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

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)

 **NITZOVIM** 

❖ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ❖

Dvar Torah

Divine Judgment

The strangeness of the word immediately jumps out at us. The *Torah* tells us (30:9): “Hashem, your G-d, will render you abundant (*vehosircha*) in all your handiwork, in the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your livestock and the fruit of your land for the good, when Hashem will return to rejoice over you for the good as He once rejoiced over your forefathers.” What is the significance of the word *vehosircha* - “He will render you abundant” - an exceedingly unusual turn of phrase?

We can find the answer, explains Rav Levi Yitzchok, in the words of the *Mishna* (*Avos* 3:19): “Everything is foreseen, freedom of choice is given and the world is judged (*haolom nidon*) favorably”. The word for world, *olom*, is of the feminine gender, and we would expect gender agreement in the verb form for judgment. But *nidon* is actually the masculine form; *nidona* is the feminine form. Why then does the *Mishna* use a masculine verb form for a feminine word?

It is because the judgment of the world also extends, so to speak, to the Master of the World. Hashem enjoys providing great abundance for his children. Therefore, if he judges them favorably, he also benefits Himself. But if He should, Heaven forbid, rule against them, He also deprives Himself of the joy of giving them blessings. The judgment extends not only to the world but to the Judge of the world. This concept is implicit in the use of the masculine

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verb form.

This is also the implicit intent of the word *vehosircha* in our *pasuk*. This word can be translated as “render you abundant”, and it can also be translated as “render you superfluous”. The *Torah* is saying that *Hashem* will render your deeds superfluous so that He can lavish you with blessings regardless of your personal merit. Why would He do this? The end of the *pasuk* provides the answer. It is because *Hashem* wants “to rejoice over you for the good as He once rejoiced over your forefathers”. He does not want to be deprived of His own pleasure because of your lack of merit. Therefore, He will look away from your deeds in order to give abundant blessings.



Story

An elderly man once walked into Rav Levi Yitzchok’s *Bais Din* while it was in session. “I want to lodge a complaint,” he said, “and I want the *Bais Din* to rule on it. I live some distance away, and I have come here just to make my case before this *Bais Din*. Will you consider my case?”

“Of course,” said Rav Levi Yitzchok. “Who is the defendant?”

“It is *Hashem*.”

“I see,” said Rav Levi Yitzchok. “And what is your complaint?”

“I am a very poor man,” he said. “My wife and I have only one child, a daughter, and we have scrimped and saved for years so that we could marry her off properly. We have gone hungry just so we could save a few more pennies. And now she is of marriageable age, and we are not even close to the amount of money we need. It is my opinion that *Hashem* is obligated to marry her off!”

The *Bais Din* deliberated for a while and arrived at a decision.

Rav Levi Yitzchok announced the verdict. “You are right,” he said. “We rule in your favor. *Hashem* is obligated to marry off your daughter. This *Bais Din* is giving Him a grace period of forty days to provide the money.”

Forty days later, the man returned to the *Bais Din*. “So when will I get my money?” he said.

“The money is coming to you,” said Rav Levi Yitzchok. “We will write you an official affidavit of our verdict, which you can take with you. It guarantees that *Hashem* will pay.”

The man left the *Bais Din* floating on air. He kissed and hugged the paper and sang and danced through the streets toward the inn in which he was staying.

Just then, a wealthy squire rode by in his fine carriage and saw the poor Jew cavorting through the streets. As he watched, he saw a gust of wind snatch the paper from the hands of the Jew and carry it away. The paper flew through the air like a falling autumn leaf, sliding back and forth on unseen currents of air until it flew into the window of the squire’s carriage. The squire took the paper in his hands, but he could not read the writing on it.

Meanwhile, the Jew had followed the path of the paper to the squire’s carriage.

“Sir, that is my paper,” he said. “Could you please return it to me?”

“I’ll return it to you in good time,” said the squire, “but first tell me what is written here.”

The poor Jew grew red in the face. "I-I cannot," he stammered. "But it really doesn't matter. It is about me and my affairs."

"Nonetheless, I will not return it to you until I know what is written on it. There is a Jew in Berdichev with whom I do business. He will translate it for me. Come to my house in an hour."

Exactly one hour later, the poor Jew was knocking on the door of the squire's house. A servant opened the door and showed him into the squire's office.

"Can I have my paper back now?"

"Actually, you cannot," said the squire. "Strange as it may seem, the letter is addressed to me. It provides me with some important information, and it instructs me to give the bearer of the letter a rather large sum of money. So, my good fellow, it seems you've earned yourself quite a handsome sum."

The squire then gave the poor Jew a sum that was far more than adequate for all his needs.



ROSH HASHANA

Sacks of Sins

Rav Levi Yitzchok was known far and wide as an *eved Hashem*, a servant of *Hashem*. It is not a simple matter to be an *eved Hashem*; this title is applied only to the greatest *Tzaddikim* of the generation. So how exactly did he achieve such an exalted status? Rav Levi Yitzchok provided the explanation.

One *Rosh HaShana* night, Rav Levi Yitzchok related, his soul rose to the Upper World, and he entered the chamber of the Heavenly Court. Off to the right, there was a doorway that led to Gan Eden, where the *Tzaddikim* resided in eternal bliss, and off to the left, another doorway led to the blazing fires of *Gehinnom*. As Rav Levi Yitzchok watched, he saw *Soton's* messengers running swiftly into the chamber with large sacks on their shoulders. They cast the sacks onto the ground and ran back for more.

"What is in those sacks?" he asked.

"The sins of the Jewish people," he was told.

"But can they run so swiftly with such large sacks of sin?"

"Yes, they can."

"And what will happen with all these sins?"

"*Soton* will use them to prosecute the Jewish people."

As Rav Levi Yitzchok watched, the messengers who had dropped their sacks earlier were now returning with additional sacks. The situation was becoming desperate. *Soton's* stockpile was becoming overwhelmingly huge. How would the Jewish people withstand such a prosecution?

Rav Levi Yitzchok quickly grabbed a few sacks, ran to the doorway to *Gehinnom* and tossed the sacks into the flames. Back and forth, back and forth he ran until he had consigned all the sins to the flames.

When *Soton* arrived before the Heavenly Court, ready to prosecute the Jewish people, he was shocked to find that all his sacks of sins had disappeared. He looked up, saw Rav Levi Yitzchok standing there and immediately understood what had happened.

“Thief!” he cried out. “Those sacks were my property. Who gave you the right to take and destroy them?”

Soton grabbed Rav Levi Yitzchok by his garments and dragged him before the bar of justice.

“This man is a thief,” he declared. “I demand that he make restitution for the losses he has caused me.”

The Court considered his arguments and decided in *Soton’s* favor. “You must make restitution,” Rav Levi Yitzchok was told, “or else you will be sold as a slave, as decreed by the *Torah* (*Shemos* 22:2).”

Soton demanded an exceedingly exorbitant sum as restitution for the damages he had incurred, and Rav Levi Yitzchok did not have the means to pay even a small fraction of it. It was, therefore, decreed that he would be sold as a slave. Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov came forward to buy Rav Levi Yitzchok, but they could not muster the necessary funds. Nor did any of the other *Tzaddikim* who tried to redeem Rav Levi Yitzchok from his predicament.

Finally, *Hashem* declared, “The entire world belongs to Me, and I will redeem him. I will buy him as My slave.”

“And this is how I became an *eved Hashem*,” concluded Rav Levi Yitzchok. “In the liturgy of *Rosh HaShana*, we say, ‘*Lekoneh avodov badin*. For the One Who buys His slaves through judgment.’ *Hashem* bought me as His slave through judgment.”



The *novi* (prophet) says (*Hoshei’a* 14:3): “*Kol tisa ovon vekach tov*.” This is usually translated as: “Forgive all sins, and accept good”. But the order of the words is somewhat awkward. The *pasuk* can also be read with an alternate interpretation.

Kol tisa ovon. Everyone can lift a sin. Why? Because a sin is as light as a feather and carried with hardly any effort. It is so easy to commit a sin and have it rise up to the heavens where it can do untold damage. *Vekach tov* – but take hold of the good. A good deed, an act that brings repair to the damage in the Upper Worlds, is much weightier than a sin. It cannot be carried up so easily. One needs to grab hold of it and drag it aloft.



Who Will Blow the Shofar?

The word was out: Rav Levi Yitzchok was looking for someone to blow the *shofar* for himself and his followers on this *Rosh HaShana*. Many people were thrilled to be presented with this opportunity. They made appointments to “interview” with Rav Levi Yitzchok for this esteemed position.

The day of the interview came. All the candidates gathered together in a room, and were called in one by one by Rav Levi Yitzchok. With each one, he asked a similar question:



What are you thinking about while you blow the *shofar*? Each aspirant answered similarly, displaying his vast knowledge of the deep concentrations and metaphysical meanings upon which to focus during the blowing. Rav Levi Yitzchok, however, was not satisfied with any of the responses.

Rav Levi Yitzchok noticed a man who was standing silently in the corner of the room, shifting uncomfortably, with a nervous look on his face. Rav Levi Yitzchok called him over, and asked him the same question. "*Rebbe*," he responded, "I am a simple Jew. I have daughters to marry off. I am a poor man with no money for their dowries. When the time comes for the sounding of the *shofar*, I mentally utter the following *tefilla*: Father in Heaven, I have done Your will, and I am blowing before You the *shofar*. Please, if You could, do for me the same – please send me fitting husbands for my daughters!" "

A large smile broke across the face of Rav Levi Yitzchok. "Excellent!" he said. "You have the correct and true feelings in mind when you blow the *shofar*. You are the type of person I am looking for to blow the *shofar*!"

May all of our *tefillos* find favor in the eyes of *Hashem* during this High Holiday season.



The sound of the *shofar* which was heard at Har Sinai when the *Torah* was given "became louder and louder" (*Shemos* 19:19).

Rashi explains, "When a human being blows a trumpet, the longer he blows it, the more tired he becomes and the weaker the sound grows."

But the *shofar* at Har Sinai was different. Not only did its sound constantly increase in volume, but it has continued to be heard ever since. Its sound will not cease until "the earth is as full of the knowledge of *Hashem* as the waters cover the sea" (*Yeshaya* 11:9).

Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev comments, "There are people who hear the sound of the *Rosh HaShana shofar* all year long...and there are people who hear the sound of the Har Sinai *shofar* all the days of their lives."

They are two different *shofaros*. The *Rosh HaShana shofar* calls us to repentance, and we should *repent* every day of the year. The Har Sinai *shofar* proclaims *Hashem* as King over the world, and this thought ought to accompany us every day of our lives.

Otherwise, as the High Holyday *tefillos* suggest, we will be caught up in the constant tussle between the *melech evyon*, the over-confident human tendency to think one is self-sufficient, and the *melech elyon*, the Creator King who expects humility of His creatures, and the capacity to listen to the divine word and live a life of dignity and responsibility.

www.oztorah.com/2009/01/levi-yitzchak-the-shofar/



Shofar, Malochim and Pesach

Another version of this story is in *Hearing Shofar: The Still Small Voice of the Ram's Horn*, Chapter 3-6 – *The Ram's Horn of Passover*.

Once, when the *Rebbe Maharash* of Lubavitch was traveling through Berditchev, he saw a group of elderly Tolna *Chassidim* carrying buckets of water and scrubbing the walls and floor of a little shul in preparation for a visit from their *Rebbe* the following day.

When the *Rebbe* asked them why they were doing all the work themselves instead of

letting the younger *Chassidim* help them, they answered, “We are doing this ourselves because we want to have healthy *Malochim* to assist the advocating *Malochim* who come out of the *tekios*, the blasts of the *shofar*.

“You know the *yehi rotzon* that is said after the *tekios* of *Rosh HaShana* — the one that mentions ‘the *Malochim* that are formed from the blowing of the *shofar*, and from the *tekia*, the *shevorim*, the *terua*, and the *tekih*, (*kshr”k*) [the identifying letters of the Hebrew words that signify the various sounds of the *shofar*]?”

“Well, one *Rosh HaShana* the holy Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev said, ‘Sweet Father, compassionate Father! Just in case the *Malochim* that proceed from the *shofar* that Levi Yitzchok the son of Sora Sosha has just blown are weak *Malochim*, let their place be taken by the holy, healthy *Malochim* that were created by the toil of Your people in preparation for *Pesach*, as they cleaned their kitchen utensils in order to fulfill their *mitzva* as perfectly as possible: *kratzen* (scouring), *shobben* (scraping), *riebe* (rubbing), and *kasheren* (making kosher)!” [for the initials of these four Yiddish words are also *kshr”k*].

(*Likkutei Dibburim* of the *Rebbe Rayatz* of Lubavitch, Volume I page 280)

(Rav Tal Moshe Zwecker)

It is a known *segula* to say and have in mind the *zechus* of Rav Levi Yitzchok ben Sora Sosha while blowing and listening to the *shofar*!



Chassidic Rosh HaShana Stories

Equestrian Illusions

While passing through a marketplace, Rav Kehos of Veritch, a *talmid* of Rav Yisrael Ba'al Shem Tov, overheard a conversation between two horse dealers.

“I was thinking,” said one to the other. “What does the psalmist mean when he says, ‘Do not be as a horse, or a mule, without understanding, their mouths stopped with bit and bridle’ (*Tehillim* 32:9)? Well, when you put a bit in a horse’s mouth, he thinks that you are giving him something to practice his chewing on. Don’t be like a horse, Dovid *HaMelech* is saying. When your Heavenly Master sends something your way, understand that it is more than something to chew on...”

Rav Kehos related this exchange to his teacher. The *Ba'al Shem Tov* was greatly excited by the horsedealer’s insight, and was inspired to a state of *d'veikus* (meditative attachment to Hashem). In his ecstasy, the *Ba'al Shem Tov* began to sing a melody. This is the melody to which the Rebbes of *Chabad* would *daven* on the first night of *Rosh HaShana*.



A Novel Audit

With the approach of *Rosh HaShana*, as we close the past year and welcome the new, what better time for auditing our experiences in the past year so that we can better them in the year to come. Each one of us does so in his own personal way. Yet, there is something we can all learn from Moshe, the innkeeper, who employed a unique method of accounting.

The *Ba'al Shem Tov's* students once asked how to prepare for the High Holidays. He sent them to observe the simple innkeeper, Moshe. The students took a room in his inn, and waited to discover the answer to their question. At midnight before *Rosh HaShana* they heard Moshe rustling about in the front room. They peeked out and saw Moshe taking down two large notebooks from the shelf. He sat down on a small stool, lit a candle, and began reading from one notebook.

The notebook was a diary of all the misdeeds and transgressions the innkeeper had committed in the course of the year – the date, time and circumstance of each scrupulously noted. His “sins” were quite benign – a word of gossip one day, oversleeping the time for *tefilla* on another, neglecting to give his daily coin to charity on a third – but by the time Moshe had read through the first few pages, his face was bathed in tears. For more than an hour Moshe read and wept, until the last page had been turned.

He then opened up the second notebook. This, too, was a diary – of all the troubles and misfortunes that had befallen him in the course of the year. On this day Moshe was beaten by a gang of peasants, on that day his child fell ill; once, in the dead of winter, the family had frozen for several nights for lack of firewood; another time their cow had died, and there was no milk until enough pennies had been saved to buy another.

When he had finished reading the second notebook, the tavernkeeper lifted his eyes heavenward and said: “So you see, dear Father in Heaven, I have sinned against You. Last year I repented and promised to fulfill Your commandments, but I repeatedly succumbed to my evil inclination. But last year I also *davened* and begged You for a year of health and prosperity, and I trusted in You that it would indeed be this way.

“Dear Father, today is the eve of *Rosh HaShana*, when everyone forgives and is forgiven. Let us put the past behind us. I didn't always do what was asked of me and You didn't always do what was asked of You. I forgive You and You forgive me, and we'll call it even.”



Legal Defense

One year, when the first day of *Rosh HaShana* occurred on *Shabbos*, Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev ascended the podium in the center of his *shul* and addressed the heavens:

“Master of the Universe! Today, all Your creatures pass before You like a flock of sheep, and You pass judgment upon them. Two great books lie open before You, the book of life and the book of death. The righteous are inscribed in the book of life, and the transgressors are written in the book of death, G-d forbid.

“But today is *Shabbos*. Did You not command in Your holy *Torah* that is forbidden to write on *Shabbos*? True, it is permitted to violate *Shabbos* in order to preserve a life, so You are permitted to inscribe the righteous in the book of life. But no such clause permits inscribing those who have transgressed Your will in the book of death. I therefore inform You, dear Father in Heaven, that according to the law of the *Torah*, You must inscribe all Your children for a year of life, health and prosperity!”



The Waiting King

HaMelech (“the King”) is an oft-occurring word in the *Rosh HaShana tefillos*, whose dominant theme is our coronation of *Hashem* as king of the universe and submission to His sovereignty. Indeed, this is the first word chanted by the cantor on *Rosh HaShana* morning, as he opens the *Shacharis tefillos* with an awe-inspiring melody that climaxes with a sonorous

Ha-Me-lech!

One *Rosh HaShana* morning, the great *Chassidic* master, Rav Aharon of Karlin, fainted when he came to the word *HaMelech*. He later explained that he recalled the *Talmudic* passage (*Gittin* 56a) that describes Rav Yochanon *ben Zakkai*'s encounter with *Vespasian*. Rav Yochanon had himself smuggled out of the besieged city of *Yerushalayim* to plead with the Roman general to spare the *Torah* center of *Yavneh*. When Rav Yochanon entered *Vespasian*'s tent, he addressed him as "Your Majesty".

"You are deserving of death on two accounts," said *Vespasian*. "First of all, I am not the king, only His Majesty's general. [Immediately afterward, relates the *Gemora*, a messenger arrived with the news that the emperor had died and *Vespasian* had been appointed to succeed him.] Second, if I am indeed king, why did you not come to me until now?"

"I thought to myself," said the *Rebbe* of Karlin, "if we address *Hashem* as 'King', does this not invite the question, 'If I am indeed your king, why did you not come to me until now?' What can we answer to that?"

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Stories about the Berditchever Rav for Rosh HaShana

The King Who Was Lost in the Woods ~ Why We Blow the Shofar on Rosh HaShana

"With trumpets and the sound of the *shofar* blow blasts before the King, *Hashem*."
(*Tehillim* 98:6)

We will explain this based on a parable:

There was once a flesh-and-blood king who traveled to a great forest to delight in the sport of hunting animals and birds. When he entered deep into the woods, he lost his way and could not locate the highway. Eventually, he lost the trail completely and was unable to retrace his steps in order to find the way back home.

He met some peasants and serfs in the woods, who did not recognize the king, and asked them for directions. They could not answer him since they themselves had never traveled on the highway at all. He continued searching, till he met a wise man and asked him for directions. The wise man realized that this was the king himself, and he was shocked and greatly moved. Immediately, he offered the king his assistance and obeyed his will. He showed him the way back to the highway using his great wisdom to recognize the proper route.

He took the king and escorted him all the way back to his palace and sat him back on his throne. The wise man found great favor in the king's eyes, who raised his station above all the other ministers. He dressed him in fine clothing and allowed him access to enter the treasury.

After much time had passed, this wise man sinned against the king and the king was greatly angered against him. He asked those ministers who were second-in-command to judge him as one who had transgressed the king's command. The wise man was very pained, since he knew the judgment would be harsh, seeing that his sin was transgressing the king's command.

He came to the king and fell before him, prostrating himself, pleading for his life. He begged that the king grant him just one wish before his judgment was carried out. His request was to be dressed once more in the very same garments he had worn when guiding the lost king out of the woods so long ago. The king granted his wish, and when he was dressed once again in those clothes, the king was reminded of the great kindness that this man had once

done for him in helping him return to his palace and seating him back on his throne. His mercy was aroused and the wise man once again found favor in his eyes. The king forgave his sins and returned him to his former position and station.

The entire parable above refers to *Bnei Yisrael*. At the time of *Matan Torah* (the Giving of the *Torah*), when *Hashem* approached the members of each nation and asked them to accept the *Torah*, they refused (*Avoda Zara* 2b; *Zohar* III 192b). We, His people, *Bnei Yisrael*, accepted the *Torah* with great joy and delight to the point where we even said, “We will do and we will hear.” We accepted the yoke of Heaven and the yoke of *Hashem*’s kingship; we crowned Him as King over us and accepted His holy *Torah* and *mitzvos*. And now we have sinned and rebelled against Him. We fear the Day of Judgment on which *Hashem* judges every hidden thing (*Koheles* 12:14), and every person is judged individually, according to his actions.

We therefore blow the *shofar* and dress ourselves in the same garments which we wore back then at *Matan Torah*, when we accepted His *Torah* over us and crowned Him with the *shofar*, as the *pasuk* tells us (*Shemos* 19:19) “The sound of the *shofar* became stronger and stronger”, in order to remind Him of those merits (*Rema Orach Chaim* 585:1, *Mishna Berura* 3: we blow at the *bima* so that the merit of the *Torah* should protect us), to ask Him to forgive us for all our sins, exempt us from judgment, and write us up immediately for good long lives – may it be His will, *Amen!*

The following parable, taken from the *sefer Toldos Aharon* by Rav Aharon of Zhitomir, a *talmid* of the *Berditchever*, explains the connection to the *pasuk*:



The King’s Happy Coronation Day

I heard the following parable about our blowing of the *shofar* on *Rosh HaShana* from my master and teacher, the holy *Gaon*, may his memory be a blessing [Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev]:

There was once a great king who was crowned by the citizens of a certain country out of their own goodwill. The king was very happy and rejoiced greatly over having been chosen and crowned as their king through their goodwill and ordered that they sound trumpets before him [to mark the occasion].

The countrymen were astonished by this command. They thought to themselves, “Why, without this ceremony would he not be king? Afterward, he commanded them further that every year, on the anniversary of his coronation, they should make an annual commemoration by once again blowing trumpets. This astonished them even more.

After much time had passed, these same countrymen rebelled, acting treacherously against the king. The king passed judgment against them as one judges a traitor who has rebelled against the king. They in turn regretted their misdeeds and wished to beg the king’s forgiveness. Due to their crimes, however, they were not permitted to see the king, for he had placed guards and watchmen around the high walls of the king’s courtyard, who did not allow the countrymen to pass through.

The countrymen came together to brainstorm what they could do to gain access to the king’s courtyard in order to meet him and attempt to solicit his forgiveness. Then one of them had an idea that they should find a way to remind the king of the great joy and happiness he had once felt at the day of his coronation when he had been crowned king of the land through their own goodwill; perhaps then he would have mercy on them.

However, due to the fact that the guards and watchmen prevented them from entering the king’s courtyard to remind him, they came up with the following plan: since on the day of

his coronation he had asked to have trumpets sounded before him, perhaps he had in mind that the trumpets themselves would remind him of this joyous occasion, so that he could show his subjects favor.

They took trumpets and began to blow them around the king's courtyard. When the king heard the trumpet blasts, he remembered that happy day when he was crowned king over his people and the land, and he forgave them in his heart. He commanded that they be granted permission to enter his courtyard and accepted them anew as his subjects, out of his great joy and happiness. They, too, accepted upon themselves never to rebel against him again.

Similarly, we accepted the Holy One as King over us at *Har Sinai* at *Matan Torah*, and we, through our own goodwill, said before him, "*Na'aseh venishma* – We will do and we will hear." Afterward, we too rebelled against the King and He exiled us from our Land, dispersing us through the Diaspora. How could our hearts not cry in pain and anguish over this? What are we doing in a foreign land? And *Bnei Yisrael* are the forethought and the primal reason – the *reishis* – of the entire Creation, as it says, "Initially (*Bereishis*), *Bnei Yisrael* came to mind" (*Bereishis Rabba* 1:4), and *Eretz Yisrael* was created before the other lands, since the world was founded on it (*Taanis* 10a; *Yoma* 54b). And does it not make logical sense that a sound, reasonable argument is that the initial and primal ones (that is *Bnei Yisrael* who are called *reishis*) should first and foremost dwell in the land (of *Eretz Yisrael*) which was created first, rather than in foreign lands which were created last (at the end of the process of Creation)?

Therefore, on *Rosh HaShana* we remind the King of His joyous day [of coronation], since back then, during the giving of the *Torah*, there were blasts and sounds as well (*Shemos* 20:15). We too blast and sound [the *shofar*] on *Rosh HaShana*, a day of judgment and renewal of the worlds, in order to remind *Hashem* of His joyous day.

Perhaps He will forgive us and gather us together, bringing us to the Holy Land.

(*Toldos Aharon Zhitomir, Parshas Ki Savo*)



Rav Ahrele Roth, mechaber of *Shomer Emunim*, once told of how the holy *Berditchever* was *davening* before the *amud* on *Rosh HaShana* and when he opened his holy mouth to say "*HaMelech!*", he fainted away!

Only with great difficulty were they able to revive him and when asked what was wrong he explained, "As soon as I wanted to say the word '*HaMelech*' I was reminded of the story in the *Gemora* in *Gittin* 56b which says: 'If I am really the king, why haven't you come before me till now?'"

"Where was I all year?" I asked myself. I was so ashamed and embarrassed at my lack of devotion; the pain caused me to faint!"

(*Kuntres Ahavas HaBoreh – Ma'amar Tzahali VeRoni* p. 387)



The Blast of the Blessing Over the *Shofar*

The Seret-Vizhnitzer *Rebbe*, mechaber of *Mekor Boruch*, once told the following tale during his *derosha* delivered before *shofar*-blowing on the first day of *Rosh HaShana* in the year 1957:

It has been related that the holy *Rebbe* Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk, mechaber of the *Noam Elimelech*, once witnessed the holy *Berditchever* recite the *berocha* "Who has commanded us to listen to the sound of the *shofar*", which is recited before blowing the *shofar* on *Rosh HaShana*. The *Berditchever* recited the blessing with such intensity and self-

sacrifice that his very soul almost departed. The Rebbe Reb Elimelech wondered, “How did he have the power afterward to actually blow the *shofar* itself?” (*Noam HaBerocha*, page 262)



The Job of the *Malochim* on *Rosh HaShana*

The *Berditchever* taught that the job of the ministering angels on Judgment Day is to advocate on behalf of and teach the merits of *Bnei Yisrael*. This is why the angels tremble in fear on that day, since they fear that they have failed in their task, not having done a good enough job.

(*MiPi Seforim U'Mipi Sofrim Ki Seitzei Peninei Chassidus* #15, page 462)



It was the custom of Rav Dovid Moshe, the Tchartkover *Rebbe*, on *Rosh HaShana* night, right after *Kiddush*, to tell the following story about the *Berditchever*:

“Rav Levi Yitzchok, the great Jewish advocate, was accustomed on *Rosh HaShana*, more than on any other day of the entire year, only to speak well about other Jews.

“One time before *Mussaf* he stood up before the *amud*, the lectern from where he led the *tefillos*, and he began the following argument with *Hashem*:

“Master of the World! Look at what a wonderful people the Jews are! Jews ask for abundant livelihood and they *daven* and beseech you for their own personal needs. But why do they need this? Only for You! All of their earnings and profits go toward Your needs! What does a Jew do with great profits? He raises his children on the path of *Torah*. He teaches his sons to be *Bnei Torah* and his daughters to marry *Torah* scholars. If a Jew profits from business all week, what happens then? When *Shabbos* comes along, he forgets all his business ventures and he deals in spiritual matters alone! His table is set with all manner of good foods and delicacies only for You so that he can glorify and brighten up Your holy *Shabbos*! He brings guests to his *Shabbos* table and they partake together of the festive meals. In the *Bais Medrash*, he donates coins for the coffers to beautify *Shabbos* and he pays handsomely for his *aliya* when he is called to the *Torah*!

“And even if a Jew falls on hard times, we rely on him to uphold and support the community and to take care of all his communal responsibilities: to help upkeep the *Talmud Torah* and the *Yeshiva*, the *mikve*, guests’ lodgings and more – so I ask You, Father in Heaven, why should You not help the Jews with their financial needs and their livelihood? Why should they not be successful in all their endeavors?”

After finishing the *Berditchever*’s arguments and the story, the Tchartkover continued with his own:

“Now we understand the request we make on *Rosh HaShana* and throughout the entire period of the *Aseres Yemei Teshuva* (Ten Days of Repentance):

Remember us for life, O’ King who desires life, and inscribe us into the Book of Life, for Your sake, O living G-d.

The meaning of this is that the entire vitality of a Jew and his requested inscription for good are purely for Your sake, in order to serve the Master of the World properly and to uphold His commandments which are found in the holy *Torah*! (*Yiddishe Licht* Volume 34 – Number 1 *Tishrei* 5745, page 22)

Rav Elozor Shapira, the Munkaczer *Rebbe* and *mechaber* of the *Minchas Elozor*, told a story about the holy *Berditchever*: Once, on *Rosh HaShana*, Rav Levi Yitzchok marshaled the following argument to advocate on behalf of *Klal Yisrael* before *shofar*-blowing:

“*Ribbono Shel Olam* – Master of the World! If You wait to redeem us till the opinion in the *Gemora* is fulfilled that the entire generation must be either worthy or unworthy – this simply cannot be! To wait for them to be entirely worthy will never happen: I swear to you that the wicked apostates will never repent from their heresy! And if entirely unworthy – this too can never be, since we, the true believers, will never relinquish our belief in You even if we are threatened with being cut up into pieces!”

These were the holy words of the true advocate of the Jewish people, the holy *Berditchever*.

(*Divrei Torah* III #24)



The Waters of the *Mikve* on *Rosh HaShana*

There was once a matchmaker who suggested a match between Rav Pinchas of Koretz's daughter and one of the young men from the holy *Berditchever's* family. Rav Pinchas Koretz was not quick to agree to the match and thought about it for some time, claiming that he did not see the match as such a good idea. After the *Yomim Noro'im*, he sent word to call the *shadchan* (matchmaker). When the *shadchan* came, he said that he did agree to the *shidduch* after all. He then explained what had brought about his change of heart:

“Before the Days of Awe, I saw a large wall erected in the Heavens between *Knesses Yisrael* and our Father in Heaven. This wall was a barrier that would have prevented our *tefillos* from ascending on high and being heard and accepted, Heaven forbid! Several *Tzaddikim* had tried their hands at canceling and annulling the decree – to no avail!

“On *Erev Rosh HaShana*, when the holy *Berditchever* entered the waters of the *mikve* to purify himself for the oncoming holy day, his actions caused such a tumult, shaking the heavens, that this wall began to shake and fall apart! By the time he came out of the *mikve*, the wall was almost totally collapsed and gone. I heard *Hashem* saying in Heaven, so to speak, ‘Beware! Make sure that not a single brick or remnant of this wall remains. If Rav Levi Yitzchok sees this barrier, he will create a huge uproar in the Heavens, shaking them up and asking how anyone could even allow such a barrier to have been erected here in the first place!’

When I recognized his lofty level, I decided that I would be honored to have my family and his joined through marriage!”

(*Ma'amar Mordechai* #5)



Begging as a Pauper at the Door ~ Prayer on *Rosh HaShana*

“Chasdei Hashem Azkir Tehillos Hashem...VeRav Tuv LeVais Yisrael Asher Gemolom KeRachmav Uchrov Chasodov. (Yeshaya 63:7)

The *Berditchever*, in *Kedushas Levi*, teaches us that the primary reason behind the requests we ask of the blessed Creator during the Days of Awe known as the *Yomim Noro'im* (which includes *Rosh HaShana*, *Yom Kippur* through *Succos*, *Hoshanah Rabbah* and *Shemini Atzeres* and *Simchas Torah*) should be based on *Hashem's* goodness, kindness and graciousness to pour out abundant blessings upon us rather than based on our merits. We must make ourselves out as poor beggars as taught by our sages of blessed memory - *Chazal* in *Rosh HaShana* (16b), Rav Yitzchok said: “Each year that begins in poverty ends in wealth”. This is because it is fundamental that we should act like a beggar begging at the door, and we should have in mind that such an impoverished person has no personal merits and good deeds.

The difference between one who asks *Hashem* based on His great loving-kindness as opposed to one who supplicates based on his own merits is that asking based on merits has placed a limit on his request. *Hashem* grants him based on only what he has earned and only up to the limits of what he deserves. This not the case regarding one who asks of *Hashem* based on His great loving kindness, here there is no end and no limit. This is because *Hashem's* kindness is boundless and and his influx of abundant blessings are unlimited.

This is the meaning of the *pasuk* “There is great goodness to the house of Israel,” when is the great goodness, so great that it is boundless and unlimited – *asher gemolom kerachamov u'krov chassodov* - when He has granted it to them with mercy and unbounded kindness” [as opposed to based on merits as was explained.] This is also the meaning of the *pasuk* in *Tehillim* (81:11) “I am the Lord your G-d who takes you up out of Egypt, widen your mouth and I shall fill it”. Meaning to say, ask for alot – ask for much, so that *Hashem* will grant you based on His unlimited love and boundless kindness.

This is also the meaning behind the teaching of the sages of blessed memory – *Chazal* in *Yoma* (29a): “Why are the *Tzaddikim* compared to an *ayala* (a gazelle)? Just as when a gazelle grows, its horns split, so do the *Tzaddikim*, when they increase their *tefillos* and their *tefillos* are answered.” We can explain that they increase their *tefillos* to mean that they increase their requests in *tefilla* (rather than the amount of *tefillos*). Meaning, that they ask the blessed Creator to pour out a great increased amount of abundant blessings due to the humility of the *Tzaddikim* whose main request is for the kindness of the Creator, therefore they ask for many good favors, because there is no limit to *Hashem's* kindness and they ask, based not on merits.

This aspect is what our Master and Teacher the holy *Rebbe* Menachem Mendel of Bar explained, based on the *pasuk* in the poetic *zemiros* sung on *Shabbos* (*Ma Yedidus*): *nachlas Yaakov yirosch bli metzorim nachala* – “They inherit the portion of Yaakov, a boundless limitless portion”, meaning that if you ask of the blessed Creator based on His great loving-kindness as opposed to your merits, making yourself as if you are totally unmeritorious, this is the *nachlas Yaakov* – “the portion from Yaakov” which you wish to inherit based on kindness and not merit, then you will merit “a boundless, limitless portion” that is without measure because *Hashem's* loving-kindness is immeasurable.



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

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

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

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

Others say that it is the custom within *Klal* Yisrael to light a *yahrzeit* candle on the day that a relative or a *Tzaddik* has passed away. The lighting has no accompanying blessing, and people would like to express themselves in a *tefilla* when lighting the candle. This is not only true on a *yahrzeit* but on every *Yom Tov* as well.

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

Hebrew Tefilla for Lighting a Yahrzeit or Hilula Candle

[תפילה הנמצאת בספר אָלף המגן מבעל הפלא יועץ על פְּרֶשֶׁת ויצא עמוד כ"ד]

הַרְיֵנִי מִדְּלִיק נֶר זֶה לְמִנוּחַת וְלַעֲלִיּוֹת נְשָׁמַת אָבִי / אִמִּי מוֹרְתִי / הַצַּדִּיק _____
 בְּ/בֵּת _____, יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלְקֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁתִּקְבַּל בְּרַחֲמִים
 וּבְרָצוֹן כָּל מַעֲשֵׂה הַטּוֹב שָׁאֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה, בֵּין בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה, בֵּין בְּדִבּוּר, בֵּין בְּמַעֲשֵׂה וַיְהִי הַכֹּל
 לְזָכוֹת וְלְמִנוּחַת וְלַעֲלִיּוֹת לְנִשְׁמוֹת עַמְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּבְפָרֵט לְנַפְשׁ רֹחַ וְנִשְׁמָה שֶׁל אָבִי / אִמִּי /
 צַדִּיק _____ יְהִי רְצוֹן שֶׁתְּהִינָה נַפְשׁוֹתֵיהֶם צְרוּרוֹת בְּצְרוּר הַחַיִּים.

Translation:

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

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

4) Study some of his teaching or writings.

See more at: www.yeshshem.com/hilulah.htm



GEDOLIM BE'MISASAM YOSER



Yahrzeits for week beginning Shabbos Nitzovim

http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim_yahrtzeits/Elul/Tishrei

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

* **28th of Elul ~ Begins Friday Night (Sep 27th)**

- * **Shaul HaMelech** and his three sons, including Yehonoson, lifelong friend of Dovid *HaMelech*. They were killed in Gilboa four months after Shmuel *HaNovi's* *petira*, 880 BCE or 878 BCE/2882;
- * **Rav Sa'adya**, father-in-law of Rav Chaim Vital, (5334/1574);
- * **Rav Chaim Yehuda Leib** *ben* Rav Avrohom Dov Auerbach, co-founder and *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Sha'ar HaShomayim*, father of Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach. The *Yeshiva* came to occupy its current premises on Rechov Rashi in the Mekor Boruch neighborhood. Among the *Yeshiva's* first *talmidim* in the Old City was Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank. It remained there until 1948, when fighting broke out prior to the departure of the British. *Hagana* 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. One of Rav Chaim Leib's sons, Rav Refoel Auerbach, assumed leadership of the *Yeshiva* after his father's *petira*. Rav Chaim was also the *mechaber* of *Chacham Lev*, (5714/1954);
- * **Rav Arye Carmell** was born in England in 5677/1917. At the age of sixteen, Rav Arye was

sent to study under Rav Eliyohu Eliezer Dessler and became his *talmid muvhok*. 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 *Rabbonim*. 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 fifty years ago. Following Rav Dessler's *petira* he started *Yad Eliyohu* in London, where children who studied at public schools were taught *Ahavas Torah* and *Yiras Shomayim*. He published *Michtov 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 Refoel Hirsch's *Chorev*, it also presented reasons behind the *mitzvos*. Moving to Eretz Yisrael in 1972, Carmell settled in Yerushalayim's Bayit Vegan neighborhood and helped Rav Boruch Horowitz found *Yeshivas Dvar Yerushalayim*, Yerushalayim's first *Yeshiva* for *ba'alei teshuva*. He gave *shiurim* on *Gemora*, *hashkofa* and *mussar*, (5766/2006).

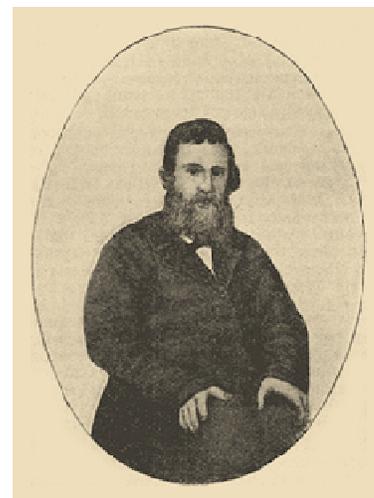
✳ **29th of Elul ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Sep 28th)**

- ✳ **Rav Yaakov HaLevi Lipschitz**, *mechaber* of *Zichron Yaakov* and secretary of Rav Yitzchok Elchonon Spector, (5682/1922);
- ✳ **Rav Menashe Klein**, the *Ungvarer Rav*, (5771/2011);
- ✳ **Rav Naftoli Hertz**, *Rav* of *Pintchov*, (5493/1733);
- ✳ **Rav Refoel Landau**, son of Rav Avrohom of Tchechenov, (5654/1894);
- ✳ **Rav Yerachmiel Yeshaya Minzberg**, *Rav* of *Likova*, (5665/1905);
- ✳ **Rav Eliezer Deutsch** of *Bonihad* [or *Bonyhad*], *mechaber* of *P'ri HaSodeh* and *Dudo'ei HaSodeh*. *Bonihad* is a small town in Tolna County in Hungary. The first document on the Jews of *Bonyhad* is a tax conscription from 1741, although on the testimony of a few tombstones in the cemetery, Jews had already settled earlier, in the first decades of the century. In 1802, there were four hundred Jewish families and an impressive *shul* and *Yeshiva*. The population of about 6,500 in 1930 consisted of about 15 percent Jews, the largest number of Jews in Tolna County. With the German occupation in 1944, 1,180 Jews were deported to *Pecs* and then to *Auschwitz*. All but fifty perished. In 1963, four Jewish families remained in *Bonyhad*, (5674/1914);
- ✳ **Rav Yisrael Rabinowitz** of *Skolya-Kishinev*, (5735/1975).

✳ **1st of Tishrei ~ Begins Sunday Night (Sep 29th)**

- ✳ **The sixth day of Creation** – *Hashem* created animals that walk and crawl on the earth; He also created *Odom*, the first man, and *Chava*, the first woman. “*Hashem* formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul” (*Bereishis* 2:7).
- ✳ **In 1656/2105 BCE** (according to Rav Eliezer), *Noach* dispatched a dove from the *teiva* for the third time. When the dove did not return, *Noach* knew that the waters had completely drained from the earth. On that day *Noach* removed the roof of the *teiva* but he, his family and all the animals remained in the ark for another fifty-seven days, until the 27th of *Cheshvan*.
- ✳ **In 1958/1804 BCE**, *Sora Imeinu* was born, according to some opinions. She was *niftar* on this day in 2086/1676 BCE
- ✳ **In 2048/1714 BCE**, *Sora Imeinu* was blessed by the *Maloch* to have children.

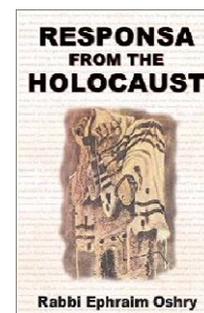
- * **In 2086/1676 BCE**, Yitzchok was bound on the *mizbei'ach* during the *Akeida*. This prompted the *petira* of his mother, Sora *Imeinu*.
- * Birth and *Yahrzeit* of Sora *Imeinu* [our mother], Avrohom *Avinu*'s wife (1803 BCE/1957–1676 BCE/2084). Her *Hilula* is on the same day as her birthday, 127 years later. This is also the same date as the binding of Yitzchok known as the *Akeidas Yitzchok*. There are many *Medrashim* as to why she chose this date to leave our world but the most clear reason as explained by the Kabbalists is that both Avrohom and Yitzchok achieved their *tikkun* by agreeing to perform and submit to the Binding (note it is not the “**Sacrifice** of Yitzchok”). Therefore, as a wife and mother she had no reason to remain in this world. Sora is a *nevia* (prophetess) in her own right and some say was even on a higher spiritual level than Avrohom;
- * **Rav Shefatia**, *mechaber* of the *selicha Yisrael Nosha Bashem*, (4647/886);
- * **Rav Amnon** of Mainz, who was killed *al Kiddush Hashem*, while composing the *Rosh HaShana tefilla Unesaneh Tokef*, (4772 or 4773/1011 or 1012);
- * **Rav Yehuda Ayas**, *Rav* of Algiers and later in Yerushalayim, *mechaber* of *Bais Yehuda*, (5521/1760);
- * **Rav Aharon Moshiach Katzenelenbogen** of Belz, (5577/1816);
- * **Rav Meir Yehuda Leibush ben Yechiel Michel (Malbim)**. He was born in Volhynia in 1809 and was still a child when his father died. He studied in his native town until the age of thirteen. He then went to Warsaw where he was known as the ‘iluy from Volhynia’. From 1838 to 1845 he was *Rav* of Wreschen, district of Posen, and in the latter year was called to the Rabbinate of Kempen, where he remained until 1860; he was thereafter known as *der Kempener*. In 1860, *Malbim* became chief *Rav* of Bucharest, Rumania. But he could not agree with the rich German Jews there who wished to introduce the Reform rite and even threatened violence in the pursuit of their aims. Through intrigue they succeeded in throwing him into prison, and though he was liberated through the intervention of Sir Moses Montefiore, it was upon the condition that he leave Rumania. He became *Rav* of Moghilef, on the Dnieper in 1870, but his lack of subservience provoked the resentment of the richer Jews, who denounced him as a political criminal. The governor of Moghilef ordered him to leave town. *Malbim* then went to Königsberg as chief *Rav* of the Polish community, but there he fared no better than in Bucharest and Moghilef; he was continually harassed by the German Jews. His fame and immense popularity rests upon his widely esteemed commentary to *Tanach*, in which he details the close relationship between the Oral and the Written Law, (5640/1879).
- * **Rav Yaakov Dovid ben Rav Ze'ev Wilovsky** of Slutzk, Chicago and Tzefas, the *Ridbaz*, one of the great European scholars to come to America. As a consequence of the *Halachic* standards of *kashrus* that he attempted to impose in Chicago, he eventually had to flee for his life, (5605/1845–5674/1913);
- * **Rav Yitzchok Cohen** of Djerba, Tunisia, (5679/1918);
- * **Rav Yitzchok Meir** of Kopycznitz (Kupishnitz), succeeded as *Rebbe* by his son, Rav Avrohom



Yehoshua Heschel, (5692 or 5696/1931 or 1935);

- * **Rav Ezriel Yehuda Lebowitz**, Viener Rav, (5752/1991);
- * **Rav Shmuel HaLevi Shechter**. Born in Montreal, Canada, in 5675/1915, he was only five years old when his mother was *niftar*. During his years at Rav Yitzchok Elchonon Theological Seminary, he shared a dormitory room with Rav Avigdor Miller. Later, he traveled to Poland to learn at the Mirrer *Yeshiva* under Rav Yeruchom. After his marriage, he learned in Kelm. When he returned to America, he learned with Rav Aharon Kotler, first at White Plains, New York, then at Lakewood. Years later, he settled in *Eretz Yisrael*, (5760/1999).
- * **2nd of Tishrei ~ Begins Monday Night (Sep 30th)**
- * **Gedalia ben Achikom**, assassinated by Yishmo'el *ben* Nesanya. Gedalia was appointed as governor over the Jews by Nevuchadnetzar after the destruction of the *Bais HaMikdosh*. The sages declared a fast day for the 3rd of *Tishrei* to do *teshuva* for this murder of a Jew by another Jew in *Eretz Yisrael*. This fast day applies to all generations, (422 BCE) or 419 BCE (Yated 2006);
- * **Rav Yisrael ben Rav Osher Perlow**, the Yanuka of Stolin (1868/5628–1921/5681). The Karlin dynasty had its beginnings with Rav Aharon *HaGodol* of Karlin (1736–1772), a *talmid* of the *Maggid* of Mezritch. At that time, Karlin was located in Lithuania, so Karliners are known as “Lithuanian *Chassidim*”. It was Rav Aharon’s son and successor, Rav Osher I, who moved the court to Stolin. Rav Aharon’s great-grandson, Rav Osher II, was childless for many years. In 1869, he and his wife, Rebbetzin Devora, were blessed with a boy, whom they named Yisrael. Rav Yisrael was only four years old when his father was *niftar* in the town of Drohobich (Galicia). The Karlin *Chassidim* resolved to meet this lack of leadership by standing firm in their loyalty to the Karlin dynasty, and therefore proclaimed the *Yenuka* [child] Yisrael to be their *Rebbe*. The influence of the *Haskola* movement, which had first begun to be felt in Rav Aharon II’s days, grew stronger in Rav Yisrael’s time. Rav Yisrael was *niftar* far away from his native town, in a convalescent home in Homburg, Germany. He was buried in Frankfurt-on-Main. After his *petira*, his followers were now in a quandary, as Rav Yisrael had left no instructions regarding which of his six sons to appoint in his place. Thus, the leadership split into three. His son, Rav Moshe, led the court in Stolin, where he opened the *Yeshiva, Bais Yisrael*, in his father’s memory in 1922. Another son, Rav Avrohom Elimelech, became *Rebbe* in Karlin, while Rav Yochonon, his youngest son, became *Rebbe* in Lutzk. The Nazis destroyed the Stolin community in *Elul* 1942, and four of Rav Yisrael’s sons perished in the Holocaust. However, thanks to his surviving sons, Karlin-Stolin communities now thrive in *Eretz Yisrael* and America. These sons were Rav Yaakov, who had moved to America in 1923, and lived in Williamsburg before moving to Detroit where he passed away in 1946. The second surviving son was Rav Yochonon, Rav Yisrael’s youngest son, who became the Karlin-Stolin *Rebbe* in America in 1948, and passed away in 1956. He was succeeded by his daughter’s son, Rav Boruch Yaakov Meir Shochet, who was a baby at the time of his passing. History repeated itself when this youngster was coronated as the next Karlin-Stolin *Rebbe* when he was only eight years old, (5682/1921);
- * **Rav Shemaryohu [or Shmuel] Greineman**, who printed the *sefer Chazon Ish*, (5741/1980);
- * **Rav Efraim Oshry** (1908/5668–2003/5763). Born in Kopishak, Lithuania, he learned in Ponevezh, *Talmud Torah Kelm*, and Slabodka. He was also a *talmid* of the *Chofetz Chaim* in Radin. While he was still quite young, he was appointed *Rav* of the Abba Yechezkel *Kloiz* in Slabodka. During World War II, he lived in the Kovno ghetto from June, 1941 until August 1,

1944. It was there that he recorded the gripping *shailos* he received, publishing them later in five volumes of *She'eilos Uteshuvos Mima'amakim*. After the liberation, he was the only surviving *Rav* of Kovno. He worked diligently to restore *Yiddishkeit* and was especially active in rescuing children left with non-Jews. He then fled to Austria, where he founded a *Yeshiva* in Welsh, a small town near Salzburg. He was then called upon to take over the leadership of the *Meor HaGola Yeshiva* in Rome. He later went to America, where he served as *Rav* of the *Bais HaMedrash HaGodol* on the Lower East Side of New York City. He published *Divrei Efraim* in 1949. He also published *chiddushei Torah* on many areas, including *Imrei Efraim* on *Nezikin* and other subjects. He also wrote *Yahadus Lita*, which appeared in *Yiddish*, about his recollections of pre-War Europe, (5764/2003).



* **3rd of Tishrei ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Oct 1st)**

* **Rav Naftoli Tzvi Trop**, *Rosh Yeshiva* Radin (1871/5631–1930/5690). Born in Grodno, he studied with his father, Rav Moshe Trop, who was *Rosh Yeshiva* of a local *Yeshiva*. At fourteen, he left for Kelm, then Slobodka, then Telz, where he became close to Rav Eliezer Gordon. In 1889, he returned to Slobodka, when Rav Yaakov Yitzchok (Itzel) Rabinowitz was appointed *Rosh Yeshiva*. There, he became his close *talmid*. In 1890, Rav Hirschel Levitan appointed him *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Or HaChaim* in Slobodka. In 1903, he replaced Rav Moshe Landinski as *Rosh Yeshiva* in Radin, where he remained for the rest of his life, (5691/1930);



* **Rav Yisrael Lipshitz** of Danzig, *mechaber* of *Tiferes Yisrael*, a popular commentary on the *Mishnayos*, (1782–1860). He also authored *Shevilei D'rokiya*, an introduction to the principles of Rabbinical astronomy and determining the *molad*; it appears in the beginning of *Seder Mo'ed* in the *Tiferes Yisrael* sets of *Mishnayos*. Additionally, he wrote *Derush Ohr HaChaim* (Homily on the Light of Life) which debates the eternality of the soul, (5621/1860);



* **Rav Shimon Nosson Nota ben Rav Dovid Tzvi Shlomo Biderman**, the Lelover *Rebbe*, (5660/1929);

* **Rav Aharon Yechiel (Reb Ahrele) Hopstein** of Kuzhnitz (1889/5649–1942/5703). Rav Ahrele was a direct descendant of the *Maggid* of Kozhnitz, who, along with the *Chozeh* of Lublin, Rav Mendel of Riminov, and the *Oheiv Israel* of Apt, were the greatest *talmidim* of Rav Elimelech of Lizhensk and who were primarily responsible for spreading *Chassidus* throughout Europe. Rav Aharon Yechiel's father, Rav Yerachmiel Moshe, the sixth Kuzhnitzer *Rebbe*, was *niftar* in 1909. Another son of Rav Yerachmiel Moshe, Rav Yisrael Elozor, moved to *Eretz Yisrael* in 1923 and helped found Kfar Chassidim and Kfar Ata, (5703/1942);

* **Rav Yitzchok Arye (Sekel Leib) Wormeiser (Wormser)**, also known as the *Ba'al Shem* of Michelstadt (1768/5528–1847/5607). At the age of seventeen, he left home to learn at the *Yeshiva Gedola* of Frankfurt, headed by Rav Pinchas Horowitz, the *Ba'al Haflo'a*. He also became close to Rav Nosson Adler, the *Chasam Sofer's Rebbe*. After his marriage at the age of twenty-two, he moved to Michelstadt, where he founded a *Yeshiva*, (5608/1847);

* **Rav Dovid Rapaport** (1890/5650–1941/5701). Born in Minsk, his mother was a descendant of

the *Gaon* of Vilna and his father, Rav Akiva, was the grandson of Rav Akiva Eiger. When he was still a young man, he enrolled in Ponovezh, having already written his *sefer*, *Tzemach Dovid*, on the *chiddushim* and responsa of his grandfather. From Ponovezh, Rav Dovid went on to study in *Kollel Bais Yisrael* of Slabodka. After his marriage, he and his wife were supported by his father-in-law, during which period Rav Dovid was able to compile his second major work, *Mikdash Dovid*, which focuses on the tractates of *Kodshim*, *Tohoros*, *Bechoros* and *Sanhedrin*. Then, during World War I, Rav Dovid had to flee and found refuge in Vilna. Later on, Rav Elchonon Wasserman invited Rav Dovid to deliver *shiurim* in *Yeshivas Ohel Torah* in Baranovich. This *Yeshiva* was founded in 1907 at the initiative of Rav Yosef Yoizel Horowitz, the *Alter* of Novardok. During the outbreak of World War II, Rav Dovid remained in *Ohel Torah*, joining the *Yeshiva* on its treks to Vilna and, from there, to Turkey and Smilishuk. On the 19th of *Sivan*, 1941, an NKVD agent burst into the *Yeshiva* and arrested him. After his trial, Rav Dovid was sent to a forced labor camp in a distant village, near Finland, (5702/1941);

✳ **Rav Nosson Sternhartz**, son of the *Kochav Lev*, the leader of Breslov, Rav Avrohom, and great-grandson of Rav Nosson of Breslov, (5733/1972).

✳ **4th of Tishrei ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Oct 2nd)**

✳ **Rav Yoel ben Rav Yisrael Yosef Ba'al Shem**. Rav Yoel was a scholar of *Halocha* and *Kabbola* who lived in Zamość during the seventeenth century. He became renowned as a *Ba'al Shem* (literally “Master of [Divine] Names”) for performing miracles, commanding demons and authoring Kabbalistic amulets. Rav Yoel married before the age of twenty and started learning *Kabbola*. Upon a dream, Rav Yisrael Yosef sent his son, Rav Yoel, to Prague to learn *Kabbola* from Rav Eliyohu *Ba'al Shem*. Rav Yoel became one of the closest *talmidim* of Rav Eliyohu *Ba'al Shem*, who confided all his special teachings to him. Rav Yoel returned to Zamość and opened a *Yeshiva* there, which became renowned for teaching both *nigleh* and *nistar*, (5474/1713);

✳ **Rav Avrohom Danzig**, *mechaber* of *Chayei Odom* and *Chochmas Odom*, (1748/5508–1820/5580). Born in Danzig (Gdansk), he learned at the *Yeshiva* in Prague under Rav Yechezkel Landau. He was related by marriage to the Vilna *Gaon*. It appears that he lived in Vilna for most of his life where he served as a *Dayan*. Other *seforim* he authored include *Zichru Toras Moshe*, an introduction to the laws of *Shabbos*, *Kitzur Sefer Chareidim*, an abridgement of the classic *Sefer Chareidim* by Rav Elozor Ezkari, and *Toldos Odom*, a commentary on the *Pesach Haggoda*, (5581/1820);

✳ **Rav Boruch Refoel Soloveitchik**, son of the Brisker *Rav*, Rav Yitzchok Zev, (5685/1924);

✳ **Rav Tzvi Hirsch Halberstadt** (the *Maharshach*), the *Kos HaYeshuos*, great-grandfather of the *Chasam Sofer*, (5508/1747).

✳ **5th of Tishrei ~ Begins Thursday Night (Oct 3rd)**

✳ Birth and *Yahrzeit* of Naftoli ben Yaakov Avinu, 1566 BCE (or 1435 BCE per Hamodia 2006). Naftoli was born on the 5th of *Tishrei* and passed away on the same day 133 years later in Egypt in 1429 BCE, and was buried in Kedesh Naftoli (*Eretz Yisrael*). Naftoli was the son of Yaakov *Avinu* and Bilha. He honored his father exceedingly, and was often dispatched to fulfill missions. He was quick to complete these missions (“swift as a hind”) so that his father was pleased with him. Moreover, Naftoli’s speech was pleasant to his father; therefore his father blessed him. He was a herald of good tidings, and brought the news that Yosef was still alive after Yosef’s elder brothers wanted to kill him;

- * **Rav Naftoli HaKohen Katz** of Lublin, grandfather and namesake of the *Semichas Chachomim*, he was also the son-in-law of the *Maharal* of Prague, as well as a descendant of the *Maharam Padwa* through his father. So respected was he that even the *Taz* sent *shailos* to him. Rav Naftoli was a *Maggid* in Prague, a *Dayan* in Proszitz, Nikolsburg and Pinsk, and finally a *Dayan* and *Rav* in Lublin, (5406/1645);
- * **Rav Mordechai Schneerson** of Vitebsk, (5668/1907);
- * **Rav Eliezer Brish**, *Rav* of Kutna, (5592/1831);
- * **Rav Boruch Sholom Ashlag**, *mechaber* of *Bircas Sholom*, and son of Rav Yehuda Ashlag, the *Ba'al HaSulam* and *Shomati* ("I heard"), the publication of his notes from his father's teachings. His father, Rav Yehuda Leib, was the great *Mekubol* of the twentieth century, the *Ba'al HaSulam* on *Zohar*, (5752/1991).



HILLULA DE'TZADDIKA

WHAT'S BEHIND YAHRZEIT MEANINGS & CUSTOMS

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

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

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



GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM

STORIES & ANECDOTES

Rav Chaim Yehuda Leib Auerbach, 28th of Elul

Rosh Yeshiva Sha'ar HaShomayim

Born in 5647/1887, Rav Chaim Leib grew up in Yerushalayim. At 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 at that time.

Rav Chaim Leib's thirst for *Torah*

was unquenchable. Even during his *sheva berochos* week he sat and learned all night with his brother-in-law, Rav Akiva Porush. He became a devoted *talmid* of Rav Shimon Lider-Horowitz, from whom he learned *Toras HaNistar*.

One night he dreamed that the Arizal came to him and bemoaned the fact that few *Yidden* study his teachings, which have the power to redeem the *Shechina* from *Golus*. When he awoke, he went straight to his *Rebbe*, Rav Shimon. It turned out that his *Rebbe* had had that same dream. So *Rebbe* and *talmid* immediately set out to open a Yeshiva for *Toras Ha'Ari*, which they called *Yeshiva 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 Menashe Klein, 29th of Elul

The Ungvarer Rav

Rav Menashe Klein was born on the 1st of *Nissan* 5685/1925 in the town of Ungvar. His father, Rav Eliezer Zev Klein, was renowned for never speaking about idle matters.

Already as a child, he began learning *Torah* from the *Dayan* of Dobrony. Even before his *bar mitzva*, he accustomed himself to sleeping on a straw-filled sack and to toiling in *Torah* in poverty. He later learned under Rav Yisrael Menachem Alter Chaim Hoffman, the *Rav* of Bendikovitz.

He began his day at dawn with immersing in a *mikve*, which was often covered with ice.

Still before his *bar mitzva*, he began attending the famous *Yeshiva* of Rav Yosef Elimelech Kahana. He was a *talmid* of Rav Chaim Tzvi Ner, himself a *talmid* of the *Chasam Sofer*. Throughout his life, Rav Klein considered himself a third-generation *talmid* of the *Chasam Sofer*.

During the Holocaust, he was deported to the ghettos and the

concentration camps together with Rav Kahana. His parents and most of his family were murdered by the Nazis. Yet, despite his losses, his faith was rock-solid.

While in a concentration camp, he vowed that if he were to survive he would devote his life to *Harbotzas Torah*. Right after the war, while still in a refugee camp in Europe, he began helping his brethren spiritually by disseminating *Torah*, establishing a kosher kitchen and facilitating other religious needs.

In the capacity of his work, he came into contact with the Sanz-Klausenberger *Rebbe*, the *Shefa Chaim*. From that point on he considered himself a *Chassid* of the *Rebbe*. They shared a very close relationship.

In 5706/1946 he immigrated to America and renewed his contacts with the *Rebbe*, who chose him to head *Yeshivas She'eiris Hapleita*, which he founded.

Rav Menashe was the only person to receive *semicha* from the *Shefa Chaim*. In America, he married the *Rebbetzin*, the daughter of Rav Dovid Shlomo Frankel, *mechaber* of *Be'er Dovid*, who had served as a *Dayan* in Debrecen. The *Rebbetzin* served at his side devotedly for the rest of his life.

In 5709/1949 he began serving as *Rav* in the Liadi community in Williamsburg, at which time his tremendous abilities as a *Rav* and *posek* became apparent. American Jewry discovered that the new, young *Rav* among them personified the image of a *Rav* from prewar Europe.

Within a short time, his reputation spread. He was in close contact with *Gedolim* such as Rav Moshe Feinstein, Rav Yonoson Steif, Rav Eliyohu Henkin, Rav Aharon Kotler, the *Tzelemer Rav*, *zecher Tzaddikim livrocha*, and others.

In 5723/1963 he was appointed

chairman of the *Vaad Halocha* of *Igud HoRabbonim*. Already, as a young man, he was consulted on complex *Halachic* issues. Anyone perusing his early *teshuvos* is awestruck by the critical issues on which he was asked to rule.

In 5718/1958, he published his *sefer Mishneh Halochos*, a commentary on the *seforim* of the *Ba'al Halochos Gedolos (Beha"g)* on *Masechtos Kesubos, Nedorim* and *Nozir*.

At the end of the *sefer* he printed the first volume of *responsa* with the same name as the *sefer*. It eventually evolved into his landmark work of *responsa* that comprised thousands of *shailos* and *teshuvos* in all areas of *Halocha*. In 5719/1959, the second volume was released, followed a year later by the third volume. The set now numbers eighteen volumes (the last was released posthumously).

In Boro Park, Rav Menashe established his community, *Kehillas Ungvar*, and opened *Yeshivas Bais She'arim*.

Rav Menashe lived primarily in the United States, paying visits to *Eretz Yisrael*. But in his last years, he settled in *Kiryat Ungvar*, in Yerushalayim.

Rav Menashe was *niftar* on the 29th of *Elul, Erev Rosh HaShana*, 5771/2011, at the age of eighty-six, after a short illness. He was buried in *Tzefas*, in the ancient cemetery near the *tziyun* of his grandfather, Rav Amram Chasida, near the *kever* of the *Alshich* and a short distance away from the *kevorim* of the *Arizal* and the *Bais Yosef*, which the *Rav* himself had devotedly worked to restore. No one had been buried in this part of the cemetery for more than a hundred years.

Zecher Tzaddik livrocha.

www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-29-elulseptember-4/



Rav Amnon of Mainz, 1st of Tishrei

Mechaber of Unesaneh Tokef

Rav Amnon of Mainz (circa 4700–4800)

By Nissan Mindel ~ Published and copyrighted by Kehot Publication Society

More than eight hundred years ago there lived a great man in the city of Mainz (Mayence) whose name was Rav Amnon. A great scholar and a very pious man, Rav Amnon was loved and respected by Jews and non-Jews alike, and his name was known far and wide. Even the Duke of Hessen, the ruler of the land, admired and respected Rav Amnon for his wisdom, learning and piety. Many a time the Duke invited the *Rav* to his palace and consulted him on matters of State.

Rav Amnon never accepted any reward for his services to the Duke or to the State. From time to time, however, Rav Amnon would ask the Duke to ease the position of the Jews in his land, to abolish some of the decrees and restrictions which existed against the Jews at the time, and generally to enable them to live in peace and security. This was the only favor that Rav Amnon ever requested from the Duke, and the Duke never turned down his request. Thus, Rav Amnon and his brethren lived peacefully for many years.

The other statesmen of the Duke grew envious of Rav Amnon. Most envious of them all was the Duke's secretary, who could not bear to see the honor and respect which Rav Amnon enjoyed with his master, which was rapidly developing into a great friendship between the Duke and the *Rav*. The secretary began to seek ways and means to discredit Rav Amnon in the eyes of the Duke.

One day, the secretary said to the Duke:

“Your Highness, why should you not persuade Rav Amnon to become a Christian like ourselves? I am sure that considering the honor and many favors he

has enjoyed at your generous hand, he will gladly abandon his faith and accept ours.

The Duke thought it was not a bad idea. When Rav Amnon came to his palace the next day, the Duke said to him:

“My good friend, Rav Amnon, I know you have been loyal and devoted to me for many years. Now I wish to ask you a personal favor. Abandon your faith, and become a good Christian like me. If you do, I shall make you the greatest man in the whole of my state; you shall have honor and riches like no other man, and next to me, you shall be the most powerful man in my land.”

Rav Amnon grew very pale. For a moment he could find no words to reply to the Duke, but after a while he said:

“O, illustrious Monarch! For many years I have served you faithfully, and my being a Jew in no way lessened my loyalty to you or to the State. On the contrary, my faith bids me to be loyal and faithful to the land of my sojourn. I am ready and willing to sacrifice everything I possess, even my very life, for you as well as for the State. There is one thing, however, that I can never part with – this is my faith. I am bound by an unbreakable covenant to my faith, the faith of my forefathers. Do you want me to betray my people, my G-d? Would you want a man to serve you who has no respect for his religion, for the bonds and ties he holds most sacred? If I betray my G-d, could you ever trust me never to betray you? Surely, the Duke cannot mean it. The Duke is jesting!”

“No, no,” the Duke said, though he sounded a little uncertain, for inwardly the Duke was pleased with Rav Amnon's reply. Rav Amnon hoped the matter was settled, but when he arrived at the palace the next day, the Duke repeated his request. Rav Amnon became very unhappy, and began

to avoid visiting the palace, unless it was absolutely necessary.

One day, the Duke, impatient at Rav Amnon's obstinacy, put it very bluntly to him; he must either become a Christian or suffer the consequences.

Pressed to give his answer immediately, Rav Amnon begged the Duke to allow him three days to consider the matter. This, the Duke granted him.

No sooner did Rav Amnon leave the Duke, than he realized his grave sin. "My G-d!" he thought. "What have I done?! Am I lacking in faith and courage that I requested three days for consideration? Can there be any but one answer? How could I show such weakness even for one moment? O gracious G-d, forgive me . . ."

Rav Amnon arrived home brokenhearted. He secluded himself in his room and spent the next three days in *tefilla* and supplication, begging G-d's forgiveness.

When Rav Amnon did not arrive at the palace on the third day, the Duke became very angry, and ordered his men to bring Rav Amnon in chains.

The Duke hardly recognized Rav Amnon; so much had the venerable man changed in the course of the last three days. However, the Duke quickly brushed aside whatever feeling of sympathy he might have felt for his erstwhile friend, and said to him sternly:

"How dare you disregard my command? Why did you not appear before, in time to give me your answer? For your sake, I trust you have decided to do as I tell you. It will be bad for you otherwise. "

Although Rav Amnon was now a broken man physically, his spirit was stronger than ever.

"Your Highness," Rav Amnon answered him fearlessly, "there can be but one answer: I shall remain a loyal Jew as long as I breathe!"

The Duke was beside himself with wrath. "It is now more than the question of your becoming Christian. You have disobeyed me by not coming voluntarily to give me your answer. For this you must be punished . . ."

"Your Highness," Rav Amnon said, "By requesting three days for consideration, I have sinned gravely against my G-d."

These brave words enraged the Duke even more. "For sinning against your G-d," the Duke said angrily, "let Him avenge Himself. I shall punish you for disobeying my orders. Your legs sinned against me, for they refused to come to me; therefore your legs shall be cut off!

With very faint signs of life, the legless body of Rav Amnon was sent back to his home, to his grief-stricken family. It was the day before *Rosh HaShana*.

The news about Rav Amnon's dreadful fate spread throughout the whole city. Everyone was horrified and distressed. It was a very tragic Day of Judgment for the Jews of Mainz, who assembled in *shul* the following morning.

Despite his terrible suffering, Rav Amnon remembered that it was *Rosh HaShana*, and he requested to be taken to *shul*. At his request, he was placed in front of the Holy Ark.

All the worshippers: men, women and children, wept terribly seeing their beloved *Rav* in such agony, and never were any more heart-rending *tefillas* offered than on that day of *Rosh HaShana*.

When the cantor began to recite the *Musaf tefilla*, Rav Amnon motioned that there be made an interval while he offered a special *tefilla* to *Hashem*. Silence fell upon the worshippers, and Rav Amnon began to recite *Unesaneh Tokef* ("Let us express the mighty holiness of this day"). The congregation repeated every word, and their hearts went out to *Hashem* in *tefilla* and tears. *Kedusha* was then recited,

followed by the *tefilla* of *Oleinu*. When the words “He is our G-d, and no other” were reached, Rav Amnon cried them out with his last remaining strength, and passed away.

The *tefilla Unesaneh Tokef* is now one of the most solemn *tefillas* of *Rosh HaShana* and *Yom Kippur*. It includes the stirring passage:

On Rosh HaShana it is inscribed, and on Yom Kippur it is sealed: how many shall pass on, and how many shall be born; who shall live, and who shall die; who in his time, and who before his time; who by fire and who by water; who by sword and who by beast; who

by hunger and who by thirst; who by storm and who by plague; who by choking and who by stoning... Who shall rest, and who shall wander; who shall be tranquil and who shall be harassed; who shall be at peace and who shall suffer; who shall become poor, and who shall become rich; who shall fall and who shall rise... But teshuva, tefilla and tzedoka revoke the evil decree!

The undying courage of Rav Amnon, the *mechaber* of this *tefilla*, serves as an inspiration to all of us.

www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/112497/jewish/

Rabbi-Amnon-of-Mayence.htm



Rav Naftoli Tzvi Trop, 3rd of Tishrei

The Quintessential Rosh Yeshiva

The famous author, Rav Dovid Zaritzky, told the following account:

It was the second year after the *petira* of Rav Naftoli Trop, and Rav Dovid Zaritzky was walking down the road with one of the older *bochurim* of Radin. As they passed the cemetery, the *bochur* left him. He had jumped over the cemetery wall and prostrated himself on the *kever* of Rav Naftoli. He screamed, “*Rebbe, Rebbe, why did you leave us?*” while crying bitter tears. Rav Dovid related that the cries were so bitter, he was sure that a child never cried over his father with such intensity. Only then did he understand the love and the bond between Rav Naftoli and his *talmidim*.

Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz said there were four *Roshei Yeshiva* who restored *Torah* to its former glory: Rav Chaim Brisker, Rav Naftoli Trop, Rav Boruch Ber Leibowitz and Rav Shimon Shkop.

Rav Naftoli was born in 1871 in Grodna to his father, the great *Tzaddik*,

Rav Moshe. Rav Moshe was the *Rosh Yeshiva* of the local *Yeshiva* and he personally taught his son until the age of *bar mitzva*. Although he so much enjoyed learning with his son, his friends persuaded him to send Rav Naftoli to *Yeshiva* after his *bar mitzva*. In 1886 Rav Naftoli set off to Kelm to learn under Rav Simcha Zissel, the *Alter* of Kelm. After two years he left Kelm and went to Telshe, where he learned under Rav Eliezer Gordon. He also spent time learning in the Slonim branch of the Novardok *Yeshiva* network and became close to the *Alter* of Novardok who came to Slonim from time to time to check on the *Yeshiva*.

But it was only in Slabodka that Rav Naftoli’s soul found its place, and he learned under Rav Itzele Ponevezh who at that time was considered second only to Rav Chaim Brisker in the *Yeshiva* world, with an almost identical *derech halimud*. Rav Naftoli was so successful in Slabodka that the *Alter* of Slabodka, Rav Nosson Tzvi

Finkel, took him as a son-in-law in 1893. Unfortunately, a few months after the *chasuna*, tragedy struck and Rav Naftoli's young wife died after a short illness.

Rav Naftoli remarried the daughter of the *Tzaddik*, Rav Eliezer Yaakov Chavas, shortly thereafter and returned to Kelm. After absorbing the *mussar* of Kelm for four years, Rav Naftoli was called back to Slabodka to head the *Yeshiva Ohr HaChaim* opened by Rav Tzvi Levitan, a *talmid* of Rav Yisrael Salanter. Rav Naftoli was an instant hit and the *Yeshiva* grew by leaps and bounds due to his magnetic personality and his incredible warmth and caring for every *talmid*.

When the *Chofetz Chaim* was looking for a *Rosh Yeshiva* for Radin, he bypassed all the older, more established "big" names in Europe and chose the thirty-five year old Rav Naftoli Trop. For the next twenty-four years Radin thrived, led by Rav Naftoli, who earned himself a reputation among the giants of his generation and his many *talmidim*. Rav Naftoli's big heart gave almost every *bochur* an opportunity to learn with him *b'chavrusa* in one form or another.

His *shiurim* live on in the *Yeshivos* until today, as his words and his *chakiros* are pored over in depth. His manner was to become the hallmark of the modern day *Rosh Yeshiva*, with everyone trying to become Rav Naftoli Trop. Rav Naftoli has many great *talmidim*, including the *Ponevezher Rav*, Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman; Rav Shlomo Heiman; Rav Dovid Leibowitz; and Rav Yechezkel Sarna.

After going with the *Yeshiva* into its terrible exile during World War I, Rav Naftoli and the *Yeshiva* finally returned to Radin in 1921. At the age of fifty-nine on *Motzo'ei Rosh HaShana* 5690/1929, Rav Naftoli's pure *neschoma* returned to the great *Yeshiva* in *shomayim* amidst the heartbreak and anguish of the *Chofetz*

Chaim and all the *talmidim* of Radin. *Yehi Zichro Boruch*.

[www.revach.net/stories/gedolim-biographies/Rav-Naftali-Trop-The-](http://www.revach.net/stories/gedolim-biographies/Rav-Naftali-Trop-The-Quintessential-Rosh-Yeshiva/4085)

[Quintessential-Rosh-Yeshiva/4085](http://www.revach.net/stories/gedolim-biographies/Rav-Naftali-Trop-The-Quintessential-Rosh-Yeshiva/4085)



Rav Naftoli Trop Stays Up to Watch the Thief

A vagrant Jew had acquired a reputation as a thief, and was ostracized by society. However, when he came to Radin, he encountered Rav Naftoli Tzvi Trop, the famed *Rosh Yeshiva* of the *Chofetz Chaim's Yeshiva*. Rav Trop greeted him warmly, invited him to eat at his table, and even offered him a bed in his home for the night. The Jews of Radin began murmuring with each other, wondering why Rav Trop was exerting himself for this unsavory character.

Someone worked up the courage to ask Rav Trop directly why he was treating this thief with such warmth. Rav Trop answered in surprise, "It's known that a thief pays back double the value of what he stole, and if he can't pay it back, he is sold as a slave. But where is it written that I'm exempt from fulfilling the *mitzva* of *hachnossas orchim*? Isn't he a Jew? Didn't Avrohom Avinu fulfill the *mitzva* of *hachnossas orchim* even with Arabs who worshipped the dust of their feet? It's true that it's risky to bring a suspected thief into my house, but I can watch over him carefully the whole time he's in my home. However, I have no excuse to exempt myself from the *mitzva*."

The next day, the people in Radin heard that Rav Trop had done exactly what he had said. He had stayed awake the entire night to guard the thief while he slept in his home.

(Sidras Tikkun HaMiddos)



Rav Yitzchok Arye Sekel or Seckel Löb Wormser, 3rd of Tishrei

The Ba'al Shem of Michelstadt

Jews in Russia gave Rav Yisrael *ben* Rav Eliezer of Okup, the founder of the *Chassidic* movement, the name *Ba'al Shem Tov*.

In Germany as well, Jews called Rav Yitzchok Arye Sekel of Michelstadt the name *Ba'al Shem*. Like Rav Yisrael *ben* Rav Eliezer, the *Ba'al Shem* was a hidden *Tzaddik* and great scholar, and he was equally versed in the ways of the world. Many people came to him to seek advice regarding both spiritual and material concerns. The general public considered him to be a miracle worker, and they sought him out in times of distress. Even non-Jews addressed themselves to him, and he never sent anyone away empty-handed.

The people of Michelstadt have said that all the Jews and non-Jews who davened at the grave of the *Ba'al Shem* before being drafted into the army during World War I came back safely from the war. The local council placed a plaque on the house where he lived in memory of its *Ba'al Shem*.

Rav Yitzchok Arye Sekel was born in 5529 (1768) in Michelstadt. His father, Matisyohu, was a simple and upright man who feared Hashem and distanced himself from evil. He was a descendant of *Rashi* and Dovid *HaMelech*.

From his youth, the young man demonstrated exemplary character traits and extraordinary abilities, which enabled people to see that he would become a genius and the glory of his people. He was known throughout the region of Michelstadt as a child prodigy. At the age of eight, there was no one in the tiny city who could teach him *Torah* any more.

When he reached the age of thirteen, he implored his parents to send him off to study in *Yeshiva*. Yet because they had lost

six sons before him, they could not accept the departure of their young remaining son. He understood that he could rely only upon himself, and so he devoted himself to



sacred study with all his heart and soul. He studied *Torah* day and night, and more than once did his mother extinguish, despite his wishes, the candle in his room at a late hour of the night. At daybreak, he arose like a lion, got dressed quickly (lest he fall back asleep), then washed his hands and ran to the *Bais Medrash*.

The young man's reputation also reached the ears of the Duke of Michelstadt, who asked his father to send him alone, without a guide, to his palace. He wanted to see how he would find his way around in a large palace, and how he would find the Duke's reception room. The young man easily found the room where the Duke waited for him. "Who showed you where I was waiting for you?" the Duke asked.

"His lordship, the Duke, himself," the boy replied. "I glanced up and looked all around, and I noticed that the windows of the all the palace's rooms were open except for a single one, it being closed and covered by a curtain. I then understood that your lordship was certainly there, hidden from the eyes of those who came to the palace."

The Duke understood that the boy

knew that he had hidden himself in order to put him to the test, and that it was precisely in this way that he had revealed his hiding place to the boy. He asked him, “Tell me, my dear boy, if you had encountered ten servants in the stairways or the halls, and you had asked them where I was, how would you have found me if they gave you different answers?”



“In that case,” he replied, “I would have followed the advice of the majority. For example, if three servants had indicated one room to me, three other servants another room, and four other servants yet another room, I would have gone toward the last room.”

At the age of sixteen, this intelligent boy entered the *Yeshiva* of Rav Nossan Adler of Frankfurt, and there he met Rav Moshe Sofer (the *Chasam Sofer*, who later became the *Rav* of Pressburg). Together they studied the revealed and hidden *Torah* with their great *Rav* and devoted themselves to emulating him.

At the age of eighteen, he took it upon himself, for the rest of his life, never to eat or drink anything that had animal products in it. Following this vow, he not only abstained from eating meat and fish, but also from consuming eggs, milk and butter.

Rav Yitzchok Arye Sekel studied *Torah* in Frankfurt for six years. One of the residents in the Jewish community there,

Yitzchok Reiss, gave him his daughter in marriage, and after the wedding he returned to his place of birth, the small town of Michelstadt. He then lived several years in Mannheim, where he learned *Torah* from Rav Yaakov Ettinger, who was later known as the *Rav* of Altona and the *mechaber* of *Aruch LaNer*. After the *petiros* of his parents, he was forced to go into business to feed his family, but even then he did not interrupt his *Torah* study, continuing to teach publicly as well.

At the age of fifty-four, he was chosen as *Rav* of Michelstadt, and there he founded a *Yeshiva* that he directed. During the last twenty-five years of his life, he was known throughout all of Germany as a worker of miracles, and no word that emanated from his mouth was ever in vain.

He was known as the “*Ba'al Shem* of Michelstadt”, and from near and far students came to hear *Torah* from his mouth. Among these were some very wealthy people who came to ask him for advice and received his blessings, but even during this period of prosperity he himself lived in poverty and ate only vegetables and vegetable products. As for the students of the *Yeshiva*, he provided them with an abundance of meat, fish and all sorts of good things. His heart and home were wide open to whoever came to ask for help or support. Rav Yitzchok Arye Sekel brought to his home every Jew passing through town, and he fed them lavishly. Sometimes, when dozens of guests were at his home, he went to the market and purchased bundles of straw. He then loaded them on his shoulders and brought them back to his home, where he himself prepared beds for his guests.

He was accustomed to saying, “It is forbidden to abandon the poor to divine mercy. A man should concern himself with them and take care of their needs.” Rav Moshe Sofer said, “I have learned the *mitzva* of *Tzedoka* and hospitality from my friend, Rav Yitzchok Arye.”

The following is an account of Rav Yitzchok Arye's final days, as told by his son:

"He wanted to strengthen our hope that the end wasn't so close. Lying on his bed, he tried hard to encourage my mother, promising her that she would lack nothing. He also told her that if she came to his gravesite at a difficult time, his soul would intercede for her before the Throne of Glory.

"The night of *Rosh HaShana* 5608 [1847], we returned from *shul* and wanted to receive our father's blessing. Yet his weakness was such that he could not pronounce a single word. He spread out his trembling hands over our heads, and we sensed that this would be his last blessing. The morning of *Rosh HaShana*, he expressed his ardent desire to hear the *Shofar*. His soul left this world during the Fast of Gedalia, at seven o'clock at night. He recited *Shema Yisrael* aloud, and his soul departed at the word *echod*."

www.hevratpinto.org/tzadikim_eng/098_rabbi_yitzchak_aryeh_sekel.html



Rav Yitzchok Arye Wormser, known as the *Ba'al Shem* of Michelstadt. The *Ba'al Shem* was born in 5528 (1768) and was a descendent of Rav Eliyohu Loantz, known as the *Ba'al Shem* of Wormser, the first *Ashkenazi Ba'al Shem*.

As a child the *Ba'al Shem* of Michelstadt became known as a tremendous prodigy, bright and diligent in his *Torah* study. As a youth he studied under the *mechaber* of the *Haflo'a*, and later under Rav Nossan Adler of Frankfurt.

After marrying, he suffered *tzaar giddul bonim* and lost some of his children as well as his wife, leaving him alone with five children. Members of the Enlightenment circles in Michelstadt informed against him to the authorities, preventing his appointment as *Rav* of the

city. As a result of their reports, as well as miraculous deeds attributed to him, he was imprisoned for a short period.

Still within a year of the passing of his wife, he left the city for Mannheim. There he cured a severely mentally ill woman at the local hospital shortly after undertaking to help. From then on he was called the *Ba'al Shem*, a reference to his use of holy names and *Kabbola* to perform amazing deeds. He also gained fame as a *Godol baTorah*, a tremendous genius who wrote numerous *chiddushim* in every area of *Torah* scholarship.



The notebooks he left behind contained the names of some 1,500 people who turned to him for *berochos* and advice. He would record the date of each conversation and after a few months or up to a year and a half he would follow up on the state of the sick person or person in need. Among those who sent requests for him to daven for them were the *Chasam Sofer* and the *mechaber* of *Chiddushei HaRim* of Gur. Together with his *tefillos* for sick individuals he would designate a *shiur* in the sick person's merit.

His lists included the exact amounts he received in the form of *keseif pidyon* and *tzedoka* for his *tefillos*, and the commitments he made to teach *shiurim* for the sake of those who sought his *berochos*. The number of *shiurim* he committed to teach is astounding, as well as the efficacy of his miracles and *segulos* through the power of the holy *Torah*.

The *Ba'al Shem's* son-in-law was Rav Eliyohu Strauss, whose son was the

famous Shmuel Strauss, who bought and founded the famous Chotzer Strauss in Jerusalem and was one of the followers of the *Alter* of Kelm. Chotzer Strauss became the home of the *mussar* greats who moved to Yerushalayim. Rav Shmuel's son-in-law was Rav Yaakov Rosenheim, president and one of the founders of the World *Agudas Yisrael*.

In 5571 (1811) the *Ba'al Shem* returned to his hometown of Michelstadt and was officially asked to serve as *Rav*.

During his final years he suffered sickness and pain, but did not stop giving his shiurim despite his difficult condition. His condition deteriorated drastically until on *Rosh HaShana* 5608 (1848) he was so

weak he could hardly speak. Nevertheless he asked to hear the *tekios* in his home. Afterward he gave instructions for his funeral arrangements, demanding to be carried by hand and not on a wagon, as was the Reform custom.

Toward the end of *Tzom Gedalia* the next day, after *tefillas Mincha*, he was *niftar* at the age of eighty. In 5700 (1940) the Nazis destroyed his gravestone, which his great-grandson replaced seven years later, inscribing the words: "Here lies the great genius of renown, Rav Zekel Wormser, known as the *Ba'al Shem* of Michelstadt. May his soul be bound up in the bond of life."

www.chareidi.org/archives5764/BRS64features.htm



Rav Naftoli Katz of Lublin, 5th of Tishrei

Rav Naftoli *HaKohen* Katz was born in Prague, the son of Rav Yitzchok *HaKohen*, son-in-law of the *Maharal* of Prague, and descendant of *Maharam Padwa*.

His grandson and namesake, the *Semichas Chachomim*, records that Rav Naftoli was one of the most respected *Rabbonim* of his time, who exchanged *Halachic* correspondence with the *Taz* and other *Gedolim*.

Rav Naftoli was a *Maggid* in Prague, and then a *Dayan* in Prostitz, Nicholsburg,

and Pinsk. His final position was in Lublin, where he was *Dayan* and *Rav*.

At the same time, the famous Rav Heschel of Cracow headed the *Yeshiva* in Lublin.

His sons were Rav Yitzchok, *Maggid* in Prague and Lublin, and Rav Chaim, who succeeded to his position.

Rav Naftoli was *niftar* on the 5th of *Tishrei* 5406/1645, and is buried in Lublin.

Zecher Tzaddik livrocha.

www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-5-tishreiseptember-9/



Rav Eliezer Brish, 5th of Tishrei

Rav of Kutna

Rav Eliezer Brish was born in approximately the year 5534/1774 in Lisa. His father was Rav Moshe Yaakov.

The city of Lisa was known in those years as a fortress of *Torah*. It was renowned for its *Geonim*, who became *Rabbonim* and *Dayonim* in many *kehillos*.

The *Rav* and *Rosh Yeshiva* at that

time was Rav Teveli, who taught thousands of *bochurim* in his *Yeshiva*. Among them was Rav Eliezer.

In 5552/1792, Rav Eliezer married the daughter of Rav Yehuda from Lisa. After his marriage, Rav Eliezer founded his own *Yeshiva*, and in a short time he was asked to become the *Maggid* and *Darshan*

of the *kehilla*.

Many *kehillos* asked him to serve as their *Rav*. Rav Eliezer, out of humility and love for his hometown, ignored these tempting offers.

Years later, in 5579/1819, when the *kehilla* of Kutna was seeking a new *Rav*, they agreed to support him and his family and to fully support a *Yeshiva* as well. It was difficult for Rav Eliezer to leave his hometown for good; it was also difficult for the members of the *kehilla*, who felt very close to him. But he made the decision to move on.

In Kutna, Rav Eliezer was a strong leader. He also headed a large *Yeshiva*,

where he delivered deep *shiurim* on many *sugyos*. His *derech halimud* was to write down all the difficulties he found with the *sugya* and then delve into its depths, answering all the questions.

After serving as *Rav* there for nearly twelve years, Rav Eliezer was *niftar* in Kutna on the 5th of *Tishrei* 5592/1831.

Some of his *deroshos* and *hespedim* were published under the name *Pe'ulas Tzaddik*.

His son-in-law was Rav Shmuel Brish – a nephew – who was *Rav* in Iniava.

Zecher Tzaddik livrocha.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-5-tishreiseptember-29/



☞ SEGULAS YISRAEL ☞

Three Segulos from the Lelover Rebbe of Beit Shemesh

The Lelover Rebbe, *Shlit"á*, of Beit Shemesh, spoke about three *segulos* for *Yom HaDin* (for *Rosh HaShana*) this year to the *Chassidim*:

1. Give In and Give Up – Be *Mevater* because *kol hamaavir al midosav maavirin lo al kol pesho'ov* (*Rosh HaShana* 17a) – Whoever knows how to give in, or give up his place or turn for another, or is willing to overlook it even when he's been wronged, then on high this is done for him as well and his sins are forgiven and “overlooked” by the *midas hadin* – the attribute of strict justice.

2. “Anyone who judges others favorably will be judged favorably” (*Shabbos* 127b). Judge others favorably and give them the benefit of the doubt – when you judge others favorably and give them the benefit of the doubt it is reciprocated on high and then you are also judged favorably and given the benefit of the doubt.

3. *Kol hamerachem al habriyos merachmin olov min hashomayim* –

Whoever shows mercy to *Hashem's* creatures is in turn shown mercy from Heaven – remember that the *Targum* of *rachem* is *ahava* – love. *Ahavas Yisrael* – *ve'ohavta lere'acha komocho* – is a great *segula*!

There is a Segula for Parnossa to Buy or Sharpen a Knife on Erev Rosh HaShana

The *Segulos Yisrael* for *Rosh HaShana* (*daled*) cites Rav Yitzchok Isaac Zidatchover, who told his *Chassidim* that they should each purchase and sharpen a new knife on *Erev Rosh HaShana* and that this is a *segula* for *parnossa* for the coming year.

The *Segulos Yisrael* says perhaps the reason is because the *Zohar* teaches that a blemished knife alludes to the *samech mem* – the angel of death – and once the letter *mem*, which symbolizes *movess* (death), is sharpened away and the knife is now no longer blemished – the name *samech alef lamed* – which is a holy name, is left which is the *gematria* of 91, which is the same as the name of the *Maloch* in charge of *parnassa*. This angel,

whose name is *Chatach* (חתך), which means “cut”, is the one in charge of livelihood.

The first and final letters of the Hebrew words פותח את ידך, “You open up Your hand” (*Tehillim* 145:16), spell *chatach*. The first letters are transformed from *peh alef yud* through *at bash* into *samech alef lamed* which equals *chatach* (חתך) and the final letters themselves are *chatach* (חתך). This is why the *pasuk* cited in *Ashrei* and *bensching* is a *segula* for *parnossa*; the word that follows in the *pasuk*, *umasbi'a* – “and satisfy [the desire of every living being]” has the numerical

value of 428, the same value as the word *chatach*. This is alluded to during the *Yomim Noro'im davening* when we say that *Hashem* is *Chosech Chaim Lechol Chai*, He “cuts” a measure of life for every living being.

Nitei Gavriel also cites the *Zichron Tov* (23b) who says that the *Neshchizer* told that the *Chozeh* of Lublin used to give out knives as a *segula* for *parnassa*.

The *Sulitzer Rebbe* cites this as his father's *minhag* as well to give knives for *Rosh HaShana* to his family members as a *segula* for *parnassa*.



תכלה שנה וקללותי תחל שנה וברכותי!!

May the year end with her curses and begin a new year with her blessings.

Shona Tova!!

א גוט גי' בענטשט יאר.

K'Siva VaChasima Tova!!



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

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

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

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

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

נפטרה בש"ט בת תשעים שנה ביום כ"ד לחודש כסלו (ערב חנוכה)

שנת תשע"ח לפ"ק תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה ותקים לתחיה לקץ הימין מהרה תנצ"ב'ה'

כב' פסוקים שהנהיג בעל הזרע שמשון לומר לפני התקיעות במוסף דראש השנה וכן לאחר סדר תשליך
The 22 pessukim that the Zera Shimshon directed to say before the Shofar blowing, Musaf Rosh
Hashana, as well as after Tashlich (Hashem's name should be said whenever there is a ה')

אוֹדֶה בְּיֵשׁוּר לִבִּב בְּלִמְדֵי מִשְׁפָּטֶי צְדָקָה (תהלים קיט' ז')
בְּשִׁפְתַי סִפְרַתִּי כָּל מִשְׁפָּטֵי-פִיךָ (שם שם יג')
וְרִסָּה נַפְשִׁי לְתַאֲבָה אֶל-מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ בְּכָל-עֵת (שם שם כ')
דַּרְךְ-אֱמוּנָה בְּזוֹרְתֵי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ שְׂוִיתִי (שם שם ל')
הֶעֱבַר זֹרְפָתִי אֲשֶׁר יִגְרָתִי כִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ טוֹבִים (שם שם לט')
וְאֶל-תִּצַּל מִפִּי דְבַר-אֱמֶת עַד-מָאֵד כִּי לְמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ יִזְלָתִי (שם שם מג')
אֶכְרַתִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ מֵעוֹלָם ה' וְאֶתְנַזֶּזֶם (שם שם מג')
זִצְוֹת-לַיְלָה אֶקוּם לְהוֹדוֹת לָךְ עַל מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ צְדָקָה (שם שם סב')
טוֹב-לִי כִּי-עֲנִיתִי לְמַעַן אֶלְמַד זִקְיֶיךָ (שם שם עא')
יִדְעֵתִי ה' כִּי-צָדֵק מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ וְאֱמוּנָה עֲנִיתָנִי (שם שם עה')
כַּמָּה יָמֵי עֲבָדְךָ מָתִי תַעֲשֶׂה בְרֹדְפִי מִשְׁפָּט (שם שם פד')
לְמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ עָמְדוּ הַיּוֹם כִּי הִכַּל עֲבָדֶיךָ (שם שם צא')
מִמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לֹא-סָרַתִּי כִּי-אַתָּה הוֹרַתָּנִי (שם שם קב')
נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי וְאֶקְיָמָה לְשֹׁמֵר מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ צְדָקָה (שם שם קו')
סָמַר מִפְּזוּדֶךָ בְּשֹׁרֵי וּמִמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ יִרְאֵתִי (שם שם קכ')
עֲשִׂיתִי מִשְׁפָּט וְצָדֵק בֵּל-תִּנְיֹזוּנִי לְעֵשֶׂקִי (שם שם קכא')
פָּנֵה-אֵלַי וְזִנְנִי כַּמִּשְׁפָּט לְאַהֲבֵי שִׁמְךָ (שם שם קלב')
צִדִּיק אַתָּה ה' וְיֵשׁוּר מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ (שם שם קלז')
קוֹלִי שִׁמְעָה כּוֹזֶדֶק ה' כַּמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ זִינְנִי (שם שם קמוט')
רֹאשׁ-דְּבָרְךָ אֱמֶת וְלַעוֹלָם כָּל-מִשְׁפָּט צְדָקָה (שם שם קס')
שִׁבְעַת בַּיּוֹם הִלַּלְתִּיךָ עַל מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ צְדָקָה (שם שם קסד')
תִּזְוִי-נַפְשִׁי וְתִהְלַלְךָ וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ יַעֲזֹרְנִי (שם שם קעה')

לאחר תשליך יוסיף - After Tashlich one should add the following

(כ') ה' שִׁפְטָנוּ ה' מְזַקְקָנוּ ה' מְלַכְנוּ הוּא יוֹשִׁיעֵנו (ישעיה לג' כב')

Did We Do Our Best when Standing Before Hashem?

"You are standing today, all of you, before Hashem, your G-d"

(Devarim 29:9)

This parsha is read during the month of Elul, just before Rosh Hashana. The Holy Zohar tells us: "'You are standing today...' – this is a reference to Rosh Hashana". On this day, we all stand before the King of the World and pass before Him like a flock of sheep. Whose heart does not tremble on contemplating the significance of this great day when "Through justice a king establishes a land". Hashem sits on the throne of judgement and declares each person's verdict, according to how he prepared himself.

The verse continues, "for you to pass into the covenant of Hashem, your G-d" (Devarim 29:11). Each Jew has a covenant of trust with Hashem; a strong and powerful connection with the King of the World and when he sins and transgresses His commandments, he has harmed that covenant and severed his connection with Hashem. But, as soon as he regrets his sin and sincerely repents, he immediately reverts to pass into Hashem's covenant, for he has renewed his powerful connection with Hashem.

A person should not assume that only terrible and serious sins disconnect him from Hashem. This perception is a great mistake, for even a sin that appears to be minor, distances a person from Hashem and severs the covenant that he has with Him. An example of this is Adam HaRishon, who was created on Rosh Hashana, a form of His handiwork. Chazal said about him (Sanhedrin 38b) that he could see from one end of the world to the other. Yet suddenly the snake seduced him and he transgressed Hashem's will by eating from the Tree of Knowledge. Due to this sin, our Sages z"l described Adam HaRishon with the harshest and most shameful descriptions – a denier and a heretic. Hashem too, charged him and demanded, "Where are you?", meaning take note of the low level to which you have descended. This was due to the fact that even a sin which appears to be minor distances a person greatly from Hashem and damages the covenant of trust that exists between them. Therefore, Hashem requests from us: Repent and you will thereby renew the connection with Me and once again merit to pass in the covenant of Hashem, as the verse tells us, "for you to pass into the covenant of Hashem, your G-d".

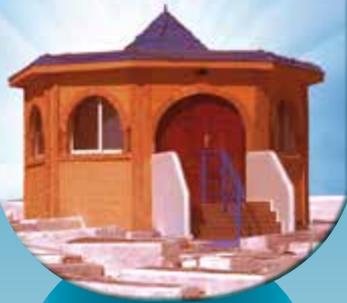
It is important to note that although we all stand before Hashem on the Day of Judgement, there are different types of 'standing'. There is the one who

stands before Hashem, but he arrives without any advance preparation. He is filthy and corrupt from the sins that he committed for he did not take the opportunity to wash and cleanse himself from the excrement of his iniquities; he is full of wounds, bruises and fresh blows. In contrast, there is the person who stands before the King of the world clean and spotless without any blemishes, for he invested effort and exerted himself during the month of Elul to examine his deeds and rectify them. He took care to straighten his ways and return to Hashem. This kind of person stands secure in judgment, certain that with Hashem's kindness he will be vindicated, for he did his utmost to pass into the covenant of Hashem and strengthen his connection with Him.

How does a person merit entering the covenant of Hashem, standing secure on the Day of Judgement and being found worthy? Only if he comes with Torat Emet (the Torah of Truth), mitzvot and good deeds in his hand. He will then be acquitted for if he possesses the merit of toiling in the Holy Torah, he possesses the best lawyer and advocate for the Day of Judgement. This is the implication of the words, "You are standing". The word 'אתם' (you) contains the same letters as the word 'אמת' (truth), which hints to the Torah which is called Torat Emet. If a person approaches the Day of Judgement holding on to Torat Emet, following in its ways and fulfilling Hashem's will, then he is promised that his righteousness will emerge and he will be written for a good life and for peace.

If he merits and he is deeply rooted alongside brooks of water, the brooks of the Holy Torah, then all the foreign winds in the world will not succeed in throwing him from the path of Torah and mitzvot which he established for himself, because he has strong faith in Hashem Yitbarach and he cleaves to His commandments. This can be compared to the long reeds that grow on the river bank. Even the mightiest winds do not succeed in uprooting them. Why? Because they grow close to water. So it is with a person who plants himself deeply in the waters of the Holy Torah. He becomes truly immune to the evil inclination and even if he is faced with many challenges in life, with Divine assistance he will succeed in overcoming them.

May it be His will that we merit to stand confident in judgment with abundant backing and advocates of Torah, mitzvot and good deeds. With Hashem's help we will be written and sealed immediately for a good life and for peace, Amen v'Amen.



Paris • Orh 'Haïm Ve Moché

32, rue du Plateau • 75019 Paris • France
Tel: 01 42 08 25 40 • Fax: 01 42 06 00 33
hevratpinto@aol.com

Jérusalem • Pninei David

Rehov Bayit Va Gan 8 • Jérusalem • Israël
Tel: +972 2643 3605 • Fax: +972 2643 3570
p@hpinto.org.il

Ashdod • Orh 'Haim Ve Moshe

Rehov Ha-Admour Mi-Belz 43 • Ashdod • Israël
Tel: +972 88 566 233 • Fax: +972 88 521 527
orohaim@gmail.com

Ra'anana • Kol 'Haïm

Rehov Ha'ahouza 98 • Ra'anana • Israël
Tel: +972 98 828 078 • +972 58 792 9003
kolhaim@hpinto.org.il



Hilula

28 - Rabbi Yitzchak Akarish

29 - Rabbi Shlomo Amralyo

1 - Rabbi Yehuda Ayash

2 - Rabbi David Rappaport

3 - Rabbi Yosef Vital

4 - Rabbi Avraham Ben Yechiel

5 - Rabbi Baruch Shalom HaLevi
Ashlag



Walking in their Ways

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

A Justified Expense

At the hilula for our holy mentor, Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hagadol zt"l, that we merited celebrating at his gravesite in Morocco, we heard many stories of miracles from the people who came to participate in the hilula. Following is one of the stories of personal salvation:

Mr. Chaim n"y, a precious philanthropist who is a noted supporter of our institutions, related that once when he gave in his tax report, he reported his contributions for tzedakah as well, so that he could get deductions on them. The gentile who took his case was skeptical about the huge sums donated to charity, that were listed there. Assuming that there was foul play at work, he refused to give him credit for them. Mr. Chaim did not yield. After much back and forth, he ended up being fined to the tune of two million dollars.

During that time, Mr. Chaim sent me a donation of fifty thousand dollars. Once again, he showed his receipt to the powers that be, in order to obtain a tax deduction. But they rejected it, once again declaring that it was too huge a sum for mere charity. Additionally, they sent down a representative to caution him about the severity of counterfeit contributions and receipts.

Mr. Chaim loudly berated the man who stood before him. Then he categorically threw the man out of his office, warning him to never show his face again. This fellow would not take such umbrage sitting down. He called the police down to Mr. Chaim's office and they arrested him for insulting a government employee. But Mr. Chaim was not fazed in the least. In his loud, clear voice, he announced, "I donated to the Torah institutions of Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zya"a. I have nothing to fear from you. Now please leave my office immediately!"

When the officers saw his determination, they had a change of heart. They began speaking to him calmly. Finally, they took their leave. A short time later, they phoned to say that they were willing to offer him a compromise. Instead of paying the sum of two million dollars, he would be required to pay only ten thousand dollars.

Mr. Chaim added a footnote to his story. Since he knew that all of his donations had gone to the worthy cause of Rabbi Chaim Pinto's institutions, he did not fear the tax authorities or the police force. He knew the tzaddik would come to his aid.

That was exactly what happened. Instead of receiving a hefty fine, together with a prison sentence, he was cleared with only a relatively small fine.

The Haftarah

"I will rejoice intensely with Hashem" (Yeshaya 61)

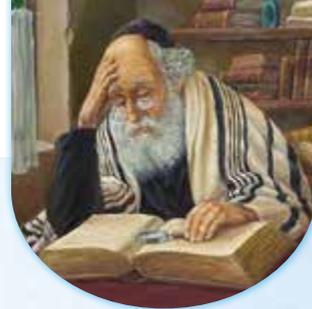
The connection to Shabbat: This is the seventh and last of the 'Seven Haftarot of Comfort' that are read starting with the Shabbat following Tisha b'Av.



Guard Your Tongue

Letter Writing

Concerning rechilut (gossip), there is no difference if the person tells him explicitly what so and so did to him or said about him, or whether he reveals the information in a letter. It also does not make a difference if he tells him that so and so spoke negatively about him or about his wares, since both cause the person to feel hatred towards the one who spoke.



Words of our Sages

What Commitment Did You Undertake?

An aspect of Hashem's kindness towards us is that when a person accepts positive commitments upon himself during these days, this proves that he wishes to improve his ways and then Hashem in his Kindness judges him according to this present state.

Even though a person must work hard to hold fast to his commitments throughout the year, but if he manages to persevere for even a short time after Yom Kippur, for example he accepts upon himself not to speak lashon hara for just half an hour after Yom Kippur, this is also considered as a great achievement, for the evil inclination challenges a person every day and seeks to kill him (indeed the evil inclination makes life extremely difficult for us, as Maran zt"l expressed it), and we don't have the strength to fight him, therefore every effort to overcome our inclination is considered worthy in Hashem's eyes.

During these days of judgement, every person feels a surge of growth. When Maran zt"l was asked how to hold on to the feelings of inspiration that we experience during the Yamim Norai'm, he replied, "One who is able to implement "I have set Hashem before me always", will be okay".

The esteemed 'Tzemach Tzedek' zya"a would say that a 'positive commitment' that a person accepts upon himself during these Holy days is considered like 'a new garment, for the new soul, for the new year'. The Gaon Rabbi Eliyahu Lopian (Lev Eliyahu, Ma'archot Hateshuva 341) brings the words of the Mishna (Avot 4:1) "Rabbi Eliezer ben Ya'akov said: He who fulfills even a single mitzvah gains himself a single advocate" and asks: Why did Rabbi Eliezer phrase his saying in the present tense, "He who fulfills even a single mitzvah" and not in the past tense – he who fulfilled? In addition, what is the meaning of 'even a single' mitzvah? This teaches us that it is not referring to one who fulfills a certain mitzvah, but one who resolves and accepts upon himself to fulfill a certain mitzvah. With this decision alone "he gains himself a single advocate" for the day of judgement.

The inspirational speaker, Rabbi Elimelech Biderman shlita, tells a story about an avreich who was an exceptional talmid chacham. "I have known him since he was young and for the last several years he suffered terrible, severe pain from a hole in his ear drum. In addition, during this long period he wasn't allowed to immerse himself in the mikveh, for someone who has a hole in his eardrum must take care that water should not enter his ears. On Hoshana Raba (5775) he went to pay a visit to his Rav, who told him that the time had come for him to undergo an operation on his ears. Several medical askanim assisted him and were able to procure an appointment for the operation. This is when the amazing miracle occurred. Upon being examined by a prominent doctor, he told him that everything was fine and he could not find any trace of a hole in his eardrum!

It was an unfathomable riddle. Everyone who knew this avreich was well aware of the torturous pain that he suffered in his ears. Suddenly, the avreich remembered that on Rosh Hashana he had accepted upon himself not to talk during the tefillot. Seemingly, in the merit of closing his mouth, the hole in his ear closed!"



Pearls of the Parshah

The Inner Spark Never Dies

"If your dispersed will be at the ends of heaven, from there Hashem, your G-d, will gather you in" (Devarim 30:4)

The sefer 'Siach Yakov Yosef', brings in the name of the Ba'al Shem Tov zya"a, that even when a Jewish person sins, a small spark of yirat shamayim remains in the depths of his heart. This is the meaning of "If your dispersed will be at the ends of heaven". If at the very edge of a person's deeds, there is yirat shamayim, "from there Hashem, your G-d will gather you in and from there He will take you". At the end of the day, this concept saves a person and will ultimately bring him to repent.

Remember Us for Life – Spiritual Life

"Hashem, your G-d, will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, to love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live" (Devarim 30:6)

The Holy Ohr Hachaim zya"a explains that the words "that you may live", refer to life in this world, for a person finds no meaning and true purpose in life without fulfilling mitzvot and cleaving to Hashem. One who does not fulfill mitzvot and study Torah, is not considered alive, for "wicked people in their lifetime are called dead".

Therefore, during the Ten Days of Repentance we insert an additional request in our prayers and beg, "Remember us for life, O King who desires life, and inscribe us in the Book of Life- for Your sake, O Living G-d". We are asking for spiritual life; we wish for the kind of life that Hashem will desire. It is a prayer for a life of mitzvot and good deeds, in order to bring spiritual pleasure to Hashem.

Repentance Brings Blessings

"When you shall return to Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart and all your soul" (Devarim 30:10)

The Holy Zohar (Acharei 69:2), in the name of Rabbi Yitzchak, outlines the ways of teshuva: "When a person repents before the King of the world and prays from the depth of his heart, this is the implication of the verse: "From the depths I called You, Hashem"."

Rabbi Abba said: 'From the depths I called You - it is a place hidden away Above, and it is the depth of the well from which rivers and fountains flow to all places, and that depth of the depths is called repentance. One who wishes to repent and purify himself from his sins, must call out to Hashem from that depth. This is the implication of the verse: "From the depths I called You, Hashem".

We are taught that when a person sins before his Creator and then offers his sacrifice on the Altar and the Kohen atones for him and prays for him, mercy is aroused and strict judgement is perfumed by the springs that are drawn out and flow, and all the lights are blessed as one, and the person is purified from his sins.

Treasures

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



Nothing is Hidden Before Your Eyes

"You are standing today, all of you, before Hashem, your G-d: the heads of your tribes, your elders, and your officers – all the men of Israel" (Devarim 29:9)

When I was visiting the gravesite of Rabbi Baruch of Mezibozh zt"l, the grandson of the Ba'al Shem Tov zya"a, I studied his holy sefer and noticed the following question that he asks on this verse: If the words "You are standing today, all of you", include everyone, why does the verse go on to detail "the heads of your tribes, your elders and your officers"? What is the reason for this repetition?

With siyata dishmaya, I would like to suggest an explanation according to the Gemarah (Rosh Hashana 18a) that tells us that on Rosh Hashana all mankind passes before Hashem like a flock of sheep. When counting sheep in order to tithe them, one by one they pass through a small entrance that does not enable them to enter as a group. "Rabba bar Bar Chana in the name of Rabbi Yochanan said and all of them together are examined with one glance, even though they pass through one at a time" (Rashi).

These words of Chazal teach us an important lesson. After nine sheep pass through a narrow opening, the tenth one then becomes holy and it is marked with a red dye in order that it can be identified. Even though this animal is destined to be slaughtered, it continues running and frolicking just like the rest of the animals in the flock and does not imagine that he has been designated for slaughter in the near future.

This too, l'havdil, is what takes place with mankind on Rosh Hashana. On this day, the Creator decrees who will live and who, chalila, will die. On this day the amount of angst and degree of suffering that will be the lot of each individual is also apportioned. It could very well be that a person is marked with a red sign and G-d forbid, it has been decreed that he will die. Nevertheless, he does not pay attention and continues his daily life as usual with no fear. His behavior can be compared to that animal who was designated for slaughter...

After explaining this idea, we can now understand, like a beaded necklace, the meaning of the verse "You are standing today, all of you". The holy Zohar says that this verse refers to Rosh Hashana. We are all standing before the King of the world in judgement. "... all of you" refers to the fact that we are all examined and judged at once. But in order that we should not mistakenly think that the judgement is a general judgement and Hashem does not pay attention to the details of every single act of every single person, the Torah repeats and details "the heads of your tribes, your elders and your officers". Each and every person is judged in a thorough manner for all his deeds and Hashem will bring judgement on every hidden thing. This is why the Torah first uses a general expression and then details the different divisions.

May it be Hashem's will that He merit us with a complete repentance and may we stand before Him in judgement free of all sin and guilt. May we be written and sealed in the book of the righteous, immediately, for a good life and for peace, Amen v'Amen.



"LET HER BE PRAISED"

Portrayal of the True 'Eshet Chayil' In memory of Rabbanit Mazal Madeleine Pinto

רבות בנות עשו חיל ואת עלית על כלנה

"Many women have amassed achievement, but you surpassed them all"

The verse "Many women have amassed achievement", was mentioned time and again in the hespedim of Rabbanit Pinto a"h, and with good reason. As is known, the Rabbanit merited seeing generations of upright and blessed offspring during her lifetime, all her children are holy acclaimed fruits, with the Torah of Hashem being their sole desire and ensuring the endurance of the world through their occupation with the three pillars on which the world exists – Torah study, the service of Hashem, and kind deeds.

With her great wisdom she steered the ship of chinuch in her home, while shouldering the responsibility for supporting her family, since her husband the tzaddik, Rabbeinu Moshe Ahron Pinto zya"a, dedicated his entire life to the service of Hashem and for forty years remained concealed in his room, delving in the Torah day and night.

A Letter to Father in Heaven

One of the most remarkable shidduchim that took place in the previous generation was the marriage of Rabbi Yitzchak Yechiel Davidovitz zt"l, the Mashgiach of the Minsk Yeshiva, to his wife, Rabbanit Shaina Miriam a"h, who was six years older than him.

In the town of Mir, close to the border between Poland and Lithuania, lived a young girl who was orphaned at a young age. The years passed and while all her friends had already found their intended, she remained single. Her difficulty in finding a marriage partner stemmed from the fact that she dreamed of marrying someone who would dedicate his life to studying Torah. In order to marry someone of this stature, she required financial support from her family, but since she had no father, there was no one who could help her materialize her noble dream.

She worked as a librarian and tried to save most of her wages towards this virtuous goal of marrying a G-d fearing young man.

One day, while sitting in the library and thinking about her situation, she decided to write a letter from the depths of her heart, to the Only One who could help her - her

Father in Heaven. She took a piece of paper that was lying on her desk and wrote down all the supplications that she regularly prayed over the last few years. She described the kind of husband she was determinedly seeking: A young man steeped in learning and possessing good middot, who will not view her poverty to her detriment. She ended her letter with the words: "You Hashem, Who supports the poor and lifts the lowly, can certainly answer my prayer. I rely on You at all times, your devoted daughter, Shaina Miriam."

She put the letter into an envelope and addressed it, 'To my Father in Heaven'. She took a walk to the grounds just outside the town, holding the envelope loosely in her hand, in the direction of the wind. As soon as she felt a gust of wind, she opened her hand and watched the letter being born aloft. She then returned home with perfect faith in Heavens assistance.

Several days after sending off the letter, one of the talmidim from the famous Mir Yeshiva, went out to pray in the fields. An envelope which lay between the bushes caught his eye and he bent down to pick it up in order to fulfill the mitzvah of returning a lost object. How surprised he was when he noticed that the letter was addressed 'To my Father in Heaven'. Unable to contain his curiosity, he opened the letter and read it in amazement. He reread it several times and was deeply moved by the pain and honesty expressed in the letter.

He returned to the Beit midrash and sought the advice of his Rosh Yeshiva (who later became the Rav of Mir), Hagaon Rabbi Elya Baruch Kamai zt"l. After a short discussion, the bachur said that he is prepared to marry this girl.

The relevant inquiries were carried out and very soon an engagement party took place. This is what he told his wife: "Despite the distinguished marriage suggestions that I received from every town and village, you, with your faith and simplicity, surpassed them all." This despite her being six years older than him.

In fulfillment of his wife's dream, her husband Rabbi Yitzchak Yechiel Davidovitz rose in heights and achieved great levels in Torah and yirah. He eventually became the Mashgiach of the Minsk Yeshiva and was the Rebbe and teacher of the previous generation's gedolim.

We can certainly refer the verse, "Many women have amassed achievement, but you surpassed them all", to this righteous woman.

WISHING YOU A YEAR OF
Health, Happiness & Prosperity!



▷ THE RAMAPOST TEAM ◁

Shraga Rayl Dani Linn Sarah Frudy Nikki