chaim of Sanz and Rav Dovid Moshe of Tshortshkov. Rav Duvid Moshe appointed him as a rebbe in תרנ"ה. The Sadigura rebbe directed him to regularly study the *Beis Yosef*.

All his life, he traveled from place to place. He made his way from Bishtin to Kolomaya to Tarinow to Zhelin, each time, leaving a spiritual legacy in his wake. Later, he spent time in Keshanov, Tshebin and, in his later years, Cracow.

He was greatly influenced by his father-in-law and followed in Rav Mordechai's ways. For example, he davened *Shacharis* very late in the morning and sometimes not until nightfall; his *seudos Shabbos* went into *Motzaei Shabbos*; and the shouts that accompanied his *davening* were deafening.

He conducted himself with sanctity in all that he did. His davening was characteristic of Nadworna which means he would, at various times, jump, or lie prostrate on the floor and cry. The masses nicknamed him "The Shouting Rebbe."

He was known as a miracle worker. Many people arrived bearing sums of money as gifts in appreciation of being helped by the wonders he brought about, yet he readily gave away all his money to *tzedakah* and lived a life of privation. He was constantly involved with *hachnasas kallah*, *hachnasas orchim*, and feeding and clothing impoverished *talmidei chachamim* and the poor. *Tzedakas Eretz Yisroel* as well as many other institutions were supported, thanks to his efforts.

Every Shabbos, his household was filled with hundreds of guests. When he recited "*Brich Shmay*," it took over an hour and a quarter, and it wasn't uncommon for the congregation to burst into tears of fright as a result of his loud devotions.

During wartime, when he lived in Cracow, he generously hosted Jewish soldiers as his guests, never refusing a soldier a meal.

He plunged the depths in all realms of Torah, especially Kabbalah.

Together with his father, he published his grandfather, Reb Meshulem Igra's sefer, *Igra Rama* in תרל"ג. Rav Avrohom Yosef added elucidations, and marginal notes (all which testified to his greatness in learning).

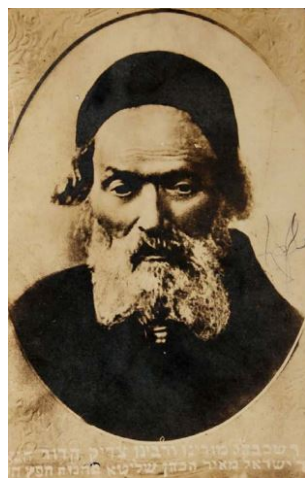
תרע"ד In, he printed the *siddur*, *Ora V'Simcha* in Keshanov. In it, he included additions from many *siddurim* of various mekubalim and sefardim.

Rav Yekusiel Aryeh Kamheler writes: "In my youth in Tarinow, I often studied in his *beis medrish* which was full of *seforim*. There, I merited to be perfumed by his Torah and to bask in the warmth, light, and glow of his fire! He left behind no physical offspring; instead, his *toldos* are the *toldos tzadikim* of good deeds. He passed away in Cracow between *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur* 1919) (תרע"ט)." Others says he passed away on the 24th of *Elul*, 1918) (תרע"ח).

(Sources: *Dor Deah Geonim* pp. 109-110)



Rav Yisroel Meir Kagan Chofetz Chaim, Mishna Berura (Elul 24, 5693 / 1933 - 93rd Yahrzeit)



Rabbi Yisroel Meir HaCohen Kagan is commonly known as the "*Chofetz Chaim*," the name of his famous work on guarding one's tongue. Born in Zhetel, Poland on February 6, 1838, he was taught until age 10 by his parents and then moved to Vilna to further his Jewish studies. Refusing the pulpit rabbinate, the *Chofetz Chaim* settled in Radin (Poland) and subsisted on a small grocery store which his wife managed and he did the "bookkeeping"-watching every penny to make sure that no one was cheated. He spent his days learning Torah and disseminating his knowledge to the common people.

As his reputation grew, students from all over Europe flocked to him and by 1869 his house became known as the Radin Yeshiva. In addition to his Yeshiva, the *Chofetz Chaim* was very active in Jewish causes. He traveled extensively (even in his 90s!) to encourage the observance of Mitzvos amongst Jews. One of the founders of Agudas Yisrael, the religious Jewish organization of Europe and later the world, the *Chofetz Chaim* was very involved in Jewish affairs and helped many yeshivos survive the financial problems of the interwar period. Exemplifying the verses in Psalms 34:13-14, "Who is the man who desires life...? Guard your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit," the *Chafetz Chaim* passed away in 1933 at the ripe age of 95.

The *Chofetz Chaim's* greatest legacy is the 21 *sefarim* (holy books) which he published. His first work, *Sefer Chofetz Chaim* (1873), is the first attempt to to organize and clarify the laws regdring evil talk and gossip. He later wrote other works, including *Shmiras HaLashon*, which emphasized the importance of guarding one's tongue by quoting our Sages. The *Mishnah Brurah* (1894-1907), his commentary on the Daily Laws of a Jew (his first series in the *Shulchan Aruch*), is found in many Jewish homes and is accepted universally to decide *Halacha*.

Firmly believing that he was living right before the time of Moshiach and the rebuilding of the Holy Temple, the *Chofetz Chaim* wrote a work that stressed the learning of laws concerning sacrifices, the Holy Temple, and related topics. He also published seforim to strengthen certain aspects of Jewish life including kashrus, family purity, and Torah study.

<https://torah.org/learning/halashon-ccbio/>

By Rabbi Nosson Scherman

A little more than one hundred years ago, an unknown author was arranging for the publication of an anonymous work on a much-ignored topic. Reb Yisrael Meir Kagan of Radin, Lithuania, had spent two winters, 5630 and 5631 (1870 and 1871), writing *Chofetz Chaim*, a compilation of the laws regarding slander and defamation. During 5632, he was engaged in getting pre-publication orders from the general public and securing testimonials from outstanding rabbinic authorities. In those days, when he was a young man in his thirties, Reb Yisrael Meir still thought he could retain his anonymity. He introduced himself as the publisher, rather than the author, of the novel *Shulchan Aruch*. In this guise he succeeded in evading recognition by the masses, but the spiritual giants of the age - men like Rabbi Yisrael Lipkin (Salanter) - saw that they were dealing with one of those rare figures who would leave his imprint on a nation. More than sixty tireless years, twenty-four additional volumes, and countless public letters and appeals lay ahead of the young "publisher," but the pattern of his long and busy life was already apparent when he was still unknown by circumstance as much as by choice.

A major reason for the enormous influence and acceptance won by the *Chofetz Chaim* was his utter and complete integrity. Statements and actions that would have seemed unctuously pretentious in ordinary humans were natural and unaffected coming from him.

A case in point is the very topic of his "*Chofetz Chaim*" – gossip and witty character assassination are not twentieth century phenomena; human tongues have always been loose and hard to control. The Talmud says, "Most people are guilty of dishonesty, few of vice, but all of *lashon hara*" (*Baba Basra* 165). Anyone presenting a book codifying the sins of slander could expect to be greeted with much scorn – private if not public. Yet, when Reb Yisrael Meir mounted pulpits in town after town to discuss the forthcoming *Chofetz Chaim*, he was listened to with respect. The people sensed that he was no salesman hawking a product, but one of those rare finds – an honest man whose love for his fellow Jews was expressed by trying to bring them closer to Torah, and who truly believed in the ability and obligation of people to pursue perfection. They were convinced that he wrote *Chofetz Chaim* not for recognition and for library shelves, but – as advertised – because he expected working men as well as scholars to form study groups to learn and put into practice what he had gleaned and compiled, and what was forged into his personality.

Many of the rabbis whom he approached for endorsements were skeptical of the first person to so systematically attack a sin that the Talmud considers universal. To avoid bringing ridicule not only upon himself but upon his stated purpose – and thus, paradoxically, provide yet another topic for gossip mongering – the personal credentials of the author as one who "withholds his tongue from evil" had to be unimpeachable. Some went so far as to assign students or colleagues to engage Reb Yisrael Meir in conversation to try to trap him into *lashon hara*, thus revealing him as no less mortal than the next man. The ruses invariably revealed the greatness of the author, and the endorsements were forthcoming.

No one knows for sure what prompted Reb Yisrael Meir to write *Chofetz Chaim*, but it was certainly not his finding an unexplored, fertile field for research, for the *Chofetz Chaim* never took pen in hand, except in response to a concrete need. To reveal his reason for compiling his *Shulchan Aruch* on *lashon hara* would have involved dredging up sordid stories of the very type he was trying to still. His son, Reb Aryeh Leib, conjectured that his father's first masterpiece grew out of a bitter controversy in the town of Radin during his youth. Acrimony had swirled about the town and all efforts to bring peace had failed. The town became divided into factions and its rabbi was forced to leave. He died after a few years in a new position and many blamed his early death on the anguish he suffered during Radin's little war. Reb Yisrael Meir, then a young man, had seen his fellow townspeople turn their tongues into ugly lethal weapons. As long as he lived, he never

discussed the dispute, saying simply, "I have a self-imposed restriction against speaking of it," but it may very well be that the *Chofetz Chaim* was his response in the form of an appeal that there be no more such incidents in Radin - or elsewhere.

A New Need / A New Book

Whenever he wrote, it was to answer a need. Russia's conscription policies forced many Jewish boys into the army for periods of at least six years, cutting them off from religious teaching and influence. They needed encouragement and answers to basic questions of *halachah* in layman's language. The result was *Machneh Yisrael*, a book that became the link to Judaism for many a Jewish soldier.

o Heartbreaking tales of the breakdown of religion among Jewish immigrants to America led to his *Nidchei Yisrael*. In providing practical answers to the halachic problems peculiar to the immigrant, Reb Yisrael Meir often rendered lenient decisions that took into account the emergency conditions of the immigrants, but which were inappropriate to the thriving religious life of Eastern Europe. Because of this, he had hoped that *Nidchei Yisrael* would not be distributed in Eastern Europe, but inevitably some copies were seen. This led to criticism of the *Chofetz Chaim* - something he regretted, but considered unimportant in view of his primary goal of aiding the uprooted Jews in America.

o Reb Yisrael Meir felt that the practical laws of kindness and charity were too often ignored. His reaction was to do for *gemilas chessed* what he had done for *shmiras halashon* (guarding one's tongue) - codify its laws, and actively campaign for Jews to join study groups to learn and to act upon them. As a result of his slim classic *Ahavas Chessed*, literally hundreds of free loan societies, shelters for the homeless, and *bikur cholim* societies sprang into being. Many of them sent requests to the *Chofetz Chaim* for letters of greeting and blessing that would be bound as the first page of a new organization's ledger book.

o Weakening of adherence to the laws of family purity and of personal modesty led to pamphlets in both Hebrew and Yiddish addressed to Jewish women.

o There were booklets in both languages urging men to pursue Torah study in their homes . . . and the list goes on and on.

The personal attention Reb Yisrael Meir devoted to the publication of his ethical works did not end when the volumes were printed and distributed. He did not write his books to be purchased; he wrote them to be used. His frequent lecture tours in behalf of one or another of his *sefarim* were devoted primarily to encouraging people to set up groups for the study of the *sefer*. In later years, when he was too old or too busy to go on personal tours, he hired “field representatives” to carry on his work. But they were firmly instructed that they must sell the message of the books by personal example and persuasive lectures.

Fire-and-brimstone preaching was not his approach; he was a firm believer in the superior efficacy of a spoonful of honey to a gallon of vinegar. Once a traveling preacher complained to him that no matter how much he thundered and reprimanded his audiences, they seemed to ignore his calls to repent. The *Chofetz Chaim* replied, “Who told you that the way to perform the *mitzvah* of correcting sinners is by shouting and storming? Putting on *tefillin* is also a *mitzvah* – do you holler and shout when you perform that *mitzvah*?”

An Imminent Need / A New Syllabus

In addition to salvaging neglected *mitzvos*, the *Chofetz Chaim* assumed responsibility for reviving interest in a long neglected area of the Torah. For centuries, *Kadoshim*, the section of the Talmud dealing with the laws of the Sanctuary and sacrificial offerings, had been virtually excluded from the curricula of major Torah centers. Rare were the scholars who had more than a passing familiarity with its intricacies. Reb Yisrael Meir saw this as a far more serious matter than a lack of knowledge among Torah intelligentsia. With the deceptive simplicity that masked his penetrating insight, he would ask, “We believe that *Mashiach* can arrive today. If he does, are we ready to bring our offerings to the *Bais Hamikdosh*? Do the *Kohanim* know the laws of sacrifices? Do the scholars know enough to train the *Kohanim*?”

Obviously, the answer to all these questions was a shameful “No.”

“Then are we not somewhat lacking in our prayers, hopes, and beliefs in the imminent coming of *Mashiach*?” The solution was simple: organize groups to study *Kadoshim*. Thus was born a trend that continues to this day. Far from being neglected, the study of

Kadashim is now a mark of prestige; the endeavor of the most advanced group in nearly all yeshivos.

Typically, the *Chofetz Chaim* showed the way by practical example as well as by exhortation. He published *Toras Kohanim*, a compilation of the Tannaitic interpretations of *Chumash Vayikra*, with an amended, completely accurate text; and an original commentary that ranks as a model of conciseness and clarity. He also composed *Likutei Halachos* modeled after the Alfasi, which is a compilation of halachic sections of the Talmud dealing with Kadashim topics; and included an elucidating original commentary.

Magnum Opus: "Mishnah Berurah"

Of all his literary efforts, his acknowledged masterpiece and the one which continues to have the greatest influence is *Mishnah Berurah*, a work that was twenty-five years in the making.

The *Chofetz Chaim* was concerned by a serious gap in halachic literature. There was no modern commentary on *Orach Chaim* (the section of the *Shulchan Aruch* dealing with daily and festival rituals) that summed up the centuries of comment and responsa, and rendered authoritative decisions in areas of dispute. Clearly such a work was much needed, but it could be undertaken only by a giant in Torah scholarship. The mantle was not sought by the *Chofetz Chaim*. He urged it upon others, but finding no one willing to assume the responsibility, he finally accepted it upon himself. The breadth, conciseness, clarity, and genius of *Mishnah Berurah* speak for themselves, as does the almost universal acceptance it has attained. This is the supreme testimonial to its author's stature as a sage.

He did not write the *Mishnah Berurah* simply because he wanted to, but because he saw it as a task that had to be done by someone, and his inability to find that someone left the responsibility at his doorstep. This is testimonial to his greatness as a person.

II. The Man of the Legends

The *Chofetz Chaim* was surely a scholar's scholar. More than this, however, he was also a genuine folk-hero. Scholars respected him, but the common people loved him with a rare

passion. The reasons are many and no doubt complex. But the most compelling one is simply that he considered himself as one with them and their problems. Even his books, despite the great scholarship they represent, were written to be used by ordinary men – and in many instances, by ordinary women, too. Sensing that he identified with them, people did not hesitate to seek his advice and assistance.

Although he never accepted the position of rabbi in Radin, he was in fact its spiritual and temporal leader. When some townspeople unfairly criticized and embarrassed their rabbi for the deficiencies of the town's *mikvah*, it was the *Chofetz Chaim* who guaranteed the funding and supervised the building of a new one. When Radin was devastated by fires that, in successive years, destroyed first one half and then the other half of the Jewish section, it was he who organized emergency relief, fund-raising, and the rebuilding of the town.

A poor workingman was not ashamed to ask him, as author of *Ahavas Chessed*, how a laborer living hand-to-mouth could be expected to perform the *mitzvah* of lending money to others. And he did not feel patronized when he was told to save a few pennies a week, eventually building it up to a fund of several rubles, for loaning to fellow workers short of pocket money. That was down-to-earth advice that was followed by thousands, and it was typical of the pragmatic idealism of a man who never took a penny offered to him by people who had the notion that his greatness entitled him to gifts.

The *Chofetz Chaim*'s awesome care in maintaining the strictest possible standards in his financial dealings has become legendary. No doubt many of the stories attributed to him are apocryphal – but, for most of them, there is more than ample first-hand testimony ... He insisted that his son reprint hundreds of sections of Mishnah Berurah to replace originals where pages had inadvertently been put in the wrong order. ... The *Chofetz Chaim* himself once went dashing through the Jewish quarter of Warsaw shortly before Shabbos seeking to pay printers who had left work early without getting their pay for the week ... When a non-Jewish railroad employee put parcels of his books on board a train for free delivery, the *Chofetz Chaim* tore up an amount of postage stamps sufficient to defray the loss of revenue to the government ... In his first speaking tour on behalf of the book *Chofetz Chaim*, he accepted orders, but not deposits, because of the possibility that he might not be able to make delivery to some pre-paying customers, thus becoming guilty of improperly taking their money ... The stories are legion.

Saint and Pragmatist

It is commonplace for people to believe that the *Chofetz Chaim*, as a saintly personality, could not have been terribly practical and certainly could not have coped with the rough and tumble of the world – especially today when so many accept as axiomatic that “you cannot make an omelette without breaking a few eggs,” and that “nice guys finish last.” Nothing could be further from the truth. It was this same saint who once remarked that one fool can do more damage than ten villains. Men like Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzensky of Vilna greatly valued his wise counsel when searching for practical solutions to the knottiest of problems. Indeed, in the crisis-laden years following World War I, when Reb Chaim Ozer was the undisputed leader of Lithuanian Jewry, he and the Chofetz Chaim were in constant consultation on all major issues. Their names appeared side-by-side on scores of proclamations and appeals in behalf of all the major causes in Jewish life.

The *Chofetz Chaim* was one of the first to realize that Torah Jewry must up-date its tactics to counter the onslaught of its enemies. Organized activities for the Torah community and its educational needs could succeed where efforts on the individual scale could scarcely cope with the juggernauts of Haskalah and secularism. Thus he took the lead in organizing and supporting Agudath Israel as the international organizational arm of traditional Jewry. As usual, he saw this as more than a matter of strategy, but as a religious obligation: “In a time when our values are under attack as never before, even small acts in defense of Torah are multiplied many times over in the Divine scales for ultimate reward.”

Though he was the senior of the two by nearly thirty years, the *Chofetz Chaim* considered Reb Chaim Ozer to be the gadol hador and deferred to his authority as a matter of course, despite the fact that Reb Chaim Ozer held him in awe. During the 1920's, pressure was brought to bear on Reb Chaim Ozer to travel to America to raise money for the European yeshivos, which were on the brink of financial ruin. He was told that only his own presence in America could assure contributions in the millions. Reb Chaim Ozer answered that his health was too precarious to permit such a trip. Though the other Torah luminaries at the meeting continued to exert pressure upon him, the Chofetz Chaim ended the debate by saying very simply, “The well-being of Reb Chaim Ozer is synonymous with that of Klal Yisrael. We dare not jeopardize it.”

Storm Over Vilna

The prestige of Reb Chaim Ozer was responsible for an unheard-of departure by the *Chofetz Chaim* - an open attack upon adversaries of Torah Judaism. His general policy had been always to avoid engaging Torah's enemies in debate. To reply to the virulent attacks made by *maskillim*, *yevsekes* (Jewish Communists) and others, he felt, would be self-defeating because it would grant them unearned recognition, and merely provide them with fuel for vituperation and ridicule. Better to isolate them from the mainstream of religious life, while devoting the available talent and resources to the more productive course of strengthening Judaism by upgrading education and observance within yeshivos and communities. Then came the storm over the Vilna rabbinate.

The government required that Vilna have a Chief Rabbi. Although Reb Chaim Ozer was a recognized leader of religious European Jewry, Vilna's official Chief Rabbi was to be elected by the entire Jewish population, which included a large secular contingent. Agudath Israel doubted that Reb Chaim Ozer would be able to command a majority of the total votes, so they joined a coalition of the Mizrachi, Socialists, and Reformers to "elect" a Rabbi Rubinstein as a pro-forma head of the Jewish Community, with the understanding that he would not assert any authority without Reb Chaim Ozer's approval. After his election, Rabbi Rubinstein's secularist supporters used this consensus as a pretext for treating him as the actual Chief Rabbi of Vilna, and Reb Chaim Ozer, the man who was revered the world over, found the ground cut out from under him in his own city. Strangely enough, the only important Torah figure whose serenity was not shattered was Reb Chaim Ozer himself. That did not prevent his adherents, led by the *Chazon Ish* and guided by the *Chofetz Chaim*, from doing battle to defend the honor of Torah. The *Chofetz Chaim* published a blistering letter attacking the perpetrators of the coup as enemies of Torah. Though disciples of Reb Chaim Ozer attempted to negotiate a face-saving compromise, the *Chofetz Chaim* torpedoed these efforts as going against the inviolable principle of Torah supremacy.

The secularists' reaction to his bold position was one of those human spectacles that must be greeted with laughter or rage. The non-religious Jewish press in Vilna vilified the *Chofetz Chaim* for stooping to *lashon hara* against the liberal Jews! His reply was simple and to the point: "When Torah values are being destroyed, Torah Law permits their defense."

His deference to Reb Chaim Ozer, however, did not prevent the *Chofetz Chaim* from arguing his own causes in the humorous, self-deprecating manner that he used so effectively. In 1923, the *Chofetz Chaim* felt that the community must be organized to provide kosher meals for Jewish soldiers. He called his new project *Kessel Kosher* (Kosher Kettle) and, naturally, his first move was to travel to Vilna to secure the endorsement and support of Reb Chaim Ozer. The endorsement was not forthcoming. Reb Chaim Ozer replied that there were many overriding considerations making such a campaign inopportune at that time.

The *Chofetz Chaim* shrugged and replied, "What can I do? People consider me to be a God-fearing Jew. When I am called to the world-to-come, they will ask me why I did nothing to provide kosher food for Jewish conscripts. What will I say? Perhaps I'll tell them that I was not lazy or indifferent; I made the hard trip to Vilna even though I was weak and past eighty. But the Rabbi of Vilna was the *gadol hador* and he said I was wrong. Who knows better than the *gadol hador* what is right or wrong?"

Reb Chaim Ozer knew he had been bested. He called a public meeting in the central synagogue to be addressed by the *Chofetz Chaim*. At that meeting *Kessel Kosher* was born.

III. As the *Chofetz Chaim* Would Say . . .

Precisely because he had such a keen feel for the pulse of the people and the needs of the time, it is fascinating - and useful - to wonder what the *Chofetz Chaim* would have said to today's problems. Indeed, we should go a step further and wonder how he would have defined the real problems of today. After all, *Chofetz Chaim* and *Ahavas Chessed* were effective replies to problems not even recognized by most. It would be a mistake to take the sizeable collection of his major and minor writings, apply them to each era, and assume that the *Chofetz Chaim* would have had nothing more to say.

How would he have diagnosed today's ills? This question should be answered by the few survivors of his era who knew him well, but perhaps we can hazard some guesses.

o There is little doubt that he would be appalled at the sharp and shady business practices that are so much a part of modern life, Orthodoxy not excluded. We live in an age when

ethics have not kept pace with sophistication, and Jews have not escaped contamination. How would he have prodded our conscience?

o Picture the *Chofetz Chaim* entering a typical middle-class home today with its emphasis on “creature comforts,” and recreational pursuits rather than a Torah atmosphere . . . Would he have smiled tolerantly? Or would he have considered his surroundings more appropriate to the House of Romanoff than to the House of Israel, and told us so?

o What would he say to the growing gap that divides yeshiva, rabbinate, and laity from one another?

o And what about the organizational weakness of Orthodoxy? He was one of the founders of Agudath Israel, long aware that modern times required modern tactics - and organizational unity was one of them. Surely he would work to end today’s factionalism.

o In this time of turbulence when the values of centuries are being discarded, we may be certain that the *Chofetz Chaim* would have found our attitude wanting and far too complacent. We are content to condemn the drug culture, but are ill prepared for our own acid test. Indicative of this is a memoir of one of his students, Rabbi Avrohom Hillel Goldberg, later rabbi of Kfar Pinnes in Israel:

It was *near* the end of his life and the *Chofetz Chaim* was in a summer cottage near Radin. He was heart-broken over the persecutions of Jews in Russia. He saw their situation as the severing of an entire limb of the Jewish body from its life-sources of Torah and mitzvos. “There is only one real hope,” he said - “Mashiach must come soon. The Final Redemption must come sooner or later, but it is up to us to hasten its arrival. We must demonstrate our overpowering desire for Mashiach. How many of us religious Jews who say ‘Ani Maamin’ every day truly long for his coming? Why don’t we cry out to Hashem to help us? This is no time for silence!

“Even in the Egyptian exile the Torah says that only when *B’nei Yisrael* cried out for help - then did their outcry go up to Hashem. We must do the same now! I must go to Vilna to Reb Chaim Ozer - without him nothing can be done!”

His family and students were aghast. He was over ninety years old and he could scarcely

leave his armchair for the length of a day. He might not survive the difficult trip to Vilna. They pleaded with him to abandon his plan, but he would not be dissuaded. The goal was worthy of even *mesiras nefesh*. They told him that Reb Chaim Ozer was a man of halachah and action; such ideas as the *Chofetz Chaim's* were out of his domain. He smiled as if to say, What do you know of Reb Chaim Ozer?

To his deep regret, the journey to Reb Chaim Ozer never took place. Had they met, who knows?

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Matzav.com



Rav Yechezkel Abramsky Dayan in Slutsk & London, Chazon Yechezkel (Elul 24, 5736 / 1976 - 50th Yahrzeit)



Rav Yechezkel Abramsky was born in a small *shtetl* near Vilna. He learned in the Novardok *Yeshiva*, and received *semicha* at eighteen from Rav Yechiel Mechel Epstein, the *Aruch HaShulchon*. Later he learned in Telshe and in the Ramailles *Yeshiva* in Vilna.

Later, Rav Yisrael Yehonoson Yerushalemsky, Rav of Ihman, took him as a son-in-law. In his father-in-law's home he advanced in *horos* while continuing to learn in depth under Rav Chaim Brisker.

For a while he served as *Rosh Mesivta* in the Lubavitcher *Yeshiva*; from there he went on to become a Rav in Smulian, and then in Smulevitch, near Minsk, where he stayed nine years. In 5683/1923, he became Rav in the city of Slutzk.

Slutzk, in Belarus, was already under Communist control. With *mesirus nefesh* Rav

Yechezkel openly practiced *Yiddishkeit*, encouraging his flock and leading the charge. The Russians, unable to swallow the “brazen acts” of the Rav, exiled him to Siberia, where he suffered for two difficult years. Only after intense *hishtadlus* by many *Gedolim* was he freed, and told to leave the country.

He traveled to London, where he became Rav of the Machzikei Hadas kehilla. Later, he became *Rosh Bais Din* in London.

In 5711/1951, he reached Eretz Yisrael and settled in Bayit Vegan, Yerushalayim. Despite his advanced age, he traveled weekly to Bnei Brak to deliver *shiurim* in *Yeshiva Slabodka*.

His widely acclaimed *sefer*, *Chazon Yechezkel* on the *Tosefta*, was hailed by Torah leaders as a magnificent illumination of an area of Torah that had previously been obscure because of the many difficult passages it contained. He undertook this monumental task in response to a simple comment made by Rav Chaim Brisker that the available version of the *Tosefta* was full of errors. He also produced *Dinei Momonos* and other *seforim*.

Rav Yechezkel was *niftar* at the age of ninety on the twenty-fourth of *Elul* 5736/1976.

Zecher tzaddik livrachah.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-24-elulseptember-19/



Rav Yitzchok Flusberg (Elul 24, 5764 / 2004 - 22nd Yahrzeit)

Rav Yitzchak Flusberg (1941-2004). Born in Tel Aviv, he learned at the Chevron Yeshiva In Yerushalayim under Rav Meir Chadash. For a number of years, he served as *Rosh Yeshiva* at Tiferes Hakarmel in Chaifa. He was among the founders of Gerrer shtieblech in Golders Green in London and in Toronto, and he was one of the primary founders of the Mifal Chessed organization of Ger in Eretz Yisrael.

matzav.com



Rav Yechiel Michel Mayim Rabim (Elul 25, 5546 / 1786 - 240th Yahrzeit)

Rabbi Yechiel Michel of Zlotchov (25 *Elul* 1786), son of Rabbi Yitzchak of Drohovitch, was introduced by his father to the Baal Shem Tov at a young age. He also became a disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch. It is said that his sermons consistently aroused his listeners to repentance. Many of his teachings are collected in *Mayim Rabim*.

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



Rav Dovid Halberstam Darchei Dovid (Elul 25, 5653 / 1893 - 133rd Yahrzeit)

(Based on Melitzei Aish vol Av-Elul p. 72 entry 193 HebrewBooks volume 29096 and Encyclopedia Chassidus Alfasi vol 1 p. 463)

Rav Dovid Halberstam was a descendant of the *Chacham Tzvi*, Rav Meir Tiktin and the *Maharshal*.

He was born in Rudnick in the year, 1818) (תקע"ח), but others say תקפ"א, and was named after his ancestor, Rav Dovid of Tronograd who was a grandson of the Chacham Tzvi. He married Echseh Gittel, the daughter of Rav Yosef Zev of Tronograd who were descendants of the Arizal. His second wife was from Tzintz family.

He was a disciple of his father but also of Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Rymanow, Rav Yissacher Dov of Radoshitz, and the Tiferes Shlomo of Radomsk.

In תרי"א, he was appointed rav in Kshanov (Chrzanow, Poland) and his father arrived at his inauguration to crown him as rav. He exchanged *Shu"t* (responsa), with his father who described him as "a great luminary-- sharp and a master, a pious chassid."

From the year, תרל"ו, Rav Dovid tried to hide his greatness, but Chassidim flocked to him from far and wide and he had no choice but to accede and serve as their leader. He was a *gaon* and such a diligent *masmid*, that they used to his quip that he studied 25 hours a

day!

His elder brother Rav Yechezkel of Shinuva once remarked that when he wished to fulfill the dictum: "make for yourself a rav," he goes to Kshanov to Rav Dovid. He was master of both revealed and hidden Torah.

All his descendants were *gedolim* and *tzaddikim*. He was the first of the *Divrei Chaim's* sons to pass away (1893). His nephew Rav Sinai of Zhemigrod remarked, "he lacks nothing from the *tzelem Elokim* of Adam Harishon."

His sons from his first wife were: Rav Yosef Zev Keshanov and Rav Aryeh Leibush of Dukla and from his second wife: Rav Moshe of Keshanov and Rav Naphtali of Keshanov.

All his daughters were from his second wife: Breindel, the wife of Rav Elazar Weissblum of Reisha; Miriam, the wife of Rav Yechiel Horowitz of Pukshbintza; Hinda the wife of Rav Moshe Yosef Teitelbaum of Uhjel; the wife of Rav Sholom Shapira of Pishtik; and Sarah Gittel, the wife of Rav Shimon Alter Frankel-Teomim, *Av Beis Din*, Podgorza.



Rav Yosef Goldman Av Beis Din of Neupest (Elul 25, 5698 / 1938 - 88th Yahrzeit)

The son of Yitzchok and Chaya Goldman. He served as Rav of Neupest for 32 years. He passed away on 25 *Elul* 1938/5698 תרצ"ח and was laid to rest in Neupest in 1967/5727, and when the local *bais hachaim* was transferred, he was reinterred in Budapest.



Rav Avrohom Horowitz Orchos Rabbeinu, Devar Halacha (Elul 25, 5764 / 2004 - 22nd Yahrzeit)

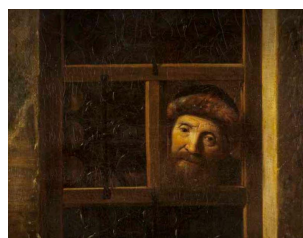
Rav Avraham Horowitz, *talmid muvhak* of the *Steipler Gaon*. He learned at Novardok Yeshiva in Tel Aviv, then at Eitz Chaim in Yerushalayim. When he was 18, he married the daughter of Rav Chaim Yehuda Leib Auerbach, father of Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach. He became the *chavrusa* of the *Steipler Gaon* for decades and wrote a *sefer* called *Orchos Rabbeinu* detailing the customs and daily life of the *Steipler* and the *Chazon Ish* (with whom he was also very close). He also authored a set of halachic sefarim called *Devar*

Halacha. (1925-2004).



Rav Gershon Shaul Yomtov Lipman Heller Tosfos Yom Tov (Elul 26, 5414 / 1654 - 372nd Yahrzeit)

(Some say the Yahrzeit is on the 6th of Elul)



Born in Wallerstein, Bavaria in the year 5339 (1579), Rav Yom Tov was orphaned from his father before he was born and raised by his grandfather, Rav Moshe Wallerstein, who served as Chief Rabbi of all German Jewry. He was a descendant of Rav Nosson, author of the *Aruch*.

His two chief mentors and rebbis were the *Maharal of Prague*, Rav Yaakov Ginzberg, Av *Beis Din* of Friedburg and Prague, and Rav Shlomo Ephraim Luntshitz, author of *Kli Yakar* and *Olelos Ephraim*.

At age eighteen, in 5357, he was appointed as a *dayan* and *rosh yeshiva* in Prague, in the *beis din* of the *Maharal*. His fame spread throughout the entire world as a *gaon*. At age thirty, he authored his magnum opus, the *Tosafos Yom Tov* on *Shas Mishnayos*.

In 5378, he authored two *selichos* describing the worries and fears of the Jewish community over the Prague rebellion. These were published as *Selichos* on the 14th of Cheshvan in Prague, 5381.

In *MarCheshvan* of 5385, he was appointed Av *Beis Din* of Nikolsberg, Moravia, and on *Rosh Chodesh Adar* of 5385 to Av *Beis Din* Vienna.

Vienna was a newly established *kehillah*, and some of the new *takanos* and reforms he established included the daily study of *Orchos Chaim* of the *Rosh* before *Shacharis*, which he personally translated into Yiddish (published in Prague in 5386) so that everyone could understand them.

In *Teves* of 5387 (1627), Rav Heller was appointed *Av Beis Din* of Prague. He began his tenure there in *Nissan*, and about half a year later he was appointed as *Rosh Yeshiva* as well, succeeding his mentor, the *Maharal*. He completed *Ma'adanei Melech* and *Lechem Chamudos* on the *Rosh* and began work on his *sefer*, *Malbushei Yom Tov*, a super-commentary on the commentary of the *Levush* on the *Arba Turim*.

The backdrop to his tenure was the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), a time of chaos and uncertainty for the populace of Bohemia and Prague, and especially for its Jews. The war emptied the government coffers, leading them to impose heavy taxes, a great financial burden upon the Jewish community. While it was the government officials that levied the taxes, the government left the collection up to the Jews themselves. This led to bitter disputes, as many of the wealthier and more powerful figures in the community tried their best to shirk responsibility, while the poorer and weaker Jews were unfairly burdened with taxes they had difficulty in paying.

The *Tosafos Yom Tov* was very upset by such underhanded measures that went against the *derech haTorah*, so he had himself appointed to the committee overseeing the tax collection. He saw to it that the taxes were collected evenly and fairly so that wealthier Jews shouldered the burden according to their means.

This act, alongside his other reforms as rabbi, earned him some bitter opponents, who initiated a slanderous libel against him and falsely accused him before the king. The slander claimed that he had disparaged and insulted the Christian faith in his *sefarim* *Ma'adanei Melech* and *Lechem Chamudos*. King Ferdinand II accepted the false rumors and ordered the *Tosafos Yom Tov* brought in chains and iron

A Fast For All Generations

On the 4th of *Tammuz*, the Imperial Judge arrived to reveal the terrible decree. On the 5th of *Tammuz*, 5389 (1629), a date that he would later establish as a fast day for his family

and all of his descendants, the *Tosafos Yom Tov* left Prague. He writes about this in *Megillas Eivah*:

“And now my children, listen to me and may your souls be revived. As I was looking through my manuscripts with the commentaries and chiddushim I composed that Hashem merited me to author, I came across something I had written down that I had heard from Rav Pinchas of Cracow, a great man, head of the leaders of Vaad Arba Aratzos - the Council of the Four Lands, the son of Rav Zalman Yeshaya Segal Horowitz of Prague. . .when I was in Prague I heard him say: ‘I have a tradition that during the time of the harsh decrees, when the government decreed that on the 5th of *Tammuz* all the holy Jewish books should be burned, the wise sages of that generation, by means of a *she’alas chalom* - a dream quest - made an inquiry and asked why this evil had befallen them. They were answered: “*Zos Chukas HaTorah K’Targumo.*” They interpreted it to be referring to the Aramaic translation of the *pasuk* in that week’s *parsha* reading, which was *Chukas*. The Aramaic translation of the *pasuk* is “*Da Gezeiras Oraisa,*” where the word “*da*” is equal in *gematria* to 5 (*Dalet* plus *Alef* = 4 plus 1).’ I believe this refers to my *sefarim*, which were originally ordered to be burned and destroyed, and because of them I was forced to leave my home in Prague on the 5th of *Tammuz* to the Kaiser’s court. The dream spoke of a *gezeira* - a decree; it was regarding the ancient decree, but I believe it refers to my decree as well, as I was arrested over matters of *chukas haTorah*. I was arrested on the 17th of *Tammuz* after *chatzos* (midday), and I was released 28 days later after *chatzos* in *Menachem Av*, equaling a period of forty days, the same as the forty days of disgrace and wandering of *Am Yisrael* in the desert. I therefore decided to instruct you all, and all your descendants, my sons and my daughters and my sons-in-law and daughters-in-law until the coming of Mashiach, to fast on the 5th of *Tammuz* until after *Maariv*. Since it falls out in the summer, when the days are longer, I do not decree until the time of nightfall after the stars come out. If the date falls out on Shabbos, it should be pushed off until Sunday. They can fast until after they *daven Minchah Gedolah*, and they need not complete the fast longer than this time. Whoever has a weak constitution or is pregnant or nursing can redeem themselves with no less than the value of three large Viennese coins. I was in doubt whether or not to establish the 28th of *Menachem Av*, the day of my freedom, as a festival and *yom tov*, as do many of our people to commemorate the day they went free or were saved from a judgment of death. However, I was left bereft and penniless with nothing but the shirt on my back; all my honor and glory were taken from me as well as the rabbinate, and my debts were so heavy I saw no way to repay them

since I was left with no means or property. I debated the matter back and forth, and in the midst of my indeterminacy and deliberations, the *sefer Yosef Lekach*, a commentary on *Megillas Esther* by Rav Eliezer Ashkenazi (1513-1586, *Yahrzeit* 22 Kislev) author of *Maasei Hashem*, came to hand. In the Introduction, he asks, the following question: 'Why is it that the *Kohanim Bnei Chashmonai* decided not to establish any festival days to commemorate and celebrate the miraculous salvation and redemption of Am Yisrael? It was an event that demonstrated the supernatural, a victory of the few over the many, their redemption was even greater than the one in the times of Mordechai and Esther. The events of that time, which became Purim, were not overtly supernatural or miraculous; they were instead covert and hidden in nature where the king's heart was overturned in an instant from evil to good. The answer he gives is that in the days of the Chashmonaim, the joy was incomplete since so many had died and the *Beis Hamikdash* was ransacked.' I am in a similar situation, for my joy remains incomplete and I am still filled with sorrow and grief. I remain anguished and pained until *Hashem* favors me and restores my past crown of glory and improves my future," (*Megillas Eivah*).

On the 8th of *Tammuz*, the *Tosafos Yom Tov* set out for Vienna, where he was accused, interrogated and jailed. Imprisoned while awaiting final judgment, his life was in great danger. The leaders and heads of the community rose up and took action to defend him and secure his release; even gentile officials and ministers who had met him defended his innocence and protested his imprisonment on an offense that was nothing more than a false libel.

He languished in prison for forty days. On the 28th of *Menachem Av*, 5389, the community's efforts bore fruit and while he was released and exonerated from the capital offense, the magistrate ordered him to pay a bond of 12,000 gulden to King Ferdinand II which was in those days a princely sum that all the Jews of Vienna and Prague together could not raise. Furthermore, the magistrate ordered that his *sefarim* be burned and that henceforth he was forbidden from serving as an *Av Beis Din* in all the kingdom and its provinces. This final judgment was a terrible blow to the *Tosafos Yom Tov*, for now he had lost his entire livelihood and source of income. Eventually the sentence was commuted, his *sefarim* were censored rather than burned and he was allowed to serve as Rav but not in Prague itself. The troubles, tragedy and suffering were recorded in his autobiography *Megillas Eivah*. *Eivah*, he writes, "stands for the acronym *Eicha Yashva Badad HaIr* - The city of Jerusalem sits solitary," an echo of *Megillas Eicha*, which we read on *Tisha B'Av*.

He concludes his preface with the remark, "Whoever reads this and suffers along with me in my sorrow shall be absolved in this merit to be saved from all trouble and suffering." (www.HebrewBooks.org/9529; translated into English as "The Feast and the Fast" published 1984 by Rabbi CU Lipshitz and Dr Neil Rosenstein, Moznayim).

Finally, in *Iyar* 5392 (1631), the *Tosafos Yom Tov* was appointed *Av Beis Din* in Nemirov, Poland, and from there, a few years later in *Iyar*, 5395 (1634), he moved to serve as *Av Beis Din* in Ludmir, Volhynia.

While in Ludmir, his enemies again reared their heads, as he describes in *Megillas Eiva*: "I awoke as a man from slumber and resolved to renew the laws from the earlier *gaonim* forbidding the practice of selling and purchasing the position of Rav from the local government ministers. A historic precedent that existed from the times that the position of *Kohen Gadol* was sold and purchased during Bayis Sheini - the Second Temple period. Previously, the Sages had enacted bans of excommunication, curses, oaths, fences and fines for transgressing these laws and decrees, but despite their efforts, breach after breach occurred, and the law became so full of holes that it became a matter of jest and seemed to people as if it was permitted.

"In Ludmir we instituted new safeguards. While previously they had forbidden the sale and purchase of the position of Rav, I added to this and forbade the hiring and employment of such people as well. This earned me new enemies, accusations, false and baseless hatred, but I was undeterred.

"On the 18th of *Iyar*, in Vizhnitz, together with the communal leaders of Volhynia, Ludmir, Ostrog, Kremenetz, and Lutzk, we gathered to renew these enactments and ordinances in all four provinces. Afterwards, I agreed to travel to Lublin and Yaroslavl on market days of public gathering where this proclamation was signed and ratified by the Vaad Arba Aratzos - (Committee of the Four Lands) together with thirty of the greatest leaders. It was read and proclaimed throughout all the shuls of Yaroslavl and the fair in Kremenet. Two of the rabbanim from the Vaad Arba Aratzos who agreed with me issued a proclamation on *Shabbos Vayikra* to prohibit the illegal sale and purchase of rabbinic positions. . . the more I acted and expounded the more my enemies did all they could to oppose me. . . they did all they could to expel me from the rabbinate" (*Megillas Eivah*).

The *Tosafos Yom Tov* finally overcame his enemies when their plots failed and he was exonerated. His former honor and glory were restored on the first day of *Chol HaMoed Sukkos* 5404, when the good news arrived that he was to be appointed as the *Rosh Yeshiva* together with Rav Yehoshua in Cracow. He arrived in Cracow on the 27th (some versions of the text say 28th) of *MarCheshvan* and was received with honor and dignity.

A Feast For All Generations

On Sunday, the first of *Adar Rishon* 5404 (1644), he was officially appointed *Av Beis Din*, and he wrote in his *Megillas Eiva* a new directive that his family observe the 1st of *Adar* as a personal family celebration of thanksgiving, to thank and praise *Hashem* on the day he was officially installed as *Av Beis Din* Cracow:

“Up until now, I hesitated to establish a day of feast and festival; however, I now resolve to establish this day as a *Yom Tov* festival. *Mi’shenichnas Adar Marbin B’Simcha!* The first of *Adar*, the second day of *Rosh Chodesh*, is established for all generations for my children and descendants, sons, daughters, sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, because on that day my crown and honor were restored and I was appointed *Av Beis Din* and *Rosh Yeshiva* of the great and holy congregation of Cracow and all its neighboring provinces. May *Hashem* merit us all to serve Him and fulfill His laws, and [may I] live out my days not for the pursuit of wealth, but for an exalted yearning as demonstrated by my conduct until the coming of *Mashiach*, amen. The symbolism of the year when the attribute of harsh judgment was leveled against me is *Shaphat* (judgment = the year 1629) שפ”ט. The symbolism of the year of my redemption, when my crown of glory was regained and restored, is 1644) ת”ד = *Das* - the law, *ve’ha’das nitna beShushan haBira* - and the law was enacted in Shushan,” to sing and rejoice with a happy heart. So saith *Yom Tov Lipman ben Nossan HaLevi Heller*,” (*Megillas Eivah*).

Sefarim

Besides his magnum opus, *Tosafos YomTov* on *Mishnayos*, he also authored *Darkei Hora’ah*, *Malbushei Yom Tov*, *Ma’adanei Melech*, *Pilpula Charifta* and *Lechem Chamudos* on the *Rosh*, *Toras Ha’asham* a commentary on the *Rema’s Toras HaChatas*, *Tzuras HaBayis* on *Yechezkel’s* prophecy of the Third *Binyan Beis HaMikdash*, and a commentary on *Bechinas Olam*, *Parshas HaChodesh* on *Kiddush HaChodesh* of the *Rambam*. He also

wrote *Tuv Taam* on *Rabbeinu Bachaya*, and *Megillas Eiva*, the autobiography of his troubles and calamities as well as his salvation from his enemies by *Hashem*. Some of his *Shu"t* and responsa are cited in many collections.

Geneology

His wife was the daughter of Rav Aharon Moshe Teumim, the father of Rav Yeshaya Teumim, who was the father of the *Kikayon D'Yonah*, a descendant of *Rashi* and Dovid HaMelech.

His descendants include many famous rabbinic figures and Chassidic rebbes. Below is a list of his children, sons-in-law and some of his more prominent descendants:

Sons

Rav Moshe of Prague - printed *Megillas Eivah*.

Rav Shmuel of Nemirov - see the story about him below in the story section.

Rav Avraham of Prague - *Rosh Yeshiva Skola*, ancestor of Rav Moshe Aharon Heller, Av *Beis Din* of Sniatyn, Rav Meshulem Feivish of Zbaraz, author of *Yosher Divrei Emes* and of Rav Shmuel Heller of Tzfas.

Rav Liva of Brisk, Rav Alexander of Prague (these two names appear in certain editions of *Megillas Eivah* and not in others) Rav Yehuda Leib Heller *HY"D* (*Yahrzeit* 15th *Tishrei*)

Sons in Law

Rav Yosef Yaakov Kahana - Kat"z *Rosh Yeshiva* Turinsk, married to Raizel, ancestor of the famed rabbis Rav Yehuda Kahana, Av *Beis Din* Sighet and author of *Kuntres HaSfeikos*, as well as Rav Aryeh Leib, author of *Ketzos HaChoshen*.

Rav Shmuel Bash of Prague - married to Dobrish. Their *shidduch* and her untimely death is described in *Megillas Eivah*.

Rav Yoel of Brisk – descendant Rav Yoel Sirkis (known as the *Ba"ch*), who married an unknown daughter. He was an ancestor of Mordechai Yosef Leiner, founder of Izhbitza – Radzyner Chassidic dynasty.

Rav Tzvi Hirsch –married to Rivka, ancestor of the Eichensteins and Safrins of the Zidatchov/Kamarna Chassidic dynasties.

Rav Ze'ev Wolf Slovis Segal -- married to Nissel, ancestor of the Maharam Schick. The marriage of their son, Nosson (named after Tosafos Yom Tov's father) to the daughter of the gaon Rav Moshe Av *Beis Din* Chelm, the son of Rav Moshe Av *Beis Din* Brisk and grandson of the communal leader Rav Shaul Wohl is described in *Megillas Eivah*.

Rav Aharon Frankel Mirels -- married to Rechel Nachele, were cousins. Rav Aharon's father, Rav Koppel, was the son of Avraham Heller, the *Tosafos Yom Tov's* uncle (his father's brother).

At age 77, as he lay in his sickbed, two additional names were added (as is customary by some to change a sick person's name by adding names), so the names "Gershon Shaul" do appear on his *matzeiva*. The *Tosafos Yom Tov* passed away on the 6th of *Elul* (Some say the 26th *Elul* as it appears on his *matzeiva*; others claim the *matzeiva* reads "On Yom *Dalet*, *Vav Elul*, meaning Wednesday, the 6th of *Elul*) 5414 (1654).

Illustration 2: Refurbished matzeiva in old Jewish Cemetery, courtyard of Rema Shul, Kazimeriz, Crakow.

Here lies the great gaon of his generation Our master, the Rav Gershon Shaul Yom Tov Lipman Heller Son of Rav Nosson HaLevi.

He dove into deep waters [of Torah] and authored several *sefarim*, whose names are *Tzuras HaBayis*, *Tosafos YomTov* on *Shas Mishnayos*, *Ma'adanei Melech* and *Lechem Chamudos* on the *Ashri (Rosh)*, and *Toras Ha'asham* on the (*Rema's*) *Toras Chatas*

He taught Torah in *Klal Yisrael* and served in several renowned holy *kehillos* and congregations [in] Vienna and Prague, and at the end of his days he established the Yeshiva in Poland. And here in Cracow, he was asked to attend the Yeshiva shel Maalah –

the Heavenly Academy -- on Wednesday the 6th of *Elul*, 5414. The Illustration : Man at Window, 1653, by Samuel van Hoogstraten, attributed to Rav Heller, the Tosafos Yom Tov, in Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, Austria.

HIS SEGULOS:

Tefillah Against Talking In Shul By The Tosafos Yom Tov

**** See Appendix Below**

During the infamous pogroms of *Ta"ch V'Ta"t* (years 5408 and 5409 - 1648-1649) the *Tosafos Yom Tov* fasted and beseeched that from on High it be revealed to him why such terrible calamities had befallen the Jewish people. It was revealed to him from on High that there was lightheaded, idle chatter in *shul*. People spoke in *shul* and in the middle of *davening*, which caused a blemish in the letter "vav" and the word for speech, *dibur*, was transformed into *dever*, a plague! When he learned of this, he composed a special prayer (others say the *Maharal* composed it but the *Tosafos Yom Tov* instituted and enacted its recitation in his *kehillos*. See the original *nusach* below) to help increase the awareness of the power of silence in *shul*, the destructive nature of idle chatter, and talking in *shul* and during *davening*. It is printed in many *siddurim* alongside the *Mi Sheberach* we recite on Shabbos after the reading of the Torah.



Rav Elyakim Getzil (*Elul* 26, 5584 / 1824 - 202nd *Yahrzeit*)



Rav Getzil, the son of Rav Yaakov Yosef of Ostrog ("Rav Yevi"), was a *tzaddik* who tried to keep his *mitzvos* hidden from public view. Although he himself lived in utmost poverty, he donated vast sums to charity. Because of his great acts of *tzedaka*, he was venerated in Ostrog for many generations.

On his tombstone is written, "A man who feared G-d and loved His mitzvos, who toiled in *tzedaka* and charitable acts to sustain the poor and the destitute."

He had no sons and one daughter.

Rav Getzil passed away 26 *Elul* in the year 5584/תקפ"ד. (*Pri Etz Chaim, Toldos Rav Yevi* pp. 75-76, cited from *Mazkeres LeGedolei Ostrog* #241)



Rav Chaim Pinto (*Elul 26, 5605 / 1845 - 181st Yahrzeit*)

Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hagadol ("the Great") [Tammuz 15, 5509 - *Elul 26, 5605* (July 1, 1749 - September 28, 1845)], a descendant of Rabbi Yoshiyahu Pinto--the "*Rif*" of *Ein Yaakov*--was born in Agadir, Morocco on the 6th *Hilula* of Rabbi Chaim Ben Attar. At age 20, he became the head rabbinical judge in Mogador, exercising this function for more than 70 years. The greatest Torah scholars of the generation esteemed him, and Jews and Muslims alike venerated him. It is said that Eliyahu Hanavi revealed himself regularly to him and studied with him. On the day of his passing, at age 96, he promised his disciples that those who would invoke his name on the day of his *Hilula* would see their prayers answered.

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



Rav Shmuel Abba Zikelinsky Lahav Aish (*Elul 26, 5639 / 1879 - 147th Yahrzeit*)

Rabbi Shmuel Abba Zikelinsky of Zichlin [26 *Elul 5639*] was an important disciple of Rabbi Simcha Bunim of Pshischah, and subsequently a Rebbe in his own right with a large following.



Rav Aharon Perlow Nireh Or (Elul 26, 5657 / 1897 - 129th Yahrzeit)



A SCION OF THE LECHOVITCH DYNASTY

Rav Aharon was appointed rebbe in תרל"א at the age of thirty-two. He was a *gadol b'Torah* and a highly organized individual. As the leader of the chassidus, he brought Koidanow to its peak in terms of spirituality and numbers of chassidim (he had thousands of adherents). He headed the *Koidanover Kollel* in Eretz Yisroel, and earlier (in his father's lifetime) he supported the *yishuv* in Teveria.

One of his letters was printed in *Ateres Sholom* by Rav Sholom Chaim of Brahmin-Warsaw, a Koidanover scion. His Torah was collected and published as *Dover Sholom* by Rav Sholom Eliyahu Shtam in Pieterkov, תרס"ו, and also in *Zecher Tzaddik* by the same publisher in Vilna, תרס"ה. His *divrei Torah* were also published by Moshe Bentzion of Bobrowna in the *sefer*, *Mefaneach Ne'elamos Lublin*, תרנ"ו and in Rav Moshe Chagiz's *Sefas Emes Vilna*, תרל"ו edition.

Eventually, all of the above were combined into one anthology named *Siach Avos* which was printed in Tel Aviv, תשכ"ג by Rav Michael Ehrlich. A *teshuvah* titled, *M'Ahavah* was

also printed in the *sefer, Erez Levanon* by Rav Yitzchok ben Rav Moshe Perlow.

Rav Aharon published the *Ramank's sefer, Ohr N'erav* along with his own additions named *Nireh Ohr*. He wrote an introduction to the *Koidanover Siddur* and his customs are recorded in the introduction to *Siddurim Eight*.

His sons were: Rav Yosef of Koidanov, Rav Shlomo Chaim, and Rav Nechemia of Baronwoitz.

His daughter married Rav Mushelem Zalman Yosef Zilberprov, *Av Beis Din*, Toporow.

He passed away on the 26th of *Elul*, 1897) (תרנ"ז).



Rav Nosson Adler (Katz) Av Beis Din of Frankfurt (*Elul 27, 5560 / 1800 - 226th Yahrzeit*)

Signature of the Great Kabbalist Rabbi Nosson Adler of Frankfurt on Sefer ...



Born Sunday 10 *Teves* 5502 in Frankfurt

A descendant of the author of the *Yalkut Shimoni*

He was a disciple of the *Pnei Yehoshua* and afterwards of Rav Moshe Rapf, but his Rebbe *Muvhak* was Rav David Teveli Schiff HaKohen who served afterwards as *Av Beis Din* in London.

He opened a yeshiva by age twenty and many great *talmidei chachamim* were his students and disciples such as: The Chasam Sofer, Rav Avraham Binga *Av Beis Din* Wertzberg, Rav

Menachem Mendel Kargoy author *Gidulei Taharah* on Mikvaos, Rav Avraham Auerbach son in law of the Yad Duvid, Rav Chaim Deutschman *Av Beis Din* Kaline and others.

He was known as an expert in secular studies of nature and sciences as well as Hebrew and Aramaic grammar in addition to his Torah wisdom especially in the esoteric secrets of Kabbalah. The *gedolim* of Frankfurt used to say though that his expertise in *hilchos tumah* and *tahara* was unsurpassed and that the Divine spirit of Hashem spoke through him in these matters.

It was said that Rav Nassan Adler's home was always open to guests and so that none ever be guilty of stealing, Rav Nosson Adler had declared all his possessions ownerless and *hefker* that way he was sure no one would ever steal from him.

He never recorded any of his Torah or *chiddushim* because he never forgot any of his learning. He once explained that the only *heter* to allow writing down the oral *Torah SheBaal peh* as explained by the Rambam is due to our forgetting it, we are allowed to write it down, "I however have no such *heter* to allow me to write down what I learned because I do not forget it!"

Some of his unique customs and *minhagim* were: since he was a Kohen, he himself *duchened* and recited the *Birkas Kohanim* in his own *bais medrash* daily (despite the *minhag* of most Ashkenazi Jews outside of Eretz Yisroel to only *duchen* on YomTov). He said about himself that as soon as the *Bais haMikdash* was rebuilt he was ready to do the *avodah* in Kodesh haKadashim since he was a master of and knew all the *halachos* of the Avodah of the Kohanim.

Another unique *minhag* he had was that he *davened* from the Siddur Arizal and used *nusach* Sefard as well as a Sefardi accent and pronunciation. The author of Tzror Chaim testified as an eye witness that he *davened* in Rav Nosson Adler's *bais medrash* and heard him pronounce with a Sefardi accent and pronunciation which he studied under a *Yerushalmi* Jew for several years to learn. He also took two *aliyahs* every Shabbos for Kohen and Maftir.

(See Chut HaMeshulash pg13-14,16-17)

He passed away on 27 Elul תק"ס.



Rav Yaakov Aryeh Leib Shapira (Elul 27, 5598 / 1838 - 188th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yaakov Aryeh, son of Rav Mordechai of Neshchiz, was born in 5539/ט'תקל"ט.

In the year, תק"ס, he was appointed as Rav of Kovil at the young age of 21. From Kovil he moved to Neshchiz and then Trisk.

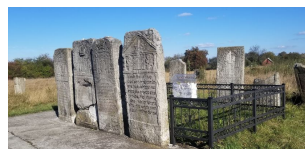
In 5597/ז'תקצ"ז, he wrote an approbation (*haskama*) for the *Slovita Shas*.

His sons were Rav Yisroel of Stabichov and Rav Levi Yitzchok of Kamin. His son-in-law was Rav Avrohom of Trisk. Some of his Torah were collected and printed at the back of *Rishpe Aish HaShalem* (Neshchiz).

He passed away on 27 Elul in the year 5598/ח'תקצ"ח (some say 5599/ט'תקצ"ט).



Rav Sholom Rokeach Sar Shalom of Belz, Midbar Kadesh (Elul 27, 5615 / 1855 - 171st Yahrzeit)



[The Sar Shalom's father Rav Elazar Rokeach was a *talmid muvhak* of Rav Chaim Sanzer of the *Kloiz* of *Chachmei Brody* [and he was son of Rav Shmuel Shmelka the Rav of the Tailor's *shul* in Brody who was son of Rav Moshe Rokeach *Av Beis Din* Zlotshuv, son of Rav Elazar Rokeach of Amsterdam author *Maasei Rokeach* a descendant of Rav Eliezer Rokeach of Worms.]

He married Rivka Henya the daughter of the Mekubal Rav Yehudah Zundel Ramraz

(Ramraz is an acronym for Rav Moshe Rav Zeligs) who was one of the great *chachamim* of the *Kloiz* in Brody.

They had three sons and two daughters:

The eldest son was Rav Yaakov Biritshuv, the second son Rav Leibush of Berditchev, the third was Rav Sholom Rokeach the Sar Shalom of Belz founder of the Belzer dynasty.

His daughters were: Ella wife of Rav Zalman son of Rav Moshe Rokeach, Malka Devorah the wife of Rav Shmuel Hirsch of Drishkipol.

Rav Shalom was born in Brody 1779 תקל"ט (others say 1783 תקמ"ג)

He was orphaned at a young age, and after his mother remarried he moved to live with his maternal uncle Rav Yissacher Dov Av *Beis Din* Skohl.

His mother Rivka Henya and uncle Rav Yissacher Dov were children of the great Rav and Mekubal Rav Yehudah Zundel Ramraz, whose *yichus* stretched back to Rav Tudras HaLevi Abulafia author of *Otzar HaKavod* and he was brother in law of Rav Yehudah Leib Bick the wealthy *gvir* of Brody.

At that time in Skohl lived Rav Shlomo Lutzker, one of the foremost disciples of the great Mezritcher Maggid, he was also his personal secretary and wrote many of the Maggid's teachings. Rav Moshe Leib Sassover testified that Rav Shlomo Lutzker's position in the Maggid's household was *lefnai velefnim* - which translates roughly as personal one on one access.

Rav Sholom quickly attached himself to Rav Shlomo and when his father in law the *misnaged* opposed their relationship, he began to visit his rebbe by making clandestine trips at night while his father in law slept, lowering himself down and out the window via a rope with his wife Malka's help. After dawn, he would return and find his trusted Rebitzen waiting for him by the window with the rope to help him back up.

Eventually he went off to Lublin to meet with the holy Chozeh who received the young seventeen year old genius with great enthusiastic *hislavavus*.

WITH THE CHOZEH OF LUBLIN

The Chozeh wished to honor his important guest and so he asked them to pour him a glass of wine. Rav Sholom had already begun his ascent and so among his ascetic practices he had self imposed upon himself was to refrain from drinking any intoxicating beverages. And so he lifted the cup up as the Chozeh had commanded but was in a quandary since he would not drink the wine. This resolved itself as soon as the wine glass shattered in his hands off its own accord. Seeing this, the Chozeh asked them to pour him a new cup of wine. When the performance repeated itself the Chozeh thundered in mock anger: "What are you trying to do? Do you mean to shatter all my glasses?" When Rav Sholom explained his *geder* and that he did not drink wine, the Chozeh let the matter alone.

The next day he honored Rav Sholom by calling him up to the Torah for the sixth *aliyah*, an honor accorded and reserved for VIPs and lofty leveled rabbonim. The assembled wondered aloud about such an honor and distinction bestowed upon such a young guest. The Chozeh responded to the clamor and commotion with the retort: "Why are you all so surprised?, this yungerman will one day be a leader of thousands!" Off course his prediction came true.

The Chozeh once requested Rav Sholom to be the one to read the Megillah on Purim for all the assembled. Afterwards the Chozeh remarked upon the completion "I have heard the story of Purim many times before, but not the way this yungerman just told it! I have never heard the story told this way ever before!"

On another occasion Rav Sholom was squashed beneath the Chozeh's *tisch*, the Chozeh whispered to him "One day they will all be squashing under your *tisch*!"

Another time the Chozeh remarked: "People travel to Rymanov (to the Rebbe Reb Menachem Mendel) seeking *parnassah* and livelihood, to Kozhnitz (to the Maggid Rav Yisroel Hauptstein) they go seeking *refuos* and healing, to me they come for Chassidus, to you they shall come and by you they shall received all of these!"

Rav Sholom also visited Rav Avrohom Yehoshua Heschel, the Apta Rav as well as Rav Yisroel the Kozhnitzer Maggid.

After the year תקע"ה when the Chozeh, the Kozhnitzer Maggid and the Rymanover passed away Rav Sholom continued to subjugate himself before others and travelled to Rav Uri of Strelisk along with his children and sons in law.

Once the Seraf of Strelisk passed away Rav Sholom began himself to take on the role of rebbe. After the year תקפ"ו the yungerman Rav Sholom became known as the Sar Sholom and became one of if not the chief rebbe in Galicia. Among those who came to bask in the light of the Sar Sholom were such great tzadikim as Rav Shlom Kaminka, Rav Chaim of Sanz, Rav Shimon of Yaruslov, Rav Yehoshua of Ostrov-Lentshena, Rav Meshuelm Feivish of Berzhan, Rav Shlomo Zalman of Vilipoli, Rav Aryeh Leibush of Tomashuv and Rav Aryeh Leibush of Mashitzisk, Rav Chaim Meir Yechiel of Mogolnitza, Rav Duvid of Dynow, Rav Sholom Mordechai Schwadron of Brezhan and others.

He passed away 27 Elul 1855 תרט"ו

His children:

His sons: Rav Elazar, Rav Shmuel Shmelka who passed away at a young age with no children, Rav Elazar performed *chalitza*, Rav Moshe of Karov, Rav Yehuda Zundel of Ochan, Rav Yehoshua of Belz, his youngest son and his successor.

His daughters: Freyda the wife of Rav Chaonch Henich Dov Meir of Olsek author Lev Sameach, Aideleh the wife of Rav Yitzchok Rubin of Brody a descendant of the Ropshitzer, Aideleh was a Rebizten more famed than her husband and the Chassidim gave her *kvitelach*.

Originally Belzer Torahs remained an oral tradition until others had mercy on us, such as Rav Yisroel Klapholtz who gathered them together and dared to publish the first volumes of Belzer Chassidus in Stensil. Today several *seforim* such as *Midbar Kadesh* have been printed collecting the Torah of the Sar Sholom and other Belzer Rebbes.

HIS SEGULOS:

Stories Of Tzaddikim

The Sar Sholom of Belz said that "*Der velt zugt* - the *oilem* says that to relate tales of the *Ba'al Shem Tov* on *Motzo'ei Shabbos* is a *segula* for *parnossa*, and to relate tales of the Rebbe Reb Melech of Lizhensk is a *segula* for *Yiras Shomayim*. And I say that this is wrong on three counts: not just on *Motzo'ei Shabbos*, but anytime; not just a *segula* for *parnossa*, but for all good things; and not just stories about the *Ba'al Shem* or the Rebbe Reb Melech, but about all the Tzaddikim - even about me! (*Besoros Tovos* p. 8a)

In *Otzar Yisrael* the story is told how the Belzer Rebbe's *gabbai* laughed at hearing the above *segula*, and the Sar Sholom explained why and how this *segula* works: When we speak about these Tzaddikim they have great satisfaction and pleasure in the World of Truth. Yet they do not wish to accept this joy for free, for such is known as the "bread of shame". They therefore pay us back by sending down an influx of *shefa* and blessings such as *parnossa* and *Yiras Shomayim* - sustenance and fear of heaven - and all manners of *yeshuos*."



Rav Yehuda Eizik Eliezer Hirschowitz Kerem Beis Yisroel (Elul 27, 5631 / 1871 - 155th Yahrzeit)

Rav Yitzchok Eizik Eliezer Hirschowitz was born in 5631/1871 in Libau (Liepaja), Latvia, a city influenced by neighboring Germany. His parents, Rav Aryeh and Liba Devora, saw the *Haskola* (Enlightenment) sweep their older children away from *Yiddishkeit*. Determined to save the youngest, they sent Yitzchok to the local *chareidi* school.

When he graduated at age fifteen, the headmaster sent him on to Telshe. He became a star *talmid*. In 5654/1894, he married the daughter of the *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Eliezer Gordon.

He wrote *Kerem Bais Yisrael* (in German with Hebrew characters), on building a Torah home. *Meitav Higoyon* is a collection of letters of Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch, translated into Hebrew from Gothic German.

In 5666/1906, he became Rav of Talsen in Kurland, where he had grown up. He remained until he was forced to flee in World War I, ending up in Minsk.

Part of the Radin Yeshiva had also taken refuge in Minsk, and the *Chofetz Chaim* asked him to teach them.

Later, Rav Yitzchok moved with his students to Ihumen, but the Soviets soon took over and he helped his *talmidim* sneak across the border to Lithuania. Once they were safe, he took his own family and followed them.

In Lithuania, he headed *Yeshiva Ohr Yisrael* of Slabodka. Later he moved back to Telshe as principal of Yavneh Teachers' College for Men.

Rav Yitzchok wrote a Jewish history book from a Torah viewpoint. *Halichos Am Olam* Volume I, from Creation until Eliyahu HaNovi's ascent to *Shomayim*, was published in 5689/1929. The notes he prepared for later volumes were destroyed during the Holocaust.

In 5686/1926, he became Rav of Wirballen. The Nazis conquered the city in 5701/1940 and began the mass slaughter of Lithuanian Jews. Rav Yitzchok fled to Kelm.

On the twenty-seventh of *Elul* 5701/1941, Rav Yitzchok was taken by the Nazis from the famous *Talmud Torah*. All sang *Adon Olam* together as they marched to their deaths.

His three daughters and four of his sons and their families were also murdered.

Hashem yinkom domom.

One son, Rav Yehuda Lieber Hirschowitz, survived and immigrated to *Eretz Yisrael*.

Zecher tzaddik livrachah

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-27-elulseptember-22/



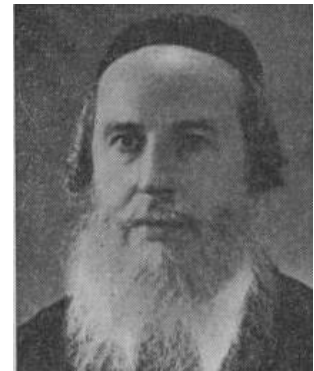
Rav Moshe Nosson Nota Segal Yungreiss (Elul 27, 5689 / 1929 - 97th Yahrzeit)

One of the first Hungarian Rabbonim to become a follower of Rav Chaim of Sanz.

He authored *Toras Moshe Nosson* and *Menuchas Osher*.



**Rav Chaim Yehuda Leib Auerbach Rosh Yeshivas Shaar Ha'Shomayim, Chacham Lev
(Elul 28, 5714 / 1954 - 72nd Yahrzeit)**



Rav Chaim Leib was born in 5647/1887 and grew up in Yerushalayim. At the age of eighteen he received *semicha* from Rav Chaim Berlin of Yerushalayim. In 5667/1907 he married the daughter of Rav Shlomo Zalman Porush, one of the foremost *askonim* of Yerushalayim.

Rav Chaim Leib's thirst for Torah was unquenchable. Even during his *sheva berachos* he learned all night with his brother-in-law Rav Akiva Porush. He became a devoted *talmid* of Rav Shimon Lider-Horowitz, learning *Toras HaNistar* from him.

One night, he dreamed that the *Arizal* came to him and complained that few *Yidden* learned his Torah, which has the power to redeem the *Shechina* from *Golus*. As soon as he awoke he went straight to his *Rebbe*, Rav Shimon, who, it turned out, had that same dream. So *Rebbe* and *talmid* immediately set out to open a *Yeshiva* for *Toras Ho'Ari*, which they called *Sha'ar HaShomayim*.

Rav Chaim Leib stood at the helm of the *Yeshiva* his entire life.

During World War I, when the military draft menaced young Jewish men, Rav Chaim Leib acted with *mesirus nefesh* to save *Yidden* from serving in the Turkish army. He somehow obtained the title of ambassador for the Ethiopian embassy, and issued Ethiopian citizenship for many Jews.

This was a great crime and easily detected, because Ethiopians are dark-skinned, and he issued the documents to lighter-skinned Yerushalmi Jews. Officially sentenced to death as a traitor, he hid from the authorities for months after the war.

Rav Chaim Leib was among the founders of the *Chassidic Bais Medrash* in Shaarei Chessed, and served as its *Rav*.

He raised money for his *Yeshiva* with tremendous *mesirus nefesh*. At times he gave away every penny he had, and was left with nothing for his family.

The *berocha* he received from Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld is well known. Rav Yosef Chaim told him, "In the merit of all you do, you will merit children who will light up *Klal Yisrael* with their *Torah* and *yira*."

Indeed, his son was none other than Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, and his sons-in-law were Rav Sholom Schwadron and Rav Simcha Bunim Leizerzohn (*niftar* in his prime), *zichronom shel Tzaddikim livrocha*.

Rav Chaim Leib suffered two heart attacks. After the second one, he suffered for some time, and was *niftar* at the age of sixty-eight on the 28th of *Elul* 5614/1954.

Zechuso yogen oleinu.

www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-28-elulseptember-3/



Rav Aryeh Carmell Published Michtav M'Eliyohu, Strive for Truth (Elul 28, 5766 / 2006 - 20th Yahrzeit)

Rav Aryeh Carmell (1917-2006) was born in England. At the age of 16 Aryeh was sent to study under Rav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler and became his *talmid muvhak*. Rav Carmell began to compile Rav Dessler's teachings under his guidance. After the war he married, making his home in London. He would spend the morning hours learning *bechavrusa* with some of London's leading rabbanim. In the afternoon he would go to his office to work for a few hours, setting aside time every day to organize *chessed* and outreach activities. He was among the first to become involved in Jewish outreach over 50 years ago. Following Rav Dessler's *petirah* he started Yad Eliyahu in London, where children who studied at public schools were taught *ahavas Torah* and *yiras Shomayim*. He published *Michtav MeEliyohu*, a compilation of Rav Dessler's teachings. The first three volumes were edited with Rav Alter Halperin and Rav Chaim Friedlander, while Rav Carmell edited the fourth and fifth volumes by himself. He also adapted parts of the work into a book in English called *Strive for Truth*. He also co-edited *Challenge: Torah Views on Science and its Problems* and wrote an important booklet called *Aid to Talmud Study*. When the wave of Russian *aliya* began he wrote a book called *Masterplan*. Based on Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch's *Chorev*, it also presented reasons behind the *mitzvos*. Moving to Eretz Yisrael in 1972, Rav Carmell settled in Yerushalayim's Bayit Vegan neighborhood and helped Rav Boruch Horowitz found Yeshivas Dvar Yerushalayim, Yerushalayim's first yeshiva for *baalei teshuvoh*. He gave *shiurim* on gemora, hashkofoh and Mussar.

Gedolim Be'Masayhem



Stories & Anecdotes

Rav Yosef Babad Minchas Chinuch (Elul 24)

THE SHEER TERROR OF THE LITIGANTS BEFORE THE DAYAN

Rav Yosef was very reluctant to preside over rabbinical court cases – based on the statement of Chazal (*Yevamos* 109b) that a *dayan* (rabbinic judge) should always imagine that Gehinnom is open underneath him.

Once, two litigants brought a case of *safek gezel* (questionable theft) before him. When Rav Yosef understood that the case was only about the possibility of inadvertent theft, and that the litigants simply wanted to distance themselves from even the suspicion of wrongdoing, he agreed to hear their case.

First, he wrapped himself in his tallis (*Choshen Mishpat*, *siman* 8:2) and then he removed his glasses. He explained to the two litigants that, based on Chazal, it is forbidden to gaze at the face of a *rasha* (*Megillah* 28a) and also that, when the litigants stand before a judge, the judge should consider them *reshaim* (*Avos* 1:8). Thus cloaked in his tallis, he turned to the litigants and, instead of calling them by name, he called out, “Reuven and Shimon!” (the customary names used by Torah sources in illustrative examples). “Reuven and Shimon, what is the dispute between you? What is your question of possible theft?”

The litigants, upon seeing Rav Yosef considering their case with such gravity and awe, were so terrified that they quickly forgave each other for any inadvertent wrongdoing and fled in terror from his home! (*Chemda Genuza*, Vol. II, p.69)

Rav Yisroel Meir Kagan Chofetz Chaim, Mishna Berura (Elul 24)

WITH R' AVRAHAM MORDECHAI ALTER ZT

In 1923, the *Chofetz Chaim* zt"l traveled to Vienna to participate in the *Agudas Yisroel* convention, and he spent some time together with R' Avraham Mordechai Alter zt"l, the *Gerrer Rebbe*. In the course of their discussion, the *Chofetz Chaim* cited the verse from that week's *parsha* (*Devorim* 13:5): ואתו תיראו ואת מצותיו תשמרו ובקלו: אחרי ה' אלקיכם תלכו ואתו תשמעו ואתו תעבדו ובו תדבקון

"*Acharei* [literally, 'after'] Hashem, your God, shall you follow and Him shall you fear; His commandments shall you observe and to His voice shall you hearken; Him shall you serve and to Him shall you cleave." The *Chofetz Chaim* commented:

"Our Sages observe that the Torah uses two words for 'after' - '*Acharei*,' which means 'long after' (or 'far away') and '*achar*,' which means 'soon after' (or 'close'). Why does our verse use '*acharei*,' implying that one should follow Hashem from a distance? In fact, one should become as close to God as possible!" He explained: Sometimes a person becomes depressed, and he feels that he is standing on the brink of a cliff as far from God as can be. He is confident that *Hashem* will not help him at this moment. One should know that such feelings are the work of the *yetzer hora*. Hashem is a Jew's "Father" at all times, and He accepts His children when they return to Him and saves them from all troubles. Even when one is "*acharei*," "far away," he should not despair of following Hashem. This is the meaning of the words in the High Holiday prayers, "Fortunate is the man who will not forget You, and the human being who will find strength in You."

The *Gerrer Rebbe* responded: "Now I will try to interpret this verse in the manner of the Chassidim. Specifically when a person feels distant from Hashem, that is when he can best follow Hashem, as it is written in *Tehilim*: 'God is close to the broken-hearted'."

Otzrosaihem

Shel

Tzaddikim

<https://www.shemayisrael.com/parsha/parkoff/archives/lagbaomer76.htm>

MEMORIES OF THE CHOFETZ CHAIM

by A. Ben-Yitzhar

Musaf Shabbos Kodesh Pesach 5756

There are certain times and moments that cannot be described in words. Rather their contents speak for themselves. Hours, which by virtue of your having lived them, can take you back at any time to generations past. This was the feeling we had when interviewing one of the *Chofetz Chaim's* early *talmidim*.

His name is HaRav Kalman Farber. For ten years he studied under the tutelage of *Maran*, the author of *Chofetz Chaim* and *Mishna Berurah*, *zt'l.*--Ten years of life spent on a different plane, one of holiness, *ruchniyus*, otherworldliness.

This can be understood by those for whom the very name *Chofetz Chaim* elicits a certain tremor, for whom not a day goes by without reaching for one of the tens of his holy *seforim*. Are there any among us who can remain impassive when sitting in the presence of an elderly man, who retains a clear, bright picture, of his esteemed *rebbe*, *Maran* the *Chofetz Chaim*, and who is able to reenact his many conversations, sayings and mannerisms?

Rav Kalman Farber is more than willing to share his wellspring of memoirs; all one has to do is sit and absorb his every word uttered in his inimitable deep voice, a voice whose clarity has not been marred by advanced age.

"So it's the *Chofetz Chaim* you came to hear about?" Rav Farber opens the interview. "Ahh, three generations have passed since then. Three whole generations separate us from those days, that era. Today nothing is the same. Different concepts, a different generation!" He becomes lost in thought, but quickly shakes himself out of his reverie.

"O.K. I'll try to tell you stories that have not yet been published in all the books about the *Chofetz Chaim*," begins Rav Farber.

"For two years I had the privilege of participating in the limited *minyan* of *yeshivaleit* who davened *Shacharis* together with the *Chofetz Chaim* in his tiny room. When I had just arrived at the yeshiva, the *Chofetz Chaim* was still able to get around independently, albeit slowly, and with two *bochurim* supporting him on either side. Later on though, this too was difficult for him and he would come to the yeshiva with "Avrumke, the *baal agola*." [In eastern Europe at that time the main means of local transportation was a horse and wagon. Avrumke had a horse and would take the *Chofetz Chaim* wherever he needed to

go.] However, he continued to *daven* at home and a steady *minyan* of *bochurim* was arranged.

Shemiras Hayodayim

"I noticed that whenever the *Chofetz Chaim* saw a fly or some other pest that he wanted to chase away he would hold the corner of his *tallis* or his handkerchief, but he would never use his bare hands. Also he never touched his face with his hands.

"For many years I could not understand the reason for this; the face is considered a naturally-exposed area of the body which one may see and touch. Recently, after having read the stories written by his son, HaGaon HaRav Leib *zt'l* I finally understood. Rav Leib told about the time that the *Chofetz Chaim* fled with the yeshiva and his family from Poland to Russia. It came time to *daven* Mincha and they entered a *shul*. 'Before davening,' Reb Leib said, 'I washed my hands as prescribed by the Shulchan Oruch but I noticed that my father began davening right away. Afterward I asked my father about this and he answered, "I guard my hands at all times!" '

"Now the reasons for the *Chofetz Chaim's* holy actions finally became clear to me," Rav Farber says. "The *Chofetz Chaim* was simply cautious that his hands remain *tohor* at all times and therefore he did not touch anything. Just as he guarded his tongue [from evil speech] he guarded his hands! Therefore, when he had to chase away a fly he would use something to cover his hands.

"From this we can gain an inkling of how the *Chofetz Chaim* became what he was; just as he guarded his hands he guards his eyes, his tongue-- everything!"

"Operation Rickshaw"

"If I already told you how the *Chofetz Chaim* would come to the yeshiva, then I will tell you something that is almost unprintable--but I'll tell you anyway. As I mentioned before, the *Chofetz Chaim* had a wagon driver called Avrumke who transported him to yeshiva at regular times. Sometimes, though, the *Chofetz Chaim* would let us know that he wanted to come to the yeshiva in the middle of the day. We were then faced with the problem of finding Avrumke and his horse.

"The *Chofetz Chaim* had his own wagon which stood outside his house. It was padded and constructed in such a way that he would be able to travel in relative ease and comfort. When we were unable to locate Avrumke, one *bochur* would simply take the place of the horse, while another would sit in the driver's seat with his back to the *Chofetz Chaim*. Other *bochurim* would then seat the *Chofetz Chaim* in his place in such a way that he would not be able to discern the nature of the "horse" or the identity of the driver!

"In this fashion they traveled the approximately 200 paces from the *Chofetz Chaim's* house to the yeshiva. When they arrived at their destination, a group of *bochurim* would block the *Chofetz Chaim's* view of the "horse" and "driver" as he was escorted into the yeshiva so that he would never suspect the truth. A few *bochurim* were in charge of this operation'. "

They're Watching!

"If we are already discussing Avrumke the wagon driver, I recall an interesting meeting I had with him, many years later, in Eretz Yisrael. Once on Shabbos between Mincha and Ma'ariv, I walked into a *shul*, here in Tel Aviv, in the Kiryat Shalom section. I saw a group of elderly men sitting around the table listening to one old man telling them about his personal experiences with the *Chofetz Chaim*: 'Once I was driving the *Chofetz Chaim* to the train station, and I saw an orchard on the side of the road. One of the trees' branches, laden with apples, extended over the road. Nu, so I stepped down from the wagon and went to take some apples, when all of a sudden I heard a shout from behind me, "They're watching! They're watching!"

"Needless to say I hurriedly jumped back on the wagon and drove away as quickly as I could. I could get in deep trouble for taking those apples. As I drove away I looked all around, but there was not a living soul in sight! I turned to the *Chofetz Chaim* and said, "Rebbe, what did you mean, they're watching? There's no one around!" "Ahh," answered the *Chofetz Chaim*, "of course they're watching, they're watching from Above!"

"I was understandably very curious to know who this old man was," continues Rav Kalman, "so I edged closer to the table, and I was amazed to see that it was none other than Avrumke, the *Chofetz Chaim's* wagon driver! He was sitting there recounting stories of his travels with the *Chofetz Chaim*. He continued:

" `On one of his trips the *Chofetz Chaim* said, "Let's learn a *perek mishnayos* Reb Avrumke."

" `Nu, so how do you think we learned? The *Chofetz Chaim* would recite the *mishna* by heart, word for word, and I would repeat after him. "You see?" the *Chofetz Chaim* would say after a while. "We learned a *perek mishnayos*!"

Rav Kalman interjects, "He would treat these plain people with such simplicity and so naturally that they felt he was one of them. I remember, that when I would return to the tiny village where my parents lived for *bein hazmanim*, they would ask me, `Nu, so how is Reb Yisroel Meir doing?' That was how close they felt to him. On the other hand, there is no denying the great admiration they had for him. All the villagers would crowd around me waiting to hear any story, or saying or *hanhogah* from the *Chofetz Chaim*. They wanted to hear more and more.

"His humility and simplicity were absolutely incredible," Rav Kalman continues. "In his house there were no chairs, just some long, rough-hewn benches and a plain, long table that opened out at both sides. That was the extent of his furniture.

"Now, when his son-in-law, Rav Mendel Zaks, *zt'l* was appointed *rosh yeshiva* of Radin, an unpleasant situation developed. Rav Mendel lived on the second floor of the *Chofetz Chaim*'s house. Now that he was *rosh yeshiva*, *bochurim* wanted to come to him to talk in learning, but there was nowhere to seat them. Not everyone felt at ease sitting on the benches shoulder to shoulder with their friends; they wanted a degree of privacy when speaking to the *Rosh Yeshiva*. So, they ordered twelve chairs. Some were put in the kitchen, some on the ground floor where the *Chofetz Chaim* was, and the rest upstairs by Rav Mendel. That's what was missing in the house--chairs!

"Then when the *Chofetz Chaim* came home and saw all the "new furniture," he was aghast. `What is all this doing here?' he asked, whereupon his family explained to him the reason for the purchase.

"The *Chofetz Chaim* was still incredulous. `Twelve chairs? Twelve? One I can understand, for the head of the household. A second chair is also necessary for the lady of the house. Let's say a guest comes, so, okay, the guest also needs a chair. But twelve chairs? For

what? "Hashem's Name is not whole, and His throne is not whole." The *Ribono shel Olom* doesn't even have one whole chair, and here there are twelve chairs?!' The *Chofetz Chaim* was simply unable to comprehend the purchase, and you must know that every word of his was spoken with absolute truth and sincerity, with no embellishment or exaggeration."

Faith That Can Be Felt

"Along with his tremendous astuteness and remarkable genius, the *Chofetz Chaim* possessed a simple faith that is almost impossible to describe. Everything was obvious and simple to him, with absolutely no *chochmos*. He would speak to *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* as if he were speaking to a king who was standing right in front of his eyes, like a son speaking to his father. Whatever happened to him, or whomever he met -- he deemed nothing as coincidental or without cause. For him, all events had their root in spirituality, and he was able to learn a lesson from them. Whatever he heard held deep significance for him, and he did not believe that there existed anything that was devoid of meaning.

"When he was in Russia, during the time that he fled with the yeshiva from Poland, a certain Jew came to him to ask for a *brochah*. The *Chofetz Chaim* placed his hand on him and asked, 'Reb Yid, where are you from?' 'From Minsk,' was the answer. 'And what is your occupation?' the *Chofetz Chaim* continued to inquire. 'I deal in animal hides,' the Jew replied. 'And how's business? Is it going well?' The *Chofetz Chaim* asked. 'Boruch Hashem business is very good,' he answered.

"The *Chofetz Chaim* couldn't understand how a Jew could be prospering under the tyrannical rule of Czar Nikolai, and he voiced his puzzlement. 'I work with the royal ministers, they buy my hides,' the Jew explained. 'Oy, you work with the Czar's ministers?' the *Chofetz Chaim* asked. 'How can you work with them, they're murderers! How do you manage?' 'I bribe them,' the Jew explained simply. 'Bribe?' continued the *Chofetz Chaim*. 'And without a bribe they won't purchase your merchandise?' 'Rebbe, if I wouldn't bribe them they would start checking every single piece, finding all kinds of flaws and defects, and in the end they might not even agree to buy anything. What would I do then? So, I bribe them and then everything goes smoothly; they take everything without checking or examining too much.'

"The *Chofetz Chaim* immediately answered, 'Aha, that's exactly how things work with us!'

A person *davens*, does *mitzvos*, but the prosecuting angels begin to testify against him: Here his prayer was not the way it should have been, there, while learning he fell asleep or chatted, etc., in short, everything is blemished. So what does *HaKodosh Boruch Hu* do in order to help this Jew? He calls over the good angels. They immediately begin to defend him saying, 'What do you want from this Jew's prayer, look how steeped he is in suffering! His wife is ill, his son was conscripted to the Polish army, he has problems with his parents. What do you want from him? This man also does *chessed*, he gives charity to those who are alone and destitute!' 'And then,' continued the *Chofetz Chaim*, '*HaKodosh Boruch Hu* takes this Jew and saves him from all the prosecuting angels. This is the "bribe" that we give to *HaKodosh Boruch Hu*! The charity we give and the *chessed* we do - that is what saves us!' concluded the *Chofetz Chaim*.

"Whenever you walked into the *Chofetz Chaim*'s house you would hear a *chiddush* about some *posuk* or other. Every day after *davening* we would hear from him a *gutte vort* -- after Shacharis and also after Mincha and Ma'ariv.

"He knew the entire Tanach by heart, backwards and forwards. As soon as you would walk into his house you would acquire a treasure: an interesting explanation on a *posuk*. Afterwards the *bochurim* would come to the yeshiva and tell over what they had heard: such and such a commentary, or some story or interesting fact. Some of these *vertlach* I remember till today," says Rav Kalman Farber.

"One of the *Chofetz Chaim*'s famous adages was: 'People worry about having with what to live, and I ask, do they have with what to die?'

"Another one of his pet sayings was his commentary on the verse, *Mi ho'ish hechofetz chaim, ohev yomim liros tov*, 'Who is the man who desires life, loves days to see good.' Whoever really loves his days, must make sure that he has good days. For we will meet our days [from this world again] in *Olam Haboh* when everything will be shown to us, and we will see for ourselves exactly how we spent our days. We will be shown all the days in which we wasted our time and did not learn, spoke forbidden speech, looked at what we were not allowed to see -- everything will be displayed to us as we undergo judgment. So the person who really wants life and loves his days, and indeed wants his days to be good ones, that person must see to it that his days are good -- so that they will be good for him!

"He would quote: 'In *olam habo* who jumps first? Theft jumps first. Who is the prosecutor? Theft is the primary prosecutor' (*Bereishis Rabba*, 80).

" 'Why theft, of all sins?' asked the *Chofetz Chaim* and answered with a story. 'There once was a successful merchant who had a store but went bankrupt. Those who had supplied him with merchandise came demanding the money he owed them. The merchant said that he had no money left since he went bankrupt. As long as the merchant continues arguing with his creditors all is well and good, and no action is taken. But what if one of the creditors is bold and impudent? He will demand his money back and when he sees that the merchant is not able to pay up, he does not continue to negotiate with the merchant as the others did, but rather simply takes whatever merchandise he can seize from the store shelves.

" 'As soon as he begins, all the other creditors follow suit until the merchant is stripped of his last belongings. This is how it works with us,' the *Chofetz Chaim* explained. 'When a person arrives in *Olam Haboh* he is met by all the sins he committed during his lifetime, but none can do anything yet to harm him. Theft, however, jumps to the forefront and begins to accuse and prosecute, because the angel that is created from a person's sin has the same attribute as the sin itself. Since the nature of theft is such that it is done with force and *chutzpah*, naturally this is the sin that jumps forward to prosecute. It shouts and does not give any peace, and then as soon as it begins, all the other sins immediately begin to shout as well.' "

Reb Kalman is quiet for a moment as he becomes immersed in his thoughts and memories. "The *Chofetz Chaim's* approach to everything was with total simplicity, but with a profound understanding. When he would speak, his words were palpable."

Do You Think that with a *Brochoh* you can create a *Ben Yeshiva*?

"He was so open and spoke at great length, seemingly effortlessly. He would tell us about incidents that happened to him and then teach us the lesson to be learned. Once he told us about a Jew who had come to him from the farthest reaches of Poland for a *brochoh*. This man had a son whom he wanted to see grow up to be a good Jew, a *ben Torah*. 'That is a wonderful thing, a truly wonderful thing,' responded the *Chofetz Chaim*. 'And what did you do in order to realize this desire of yours?' 'That's exactly why I came, to ask for a

brochoh,' the Jew answered. The *Chofetz Chaim* was annoyed. 'What?! You think that with a *brochoh* you can create a *ben yeshiva*? Don't you know, that these days you must be *moser nefesh*?! Chinuch today demands *mesirus nefesh*! Not *brochos*. With *brochos* you won't get anywhere!' "

When You Cry Out to Hashem You Will Be Answered

"Another time he told us that he was walking in the street when he saw a man with a wagon full of apples, hawking his wares in order to attract customers. The *Chofetz Chaim* noticed, though, that not a soul came to buy from him. 'I came back two hours later,' the *Chofetz Chaim* continued, 'and I saw that the man was still standing in the same place crying out to people to come and buy, but still no one came to him. I went over to him and asked what he was shouting about since he was not making any sales. The man answered me, "Look Rebbe, it's true that I shout all day, but when I come home in the evening and make an accounting of what I have earned I see that *boruch Hashem* I have with what to live.'"

"'Do you understand?' the *Chofetz Chaim* asked. 'A person must cry out. When we cry out to Hashem once, twice, three times, and then once again and yet again, *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* answers! There is no question about it. We are certainly no worse than that Jew. All we have to do is cry out, to beg Hashem to answer us.'"

The Essence of Teshuva

"He was known to say, 'What do you think a *baal teshuva* is? Do you think a *baal teshuva* must put on sackcloth? A *baal teshuva* does not need to put on sackcloth. When a witness stands under the *chuppah* he must be a kosher witness. How is this done? The rov says to the witness, 'You must do *teshuva*.' And what does the Jew do? He turns to the side and says: 'I regret the past and request [Heavenly assistance] for the future.' And that is what *teshuva* is all about, with no chochmos or odd exterior trappings. A person who knows that he is lacking in a certain area must work on himself to rectify this. No more. That is *teshuva*.' "

Heavenly Reckoning

"In those days paralysis was extremely prevalent and many people fell victim to it with no relief in sight. I remember how the *Chofetz Chaim* would relate to this when speaking to us: 'Where does the disease of paralysis originate?' he would ask rhetorically. 'Why has this disease spread to almost epidemic proportions during the last few years? If we would examine it we would observe that this is indeed a very strange affliction: A person has a mouth, a palate, lips, a throat, everything, but he cannot utter one word from his mouth! What happened? Paralysis! A person has legs, knees, feet, everything, but to walk? Not even one step. What happened? What does *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* want from us?

" 'Every human being has an account, an allowance of sorts. For example, a person might be allotted a million steps in his lifetime. After he has used up those million steps, there are no more! Finished! And from then on the person can still have feet and all the rest -- but to walk? Not one more step. His allowance is depleted. Moreover, this person must know that each and every footstep is written down. Every step is reckoned. Guard your steps. Don't go to places of wrongdoing. Don't waste what you were given.

" 'A person has a mouth. *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* gave a person a certain number of words in his lifetime. As soon as he has used up all his words -- finished! He can have all the organs of speech but not one word will he be able to pronounce. Keep this in mind and guard your speech! Know that every word is written down; each word is subtracted from your allowance. Don't waste them!

" 'The same goes for the eyes, the hands and all the other organs of the body.'

"This was the *Chofetz Chaim's* explanation to us regarding paralysis. And he said everything with such conviction and vitality; you could see that he felt the truth of his words with all his senses, and you could not remain indifferent.

"When he spoke of the gentiles, of [idols of] wood and stone, he would literally laugh out loud at avoda zora and you could really feel what he was saying." <http://www.chareidi.org/>

RUACH HAKODESH

"Whenever he spoke of *yeshivaleit* he would say, 'When will we receive true *gedolim*? When? Rabbonim we have plenty of, but who will bring us the genuine *gedolim*?'

"He wanted and demanded that *bnei Torah* be true *gedolei Torah*. Even from the older students he constantly demanded more and more.

"HaGaon HaRav Aharon Kotler *zt'l* was once speaking to HaGaon HaRav Elchonon Wassermann *Hy'd* and told him that once he spoke to the *Chofetz Chaim* when all of a sudden, in the middle of the conversation the *Chofetz Chaim* said, 'When you begin a *maseches* you must always finish it. Don't leave it in the middle.' Rav Aharon later thought about what the *Chofetz Chaim* had said and realized that he was actually guilty of doing just that. On many occasions he had begun a *masechta*, learned a little, and then left it there. 'How did he know that?' Rav Aharon asked Reb Elchonon. Reb Elchonon answered, 'The same thing happened to me! I was discussing something with the *Chofetz Chaim* when suddenly he interrupted me and said that after beginning a *maseches* one must finish it. 'Genuine *ruach hakodesh*!' both Rav Aharon and Reb Elchonon agreed."

<http://www.chareidi.org/>

Rav Yechezkel Abramsky Dayan in Slutsk & London, Chazon Yechezkel (Elul 24)

THE AFFABLE LION

By Tzivia Meth

A born genius who stared down the Russian authorities. A brilliant writer whose *Chazon Yechezkel* has become the classic commentary on Tosefta. The leader of Vaad Hayeshivos in Eretz Yisrael.

For all the titles Rav Yechezkel Abramsky held in his life perhaps the one with the most enduring influence was Chief Dayan in the London Beis Din — a position he only accepted after ensuring that he would be able to raise the standards of halachah for all of British Jewry.

London 1935.

The winds blowing from Germany bear increasingly frightening news. Those emanating from the Soviet Union bring tidings of Communism's tightening grip over Yiddishkeit. British Jews are apprehensive at the darkness all around them but are focused on filling

the vacant seat of chief dayan on the London Beis Din. It seems almost impossible to satisfy all the factions involved in the decision with the growing religiously conservative immigrant community demanding a greater voice in communal policy and the powerful left-wing establishment attempting to maintain the status quo without fracturing the community. The chief dayan must maintain the beis din's grandeur pleasing everyone — but bowing to no one. His ideology and policies will shape British Jewry's present and future.

Possible candidates include such luminaries as Rabbi Dr. Isaac Herzog future chief rabbi of Israel and Rav Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg the *Seridei Eish*. One name keeps recurring: Rav Yechezkel Abramsky a recent émigré from Communist Russia where he narrowly escaped a death sentence for teaching and disseminating Torah. His consideration for the position is an enigma to many as his minimal English and his ultra-right-wing hashkafos pose a marked contrast with the United Synagogue's centrist religious positions.

Rav Abramsky himself balks when he learns of the existing halachic leniencies and the pressure to maintain them. Ultimately in a prescient gamble Rav Abramsky accepts the position forever changing the spiritual map of British Jewry.

Trouble Zones

While the Ashkenazic community in London dates back to the late 17th century the formal communal organization known as United Synagogue was founded in 1870. It was a unique community model in that its members maintained only Orthodox rabbis and standards while many communities in central Europe at the time were affiliating with the Reform movement.

Historian Dr. Miri Freud-Kandel points out that because British Jews who wanted to assimilate were not required to join the official community those Jews who were affiliated with the United Synagogue were favorably disposed toward tradition. This situation was in marked contrast to most of Continental Europe where nonreligious Jews were required to join the official community and many of them voted for Reform communal standards.

While this structure maintained basic Orthodox standards throughout the country and kept a measure of unity in the Jewish community it was not without its own challenges. The London Beis Din which was under the jurisdiction of the United Synagogue was only

able to enforce halachic standards — particularly related to kashrus — that Eastern European immigrants arriving toward the end of the 19th century considered to be below par.

In 1891 for instance a *shechitah* controversy impelled the immigrant community to form their own shechitah supervision. Over the next few decades the London Beis Din improved many of its kashrus standards but lack of *nikkur* proved a persistent problem plaguing *beis din*-certified butcher shops. *Nikkur* is the process of removing the *gid hanasheh* and forbidden fats from hindquarter meat.

Overall the United Synagogue succeeded in remaining Orthodox but at a cost: It was forced to rely on leniencies that are usually reserved for extenuating circumstances. Rav Yechezkel Abramsky stepped into this breach with courage foresight and a regal personality renewing the beis din's halachic rigor — and thereby its prestige — throughout the world.

The Iluy from Most

Rav Yechezkel Alter Abramsky whose 40th *yahrtzeit* was on 24 *Elul* was born in 1886 in Dashkovtsy Lithuania a tiny town without even a minyan of Jews. His father Mordechai Zalman was a timber merchant but the family was so poverty-stricken that Rav Abramsky would stand in *sefarim* stores for hours (with the owner's permission) to memorize sources from *sefarim* he couldn't afford to buy. Upon completing cheder in the nearby town of Most Rav Yechezkel studied in the yeshivos of Novardok Telz Ramailles Slabodka and Brisk where he earned a reputation as "the *illui* (genius) from Most."

After marrying Reizel Jerusalemsky at the age of 23 Rav Abramsky served as rabbi in the Russian towns of Smolyan Smolevich and Slutzk. While in Slutzk he published the first volume of his magnum opus *Chazon Yechezkel* a commentary on the Tosefta.

But the political upheaval in Soviet Russia soon turned Rav Abramsky's peaceful existence into an international drama. In 1929 apprehensive about prospects for his sons' yeshivah education he sought to emigrate from the Soviet Union to become rabbi of Petach Tikva. Because he was a prolific Torah teacher and author instead of granting his request Soviet authorities placed him on the emigration blacklist.

Sensing that he was a wanted man Rav Abramsky hid in various cities throughout Russia for the next ten months. At one point he dreamt that NKVD officials were coming to arrest him. He and his wife Reizel decided that he should leave immediately to find another hiding place. Sure enough the police showed up at his apartment shortly thereafter and demanded to know his whereabouts. Reizel made up a story that she and her husband had quarreled and that he had abruptly left the house. Although her ruse worked she was distraught at having presented even a fictional account of a squabble.

Soon after this episode the Soviet police apprehended Rav Abramsky and condemned him to death. Rebbetzin Abramsky then collaborated with Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzenski to solicit prominent rabbis and Jewish organizations throughout the world to lobby the Soviet government on his behalf. Their efforts led to Rav Abramsky's sentence being commuted to five years of hard labor in Siberia and eventually to his full release.

During his year in the Siberian labor camp Rav Abramsky continued to work on *Chazon Yechezkel* ingeniously smuggling it out on cigarette paper. He was freed on *Erev Yom Kippur* of 1931 and given a month to leave the country. Rav Elchonon Wasserman recounted that the *Chofetz Chaim* said five perakim of *Tehillim* each day on Rav Abramsky's behalf but on that *Erev Yom Kippur* he did not say the *Tehillim* announcing with certainty that "the Rav of Slutzk" had been freed.

Rav Mordechai Pinchas Teitz later the rav of Elizabeth NJ went to greet Rav Abramsky at the train station in Riga Latvia but did not see anyone who could pass for a rav of Rav Abramsky's stature. To Rav Teitz's consternation it soon became apparent that the beardless man on the platform trying to conceal his face in his coat collar was none other than Rav Abramsky. In a last effort to humiliate Rav Abramsky before his release the Soviet officials had pulled out his beard. Since Rav Abramsky did not want to be seen without a beard Rav Teitz arranged for *minyanim* to be held in his apartment until his beard grew back.

PRESTIGE RESTORED

His exacting standards weren't always popular but no one could deny that Rav Abramsky restored the prestige of the London *Beis Din*. Through the efforts of *askanim* who had to arrange for a passport because the Russian authorities had stripped him of travel

documents Rav Abramsky arrived in London in late 1931. For the next two years he served as rabbi of the Machzikei Hadas synagogue in east London where he delivered numerous *shiurim* throughout the week in addition to an advanced *shiur* at Yeshivah Etz Chaim.

Rejection and Acceptance

In early 1934 when Dayan Shmuel Yitzchak Hillman retired from his post as Chief Dayan of the London *Bais Din* Chief Rabbi Joseph Hertz sought to replace him with a preeminent halachic authority. Even the non-religious leaders of the United Synagogue were keen to select a figure acceptable to right-wing Orthodox Anglo-Jewry as the latter group had become increasingly vocal about the London Beis Din's lax standards particularly regarding *shechitah*.

The United Synagogue first approached Rav Avigdor Schonfeld head of the right-wing Adas community but he rejected the offer. Other rabbanim also came under consideration but when Rav Abramsky emerged as a possible candidate all other options faded. Although he was far to the right of the centrist Rabbi Hertz and possibly the least likely to be able to communicate with his constituency due to the language barrier (he barely spoke English) Rav Abramsky had the greatest name recognition of all the nominees. Rav Menachem Gelley and Rav Ivan Binstock both currently *dayanim* on the Bais Din emphasize that the United Synagogue and Chief Rabbi Hertz were singularly impressed by Rav Abramsky's credentials. "Rav Abramsky had an outstanding reputation " explains Rav Gelley "and it was considered a 'catch' to have someone of his stature on board."

The United Synagogue made its official offer to Rav Abramsky in June 1934. Although initially amenable, Rav Abramsky grew wary of taking the position when a butcher, under the guise of asking about the kashrus of a chicken, furtively apprised him of the flagrant kashrus violations taking place under the *beis din's* jurisdiction. Of greatest concern was the fact that for decades, the *beis din* had licensed butchers who openly sold meat that was not *menukar* (porged). This left the onus on the customer to request that the meat be *menukar* (as in *shatnez* testing). Many customers did not do so, either out of ignorance or because proper *nikkur* made the meat look unappealing. Many butchers felt no compunction selling meat without *nikkur*, and the chief rabbi and *beis din* had been unsuccessful in stopping the practice.

After hearing about these violations, Rav Abramsky demanded that if he were to become chief *dayan*, the *beis din* would forbid butcher shops they certified from selling hindquarter meat altogether, thus eliminating the need for *nikkur*. Rabbi Hertz countered that he would commit to certify only butchers who did *nikkur*. Rav Abramsky suspected that this commitment wouldn't be enforced, so he rejected the job offer.

At this juncture, the United Synagogue approached Rav Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg, then the head of the Hildesheimer Seminary in Berlin, to fill the position. Although Rav Weinberg expressed interest in the position, the Hildesheimer Seminary exerted pressure on him to remain with them, and Rav Weinberg withdrew his candidacy.

In an unexpected turn of events, Rav Hertz returned to Rav Abramsky and repeated his offer: If he would accept the position of chief *dayan*, the *beis din* would certify butchers only if they committed to do *nikkur* on all hindquarter meat. Although he had initially rejected this proposal and insisted that he would only consider the position if no hindquarter meat would be sold, Rav Abramsky changed his mind and accepted the offer. What caused this change of heart?

This mystery unraveled when I chanced upon a footnote in Rav Abramsky's biography stating that in the period between the two offers, Rav Abramsky visited his father in Eastern Europe. In a United Synagogue protocol from October 28, 1934, one of the officials of the United Synagogue expressed the hope that Rav Abramsky would visit Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzensky in Vilna, and be advised to soften his approach to the offer from the London *Beis Din*. Rav Abramsky did indeed meet with Rav Chaim Ozer. What, precisely, did Rav Chaim Ozer advise him, and why?

That footnote in the biography did not supply any further details, but careful examination of a handwritten letter from Rav Chaim Ozer to Rav Abramsky that appears on a later page in the book provided an important clue to the latter's change of heart.

Dated *Rosh Chodesh Nissan* (April 4) 1935, the letter reads, "If there is hope that the breaches will be fixed, especially in the matters of *kashrus*, my advice is that you accept the position."

It seems clear that Rav Chaim Ozer influenced Rav Abramsky to be more flexible with

regard to his demands, but there is an additional factor that may have swayed him. Rav Abramsky apparently realized that Rabbi Hertz's second offer — despite the weakness of the terms — was, in a sense, a capitulation. At this point, Rabbi Hertz's proposed ban on selling meat without *nikkur* could not be an empty offer.

This theory is supported by reports in the Jewish Chronicle, Britain's primary Jewish newspaper. With each of his offers to Rav Abramsky, Rabbi Hertz had sent a letter regarding *nikkur* to the Shechita Board. The first was never read, but the second was. According to the Jewish Chronicle, at the time of the second offer, "a meeting was convened to consider a letter from the Chief Rabbi on the subject of the sale of hindquarter meat. After tracing the arrangements made in the past, and recent developments [emphasis added], the letter states that the Beth Din has decided that henceforth, all hindquarter meat sold in any shop under the control of the Beth Din and Shechita Board must be porged, and that one of the conditions of the license must be that no customer shall be sold hindquarter meat unporged."

At this point, Rav Abramsky decided to compromise, and almost a year to the day from the first offer, he was officially appointed chief dayan on June 20, 1935.

No More Nikkur

Less than a month after his appointment, Rav Abramsky issued a full-page public statement in the Jewish Chronicle describing the firm measures the *beis din* would now enforce to prevent the sale of meat without *nikkur*. But he never relinquished his goal of entirely eliminating the sale of hindquarter meat, and during World War II, when many porgers were enlisted to assist in the war effort, he was able to enact a ban on the sale of hindquarter meat.

This measure met with stiff opposition. Sir Robert Waley Cohen, vice president of the United Synagogue, expressed concern that prohibiting hindquarter meat would necessitate using additional cows, making British Jews appear unpatriotic during a period of wartime rationing. In addition, the Shechita Board was facing a large deficit as a result of meat rationing, and fees lost from hindquarter licenses threatened to further increase the deficit.

Despite the pressure, Rav Abramsky did not back down from his demand, with his wife

Reizel supporting him by offering to open a restaurant to sustain the family should he resign over the issue. After a meeting with the Shechita Board in 1941, Rav Abramsky delivered an ultimatum: If the committee would not stop the sale of hindquarter meat, he would leave the post of chief dayan. He rose, submitted his letter of resignation, and abruptly left the room. The members of the committee realized that Rav Abramsky was serious and voted unanimously to prohibit the sale of hindquarter meat.

This ban has never been annulled, and to this day, Jews in Great Britain are not in danger of eating *gid hanasheh* because of Rav Abramsky's perseverance.

Timing Instinct

The *nikkur* episode was but one instance in which Rav Abramsky displayed a unique instinct for timing, knowing how and when to intervene to buttress halachic observance.

In another instance, a fashionable catering hall opened in London, and the management repeatedly refused to obtain kashrus certification from the London Beis Din. Since many of their customers did not keep kosher, the administrators saw no need for the extra expense. Rav Abramsky, who regularly read the Jewish Chronicle so he could know what to *daven* for, noticed a prominent advertisement about the dinner of a major Jewish institution scheduled at this catering hall. The guest of honor was to be a member of the royal family.

Rav Abramsky and his fellow dayanim immediately drafted an advertisement notifying the public that the dinner would not be under kashrus certification, and asked one of the dayanim to notify the Jewish institution of the impending advertising campaign. Within ten minutes, Rav Abramsky received a call from a lawyer representing the hall, threatening to sue the *beis din* for damages. Rav Abramsky responded that a prominent attorney had already been hired to represent the *beis din*. In the scramble for a compromise, the Jewish institution's lawyer suggested that the hall be certified for this one occasion. Rav Abramsky promptly refused the offer. Not long thereafter, the manager of the hall personally approached Rav Abramsky and requested permanent certification from the *beis din*.

Curtailing Dubious Conversions

Another key achievement for Rav Abramsky during his tenure as chief dayan of the

London *Beis Din* was to improve *geirus* (conversion) standards in three areas.

First, the London *Beis Din* had previously only required conversion candidates to commit to keep Shabbos and to study Jewish laws and customs. In his contract, Rav Abramsky stipulated that candidates would also be required to live in a Jewish environment and demonstrate that their workplace would not hinder Shabbos observance.

Second, upon assuming office, Rav Abramsky restricted synagogue rabbis from being involved in the conversion process, outside of referring potential *geirim* to the *Beis Din*. This lent more objectivity to the conversion process, because if the prospective convert was dating or engaged to a Jew, the local rabbi was often subject to pressure to convert the potential marriage partner.

Third, after World War I, in an increasingly secularized society, interreligious socializing became more common, and the number of non-Jews seeking conversion was much higher than ever before. While the *beis din* generally refused to convert people motivated by marriage, they often capitulated when pressure was brought to bear from high places.

Rav Abramsky, however, was never intimidated by any chief rabbi or officers of the United Synagogue into allowing dubious conversions.

One prominent member of the London community repeatedly approached the *beis din* to convert his son's fiancée. After delaying the decision for a while, Rav Abramsky finally informed the family that since they were *Kohanim*, it was forbidden for the young man to marry a convert in any case, so the conversion would be pointless.

When asked why he had not rejected the conversion on those grounds at the outset, Rav Abramsky replied that he had not wanted the public to assume that the young man's status as a *Kohein* was the only obstacle to this conversion, but that any conversion for the sake of marriage would be rejected. Furthermore, Rav Abramsky explained that he wanted to establish that "there is no bias in the matter, even for community leaders."

The numbers are dramatic. In 16 years under Rav Abramsky's leadership, the London *Beis Din* accepted only five converts — as compared to 24 converts in 1925 alone.

Rav Abramsky's uncompromising conversion standards were not popular with many of London's Jews, especially secularized Jews. Reform historian Jonathan A. Romain protests, "For many Jews, the Chief Rabbi's Court sometimes appeared to be less a communal servant than a communal tyrant." While Rav Abramsky was hardly a tyrant, he certainly did not view himself as a servant of the public, but a servant of Hashem, charged with safeguarding and preserving the authenticity of the Jewish nation.

An Affable Lion

Upon reaching the official retirement age of 65 in 1951, Rav Abramsky and his wife settled in Bayit V'gan in Yerushalayim. He gave *shiurim* in the Slabodka yeshivah in Bnei Brak, continued to publish *seforim*, and later served as *nasi* of the Vaad Hayeshivos.

But his influence on British Jewry continues to be felt until today, and eventually, even secular Jews came to appreciate the values he had brought to their community. On Rav Abramsky's 90th birthday, the Jewish Chronicle paid tribute to him, stating:

"[Rav Abramsky] laid down the law as he saw it... He [has] the presence of an affable lion, though he is not always so affable, especially when [halachah is] contradicted, and even the late and great Sir Robert Waley Cohen (a non-religious power broker of the United Synagogue), no respecter of holy persons, stood in awe of him."

Rav Abramsky's approach to religious leadership was poignantly captured by the late Chief Rabbi Lord Jakobovits, in which he recounted a visit with Rav Abramsky after the latter had relocated to Yerushalayim, during which Rav Abramsky drew his attention to a passage in the first perek of Yehoshua: "Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the Land which I swore to their fathers to give to them. Only be strong and very courageous to observe, and to do according to all the law which Moshe, My servant, commanded you..."

When discussing acquiring Eretz Yisrael, Hashem only commands Yehoshua to be "strong and courageous," noted Rav Abramsky, but when it comes to observing the laws of the Torah, Hashem instructs him to be very courageous.

These words accurately depict Rav Abramsky's own ability to stare down any opposition to his efforts to shore up the halachic standards in England — be it communal leaders,

left-leaning rabbis, or even a British judge.

When a *shochet* who had been fired sued the London Beis Din in secular court, Rav Abramsky was called to testify. After establishing Rav Abramsky's name and position, his attorney asked, "Is it true that you are the greatest living halachic authority on the European continent?"

"Yes," Rav Abramsky replied. "It's true."

"Rabbi Abramsky," the judge said sharply, "isn't some humility in order?"

"Your honor," the Rav replied, "I am under oath."

(Originally featured in Mishpacha, Issue 629) <https://mishpacha.com/the-affable-lion/>

Rav Yechiel Michel Mayim Rabim (Elul 25)

RAV MICHELS BLESSING

Rav Michel of Zlotshuv was once visiting Brody and stayed at the home of Rav Yehuda Zundel, who treated Rav Michel as an honored guest. Before he left and traveled onward, Rav Michel blessed him that he should have a child who would light up the entire world. Rav Yehuda Zundel's young daughter Rivka Henya was listening and remarked, "But my parents are too old to have any more children; his *berocha* must then apply to me!" True enough - her son was the *Sar Sholom* of Belz.

Another version says that Rav Yehuda Zundel had a dream, which he related to the *Chachmei HaKloiz* in Brody, in which he was promised a child who would light up the world. He himself was puzzled by this vision, due to his old age. When his young daughter Rivka Henya heard this, she remarked, "May it be His will that I merit this child," and all the sages of the *Kloiz* answered, "Amen!"

Rav Gershon Shaul Yomtov Lipman Heller Tosfos Yom Tov (Elul 26)

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

THE HASHGACHA PRATIS AND DIVINE PROVIDENCE OF RAV SHMUEL HELLER TO SAVE HIS FATHER'S LIFE

In Part II of Megillas Eivah, Rav Heller's son Shmuel writes:

I will be brief and record these events in order to demonstrate to all of *Klal Yisrael* just how great is the power of dispute and *machlokes* and how many sins controversy cause, in order that a person should greatly distance himself from this, as far away as possible. . . In 5385 (1625), when my father was still the *Av Beis Din* in Vienna, he sent me off to study in Metz, France at the *yeshiva* of the *gaon* Rav Mordechai ben Rav Moshe Luria, *Av Beis Din* of Worms. I studied there for four years until 5389 (1629). On *Rosh Chodesh Sivan*, I received a letter from my father, who was now *Av Beis Din* in Prague, asking me to come home . . . I made my way home on foot along with other *yeshiva* students. . . I arrived in Vienna happy of heart and carefree, unaware that my holy father sat alone, imprisoned in one of the jail cells of this very city waiting to stand judgment for a capital offense punishable by death! In this manner, see how *Hashem* prepared the remedy and the cure before striking the blow, and how *Hashem* arranged the turn of events so that a wondrous thing would occur through me that would later set in motion and secure my father's release. Before I entered the city, I lay myself down on some green turf to rest a bit by the forest in an area often used for pleasant outings and day trips by the citizens of Vienna. That day, the place was peaceful and quiet; I had it all to myself because there was some great festival and parade taking place in Vienna.

I placed my bundle beneath my head and I imagined who I might visit first, knowing that my father had served here previously as *Av Beis Din*. Surely I would be warmly welcomed and received by his many friends. As I lay daydreaming I heard a loud cry for help, "Help us, save us, or we shall be lost!" I looked and saw a wild bull chasing after a young noblewoman and a young nursemaid with a boy in her arms. They fled, running away from the charging beast. The wild bull was only several kilometers distant and gaining on them in wild anger due to the waving of the red kerchief the nursemaid had tied round her neck. Bulls will charge in anger when they see red waving, as is well known. As soon as I saw this I ran forward, untied and pulled the kerchief off and cast it aside at the feet of

the charging bull. The bull attacked it and proceeded to tear it to shreds with his horns while the women hid behind one of the trees. At that moment a carriage arrived with the young noblewoman's husband dressed as a nobleman in silk and finery and bearing a coat of arms. The carriage had a woven coat of arms as well. The women approached and explained what had happened and pointed at me, introducing me as their rescuer. The nobleman explained that he was the French ambassador, and apologized for not speaking German. He spoke to me in French and inquired as to my name and identity. [See now the Divine Providence] In the four years I was away in Metz, France I learned the French language, so I responded that I was a Jew and the son of a great rabbi. The Ambassador invited me to his home and wished to reward me handsomely. I declined, so he asked how he could repay my kindness and good deeds. I answered that my reward should be that if ever he would think well and good of the Jews and see that we do good without hope or desire of a reward, that this good thought would suffice. The nobleman insisted that he would be at my service should I ever require it and that I would always be considered a good friend. He said, "Since the Jews are often persecuted and downtrodden in this country, perhaps one day you will need my services since, as the French Ambassador, I have power and influence. If you ever need anything, please come see me so I can thank you and repay your kindness." We parted in friendship, after he inquired where I learned such good French and having given me his address and his thanks, regretting that I was a Jew and they could do no more for me to better me and my station. He, his wife, the nurse and the child continued to Vienna to join in the merry making and parade while I took up my bundle and went to the Jewish quarter of Vienna. . . I decided to visit my maternal uncle, my mother's brother Rav Baruch Zatriner. . . They began to cry and it wasn't long before the entire matter of the accusations against my father of false slander and libel, and his subsequent imprisonment was made known and revealed to me. . . I sat dazed. . . I visited my father. . . after I met with the community leaders and learned of the news and how things stood. I went straight to see the French Ambassador. . . "I beg your honor repay my heavy debt, for I only saved three lives and I asking you to save the lives of my father and all the members of the Jewish community." As I said these words, I fell at his feet, soaking them with tears. . . "I praise and thank the Creator I shall not remain long in your debt. Your father shall live and the community shall be saved . . ." Immediately I sent word to my father through his defense counsel, as Rav Hena was permitted to visit him at all times. None of the Jews of Vienna slept that night for fear of my father's life and that we would all be expelled and exiled. . . The ambassador appeared after a half hour's wait that seemed like a lifetime and said, "Dear son, your father shall live and your community

will not be expelled. They have shown mercy, not one person will be forced to leave their home, and they commuted your father's death sentence to a fine." (*Megillas Eivah* Part 2)

RAV YEHUDA HANASI, AUTHOR OF THE MISHNA, SAVES THE TOSAFOS YOM TOV'S SON AND SEFER

Rav Yekusiel Yehuda Greenwald of Budapest once related:

Rav Shmuel, the son of Rav Yom Tov Lipman Heller, lay unconscious, dying in his sickbed. Seeing his son's worsening condition, Rav Heller approached the trunk where he kept his writings and manuscripts and removed a copy of the then unpublished manuscript of his monumental commentary on the *Mishna*, the *Tosafos Yom Tov*. Clutching his precious *sefer*, he declared heavenward:

"*Ribono Shel Olam* - Master of the World! Perhaps I had some pride or took some physical pleasure in the composition of my *sefer*, and if so, I am ready and willing right now to cast the pages into the flames and burn it!" He prepared and stoked the fire in the fireplace until suddenly, as he was about to relegate the handwritten manuscript to the flames, his son Shmuel cried out excitedly: "*Tatty Tatty!* Please don't do it!"

The *Tosafos Yom Tov* was overjoyed and he ran to his son's side and approached the sickbed. Shmuel told his father: "I was in the World of Truth, on High and I saw the Heavenly tribunal, deliberating my fate: would I live or die? Suddenly I saw Rav Yehuda HaNasi, the author of the *Mishna*, approach and advocate on my behalf. "Leave him be, allow him to live and descend back to earth, for his father authored the commentary *Tosafos Yom Tov* sincerely for the sake of Heaven, *lishma*, and many times he succeeded in arriving at the truth and getting things right. See how he now wishes to destroy and burn his manuscript!" No sooner did he say this when my fever broke and I awoke and I felt better now." They celebrated his recovery with a festive meal, inviting all the rabbis of the town to share and rejoice.

(*Yechabed Av*, *Shem Ha'gedolim Ha'chadash* pg 30b) (See also Responsa *Shu"t Tirosh Yitzhar* [215] where he cites the *sefer Chefetz Hashem* of Rav Chaim Ben Attar, the *Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh*, who writes that he has a sign that proves that he studied *Torah lishma* because many times he arrived at the truth by reaching the same conclusions as the *Ramban*, the *Ran* and the *Tosafos Yom Tov*).

A VISIT FROM THE TOSAFOS YOM TOV

Once, as the Rebbe Reb Bunim of Peshischa sat together with his disciples, an elderly *talmid chacham*, who remembered Rav Bunim from his younger days when he was in Vadislav, approached and greeted him. Since he remembered Rav Bunim as a youngster, he did not greet him by the title Rav or Rabbi and the disciples and *talmidim* of his *chevraya* were upset by this and rebuked the elderly guest for his lack of honor and respect for their rebbe. "You know what?" replied the elderly *talmid chacham* from Vadislav, "I will test your rebbe and ask him a question from the commentary of the *Tosafos Yom Tov*. If he knows the answer I will indeed honor him with the title Rav and Rebbe." He asked Rav Bunim, and the Rebbe Reb Bunim closed his eyes in concentration and rested his head on his arm for several minutes. Finally he lifted his head, opened his eyes, and delivered a very good explanation in the *Tosafos Yom Tov*, answering the visitor's question. The guest was amazed. "I asked many scholars, but no one could answer my question. How did you know the answer?" "Well," explained the Rebbe Reb Bunim, "I ascended on High and asked the *neshamah* of my departed rebbe the *Yid HaKadosh*, who in turn went to visit the *Tosafos Yom Tov* himself in the heavenly academy. He explained that the printer had missed a few words. He explained the answer to me and that's how I know it!" (*Yechabed Av, Shem Ha'gedolim Ha'chadash* pg 30b)

YOSSELE THE HOLY MISER - YOSSEL'EH KAMTZAN KADOSH

GIVING TO THE LAST PENNY

A long time ago in Krakow / Cracow during the tenure of Rav YomTov Lipman Heller author of the *Tosfos Yom Tov* on *Mishnayos* there was a special *chevra tzedaka*, an institution of charitable giving where all the money donated for the poor, for the orphans and widows, for the indigent and the hungry was collected. Off course none other than the *Tosfos Yom Tov* himself was the president of this charitable organization. He saw to the collection and distribution of funds, often donated hefty sums from his own pockets and when the coffers were empty he himself took on the role of collector, and made his rounds among the wealthy Jews of Cracow seeking their support for the plight of the poor. And so did Rav Zelig Margolios testify in the introduction to his *sefer Chibburei Likkutim*: Despite his role as *Av Beis Din* of Cracow, he himself supported the poor to the point that after he passed away there was no money left to even purchase him the burial shrouds; all his money had been donated to *tzedaka* as charity for the poor.

THE STINGY MISER

There was one thing that bothered the Rav, and that was Reb Yosseleh. Reb Yosseleh was a wealthy man, he was kind and good hearted, he seemed to be very respectable and ardently fulfilled the *Torah* and the *mitzvos* in all ways. . . in all ways but one. Somehow, for some reason that the Rav couldn't understand when it came to charitable giving, no donations were forthcoming from the wealthy Reb Yosseleh. Despite his immense wealth, the man was a miser, stingy as could be! He always donated small paltry sums that were totally incompatible with ways and means. It was a puzzle but that citizens of Cracow knew that Yosseleh the wealthy was Yosseleh the miser.

One day Rav YomTov was on a *tzedaka* collecting mission. Despite his best efforts he simply was unable to collect enough donations to cover the great deficit and help the poor that so desperately needed the funds. That day everything seemed to be against him, one wealthy generous donor was absent and away, one had recently suffered a tremendous downturn in his business and his donations was smaller than usual, the other had gone out of business, and the final donor claimed that he was bankrupt with not even a penny left to his name. What was the Rav to do? The *Tosfos YomTov* felt he had run out of options, with no choice left he turned to Yosseleh.

As usual the wealthy man gave a small donation, much less than a man of means with his wealth should be able to give. The Rav was understandably upset and he argued and complained with the rich miser to give more, "Yosseleh please don't be unreasonable, just this once can't you give a larger donation? Even your poor neighbor who is no man of means gives a larger sum than you?!" But his words fell on deaf ears. No amount of pleading or cajoling helped, Yossele stood his ground.

HIS BURIAL IN SHAME AND DISGRACE

According to some accounts the *Tosfos YomTov* himself took the miser to *Beis Din* over his stinginess. Others say that the matter was ruled on after the wealthy miser passed away when the *chevra kaddisha* refused to even bury him at all. Either way all accounts agree the *chevra kadisha* was ordered by the Rav to bury the miser close to the fence and gate of the *beis hachaim*, a location known as a shameful and disgraceful place reserved for burying criminals and sinners.

THE GREATEST SECRET BAAL TZEDAKA IN CRACOW REVEALED

For a while the matter was forgotten, until something strange happened that is. First the amount of poor seemed to grow exponentially. The demand for money from the coffers of the *chevra tzedaka* increased sharply and then the complaints came pouring in from the poor, the orphans and the widows. "What did you do all these years?" asked the Rav who was shocked and surprised at the sudden unexplained increase in poverty. "All these years Yosseleh supported us in secret," they revealed, shopkeepers were paid to keep quiet so they could donate food to the poor, even the poor neighbor who lived opposite Yossele revealed that his sizable donation, always incongruous to his means, was in fact Yosseleh's as well, hidden and secret just as all his charitable works were.

It seems that the stingy miser was actual a great *baal tzedaka* a master of charitable giving, in its highest form. The *Rambam* in *Hilchos Tzedaka* tells us that one of the greatest forms of charitable giving is *tzedaka* called *matan be'seiser* - anonymous donation. Yosseleh didn't want anyone to know that he was the biggest *baal tzedaka* in town. He shunned the honor and the fame, he remained anonymous, rebuked and even labeled as the town miser. He suffered shame and disgrace, all so long as no one revealed his secret.

YOSSELEH THE HOLY MISER REDEEMED

When the Rav realized what had happened he was greatly dismayed and distressed. Yosseleh the miser was really Yosseleh the holy donor, a great man who had supported so many poor people for so many years. He did not deserve to be shamed and disgraced by being buried in a plot usually reserved for criminals and sinners. And so the *Tosfos YomTov* redeemed him, he himself was buried not far, close to the holy Yosseleh, now they were to be neighbors in the nest world, by being buried himself there the Rav *Tosfos YomTov* hoped to atone for the accidental mistaken injustice done to Reb Yosseleh who was nicknamed *Kamtzan Kadosh* - the holy miser.

Today in the old *Beis HaChaim* in the courtyard of the *Rema shul* in Cracow you can visit the *Kever* of the holy tzadik, the *Tosfos YomTov*. He is indeed buried on the other side of the *beis hachaim*, closer to the old gate which was once open and today is blocked and closed. And there not far away is a small weathered headstone, this small *matzeiva* whose

writing is barely legible has on it many stones, left by visitors. Petitioners, those that come to seek *yeshuos* and *refuos* - and have their *tefilos* answered. Tradition has it that this is the *kever* of none other than Yosseleh *Kamtzan Kadosh*. (Based on *Al haTzadikim veal HaChassidim* and *Tzadikei Olam*)

Rav Betzalel Rakov of Gateshead, a descendant of the *Tosfos YomTov* is cited as telling a story he saw in print that this story about Yosseleh was once told publicly at a convention. Afterwards the speaker was approached privately by a priest who revealed that his mother had once told him this story and that they were descendants of the holy miser of Cracow. Events have a way of leading one to another and somehow this priest eventually returned to his roots and today he is a *baal teshuva* learning Torah in Jerusalem. Perhaps it is the merit of his holy ancestor Yosseleh *Kamtzan Kadosh* the holy miser and the power of one of the greatest forms of charitable giving is *tzedaka* called *matan be'seiser*.

Rav Elyakim Getzil (Elul 26)

THE MASTER OF TZEDAKA

Rav Yaakov Yosef was known as a righteous *tzaddik* and a *tamim* who attempted to conceal his ways from the public eye. He was renowned for his charitableness, donating vast sums to *tzedakah* while he lived in poverty.

From morning until dusk, he would collect money to feed the hungry, provide needed clothing, and make sure all had shelter. He cared like a father for orphans and widows. He was brotherly to the downtrodden and anyone who needed his help and compassion. When the coffers were empty, he would borrow the money and spend all day collecting the funds to pay back what he borrowed. He even had a secret fund for those who were once wealthy upper classmen and had fallen on hard times. He reasoned that they needed the *tzedakah* as much as others but were ashamed and embarrassed to ask.

There was once an impoverished *ben tovim* (an upper-class yungerman) who was staying with Rav Getzil. In the manner of customary rebbishe garb he was dressed in a silken kaftan, but it was torn and rent full of holes. Rav Getzil, in his compassion, tried to have a new silk kaftan made for him, but the *ben tovim* was ashamed and refused all offers, claiming that his old garment was fine and sufficient. Rav Getzil came up with a plan. He

ordered the tailor to come by and secretly size up the measurements of his guest in order to sew him a new silk kaftan. Rav Getzil paid the tailor and brought the new garment upstairs. While the guest was fast asleep, Rav Getzil stealthily removed the old kaftan that was draped over a chair, and swapped it for the new silken garment that the tailor had sewn. The next morning, when the guest awoke, he got dressed, and though the clothes fit him, he realized that the kaftan was new. He began to yell, "My clothes are gone!"

"Listen my good friend, calm yourself down," said Rav Getzil, "there are no thieves here in my house; if your old clothes are gone and this was left in their place, surely a miracle has occurred and your new garments are Heaven sent!"

His guest had off course no choice but to accept the new "miracle kaftan."

Like his father, Rav L evi, before him, Rav Getzil was extremely scrupulous regarding weights and measures. When he would pass by the marketplace all the merchants would quickly hide any false weights, lest the wonder rabbi would discover them!

He refused to move to a larger home, stating that the reason was that he didn't want live in any permanent home outside of Eretz Yisroel. For many generations he was venerated in Ostrog for his legendary *tzedakah*.

Rav Getzil once overheard a tumult going on. A wandering *maggid* visiting Ostrog had said his *drashah* and became outraged by payment that he considered well below his standard. He was berating and cursing the *baalei batim* when Rav Getzil came by. He turned to the angry *darshan* and quipped: "You know you are even worse than Bilaam! At least when Bilaam wanted to curse Bnei Yisroel, he asked for houses full of gold and silver-- but the *brachos*, he gave them for free! You, however, want a lot of money for your *brachos*, but your curses you are willing to give us for free!"

He was well-respected by the *lamdanim* of the generation as well. Rav Chaim HaKohen Rappaport wrote him a *teshuvah* (found in *Mayim Chaim* Vol 2 *Even HaEzer* p. 59 *Siman* 38).

In תקנ"ב he published his father's Torah as the sefer Rav Levi and wrote an extensive introduction full of mussar and chassidus.

HIS HUMILITY

Regarding his great humility, they tell how, once, through a drawing of lots, Rav Getzil was appointed as *chevra kadisha* of *halvaos chen* - nowadays, known as a “gemach,” or free loan society. An additional drawing, resulted in a simple porter becoming the second appointee. The porter was thrilled with this new assignment and was about to position himself at the top of the table as the head of the society. When he arrived, he realized that the sainted tzaddik, Rav Getzil, was already seated there. Considering himself to be unworthy to sit side by side as an equal to the rav, the porter became embarrassed. He couldn't bring himself to sit himself down next to such an important and respected individual. He therefore remained standing at a distance. Rav Getzil was sensitive to the man's feelings and warmly called him over. “My dear friend, come and sit next to me; take your proper place beside me at the head of the table. It is from Heaven that you be appointed to head the free loan society together with me. And if so, why do you stand so far away?”

And so, they sat down side by side - the great rav and tzaddik, alongside the simple porter.

Rav Nosson Adler (Katz) Av Beis Din of Frankfurt (Elul 27)

RAV NOSSON ADLER DANCES FOR THE DONKEY

One cold winter day, the *Gaon*, Rav Nosson Adler, was traveling together with his esteemed *talmid*, the *Chasam Sofer*. The horses pulling the wagon were trudging through the heavy snow with great difficulty. Suddenly, one of the horses collapsed and died, and the second horse was not strong enough to pull the wagon alone. The wagon driver, having no other choice, starting walking to the nearest village to obtain an additional horse. The two venerated passengers waited in the wagon.

Eventually, the wagon driver returned, leading a...donkey. When Rav Nosson saw the donkey, he descended from the wagon, and began to dance happily in the snow. “Rebbe,” asked the *Chasam Sofer*, “Why are you so happy?”

“Don't you see?” asked Rav Nosson. “The wagon driver brought a donkey instead of a horse. Who would ever have thought that I would merit fulfilling the mitzva of “Do not

plow with an ox and donkey together”? At home in Frankfurt, I never imagined that I would merit fulfilling this commandment. Now that Boruch Hashem, I merited it, I am filled with joy!”

The passengers instructed the wagon driver to return the donkey, and he brought back a horse in its place. (*Ukarasa Lashabbos Oneg*)

NO CHIDDUSH

The *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz once told Rav Shimon Sofer of Cracow regarding his father the *Chasam Sofer* that:

“It was no *chiddush* that your father the *Chasam Sofer* was so great and holy and rose to such heights when he had a rebbe such as Rav Nassan Adler.

Regarding whom I heard from my own rebbe Rav Naphtali of Ropshitz who heard in turn from his rebbe the Rebbe Reb Melech of Lizensk author of *Noam Elimelech* who said that ‘for many years a soul such as Rav Nosson Adler’s had not descended to this world besides the soul of the *Baal Shem Tov*.’”

Rav Yaakov Aryeh Leib Shapira (Elul 27)

HEAR NO EVIL

The two litigants stood before Rav Aryeh Leib Shapira of Kavla.

“Rebbe we cannot agree on how to resolve the conflict between us. However, the only thing we agreed to is that you should decide, and whatever the rebbe rules we will accept the judgment.”

Rav Aryeh Leib sat lost in thought for some time. Finally, he came to a conclusion. He banged his hand on the table (as was his custom when intending to especially arouse himself towards serving Hashem) and declared, “When I was a young child, just beginning to learn the shape of the holy letters of the *aleph- beis*, my holy father, Rav Mordechai of Neshchiz, asked me to dine with him. During the meal, he told me the following:

“Know my son that whatever you see was created by One Creator, Hashem, and all of this was done for the sake of the giving of the Torah!

“He then began to relate all of the events of Jewish history to me, all the tales of Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov and their deeds and the events of their lives, all the stories of the tribes, Yosef and his brothers and their descent into Egypt, their slavery and miraculous deliverance through the Exodus, their travels through the desert and so on. He explained how these events were put into motion all for one purpose and one purpose alone: for the sake that we merit to accept the holy Torah!

“‘Now know my son’ my father continued, ‘that Hashem and the *Torah* and Bnei Yisroel are bound together as one cohesive unit. Hashem is Truth, and His Torah is true and His seal is truth. Therefore, if you speak the truth, you will also be bound up with Hashem and with His *Torah*. If, however, heaven forbid, you lie and speak falsely then you will have nothing whatsoever to do with Hashem or His holy Torah!’ This did my father teach me and reviewed with me day after day until my *Bar Mitzvah*.”

“Now if my holy father spoke this way even to the simplest ignoramus, his words would have made an impact and caused him to never speak falsely all the days of his life. However, my father spoke those words to me, and upon me they did their work. He therefore succeeded in making me unable to hear lies and falsehood. Therefore, I tell you both, speak the truth, if either of you speaks a lie or utters and falsehood, I simply won’t hear you speaking at all! Therefore, speak the truth in your arguments and I will hear them!”

And this was Rav Aryeh Leib of Kavla’s way, if anyone ever lied in his presence, he simply was deaf to him, and did not even hear what he said at all. (*Derech Tzadikim* p. 22 # 9)[3 of 38]

Rav Sholom Rokeach Sar Shalom of Belz, Midbar Kadesh (Elul 27)

THE SAR SHALOM AND THE SIDDUR RASHASH

The first *Belzer Rav*, the *Sar Shalom*, had a *Chassid* who always traveled to Eretz Yisrael to procure an *esrog* for the *Rebbe* for *Sukkos*. One summer, when this *Chassid* was

preparing for the journey, the *Rebbe* gave him an additional mission: to procure the *sefer Nahar Sholom* and the various volumes of the siddur of the holy *Rashash*, which was rare back then, and only available as a hand-written manuscript - and only in *Yeshiva Beis E"l* in the old city of Yerushalayim.

The *Chassid* accepted the mission and when he traveled to Eretz Yisrael he succeeded in procuring the manuscripts of the *Rashash's* writings, as well as the siddur for the Sar Sholom.

When word reached the *Rebbe*, his joy knew no bounds, and when he heard of his *Chassid's* arrival, the *Tzaddik* dressed in Shabbos clothes and went out to the city limits to meet the approaching caravan and horses. When the *Chassid* saw the *Rebbe* approach, bedecked in his Shabbos finery, he alighted and approached the *Rebbe*.

"Where are the seforim of the holy *Rashash*?" inquired the *Rebbe*.

The *Chassid* pointed to one of the trunks and, to his amazement, the *Rebbe* lifted the heavy trunk off the horse and carried it by hand himself all the way back to town!

Afterward, the *Rebbe* closeted himself in his room for some three days straight to study the *seforim*. When he emerged on the fourth day, a holy light shone from his countenance and he declared, "For some years now I greatly desired to study the *sefer Nahar Sholom* and the *siddur* of the *Rashash*. Now that I have achieved my heart's desire and have studied them, I see that we are both of the same mind on certain matters; many things I thought, the *Rashash* also teaches!" The *Rebbe* then handed out cake and *bronfen* and they drank *lechaim!* (Moron HaRashash, p. 232-235)

WITH THE CHOZEH OF LUBLIN

The Chozeh wished to honor his important guest, Rav Sholom Rokeach, and so he asked them to pour him a glass of wine. Rav Sholom had already begun his ascent and so among his ascetic practices he had self imposed upon himself was to refrain from drinking any intoxicating beverages. And so he lifted the cup up as the Chozeh had commanded but was in a quandary since he would not drink the wine. This resolved itself as soon as the wine glass shattered in his hands off its own accord. Seeing this, the Chozeh asked them to pour him a new cup of wine. When the performance repeated itself the Chozeh

thundered in mock anger: "What are you trying to do? Do you mean to shatter all my glasses?" When Rav Sholom explained his *geder* and that he did not drink wine, the Chozeh let the matter alone.

The next day he honored Rav Sholom by calling him up to the Torah for the sixth *aliyah*, an honor accorded and reserved for VIPs and lofty leveled rabbonim. The assembled wondered aloud about such an honor and distinction bestowed upon such a young guest. The Chozeh responded to the clamor and commotion with the retort: "Why are you all so surprised?, this *yungerman* will one day be a leader of thousands!" Off course his prediction came true.

The Chozeh once requested Rav Sholom to be the one to read the Megillah on Purim for all the assembled. Afterwards the Chozeh remarked upon the completion "I have heard the story of Purim many times before, but not the way this yungerman just told it! I have never heard the story told this way ever before!"

On another occasion Rav Sholom was squashed beneath the Chozeh's *tisch*, the Chozeh whispered to him "One day they will all be squashing under your *tisch*!"

Another time the Chozeh remarked: "People travel to Rymanov (to the Rebbe Reb Menachem Mendel) seeking *parnassah* and livelihood, to Kozhnitz (to the Maggid Rav Yisroel Haupstein) they go seeking *refuos* and healing, to me they come for Chassidus, to you they shall come and by you they shall received all of these!"

Rav Chaim Yehuda Leib Auerbach Rosh Yeshivas Shaar Ha'Shomayim, Chacham Lev (Elul 28)

THE FOUNDING OF YESHIVAS SHAAR HASHOMAYIM

by Rabbi Aryeh Gefen

"A person doesn't always find the path that he ought to be taking. For the want of a mentor he might stray onto tortuous sidetracks. Or, he might go right inside without enough advance preparation and lose his bearings due to the powerful, intoxicating aromas of PaRDeS [the acronym of the initial letters of the four levels of Torah interpretation: pshat (simple meaning), remez (allusion or hints), drush (expounding or

homiletics) and sod (secret teachings)]. This [danger] led to [the imposition] of protective measures and limitations, as well as to [people's] keeping away from the approaches to the wisdom of the Kabboloh" (from the pamphlet issued when yeshivas Shaar HaShomayim was founded).

Yeshivas Shaar HaShomayim came into being after two distinguished Yerushalmi Yidden shared the same astonishing dream. The yeshiva truly is a Gateway to Heaven within which, over the years, numerous students of all ages and levels have elevated themselves heavenward.

Fascinatingly, its name is taken from a posuk (Bereishis 28:17) that Yaakov Ovinu uttered after the dream in which he saw mal'ochim ascending and descending between heaven and earth.

One night, HaRav Chaim Yehuda Leib Auerbach zt'l awoke suddenly after having dreamed a strange dream. Exhausted, he turned over and quickly dozed off again but soon he woke up again, shaken, after the dream repeated itself. His drowsiness now having disappeared and he being none too interested in trying to fall asleep again just to see the dream a third time, he arose, dressed and went outside into the cool Yerushalayim night.

His footsteps echoing softly in the deserted streets and alleys, he made his way to the Botei Broide neighborhood (adjacent to Machaneh Yehuda), to the home of HaRav Shimon Horowitz zt'l, one of Yerushalayim's great kabboloh scholars.

After a time he became aware of the sound of more footsteps. In the darkness he made out a figure, recognizably Jewish, coming towards him. When the figure came close to him he discovered to his surprise and joy that it was the very person whom he wanted to see — HaRav Shimon Horowitz himself.

"What are you doing out so late?" Rav Shimon asked Rav Chaim Leib.

"I was on my way to see you. I had an amazing dream tonight and I wanted to tell you about it."

"Very interesting. I also had an astonishing dream about you and I was on my way to you."

Conferring on a dark street corner, the two were staggered to discover that they had both dreamed about the same venerable elderly man, his face shining with an otherworldly light, who had forcefully requested of them that his Torah be learned in Yerushalayim. "My Torah has the power to bring the Shechinah back from its exile," he told them.

Rav Shimon decided that the person who had appeared to them was apparently none other than the holy Arizal, who is known to have regretted the fact that his Torah was not widely circulated among Yerushalayim's Ashkenazi population. The only place where the Ari's kabboloh was then studied in Yerushalayim was the Beis Keil yeshiva which produced scholars of the stature of HaRav Shalom Sharabi (the Rashash), HaRav Yedidiah Aboulafieh and the author of Shemen Sasson.

Then and there the two Ashkenazim decided to open a yeshiva for the study of the Ari's kabboloh. Without fanfare, an initial group formed and began learning in the Old City and very soon the first shiur was being delivered.

A Home of Its Own

Over the years the yeshiva underwent many difficulties, moving from one place to another before finally coming to occupy its own current premises on Rechov Rashi in the Mekor Boruch neighborhood. By the way, there is a meaning to the arrangement of the windows in the beis medrash. There are thirteen windows — the gematria of echod — on each side, together making twenty- six, which is the gematria of Hashem's Name.

Among the yeshiva's first talmidim in the Old City was HaRav Tzvi Pesach Frank zt'l. An earthquake in Yerushalayim in 5627 (1927) slightly damaged the yeshiva's building but it remained there until 5708 (1948), when fighting broke out prior to the departure of the British. Haganah fighters took up a position on the roof of the yeshiva from where they were able to fire on the Jordanians.

When the Old City fell to the Jordanians shortly thereafter, the conquering Jordanians set fire to the building with all the seforim and furniture inside, contrary to all international rules and laws. The yeshiva tried unsuccessfully to reclaim the building following the liberation of the Old City in 1967. The Machon Yerushalayim publishing house now occupies the renovated building at number one Rechov Gal'ed, and only a plaque

commemorates the yeshiva that was once situated there.

Despite all its travails the yeshiva remained intact. It relocated at first to the Katamon neighborhood together with many other Jewish refugees from Old City. To this day there is a beis haknesses named Shaar HaShomayim in the building that the yeshiva occupied on Rechov Amatzia.

With growing tensions on the Jordanian border the yeshiva moved again to the Beis Yisroel neighborhood, learning in the building that now houses the shtieblach. In 5718 (1958), following the intervention of Rabbi Menachem Porush, the yeshiva moved to temporary premises on Rechov Rashbam.

One of HaRav Chaim Leib's sons, HaRav Refoel Auerbach zt'l, assumed leadership of the yeshiva after his father's petiroh and tried to fulfill his father's testament that it move into a large, spacious building of its own. With the help of Rabbi Reuven Saron, negotiations were entered into with the owners of the present building on Rechov Rashi and with another of the yeshiva's foremost supporters, Rabbi Pinchas Hoffman. The deal was eventually settled and the building was bought for the yeshiva.

When the supporter returned to Eretz Yisroel several months later he paid a visit to HaRav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt'l, another of HaRav Chaim Leib's sons, who worked to strengthen the yeshiva all his life and served as its president for many years. He was stunned to hear the following from Reb Shlomo Zalman:

"My brother Reb Refoel passed away exactly thirty days after the building was purchased. Those thirty days were among the happiest of his life. For years he had been deeply worried that he might pass away before managing to fulfill his promise to our father to build a home for the yeshiva. With the contract signed and the purchase completed his promise to our father zt'l was fulfilled and he 'returned in peace to Father's house' (see Bereishis 28:21)."

Within the Yeshiva's Walls

Right from the start the yeshiva was planned with broad vision. When first opened it comprised a Talmud Torah, a yeshiva ketanoh, a yeshiva gedolah and a kollel for married

students.

The condition for joining the yeshiva for mekubalim was extensive knowledge of the revealed Torah. Only those who had already "ingested their fill (milei kereiso)" of Shas and poskim, and were solidly grounded in Torah and yiras Shomayim were admitted. To this day, alongside the shiurim in kabboloh, the yeshiva offers daily shiurim in Shas, poskim, Halochoh and aggodoh that are attended by scores of talmidei chachomim and laymen.

The yeshiva is still the main address for Ashkenazim who wish to study kabboloh. Half the day must be spent learning revealed Torah and, as a matter of principle, all students are strictly forbidden to make any use whatsoever of "practical kabboloh" or any related techniques.

Shaar HaShomayim took the lead in making the public aware of the Arizal's yahrtzeit on 5 Av and of the custom of visiting his burial place then, and also of the tikkunim carried out once a week during the annual Shovovim period (between Teves and Adar).

The word Shovovim is made up of the first letters of the parshos of that period: Shemos, Voeiro, Bo, Beshalach, Yisro, Mishpotim. In a leap year, the weeks of Terumoh and Tetzaveh are added, and it is then called Shovovim Tat. Today, one can encounter well known roshei yeshiva attending the special Thursday tefillas minchahs that are held in the yeshiva during the Shovovim weeks, among the large crowd that always comes.

Various other tikkunim and pidyonos are still held in the yeshiva, such as tikkun almonoh and others, but these are conducted quietly and without publicity. The yeshiva has also published many kabboloh works.

Talmidim tell the story of one of the yeshiva's scholars who started to pray wearing tefillin prepared according to the halachic requirements of the author of Shimusha Rabboh. He found that while wearing the tefillin he was unable to concentrate his thoughts in the way that he had learned. He could not understand what had happened until he had the tefillin checked and discovered that they were posul!

At the Helm

The first roshei hayeshiva were the founders, HaRav Chaim Yehuda Leib Auerbach, author of Chacham Lev and HaRav Shimon Tzvi Horowitz, author of Shem Mishimon and Kol Mevasser. Over the years, many other great Torah scholars taught in the yeshiva. Rav Chaim Leib's son, Rav Eliezer Auerbach zt'l led the yeshiva for many years and after his petiroh, his brother Rav Refoel Dovid zt'l took over. Members of the family continue leading the yeshiva to this day.

Heading the yeshiva at present are HaRav Fishel Eisenbach, HaRav Yaakov Meir Shechter and HaRav Gamliel Rabinowitz. Since HaRav Shlomo Zalman's petiroh, his son HaRav Shmuel, rosh yeshivas Maalos Hatorah, has served as the yeshiva's president. He asked a nephew of Reb Shlomo Zalman who is a son-in-law of Rav Refoel Dovid Auerbach, Rav Yechezkel Schlaff of London, to shoulder the burden of the yeshiva's material and spiritual upkeep.

Many avreichim spend many hours of the day learning revealed Torah in Shaar HaShomayim and the yeshiva has produced a number of talmidei chachomim of stature, as well as Torah disseminators and rabbonim.

There are several shiurim in the department for the study of the concealed Torah, arranged according to level. The first shiur is introductory, with the study of Oztros Chaim. In the second shiur, Eitz Chaim is studied in depth. In the third shiur, kavonos of the Rashash are studied.

In 5684 (1924), the yeshiva published a booklet in which its leaders set out its aims as follows. "First, the study of the revealed Torah, as it is studied in all the holy yeshivos, [including] Shas in depth and poskim. Second, the study of kabboloh, mussar and inquiry. [This is] the only place in the world where the Torah of kabboloh is studied in an orderly manner, progressing from simple teachings to more difficult ones, taught by talmidei chachomim who are qualified for the task.

"A person doesn't always find the path that he ought to be taking. For the want of a mentor he might stray onto tortuous sidetracks. Or, he might go right inside without enough advance preparation and lose his bearings due to the powerful, intoxicating aromas of PaRDeS [the acronym of the initial letters of the four levels of Torah interpretation: pshat (simple meaning), remez (allusion), drush (expounding) and sod

(secret teachings)]. This [danger] led to [the imposition] of protective measures and limitations, and to [people's] keeping away from the approaches to the wisdom of the Kabboloh.

"The yeshiva's intention is not to provide its students with a simple, superficial understanding of the works of kabboloh, to afford a mere glimpse, wherein lies the danger of stumbling — as Chazal put it, "He glimpsed and was injured." Only extensive inquiry and in-depth study of all the kabboloh works ensures full, rounded knowledge. This is what Yeshivas Shaar HaShomayim and its branches aim to provide."

How a Yeshiva Looked a Hundred Years Ago

Looking through several of the promotional publications issued by Yeshivas Shaar HaShomayim for the Study of Revealed and Concealed Torah, one gets an impression of what it was like to learn in this unique yeshiva, which was fully operational before yeshivos were patterned as they are today. Many aspects of how the yeshiva was run were a function of the circumstances at the time and do not necessarily have any practical application in our times. It is interesting to follow the way in which things developed until they crystallized into the form that we have them today.

In their prospectus, the yeshiva's founders provide the following description of some of the different "courses" the yeshiva offered.

"The yeshiva for bochurim — This department will accept gifted and inspired youngsters aged fifteen and sixteen who have completed their studies in Talmud Torah and who want to become halachic authorities for Klal Yisroel. Distinguished rabbonim and scholars of Yerushalayim will deliver shiurim in gemora and commentaries and in the poskim. Upon completion of their course of studies, the talmidim will receive a certificate attesting to their competence to render rulings from the yeshiva's teachers who themselves are rabbonim who occupy positions in Yerushalayim.

"Rabbinical lawyers — In addition to the Torah and ethical authority that our botei din wield in the Diaspora, the beis din tzedek in the Holy Land is invested with the legal authority of the [mandatory Palestine, pre-1948] state, by decree of the king, may his glory be exalted. The members of the beis din issue rulings on all matters pertaining to inheritances, wills, marriage and divorce, alimony and the like. There is therefore a great

need for rabbinical lawyers who can act as advocates in the botei din. The yeshiva has therefore opened a special department whose purpose is to teach and train advocates in Talmudic law. Capable youngsters who are gifted with clarity of speech and with sound logic, who are honest and of fine character, will be accepted. The shiurim will be on Shulchan Oruch, Choshen Mishpat and Even Haezer.

"The Department for the Study of Kodshim and Taharos — These two orders [of mishnah] are almost totally neglected by most scholars, to the point where laymen suspect that these parts of Torah may simply be superfluous. The laws that Chazal term "fundamental halochos" (Ovos 3:18) have almost disappeared from the vista of the holy Torah's splendor and wholeness. The arrangers of the Talmud saw fit to assign so much space to the orders of Kodshim and Taharos, even though they already lacked practical relevance in their day. This department will accept talmidei chachomim who are Cohanim and whose occupation is Torah, who wish to attain knowledge of Torah in its entirety.

"The Department for the Study of Kiddush Hachodesh and the Principles of Fixing the Calendar — The Jewish People are considered "a wise and understanding people" (Devorim 4:6) on account of their expertise in this area. The Rambam devoted an entire chapter to it in his Mishneh Torah. This department will accept talmidei chachomim from among the yeshiva's scholars who wish to learn the laws governing the fixing of the calendar and sanctifying the new moon from the Talmud and the Rambam, in an orderly and methodical way.

"The Study of Kabboloh — Talmidei chachomim who are trained and very solidly grounded in all areas of the revealed Torah, and who have passed all the tests that prove their suitability [for this study] from a spiritual standpoint, will be accepted. These shiurim will be given daily by the greatest experts in Kabboloh, in the seforim of the Ari and his talmid Rav Chaim Vital zy'a. There are several levels in the yeshiva and those who have passed the first level will ascend to succeeding levels. Those who are capable, will become mentors and will convey their learning to others. Others are involved in editing the many manuscripts that the yeshiva publishes in the field of Kabboloh. Mechavanim is the term for those who have been successfully tested by the elder scholars of Kabboloh and know how to focus their thoughts on Yichud Hashem and on the thoughts brought in the kabboloh literature." <http://chareidi.org/archives5767/rosh/RSH67features2.htm>

Segulos Yisroel



SEGULOS FOR PARSHAS NITZAVIM & PARSHAS VAYEILECH & ELUL

Segulah To Help Others Become Baalei Teshuvah

There is a *segula* to help wayward offenders return to the fold, this *segula* was often *prescribed* by the Arader Rav and Rav Aharon Fisher. It is found in the *Degel Yehudah* of the Stretiner and Rav Hirschele Miller's version with detailed instructions is found here. The *Segula* is to write their names on bricks and to bake them erev Shabbos with the Challos in the oven and recite three times that just as these bricks baked and burned in the oven so should the heart of *Ploni ben Ploni* - insert Hebrew Name son of Mother's Hebrew Name burn with the fire and passion for *avodas Hashem* and then bury it in the *kever* of a well known famous tzadik or next to the *kever* of a tzaddik, many do so by the *kevarim* of the Kasua Rav of Williamsburg Tolaas Yaakov, by the *kever* of the Ohr haChaim haKadosh, by the *kever* of the Divrei Yoel of Satmar or Ribnitz or by the *kever* of a Tanna. Rav BenTzion Mutzafi and Rav Shmueli also prescribed this *segula* to others to do to help people repent and do *teshuvah* see <https://www.doresh-tzion.co.il/QAShowAnswer.aspx?qaid=27591>

Please Visit [MeOros HaTzadikim](http://MeOrosHaTzadikim.com) for more Segulos and Torah from Tzadikim and Chassidus

רבי נחמן מברסלב כותב בספר המידות ערך 'דעת' כי
תפילתו של חבקוק הינה סגולה ליישוב הדעת

Rebbe Nachman of Breslov teaches in Sefer
HaMiddos that it is a segulah if "Someone whose
mind is confused should frequently say the prayer
of Habakuk"

מי שִׁמְחוּ מִבְּלָבָל, יִהְיֶה רָגִיל בְּתַפִּילַת חֲבֻקֹּק הַנָּבִיא

במקומות רבים נוהגים לקוראה בליל יום הכיפורים
Many have the custom to recite it on Yom Kippur

לשון התפילה

חבקוק ג: א

תַּפִּלָּה לַחֲבֻקֹּק הַנָּבִיא עַל שְׁגִינוֹת. אֲדֹנִי, שְׁמַעְתִּי שְׁמִעָךְ
יִרְאֵתִי; אֲדֹנִי פָעַלְךָ בְּקֶרֶב שָׁנִים חַיִּיהוּ, בְּקֶרֶב שָׁנִים
תּוֹדִיעַ; בְּרָגֶז, רַחֵם תִּזְכּוֹר. אֱלֹהִים מְתִימָן יְבוֹא, וְקֹדֶשׁ
מִהַר-פֶּאֶרֶן סָלָה; כֹּסֶה שָׁמַיִם הוֹדוּ, וַתִּהְלֹתוּ מְלָאָה
הָאָרֶץ. וְנִגַּה כָּאוֹר תִּהְיֶה, קִרְנִים מִיָּדוֹ לוֹ; וְשֶׁם, חֲבִיוֹן
עֲזָה. לִפְנֵיו, יִלָּךְ דְּבָר; וַיֵּצֵא רֶשֶׁף, לְרַגְלָיו. עָמַד וַיִּמָּדֵד
אָרֶץ, רָאָה וַיִּתֵּר גּוֹיִם, וַיִּתְּפֹצֵצוּ הָרִירִי עַד, שָׁחוּ גִבְעוֹת

עוֹלָם; הִלִּיכוֹת עוֹלָם, לוֹ. תַּחַת אֲוֹן, רָאִיתִי אֶהְלִי כּוֹשֵׁן;
 יִרְגְּזוּן, יִרְיָעוֹת אֶרֶץ מִדְּיָן. הִבְנְהָרִים, חָרָה אֲדָנִי, אִם
 בְּנֵהָרִים אֶפֶד, אִם-בָּיִם עֲבָרְתֶּךָ: כִּי תִרְכַּב עַל סוּסֶיךָ,
 מִרְכַּבְתֶּיךָ יִשׁוּעָה. עֲרִיָּה תַעֲוֹר קִשְׁתֶּךָ, שְׁבָעוֹת מַטּוֹת אֶמָּר
 סֵלָה; נִהְרוֹת, תִּבְקַע אֶרֶץ. רָאוּךְ יַחֲלִילוּ הָרִים, זָרֵם מִיָּם
 עֲבָר; נָתַן תְּהוֹם קוֹלוֹ, רוֹם יִדְּיָהוּ נָשָׂא. שָׁמֶשׁ יָרַח, עֹמֵד
 זָבֻלָּה; לְאוֹר חֲצִיךָ יִהְלֹכוּ, לְנִגְהָ בֵּרֶק חֲנִיתֶךָ. בְּזַעַם, תִּצְעַד
 אֶרֶץ; בְּאֵף, תִּדּוֹשׁ גּוֹיִם. יִצְאֶתָ לִישׁוּעַ עֹמֵד, לִישׁוּעַ אֶת
 מְשִׁיחֶךָ; מִחֲצֶתָ רֹאשׁ מִבֵּית רָשָׁע, עֲרוֹת יִסּוּד עַד צִוָּאר
 סֵלָה. נִקְבַּת בְּמַטְיוֹ רֹאשׁ פָּרְזוֹ, יִסְעֲרוּ לְהַפִּיצָנִי; עֲלִיצָתָם,
 כְּמוֹ לֶאֱכֹל עֹנִי בַּמִּסְתָּר. דִּרְכָּתָ בָּיִם, סוּסֶיךָ; חֲמֹר, מִיָּם
 רַבִּים. שָׁמַעְתִּי וַתִּרְגַּז בְּטָנִי, לְקוֹל צִלְלוֹ שִׁפְתֵי יָבוֹא רִקְבִי
 בַּעֲצָמִי, וַתַּחֲתִי אֶרְגָּז: אֲשֶׁר אָנוּחַ לְיוֹם צָרָה, לַעֲלוֹת לָעַם
 יְגוּדָנוּ. כִּי תֵאֵנָה לֹא תִפְרָח, וְאֵין יָבוּל בַּגִּפְנִים כַּחַשׁ
 מַעֲשֵׂה זֵית, וּשְׂדֵמוֹת לֹא עֹשֶׂה אֶכֶל; גָּזַר מִמֶּכְלָה צֶאֱוֹן,
 וְאֵין בִּקְרַב בְּרַפְתִּים. וְאֲנִי, בִּיהוָה אֶעֱלוֹזָה: אֲגִילָּה, בְּאַלְהֵי
 יִשְׁעִי. יְהוָה אֲדָנִי, חִילִּי, וַיִּשֶׁם רַגְלִי כְּאֵילוֹת, וַעַל בְּמוֹתֵי
 "יִדְרַכְנִי; לְמִנְצָח, בְּנִגְיֹנוֹתֵי

A prayer of the prophet Habakkuk. In the mode of Shigionoth.

יְהוָה שָׁמַעְתִּי שְׁמֶעְךָ יִרְאֵתִי יְהוָה פָּעֲלֶךָ בִּקְרֹב שָׁנִים
 O LORD! I have learned of Your renown;
 I am awed, O LORD, by Your deeds.

Renew them in these years,
Oh, make them known in these years!
Though angry, may You remember compassion.

אֱלֹהֵי מִתִּימָן יָבוֹא וְקִדּוֹשׁ מִהַר־פָּאָרָן סֵלָה כֶּסֶה שָׁמַיִם
God is coming from
Teman,

The Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah.

His majesty covers the skies,
His splendor fills the earth:

וְנֹגַהּ כְּאוֹר תִּהְיֶה קִרְנִים מִיָּדוֹ לּוֹ וְשֵׁם חֲבִיּוֹן עֲזָה:
It is a
brilliant light

Which gives off rays on every side—
And therein His glory is enveloped.

פֶּסְטִילֵנְס מַרְכֵּס לְפָנָיו יֵלֵךְ דְּבַר וַיֵּצֵא רָשָׁף לְרִגְלָיו:
Pestilence marches
before Him,

And plague comes forth at His heels.

עָמַד | וַיִּמָּדֵד אֶרֶץ רָאָה וַיִּתֵּר גּוֹלִים וַיִּתְפָּצֵצוּ הַרְרֵי־עֵד שָׁחוּ
When He stands, He
makes the earth shake;

When He glances, He makes nations tremble.

The age-old mountains are shattered,

The primeval hills sink low.

His are the ancient routes:

As תַּחַת אֲנִי רְאִיתִי אֶהְיֶה כּוֹשֵׁן יִרְגָּזוּן יְרִיעוֹת אֶרֶץ מִדְיָן:
a scene of havoc I behold
The tents of Cushan;
Shaken are the pavilions
Of the land of Midian!

הַבְּנֵהָרִים חָרָה יְהוָה אִם בְּנֵהָרִים אֶפְךָ אִם-בַּיָּם עֲבַרְתָּךְ כִּי
Are You wroth, O תִּרְכַּבְּ עַל-סוּסֶיךָ מִרְכַּבְתֶּיךָ יְשׁוּעָה:
LORD, with Neharim?
Is Your anger against Neharim,
Your rage against YameNeharim (lit. "Floods") and
Yam (lit. "Sea") were marine monsters vanquished
by the Lord in hoary antiquity.
That You are driving Your steeds,
Your victorious chariot?

עֲרִיָּה תַעֲוֹר קִשְׁתְּךָ שְׂבָעוֹת מַטּוֹת אֶמֶר סֵלָה נְהָרוֹת
All bared and ready is Your bow. תִּבְקַעְאָרֶץ:
Sworn are the rods of the word. Selah.
You make the earth burst into streams,
רֶאֱוָה יַחֲלִילוּ הָרִים זֶרֶם מַיִם עָבַר נָתַן תְּהוֹם קוֹלוֹ רוֹם
The mountains rock at the sight of You, יִדְּהוּ נִשְׂאָ:
A torrent of rain comes down;
Loud roars the deep,
The sky returns the echo.

שָׁמַשׁ יָרַח עָמַד זָבְלָה לְאֹר חֲצִידָי יִהְיוּ לְנֹגַהּ בְּרֶק
Sun [and] moon stand still on high
חֲנִיתָדָּ:

As Your arrows fly in brightness,
Your flashing spear in brilliance.

You tread the
earth in rage,
You trample nations in fury.

יִצְאָתָּ לַיִשָּׁע עִמָּךְ לַיִשָּׁע אֶת־מְשִׁיחֲךָ מִחֲצֶפֶת רֹאשׁ מִבֵּית
{רָשָׁע עֲרוֹת יִסּוּד עַד־צִוָּאר סָלָה: } פ
You have come forth to deliver Your people,
To deliver Your anointed.

You will strike the heads of men of evil, / Smash
the pates of Your adversaries. Selah.

You will smash the roof of the villain's house,
Raze it from foundation to top. Selah.

נִקְבַּת בְּמַטְיוֹ רֹאשׁ פִּרְזוֹ יִסְעֶרוּ לְהַפִּיצָנִי עַל־יִצְתָּם כְּמוֹ־
You will crack [his] skull with
Your bludgeon;

Blown away shall be his warriors,
Whose delight is to crush me suddenly,
To devour a poor man in an ambush.

You will crack their skulls with Your bludgeon; /
Dispersed, blown like chaff shall be they / Who lie

in wait to swallow the innocent, / To devour the
poor in an ambush.

דַּרְכֶּךָ בָּיִם סוּסֶיךָ חֲמֹר מַיִם רַבִּים: 15

You will make Your steeds tread the sea, / Stirring
the mighty waters,

שָׁמַעְתִּי | וַתִּרְגַּז בִּטְנִי לְקוֹל צִלְלוֹ שִׁפְתֵי יָבוֹא רָקֵב בַּעֲצָמִי
וַתַּחֲתִי אֶרְגַּז אֲשֶׁר אָנוּחַ לַיּוֹם צָרָה לַעֲלוֹת לָעַם יְגוּדָנוּ:

I heard and my bowels quaked,
My lips quivered at the sound;
Rot entered into my bone,
I trembled where I stood.

But this report made my bowels quake, / These
tidings made my lips quiver; / Rot entered into my
bone, / I trembled where I stood: /

16 That I may have rest on a day of distress, /
When a people come up to attack us. /

Yet I wait calmly for the day of distress,
For a people to come to attack us.

כִּי־תֵאָנֶה לֹא־תִפְרָח וְאֵין יָבוֹל בַּגִּפְנִים כַּחַשׁ מַעֲשֵׂה־זֵית
וּשְׂדֵמּוֹת לֹא־עָשָׂה אֲכָל גָּזַר מִמְכָּלָה צֹאן וְאֵין בָּקָר
בְּרִפְתִּים:

Though the fig tree does not bud
And no yield is on the vine,
Though the olive crop has failed
And the fields produce no grain,
Though sheep have vanished from the fold
And no cattle are in the pen,
17 That the fig tree does not bud, / And no yield
is on the vine; / The olive crop has failed, / And
the fields produce no grain; / The sheep have
vanished from the fold, / And no cattle are in the
pen.

וְאָנִי בִיהוָה אֶעֱלֹזָה אֲגִלָּה בְּאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי: Yet will I
rejoice in the LORD,
Exult in the God who delivers me.
יְהוָה אֲדַנִּי חֵילִי וְיִשְׁעִי רַגְלִי כְּאַיִלֹת וְעַל בָּמוֹתַי יִדְרֹכֵנִי
לְמִנְצֵחַ בְּנִגְיוֹתַי: My Lord GOD is my strength:
He makes my feet like the deer's
And lets me stride upon the heights.

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and Torah from Tzadikim and Chassidus

Appendix: Tefillah Against Talking in Shul by the Tosafos Yom Tov

THE MI SHE'BERACH OF THE TOSAFOS YOM TOV



Illustration 1: Mi Sheberach of Tosafos Yom Tov current version found in most Siddurim

During the infamous pogroms of Ta"ch V"Ta"t (years 5408 and 5409 – 1648-1649) the Tosafos Yom Tov fasted and beseeched that from on High it be revealed to him why such terrible calamities had befallen the Jewish people. It was revealed to him from on High that there was lightheaded, idle chatter in shul. People spoke in shul and in the middle of *davening*, which caused a blemish in the letter "*vav*" and the word for speech, *dibur*, was transformed into *dever*, a plague! When he learned of this, he composed a special prayer (others say the Maharal composed it but the Tosafos Yom Tov instituted and enacted its recitation in his *kehillos*. See the original *nusach* below) to help increase the awareness of the power of silence in *shul*, the destructive nature of idle chatter, and talking in shul and during *davening*. It is printed in many *siddurim* alongside the *Mi Sheberach* we recite on Shabbos after the reading of the Torah. We reproduce it for you here as well as its translation:

He who blessed our forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, Moshe and Aharon, Dovid and Shlomo, shall bless all those who guard their mouth and tongue so as to not speak during the time of tefillah. May the Holy One protect them from all troubles and calamities and all affliction and sickness. May all the blessings written in the Sefer Torah of Moshe Rabbeinu, as well as the prophets and writings (of Tanach) descend to rest upon him. And may he merit to see children and grandchildren alive and well, and to raise them and marry them off to Torah, chuppah and good deeds. May he serve Hashem our G-d forever, fully, and purely, and sincerely. Let us say and answer Amen.

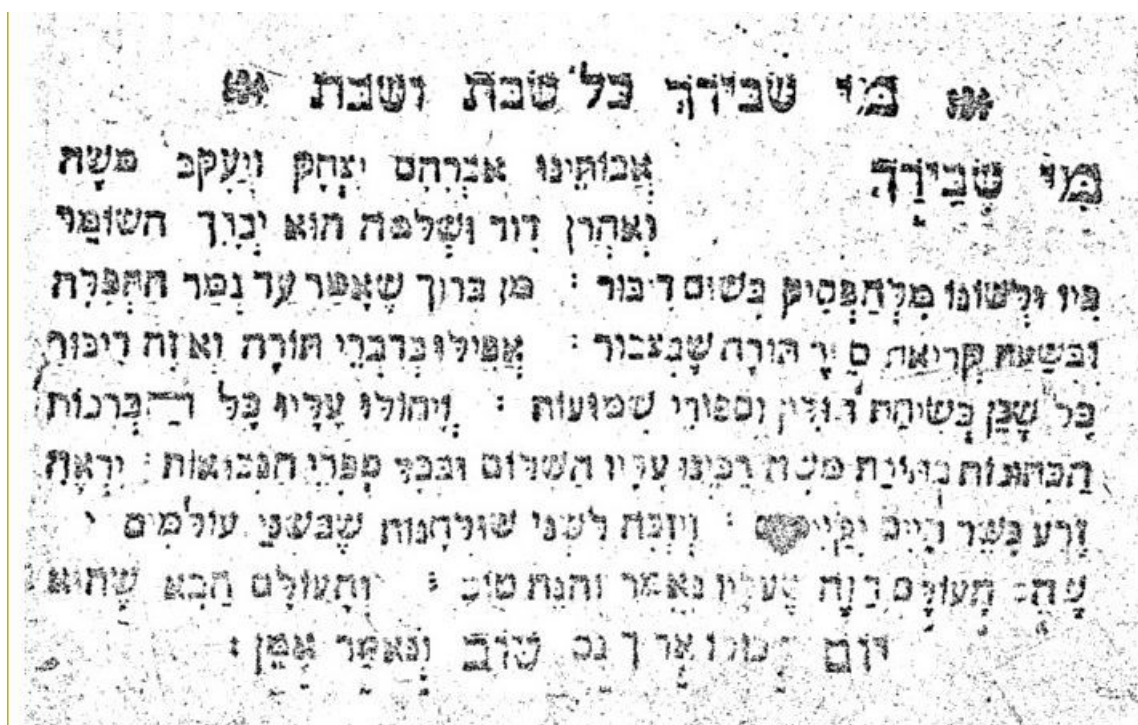


Illustration 2: Ancient Version of Mi Sheberach attributed to Maharal or Tosafos Yom Tov, his disciple

Appendix: Segulah to Help Others Become Baalei Teshuvah

בעזה"ש

סגולה למי שנטה מן דרך הישרה ח"ו בר מינך¹

- (א) ערב שבת דייקא.
- (ב) בשעה שאופן החלות לכבוד שבת.
- (ג) לוקחים לבינה.
- (ד) חדשה דייקא.
- (ה) וכותבים על הלבינה שם של הבחור/בתולה עם שם האם. לדוגמא חיים בן רחל².
- (ו) אחר שהשם כבר נכתב על הלבינה אומרים הנוסח דלהלן ג' פעמים.
- (ז) לזכר. כשם שהלבינה זה בוער בתנור אש כן יבער הלב של פלוני בן פלונית שיצא לתרבות רעות שיתהפך לבו לשמים לטובה.
- (ח) לנקיבה. כשם שהלבינה זה בוער בתנור אש כן תבער לבה של פלונית בת פלונית שיצאה לתרבות רעות, שתתהפך לבה לשמים לטובה.
- (ט) אח"כ מניחים הלבינה בהתנור אחורי החלות (החלות מלפניו ולאחוריו הלבינה).
- (י) בשעה שהלבינה הוא בתנור והחלות הם באמצע האפיה אומרים עוד הפעם ג' פעמים נוסח הנ"ל.
- (יא) ואוכלים החלות באותו שבת.
- (יב) הלבינה משאירים בהתנור כל השבוע. (ואולי טוב שלא להשתמש עם התנור כל השבוע)
- (יג) בשבוע הבא, אופין עוד הפעמים חלות לכבוד שבת, באותו התנור.
- (יד) ובשעה שהחלות הם באמצע האפיה אומרים עוד הפעם נוסח הנ"ל ג' פעמים
- (טו) אחר שגומרים לאפות החלות, והלבינה כבר נצטנן, לוקחים הלבינה מן התנור, ואמרים עוד הפעם ג' פעמים נוסח הנ"ל, אולם יש לשנות קצת הנוסח, דתחת "בוער" לשון הוה אומרים "ביער" לשון עבר וכדלהלן
- (טז) לזכר. כשם שהלבינה זה "ביער" בתנור אש כן יבער הלב של פלוני בן פלונית שיצא לתרבות רעות שיתהפך לבו לשמים לטובה
- (יז) לנקיבה. כשם שהלבינה זה "ביער" בתנור אש כן תבער לבה של פלונית בת פלונית שיצאה לתרבות רעות, שתתהפך לבה לשמים לטובה
- (יח) אח"כ קוברים הלבינה על קבר צדיק מפורסם³, ובדיעבד⁴ סגי "סמוך" אצל צדיק מפורסם, וכן עושים רבים.

¹ כל הסגולה שמעתי מר' הערשל מילער שליט"א, הרב מאראד, (718-387-5640) דראה ושמע כמה פעמים דאביו הרב מאראד עשה זאת, בעיר אראד, וכן בניו יאריק באמעריקא, כמו שיבאר להלן. וכן כל ההערות מלמטה כל זה שמעתי מפיו ואמר דסגולה זו מובא בכמה ספרים, ואין מבוואר בברירות אופן הסגולה וכנראה דאביו עשה ככל האופנים להוציא מספק, עוד אמר דאביו עשה זאת בהתעוררות גדולה וכו', ורבים נושעו ע"ז, ופעם אחד עשה כן ב' פעמים עוד אמר דאביו ציוה לנמור תהלים באותו יום

² מרגליה בפומיה דאינשי וכן עושים רבים. לכתוב כל הנוסח על הלבינה, אולם אבי לא כתב רק השם על האבן גם לא מוזכר בספרים הנ"ל לכתוב כל הנוסח על הלבינה, גם קשה מאד לכתוב יותר מן השם על הלבינה.

³ שמעתי בשם רבינו ז"ע, להניח אצל צדיק מפורסם, ורבים הניחו אות אצל ציון של הרב ר' יחזקאל מערין, וידעתי מב' אנשים שקברו אותו אצל ציון מהאזה"ק

⁴ בספרי הסגולה כתבו להניח בקבר צדיק, ונראה מזה דיש להניח ממש בהקבר, ואולי על ג' מפחים מותר, וכן ציוה אבי. אולם קשה לעשות כן ורבים קוברים אותו סמוך לקבר הצדיק.

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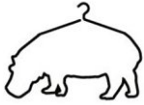
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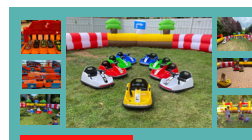
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