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זכות רפואה שלמה
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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)

✧ **BALAK** ✧

✧ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ✧

Ahavas Yisrael – Ohev Yisrael

Dvar Torah

The Berocha - May You Always Feel Motivated Right at the Beginning

Ma tovu ohalecha Yaakov mishkenosecha Yisrael - "How good are your tents, O Yaakov, and your tabernacles, Yisrael" (24:5).

The Apta Rav, in *Ohev Yisrael*, uses this *pasuk* to illustrate an experience that many of us have had in our *Avodas Hashem*. Sometimes we feel a great vitality and a spiritual awakening right away as soon as we begin the *Avoda*. Right at the start we are motivated to serve *Hashem* and we feel charged and exhilarated by this experience. However, at other times our *Avoda* may feel sluggish or dim and lack any form of vitality or motivation; only at the very end are we rewarded with a feeling of *dveikus* or a sense of accomplishment or achievement.

The Apta Rav categorizes these two forms of *Avoda* as corresponding to the two well-known archetypal spiritual levels of *ovdim*: those who serve *Hashem* are either of the *bechina* (aspect) of Yaakov, or on a higher level called Yisrael. Those who serve as Yaakov are characterized by the *Yud Akev*, which spells Yaakov; they feel the G-dliness at the heel, at the end of the *Avoda*, whereas those named Yisrael are characterized by *Li Rosh*, which spells Yisrael and means the head; they experience the *dveikus* at the head or forefront when their

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Avoda begins.

The *Apta Rav* says that our *pasuk* is a *berocha* that blesses us with the best form of *Avoda*. We are told how great it is when your *Avoda* in the form of Yaakov is like a tent. An *ohel* (tent) is a temporary dwelling; if our *Avoda* starts off on the wrong foot, only at the heel or end is it alive and meaningful – but this should be just a temporary state that passes. We are given the *berocha* that the higher level called Yisrael, which characterizes the *Avoda* of feeling immediate excitement and vitality right from the start should be as a *Mishkon*, a permanent dwelling. May we be blessed to dwell on this level always, *Amen!*



Shabbos Noam HaNeshomos – Noam Elimelech

How Pinchas Fixed Zimri's Torah and Mitzvos

The *Noam Elimelech* cites the *Gemora*: A person should always study *Torah* and fulfill *mitzvos* even *shelo lishma* (with ulterior motives), because in doing so he will eventually end up acting *lishma* – sincerely, for its own sake, with no ulterior motives.

When a person studies and fulfills *mitzvos* but lacks *kavona*, meaning that he lacks the intentions to fulfill and he does so out of habit, then his *mitzvos* and *tefillos* are like a body without a soul. When he studies *Torah* in such a manner or fulfills the *mitzvos* in this way, he is creating a body [of an angel] with no soul.

In contrast, when a holy *Tzaddik* studies *lishma* he creates [a complete body with] 248 spiritual limbs. This *Tzaddik*, who studies *lishma* – sincerely and for its own sake, with no ulterior motives – has the ability to uplift the *Torah* study and *mitzvos* of the person who studies insincerely – *shelo lishma*. This is because the *Tzaddik* has the power to draw down a soul into the *Torah* study of the second individual, whose study lacked any *kavona* and who had created a soulless body.

This is the meaning of *Chazal's* words, that from *shelo lishma* he will eventually end up acting *lishma*. On a deeper level it means that the *Torah* that was studied *shelo lishma* will now end up coming before the one who does study *lishma*, who will rectify it by imbuing a soul into those lifeless limbs.

The Rebbe Reb Melech says that this may also be the meaning of the *pasuk* *Tefilla l'oni chi yaatof* – “A prayer for the pauper when he faints”. The poor man here is the one who lacks knowledge, called an *oni bedaas*. Such a person has trouble concentrating on his prayers; when he *davens* he should rectify the problem by attaching himself to a *Tzaddik gomur* (a completely righteous person), who does have the right concentration and *kavona* in his *tefillos*. The *Tzaddik* will then uplift all the downfallen prayers – the *tefilla l'oni bedaas*, the prayers of those whose poverty is in knowledge and lack of *kavona*. The *oni's* *tefillos* have no soul because they lack *kavona*; the *Tzaddik* will imbue them with life and vitality, lifting them up.

This is how to read our *pasuk* in *Tehillim*: *Tefilla l'oni chi yaatof* – how can the *tefilla* of the *oni* be accepted [since he is an *oni bedaas* and lacks *kavona*]? *Ki yaatof* – the advice is that he should attach himself to the *Tzaddik gomur*, because the word *yaatof* means to attach or connect. Then “before *Hashem* he shall pour out his words” – he, the *Tzaddik*, shall pour out

the *oni's* words before *Hashem*. The *Noam Elimelech* reads the subject of the sentence (the one doing the pouring) as the *Tzaddik*, who will pour out the poor man's *tefillos* to *Hashem*, which will then be accepted with love.

This is what occurs in our *Parsha* as well with Pinchas. The *Noam Elimelech* explains that Pinchas observed that *Torah* study *lishma* is called "seeing" because when such a person studies, he seeks to see and understand what is written in order to fulfill it. However, he who studies *shelo lishma* has ulterior motives, such as the honor of being called a *Rav*. This is what the *pasuk* means – Pinchas saw – the *pasuk* testifies that Pinchas studied *Torah lishma*; he saw and observed.

Zimri was a *Nosi*, the head of one of the tribes, a *Godol baTorah* – a great man. However, when Pinchas saw how he acted, when he saw the sin he had committed, he understood from Zimri's behavior that Zimri's *Torah* study was *shelo lishma*. Whatever he had studied had created soulless bodies. This is why the *pasuk* says that Pinchas grabbed a spear, spelled *romach* – *reish, mem, ches* – symbolizing the 248 limbs. Pinchas seized those empty bodies and all their *remach* – 248 limbs – that had been created by Zimri, took them all in hand to rectify them and sent *shefa* (abundance) of life and vitality into them.



OHR HACHAIM

"The gates of heaven opened up and I saw G-dly visions, the Creator of the four corners of the earth, and I gazed and meditated upon that which I had permission to, and began to explain at the beginning of Hashem's holy words" Ohr HaChaim, Bereishis

Praises for the Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh

Mora De'Ara De'Yisrael

From the time that the Belzer Rebbe, Rav Aharon of Belz, moved to *Eretz Yisrael*, he never recited *tachanun* on the *Yahrzeit* of the *Ohr HaChaim* on the fifteenth of *Tammuz*. The reason for this was that the *Ohr HaChaim* was *Mora De'Ara De'Yisrael*, the Master and chief *Rav* of *Eretz Yisrael*.



The Holy Lights Of The Ohr Hachaim

The *Ohr HaChaim* on *Bamidbar* 23:5 explains the *pasuk*, "*Hashem* placed *dovor* (something) inside the mouth of Bilom".

Hashem placed a barrier in Bilom's mouth between his defiled, impure mouth and the divine words of holiness that *Hashem* wished him to speak. Because Bilom was a horribly defiled and disgusting person, the spirit of revealing the future through *Ruach HaKodesh* could not descend upon him. Even the words themselves were holy and they could not dwell within an impure *goy*. *Hashem* therefore made a *tikkun* so that He would not need to dwell in a disgusting, impure place, a barrier between the power of speech and the spoken word itself, and the mouth of that swine Bilom. This is what *Hashem* meant when the *pasuk* says that He

placed “something” into the mouth of Bilom: *Hashem* placed a barrier to make a separation between them, and Bilom’s mouth became a separate entity. When the *pasuk* says, “So shall you speak and say,” it means the *Ruach HaKodesh* will speak.



הילולא

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

One of the tools that *Kabbola* 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 *berochah*. 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 אלה המגן מבעל הפלא יועץ על פרשת ויצא עמוד כ"ד]

הריני מדליק נר זה למנוחת ולעילוי נשמת אבי / אמי מורתִי / הצדיק _____
בן/בת _____, יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלקינו ואלקי אבותינו, שתקבל ברחמים
וברצון כל מעשה הטוב שאני עושה, בין במחשבה, בין בדיבור, בין במעשה ויהיה הכל
לזכות ולמנוחת ולעילוי לנשמות עמך ישראל, ובפרט לנפש רוח ונשמה של אבי / אמי /
צדיק _____. יהי רצון שתהינה נפשותיהם צורות בצרור החיים.

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 Beginning Shabbos Balak

http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim_yahrtzeit/Tammuz

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

☞ 17th of Tammuz ~ Begins Friday Night (Jul 19th)

The 17th of *Tammuz* is a morning-to-evening fast. The purpose of the fast is to remember the spiritual cause of the destruction of the walls of Yerushalayim as one step in the process of the destruction of the *Bais HaMikdosh*. This day should have been a day of happiness but we built the Golden Calf;

- * **Rav Yehuda ben Rav Osher**, son of the *Rosh*, a *Talmudic Sage*, (5109/1349);
- * **Rav Salman Mutzafi** (b. 1900), born in Baghdad to Rav Tzion Meir, who descended from an illustrious family of *Torah* scholars who first arrived in Baghdad during the Spanish expulsion. The person who had the greatest influence on Rav Salman during his childhood was the *Ben Ish Chai*. Every *Shabbos*, the young Salman accompanied his father to Baghdad's main shul to hear the *Ben Ish Chai's derosha*, which lasted for two hours and was attended by over two thousand people. In 1934, he moved to *Eretz Yisrael*. For two full years, he studied the nine volumes of *Siddur HaRashash*, with all of its kabbalistic *kavonos*. It is said that his prayers have successfully saved the Jewish people on many occasions, (5735/1975);
- * **Rav Shmuel Yaakov Weinberg** (b. 1923). The Weinberg family is from the Slonimer *Chassidic* dynasty, a Lithuanian *Chassidus*. The approach and relationship of the Slonim *Chassidim* to *Torah* has been similar to the classic *Litvishe* approach. The founder of the dynasty was Rav Avrohom ben Yitzchok Mattisyohu Weinberg, the *mechaber* of *Chessed L'Avrohom*. As a youth, Rav Weinberg studied in the *Rabbeinu Chaim Berlin Yeshiva* in New York City under Rav Yitzchok Hutner, a *talmid* of the *Alter* of Slobodka. Rav Weinberg married the only daughter of Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Ruderman, the *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Ner Yisrael* of Baltimore and another *talmid* of the *Alter*. In 1964, Rav Ruderman sent him to Toronto, to preside as the *Rosh Yeshiva* of a branch that *Ner Yisrael* had established there several years earlier. Eight years later, when the *Yeshiva* in Toronto decided to become independent, he returned to Baltimore. Shortly before the *petira* of his father-in-law in 1987, Rav Weinberg was asked to preside as the *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Ner Yisrael* in Baltimore. He was a member of the *Moetzes Roshei HaYeshivos* of *Torah Umesorah* for many years, and was very active in expanding the projects of this important organization, (5759/1999);
- * **Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Spiegel** (b. 1937), *Rav* of the Romanian *shul Kehal Shaarei Shomayim*, son of Rav Moshe Menachem Spiegel, the *Admor* of Ostrov-Kalushin (formerly of Brownsville, later of the Lower East Side), and the grandson of Rav Naftoli Arye Spiegel, the former *Rav* of Ostrov-Kalushin in Poland; a *talmid muvhok* of Rav Aharon Kotler, (5761/2001).

☞ 18th of Tammuz ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Jul 20th)

- * **Rav Yehuda HaLevi Ediel** [Edel] of Slonim, born in Zamosc, Galicia, in 1757 or 1759. His most famous work was *Afikei Yehuda*. His *chiddushim* on *Seder Toharos* was considered

indispensable for anyone studying this topic. Rav Chaim Soloveitchik of Brisk kept a copy on his table at all times. He also published a book on Hebrew synonyms called *Redifei Maya*, and his first book, *Safa leNe'emonim*, a treatise on grammar, was what caught the attention of the Vilna Gaon. He had five sons, all of whom became *Rabbonim*, (5565/1805);

- * **Rav Avrohom (Maskileison) ben Yehuda Leib** (b. 1788). He authored *Maskil L'Eisan* (*chiddushim* on parts of *Moed* and *Kodoshim*); *Be'er Avrohom* (*chiddushim* on *Shas*); *Nachal Eison* (*chiddushim* on the first two parts of *Rambam's Yad Chazoka*) and *Yad Avrohom* (*chiddushim* on *Yoreh De'a*; notes on *Sifre*), (5608/1848);
- * **Rav Moshe Dovid Ashkenazi**, *Rav* of Toltshova-Tzefas, (5615/1855);
- * **Rav Yaakov Arye Guterman** (b. 1792). A *Chassid* of the Kozhnutzer *Maggid*, the *Chozeh* of Lublin, the *Yid HaKodosh* of Peshis'cha, and Rav Bunim of Peshis'cha, he took the mantle of leadership in Radzymin (Warsaw district) after the *petira* of the Vorka *Rebbe* in 1848. His *divrei Torah* were written in *Bikkurei Aviv* (on *Chumash*) and *Divrei Aviv* (on *Medrash* for *Sefer Bereishis*), (5634/1874);
- * **Rav Yehoshua** of Tomoshov, (5664/1904);
- * **Rav Chaim Meir Yechiel ben Rav Dov Beirish Shapiro**, (b. 1907), *Naroler Rav* who passed away just shy of his hundredth birthday. He was a grandson of the *Rav* of Narol, and a descendant of the *Sar Sholom*, the first Belzer *Rav*. When he was a young child, his family fled to Kashuai in Hungary, where his grandfather re-established his court. The family returned to Narol in 1924.

After his grandfather's *petira*, in a decision made by *Gedolei Yisrael*, Rav Chaim Meir was appointed *Rav* and *Dayan* in Narol despite his young age. He received *heter horo'a* from the *Bais Din* in Lvov, and became a *posek* for Belzer *Chassidim*. After the Nazi invasion in 1939, he fled with his family to Taprov, where his father-in-law lived, and stayed until the summer. In June, all Jews who didn't have passports were seized by police and shipped to Siberia. The *Naroler Rav's* family managed to leave Siberia and reach Samarkand where survival was easier. In 1945, the *Rav* was permitted to leave Russia and go to the West. In 1946, he arrived in Antwerp, and began to give *shiurim* to the Belzer *Chassidim* who had arrived there. He was active among the refugees here too, helping to marry off orphans and setting up their homes.

In 1948, the *Naroler Rav* moved to Brooklyn. A Belzer *Bais Medrash* was founded, and the *Naroler Rav* appointed at its head. He gave many *shiurim*, among them a *shiur* on *Minchas Chinuch*, which he consistently gave for over seventy years. On *Rosh Chodesh Tammuz*, 1972, the *Naroler Rebbe* left America and settled in Bnei Brak, where he founded the *Naroler Bais Medrash*. The *Rebbe* leaves behind his son Rav Berish, *Rav* of Narol. (Some say the 17th of *Tammuz*), (5767/2007).

☞ 19th of Tammuz ~ Begins Sunday Night (Jul 21st)

- * **Rav Yitzchok Isaac ben Rav Yoel Leib HaLevi Herzog** was born December 3, 1888 (29th of *Kislev* 5649) in Łomża, Poland. He became chief *Rav* of Ireland and later *Eretz Yisrael* (1888–1959). His father, Rav Yoel Leib Herzog (1865–1933) was chief *Rav* of Paris. From his birth until his sixteenth birthday, Rav Yitzchok studied at the feet of his father. He was given *semicha* by Rav Yaakov Willowski (the *Ridbaz*, *mechaber* of a *peirush* on the *Yerushalmi*). In



1916, he was named chief *Rav* of Belfast, Ireland. Later he served in the same post in Dublin, and later he became chief *Rav* of all of Ireland. Following the passing of *Rav Avrohom Yitzchok HaKohen Kook* in 1935, *Rav Herzog* was invited to become *Eretz Yisrael's* second *Ashkenazi* chief *Rav*. He served in that capacity from 1933 until his *petira*. He is the *mechaber* of the *Heichal Yitzchok*, (5719/1959);

- * **Rav Yona Stenzel**, initiator of *Halocha* and *Mishna Yomi*, (5729/1969);
- * **Rav Bentzion Abba Shaul** *ben Rav Eliyohu*, *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Poras Yosef*, great *Sefardi Tzaddik* who was recognized as one of the greatest *Halachic* authorities of his time, (5758/1998);
- * **Rav Eliezer Yehuda** *ben Rav Nossan Tzvi Finkel*, *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Mir*. His father was the *Alter* of *Slabodka*. He married the daughter of *Rav Eliyohu Boruch Kamai* (*Rosh Yeshiva* of *Mir*) in 1903. Between 1939 and 1941, because many businesses were taken over by the Soviet government, the *Mir Yeshiva* left *Belarus*. *Rav Finkel*, many other *Rabbonim* and *Yeshiva* students went to *Lithuania* because that country was still independent. The story of the escape of *Mir Yeshiva* to *Shanghai* during *World War II* has been the subject of several books. After the war, the *Rabbonim* and students founded the *Mir Yeshiva* in *Brooklyn, New York*. *Rav Finkel* survived to establish the *Mir Yeshiva* and moved the *Yeshiva* to *Yerushalayim* in 1944, (5725/1967).

☞ 20th of Tammuz ~ Begins Monday Night (Jul 22nd)

- * **Rav Nossan Nota Hanover Hy"d** *ben Rav Moshe* was a *talmid* of the *Maharshal* and *mechaber* of *Yaven Metzula* and *Shaarei Tzion*, a very popular *kabbalistic sefer* of *tefillos* and *minhogim*. He was killed by a stray bullet. (*Kabbala* teaches that there are no stray bullets), (5443/1683);
- * **Rav Yisrael** of *Rikel*, murdered in *Kavakaz*, (5583/1823);
- * **Rav Moshe Yehuda Twersky** of *Trisk-Chelm*, *mechaber* of *Imrei Mi*, (5697/1937);
- * **Rav Avrohom Yitzchok Bloch**, *Telzer Rosh Yeshiva*, brother of *Rav Eliyohu Meir Bloch* and second son of *Rav Yosef Leib Bloch* (1860–1929). Upon his father's *petira*, *Rav Avrohom Yitzchok* assumed the leadership of both the *Yeshiva* and the city of *Telz*, although he was not yet forty. The *Yeshiva's* end in *Europe* began in the summer of 1940, when the *Soviets*, who had occupied *Lithuania*, ordered the *Yeshiva* closed. The *Nazis* entered the city on *Rosh Chodesh Tammuz* of 1941. After three terrible weeks of torture, on the 20th of *Tammuz* the *Nazis* massacred the male population of the city, including the *Yeshiva's* administration and student body. The women and children of *Telz* were killed on the 7th of *Elul*. (2nd of *Tammuz*, per *Yated* 2006), (5701/1941);
- * **Rav Avrohom Chaim Na'eh**, *posek*; *mechaber* of *Shiurei Torah* and *Ketzos HaShulchon* (b. 1890), one of the leading *poskim* in *Eretz Yisrael*. His *shiurim* for units of measure are among the most well known, even by those who do not use them. He is the *mechaber* of *Ketzos HaShulchon*, *Shiurei Torah* and *Gesher HaChaim*. Born in *Chevron* to *Rav Menachem Mendel Na'eh*, *Rosh Yeshiva* of the *Sdei Chemed's Yeshiva, Mogen Avos*. Later, he studied at *Rav Yehoshua Leib Diskin's Yeshiva, Ohel Moshe*, under *Rav Yehoshua Leib's* son, *Rav Yitzchok Yerucham*. In 1912, he published his *Chanoch LaNoar*, which contains the laws necessary for *bar-mitzva* youths. With the outbreak of *WWI*, the *Turks*, who were in control of *Eretz Yisrael*, expelled anyone who did not possess *Turkish* citizenship. Most of the expelled Jews clustered in *Alexandria*. *Rav Avrohom Chaim* opened *Yeshivas Eretz Yisrael* there. This *Yeshiva* had two hundred *avreichim* and *Talmidei Chachomim*, who had

been exiled from Yerushalayim, supported fully by Rav Avrohom Chaim during the entire war. There, he wrote *Shenos Chaim*, a special *Kitzur Shulchon Aruch* for *Sefardi* Jews. In Teves of 1918, he returned to *Eretz Yisrael* and served as *safra de'daina* (personal secretary) of the *Eida Chareidis*, under Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, the *Rav* of Yerushalayim. In 1948, he founded the *Vaad HoRabbonim* of Agudas Yisrael. Later, he helped found the *chareidi* weekly newspaper, *Kol Yisrael* (later still, he was one of the prime movers behind *Hamodia*), (5714/1954);

- * **Rav Hillel Lichtenstein**, the *Krasna Rav*, (5739/1979);
- * **Rav Chaim Shaul Karelitz** (b. 1912), *Av Bais Din* of *Badatz She'eiris Yisrael, Mashgiach Ruchani* of *Yeshivas Bais Meir* and *Talmud Torah Tashbar*, nephew of the *Chazon Ish*, learned at Kosovo, Barnaovich (under Rav Elchanon Wasserman), Kaminetz (under Rav Baruch Ber Leibowitz), and Lomza in Petach Tikva, (5761/2001);
- * **Rav Betzalel Rakow** (b. 1927), born in Frankfurt, Germany. His father, Rav Yom Tov Lipman, studied in Volozhin under Rav Isser Zalman of Slutsk. After *Kristallnacht*, his family left via Antwerp to England, in 1939. Rav Betzalel learned at Rav Moshe Schneider's *Toras Emes*, along with Rav Moshe Sternbuch and Rav Tuvia Weiss. By age eighteen, he became very close to Rav Elya Lopian and Rav Yechezkel Abramski. He then joined the Gateshead *Kollel*, marrying three years later. In 1956, he became the *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Etz Chaim* in Montreaux, Switzerland, where he developed a close relationship with Rav Yechiel Weinberg and the *Brisker Rav*. In 1963, he became the *Rav* of Gateshead, where he remained until his *petira*. He is the *mechaber* of *Birkas Yom Tov*. He was the brother of Rav Bentzion Rakow, *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Chayei Olom Yeshiva*, but he was also the *Rav* of *Bais Medrash Heichal HaTorah* and a leader of Agudas Yisrael in London, (5763/2003).

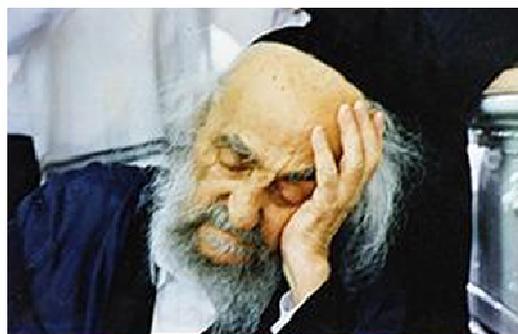
☞ 21st of Tammuz ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Jul 23rd)

- * **Rav Shlomo Machlama** of Chelm (b. 1717). Born in Zamosc, he became *Rav* of Chelm and Lvov (Lemberg), *mechaber* of *Merkevet HaMishna*, a work considered by many to be among the most important commentaries on *Rambam's Mishneh Torah*. He also wrote *Kuntres Breichos Becheshbon*, a collection of *Talmudic* math problems and their solutions, (5541/1781);
- * **Rav Avrohom Matisyohu Friedman** of Stefanest (Shtefanesht), Romania (b. 1848), only son of Rav Menachem Nachum (fourth son of the *Rizhiner Rebbe*). He succeeded his father after the latter's *petira* in 1869, (5693/1933).

☞ 22nd of Tammuz ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Jul 24th)

- * **Rav Shmuel ben Yoel ibn Shuiv**, *Rav* in the Aragonese community of Salonica. His father, who was born in Spain and moved to Salonica in 1495, authored *Olas Shabbos, Nora Tehillos* and *Ein Mishpot*, (5288/1528);
- * **Rav Mano'ach Hendel**, *mechaber* of *Chochmas Mano'ach*, (5371/1611);
- * **Rav Shlomo HaLevi ben Rav Meir** of Karlin, *Hy"d* (born 1740 or 1738). A student of the *Maggid* of Mezritch, as well as of Rav Aharon the Great of Karlin, whom he succeeded in 1772, he was murdered *al Kiddush Hashem*, stabbed by a Cossack while in the midst of the *Amida* prayer. After his passing, Rav Aharon *HaGodol's* son, Rav Osher, became *Rebbe*, (5552/1792);

- * **Rav Avrohom Grodzenski**, *Hy”d. Mashgiach Ruchani* of the Slabodka *Yeshiva*, murdered *al Kiddush Hashem*, along with his sons, Yisrael, Zeev and Eliezer, and his daughter, Miriam. A collection of his thoughts is recorded in *Toras Avrohom*. His last three years were spent in the Kovno Ghetto. An account of that period in his life was written by his daughter, Rebbetzin Wolbe, who became the wife of Rav Shlomo Wolbe, entitled *Ve’emunot’cha Baleilos*. On June 23, 1941 (27th of *Sivan*), German bombardment of Lithuania put a stop to the learning in Slabodka, as Kovno took the brunt of the attack, (5702/1942);
- * **Rav Levi Yitzchok ben Rav Avrohom Noach Bender** (born 1897). Born in Grodzisk (near Warsaw), he was sent to *Yeshivas Mokov* when he was ten, where he became drawn to Breslov *Chassidus*. The teachings of Rav Nachman (who was *niftar* in 1810) were transmitted chiefly by his *talmid*, Rav Nosson Sternhartz, who transcribed the *Rebbe’s* teachings and conversations. After Rav Nosson’s *petira* in 1844, the torch of Breslov was carried on by a number of leaders, including Rav Nachman of Tulchin (*niftar* 1884) and Rav Nachman of Tcherin (*niftar* 1894). The fourth generation of leaders included Rav Yitzchok Breiter (*niftar* around 1943) and Rav Avrohom Chazan (Rav Nachman of Tulchin’s son, *niftar* in 1917). Rav Levi Yitzchok, one of the fifth-generation leaders, was a *talmid* of Rav Avrohom Chazan. The sixth-generation leaders of our time include Rav Yaakov Meir Shechter (born 1931), one of the well-known *Gedolim* of *Eretz Yisrael*. After his father-in-law’s passing, Rav Levi Yitzchok moved with his family to Uman, where he remained for twenty years until 1936. After five years in Moscow, Rav Levi Yitzchok, his wife and his daughter moved to Tashkent in Uzbekistan, Central Asia. In 1945, the family moved to nearby Samarkand, known as the *Yerushalayim* of Uzbekistan, which had a much larger, loyal Jewish community. In 1949, Rav Levi Yitzchok arrived in *Eretz Yisrael*, where he helped build Breslov *Chassidus* into the vibrant community of today, and helped establish the main Breslov *Bais Medrash*, near the border of the Mea Shearim district, (5749/1989);
- * **Chacham Yosef Yedid**, Syrian *Rav* in America, (5776/2016).



✧ 23rd of Tammuz ~ Begins Thursday Night (Jul 25th)

- * **Rav Moshe Cordovero (Remak)** (born 1522), one of the most famous *Mekubolim*. The *Remak* was the son of Rav Yaakov, one of the exiles from Cardova, Spain. He studied *nigleh* (revealed *Torah*) under the great *Mekubolim* Rav Shlomo HaLevi Alkabetz (who would become his brother-in-law) and Rav Yosef Karo. Rav Chaim Vital was among his greatest *talmidim*. He was the *mechaber* of *Tomer Devora* and *Pardes Rimonim*. In the latter book, he systematized all Kabbalistic knowledge that had been revealed until then. In his *sefer Ohr Ne’erav*, he explains the necessity of studying *Kabbola* but also criticizes those who study this subject without prior *Torah* knowledge, pointing out that one must first study *Torah*, *Mishna* and *Gemora* before studying *Kabbola*. He also wrote a comprehensive commentary on the *Zohar* entitled *Ohr Yokor*, but it was not published for four hundred years. Publication of this multi-volume work was finally begun in 1962 and completed in 1989. Although he served as *Rosh Yeshiva* and as a *Dayan*, his fame rests on his contribution to Kabbalistic literature and thought. The Satmar *Rebbe*, Rav Yoel, had a

kabbola (receiving) from the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz that the *sefer Tomer Devora* is a *segula* against the “known disease” – may *Hashem* save us – and if one is not able to learn it himself, he should have someone read it in front of him. (It is available in English translation). There is a story told about his burial. When he was about to be buried, two different towns were striving for the right to bury him. He had told his students that the one who could *see* the fire when he was buried would be the next teacher and the whole world would follow his method. At the burial, the only person who could see the fire was the *Ari HaKodosh*, who was new in town, (5330/1570);

- * **Rav Yechezkel Katzenellenbogen**, the *Knesses Yechezkel*, (5509/1749);
- * **Rav Dovid Morgenstern** of Kotzk, son and successor of the *Kotzker Rebbe*, Rav Menachem Mendel;
- * **Rav Gedalya Aharon Kenig** (Koenig), *mechaber* of *Chayei Nefesh*, founder of Kiryat Breslov in Tzefas. He was succeeded by his son, Rav Elozor Mordechai Kenig, (5741/1981);
- * **Rav Nechemia Alter**, son of the *Sefas Emes*, (5702/1942);
- * **Rav Yaakov Yosef** of Ostrah, (5609/1849);
- * **Rav Shaul Moshe Zilberman**, the *Viershaver Rav*, and *mechaber* of *Pardes Shaul*, (5699/1939).



❁ 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

Chacham Ben Tzion Abba Shaul, 19th of Tammuz

Ambulances speeding down Geula's Malchei Yisrael Street with their sirens wailing are, sadly, not an uncommon sight. Nonetheless, each time the wail of an ambulance was heard in the Geula-based *Porat Yosef Yeshiva*, its *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Ben Tzion Abba Shaul, would bless the passing patient with a speedy recovery. Then he would quietly resume his *shiur* or studies. While it's impossible to know what effect these particular blessings had, it is well known that Rav Ben Tzion's blessings worked miracles.

"Why are your blessings so effective?" a student once asked him.

"Because I really love people," was his unassuming reply.

This love for his fellow Jew (*Ahavas Yisrael*) was an inherent part of Rav Ben Tzion's every action. His love for others was so great that when he would see young children walking to *cheder*, their innocence and sweetness would cause his heart to swell with a love for all of *Klal Yisrael*.

Before going to bed each night, he would forgive all those who had wronged him during the day. He recited the nighttime prayer "I hereby forgive all who angered me" not by rote, but with great sincerity.

Once, someone greatly offended Rav Ben Tzion. "Did you recite the prayer that night?" a friend asked him. "To tell you the truth," replied Rav Ben Tzion, "I found it very hard to forgive him. Twisting and turning in bed, I said, '*Hashem*, my anger is justified. But what should I do? Skip the prayer?' Then I sat up in bed and for a long time struggled to judge that person favorably. When I was certain that I no

longer bore a grudge against him, I placed my head on the pillow and recited the prayer."

Rav Ben Tzion's formula for developing and maintaining strong interpersonal relationships was based on simple arithmetic: Instead of calculating what others owed him, he would ask, "What do I owe others?" Then, enumerating all of the *mitzvos* between man and his fellow, such as "Love your neighbor as yourself"; "Don't despise your brother in your heart"; "Don't bear slander"; "Don't harbor vengeance", he would say, "How can I be at odds with people to whom I owe so much?"



Miraculous Beginnings

As was the case with many *Gedolei Yisrael*, prior to Rav Ben Tzion's birth, miraculous events occurred to his parents. These events seemed to foreshadow the greatness of the child they were destined to usher into the world.

Rav Ben Tzion's father, Rav Eliyohu, grew up in a small village in Iran. One day, one of the Moslem rulers gave the Jews there an ultimatum: convert or leave the country. Rav Ben Tzion's grandfather fled Iran with his family and boarded the first available boat to *Eretz Yisrael*. But instead of reaching Chaifa's port, the boat crashed on the shore opposite Eliyohu's Cave on Har Carmel.

Rescue squads arrived on the scene and tossed the passengers into rowboats. Rav Eliyohu was also tossed into a rowboat, but he landed in the sea. A non-Jewish sailor noticed the drowning child and

dragged him out of the water, saving his life.

After much wandering, the family settled in Yerushalayim, and became followers of Rav Tzadka Chutzin.

Rav Eliyohu later married Banya, a woman who was very devoted to *Torah*. When her children returned home from *Talmud Torah*, she would hug them and say, “May you become *Talmidei Chachomim*.” Her prayers were answered, and all of her children become *Talmidei Chachomim*. The fact that the entire family remained *Torah*-observant during a period when many families of Oriental and *Sefardi* backgrounds were lured into sending their children to Zionist schools was highly unusual. The fact that they became *Talmidei Chachomim* was even more so. Rav Ben Tzion was born in the year 5684, on the 29th of *Tammuz*, the *Yahrzeit* of *Rashi*. He studied in the *Bnei Tzion* School founded by Rav Moshe Porush. When Rav Ben Tzion grew older, he helped Rav Porush recruit students for the school, saving many children from spiritual destruction.

As a youngster, he also studied under Rav Yaakov Adas and Rav Tzadka Chutzin. But he reached the height of his spiritual growth in the *Porat Yosef Yeshiva*, where he studied under its *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Ezra Attia, his primary mentor. The two were very close, and Rav Attia came to regard Rav Ben Tzion as his successor.

Whenever Rav Attia came up with a *chiddush*, he would discuss it with Rav Ben Tzion and anticipate his reaction. Rav Ben Tzion, meanwhile, would tremble in awe when he spoke with the *Rosh Yeshiva*.



Marriage and Teaching

In 5709, Rav Ben Tzion married Hadassa, the daughter of Rav Yosef Sharbani, a great *Torah* scholar and son of the *Mekubol* Rav Yehoshua Sharbani, a

student of the *Ben Ish Chai*.

During that period, there were still no *Bais Yaakov* schools in *Eretz Yisrael*, and the Sharabani daughters were considered very unusual in that they wanted to marry *Torah* scholars. When Hadassa became engaged, people tried to dissuade her from marrying Rav Ben Tzion because he planned to devote his life to *Torah* study. But she ignored them. True to her goal, she enabled her husband to study *Torah* after their marriage even under the most difficult circumstances.

Rav Ben Tzion earned his living as a teacher at the *Bnei Tzion Talmud Torah*. In time, Rav Attia asked him to serve as *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Porat Yosef*. But he refused to accept that position as long as his mentor, Rav Yehuda Tzadka, was alive. Instead, he agreed to serve as a *Ram* at the *Yeshiva*.

In his new role, Rav Ben Tzion taught *Choshen Mishpot* and tested the students. He also delivered *Torah shiurim* in the *Ohel Rochel shul*, and gave *Shabbos* lectures to hundreds of prominent young *Torah* scholars.

Following Rav Tzadka's passing in 5743, he became *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Porat Yosef Yeshiva*, a position he held until his own *petira* fifteen years later.



Advice that Works

During Rav Ben Tzion's tenure as *Rosh Yeshiva*, people came to him not just to learn *Torah*, but also to receive his blessings and advice.

Once, a father whose son was critically ill came to Rav Ben Tzion. The doctors had recommended a treatment for his son that was very risky, and he was unsure whether to give them the go-ahead to do it.

“Take him out of the hospital,” Rav Ben Tzion advised him.

The father followed Rav Ben Tzion's advice, but it proved to be rather

complicated. Taking a seriously ill patient out of the hospital is no simple affair, since in such cases hospitals refuse to release medical records to the patient's relatives. In this case, the hospital staff went so far as to call in the police, and it was only due to the intervention of a community leader that charges weren't pressed against the family.

In the end, the child recovered without the treatment, the consequences of which may have been dire.

Rav Ben Tzion disagreed with doctors on many different occasions, and his diagnosis would invariably prove to be correct. How was this possible? He never studied medicine, nor did he have access to X-ray machines or ultrasound devices. As the *Chovos HaLevovos* says, "One who lives a life of faith merits seeing without an eye, to hear without an ear. His soul sees" (*Sha'ar Cheshbon HaNefesh*, Chapter 3).

Rav Ben Tzion also gave advice on family matters. His approach was innovative and invigorating.

A father whose son had left *Yeshiva* told Rav Ben Tzion, "My son's a good-for-nothing. He not only roams the streets, but he has even asked me to buy him a motorcycle."

"Then buy him one!" replied Rav Ben Tzion.

Though surprised by Rav Ben Tzion's reaction, the father decided to heed his advice and bought his son a motorcycle. When the young man saw that his father was reaching out to him, he reacted in kind and eventually returned to *Yeshiva*.



"But I'm Not a Talmid Chochom"

Rav Ben Tzion's ability to freely give advice and blessings was a natural outgrowth of his great *Ahavas Yisrael*. That *Ahavas Yisrael* was coupled with an equally great sense of humility.

Rav Ben Tzion Mutzafi, *Rosh Yeshiva* of the *Bnei Tzion Yeshiva* and the

son of the *Mekubol* Rav Suleiman Mutzafi, told the following stories to illustrate Rav Ben Tzion's humility:

"In 5723, the *Porat Yosef Yeshiva* decided that all of its *Rabbonim* and teachers had to wear long rabbinical coats. Rav Ben Tzion was very upset by this decision.

"You'll get used to it. Everyone will wear them,' his colleagues consoled him.

"That's not the point,' he replied. 'How can I wear a rabbinical coat when I am not a *Talmid Chochom*?'

"His humility," Rav Mutzafi continued, "was even more apparent one *Purim* when, with every sip of wine, secrets seep out. What was the secret he revealed as he fulfilled the *mitzva* of the day? In front of his guests, he said, 'Pray for me, my friends. Pray that I merit knowing at least one *Halocha* perfectly.'

"The same unassuming, self-effacing manner was evident one evening when someone accidentally locked the doors to the *Yeshiva's* kitchen," Rav Mutzafi added. "A hundred and twenty students were destined to go hungry that night, and the *bitul Torah* would have been great.

"What do you suggest we do?' I asked him.

"Taking some money out of his pocket, Rav Ben Tzion said, 'Send a student to the bakery for pitas, and another one to buy falafel balls and some tomatoes.' A short while later, Rav Ben Tzion could be seen in one of the rooms, rapidly cutting the pitas and filling them with falafel balls and tomato slices. How stunned the students were when he personally served each a portion, along with wishes to 'enjoy it'. With breakneck speed, he finished his work and returned to his studies. That evening, the students studied with added enthusiasm.

"When he recovered from a serious stroke," Rav Mutzafi concluded, "he nonetheless came to the weddings of his

students. At one wedding, his arrival aroused much excitement. Forming circles, the students began to sing *Yomim al yemai melech tosif* – ‘Add days to the lifespan of the king.’

“Rav Ben Tzion felt uncomfortable being honored in that manner. Pointing to the groom, he said, ‘*Chosson domeh l’melech* – A groom is like a king. They are singing in his honor.’”



Love of Hashem

When Rav Ben Tzion spoke about love of *Hashem*, his eyes would glisten and his face would glow.

In his talks, he would advise his students how to strengthen their fear of *Hashem*. “Sometimes, a person searches for *mitzvos*, but doesn’t know that there are hundreds at his fingertips,” he once said. “If he avoids forbidden sights, he can earn hundreds of *mitzvos* at one time.”

After he recovered from a serious stroke, he told his brother-in-law Rav Reuven Sharbani, “When I was ill, what worried me wasn’t how long I will live, but whether I would be able to stand before the Heavenly Court and account for my deeds.”



Honoring His Parents and Wife

Rav Ben Tzion went to great lengths to honor his parents. During the War of Independence he lived in the Katamon neighborhood. Yet every Friday afternoon he would visit his parents in order to kiss their hands. His parents lived on the other side of town, near the Jordanian border. Later on in the evening, he would walk home in the dark, when it was extremely dangerous to be outside.

This practice was in line with the *Arizal’s* teaching in *Shaar HaKavonos* (71b) that a person should kiss his parents’ hands every *Shabbos*.

In addition, on *Shabbos* mornings,

he would walk back to his parents’ neighborhood and pray in the *Ohel Rochel shul* founded by his father.

The honor he showed his wife, Rebbetzin Hadassa, was also legendary.

He would tell his students, “If a man and woman deserve it, the *Shechina* rests between them. When the *Shechina* rests in your home, the *Soton* can’t enter it, nor can poverty or illness. Honor your wife with your deeds, your thoughts and your speech. Buy her jewelry and items she likes, speak pleasantly and don’t upset her, think well of her and judge her favorably.”

Rav Ben Tzion practiced what he preached.

Serving Hashem with Joy

Rav Ben Zion served *Hashem* with a joy and enthusiasm that was infectious, and that penetrated his *halachic* rulings and his advice to others.

He once explained the *Halocha* that states that it is forbidden to ask a non-Jew to put out a fire on *Shabbos*, even if all of one’s possessions are likely to be burned. A student was so enthused by the discussion that he actually envisioned himself in such a situation.

“*Kevod HaRav*,” he called out. “I don’t understand. Am I supposed to sit back and watch while everything I own goes up in smoke?”

“That’s not what I said,” Rav Ben Tzion replied. “I meant that one should dance, sing and rejoice at having merited to fulfill the *pasuk*, ‘You should love *Hashem* your G-d with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might (*me’odecha*)’. According to our sages, *me’odecha* means one’s possessions.”

A newcomer to *Torah* once feared that the *mitzvos* would be too burdensome for him. Rav Ben Tzion encouraged him, saying, “There’s no reason to feel pressured. Every morning, volunteer to

serve *Hashem*. Don't obligate yourself, but volunteer. Volunteer to put on *tefillin*. It's not so hard. Here, let me show you how. Volunteer to pray, adding on more and more *tefillos* each day. It's a privilege to serve as a volunteer in *Hashem's* corps."



His Approach to Torah Study

Rav Ben Tzion Mutzafi describes his experiences as Rav Ben Tzion's student:

"Every day, a different student would be called upon to explain the *sugya* being studied. He had to explain the entire *peshat*, from its beginning in a very precise and comprehensive manner, paying attention to each *Talmudic shakla* and *tarya*. He also had to explain the reasoning of the one who asked the question and that of the one who provided the solution, as well as why it was impossible to resolve it otherwise.

"He also had to know the *Rashi*, and not to skip a word, because there are no extra words in *Rashi*. He had to understand *Tosafos*, as well as why *Tosafos* differed from *Rashi*, and how *Rashi* would stand up to *Tosafos'* challenges. 'Every question has an answer,' he would say. 'You must find it.

"Studying *Maharsha* was a central and important part of the lesson. Sometimes, Rav Ben Tzion wouldn't state his opinion on the *sugya* until we had studied the *Maharsha*.

"He taught us to probe the *peshat* and its many ramifications. During one lesson, he asked an explosive question. We sat there, our mouths agape. Suddenly, he stated two brilliant answers, and then a straightforward one. He remained silent for a few moments and then said, 'Know that the third answer is the only true one. The two others have external luster. I told them to you only in order to teach you not to be dazzled by glitter, but only by the *peshat*. It must be absolutely true.'"

Although Rav Ben Tzion was well

known for his brilliance and clarity of thought, he tried to remain unobtrusive and did not rush forward to issue *halachic* rulings. Until the passing of Rav Ezra Attia, he refused to issue *halachic* rulings even to his students or close acquaintances, out of respect for his mentor.

After Rav Attia's passing, he would discuss his *halachic* opinions with his students, but only on a private basis. One day, Rav Yehuda Tzadka, the *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Porat Yosef*, decided to put an end to all that, and began to refer people to Rav Ben Tzion, telling them that he was a great *halachic* authority whose rulings they should heed. He would say, "Rav Ben Tzion will refuse to issue a ruling. But don't give in."

Rav Ben Tzion, who was a bit stymied by all this, asked Rav Tzadka how he should relate to people who asked him *halachic* questions. Rav Tzadka urged him, "You are well-versed in *Halacha*. Why shouldn't you issue rulings?"

It was in this way that Rav Ben Tzion's ability to become a great *halachic* authority was brought to light.



S.O.S.!

Rav Ben Tzion was careful not to waste a moment of precious *Torah* study time. One morning on his way to *Yeshiva*, he saw a student examining a billboard poster. Suddenly, Rav Ben Tzion cried out: "S.O.S.! S.O.S.!" and continued on his way. The student ran after him and breathlessly asked, "What happened? Who needs help?"

"The entire world," Rav Ben Tzion replied. "If you don't study *Torah* the world will be destroyed. If you were an ambulance driver or a paramedic, and were summoned to save a life, would you stop to read the latest announcements? As a *ben Torah* your job is far more vital, because the world is maintained only in the merit of *Torah* study."

Communal Involvement

Even though Rav Ben Tzion was humble and preferred spending his time within the four cubits of the *Halocha*, he did not hesitate to involve himself in communal affairs, especially in battles over religious matters.

He was one of the leaders in the battle over the preservation of the sanctity of *Shabbos*, and he bravely protested mixed swimming pools and post-mortem operations.

In 5732, he was at the forefront of the battle against mandatory army service for girls. Along with Rav Yehuda Tzadka, he drafted a halachic ruling declaring that mandatory army service for girls was in the category of “be killed and do not transgress”. The text of his ruling was sent to all of the *Torah* sages in the country, and was signed by four hundred *Gedolei Yisrael*.

Rav Ben Tzion was also a leader of *Sefardi* Jewry not just in *Eretz Yisrael*, but also in countries around the world. He traveled to Iran, England, Italy, France, South America, Mexico, Panama, Columbia and the United States, strengthening the *Sefardi* Jews of those countries. He founded rabbinical courts for them and provided them with *Shochtim*, *Mohalim* and *Rabbonim*, thwarting assimilation and the influence of heretical streams.

In 5743, while delivering a eulogy at the funeral of Rav Yaakov Mutzafi, he suddenly felt ill. A short while later he suffered a stroke. (He had suffered a heart attack previously.) Although he recovered, part of his body remained non-functional. But this situation did not prevent him from spreading *Torah* and from being involved in public affairs.

Above all, Rav Ben Tzion devoted his energies to the education of Jewish children, personally founding scores of *Talmud Torahs* throughout *Eretz Yisrael*. He regarded strengthening the education of

the younger generation as his primary goal.

Rav Ben Tzion, together with Rav Yehuda Tzadka and Rav Ovadia Yosef, founded the *Maayan HaChinuch HaTorani*, a federation for hundreds of *Sefardi Talmud Torahs* throughout *Eretz Yisrael*. He considered this enterprise his life’s work, and in its early stages, subsidized it himself.

One time, he saw a school bus stopping beside a *Talmud Torah*. As the children gleefully poured out of the bus, he said to the person accompanying him, “Did you see how the doors of that bus opened? It reminds me of the opening of the *Aron Kodesh*, upon the removal of a *Sefer Torah*. I’m jealous of that driver. Those children are heading toward *Har Sinai* now, where they will receive the *Torah*.”



How Can I Stay Home?

After he had suffered his stroke and was confined to his home, the *Hanhola* of *Lev L’Achim* paid him a visit before their annual *Asifa* in Bnei Brak. They explained to the *Rav* that they realized that he would be unable to come and speak, since he could barely get around and speech was also very difficult for him. The *Rabbonim* suggested that he send his son in his stead to say a few words of greeting in his name.

He refused. Slowly, and with great difficulty, he said to them, “If the organization that does so much for *hatzolas Yaldei Yisrael* is holding an *Asifa*, I cannot stay home. I must be there.” And with extreme *mesiras nefesh*, he came. He was carried into a car, and from the car, entered the large hall in a wheelchair.

Rav Aron Leib Steinman had already left the dais of the gathering to return home when he was told that Rav Abba Shaul was on his way from Yerushalayim. He returned to the dais, saying, “How can I leave if Rav Ben Tzion is coming? I must stay and wait for him to be *mechabed* him.”

'Linked to Klal Yisrael'

On the last night of Rav Ben Tzion's life, one of the great *Roshei Yeshiva* of our times phoned and asked him a very important question. The following day, the *Rosh Yeshiva* called back for a reply. From the weeping of Rav Eliyohu, Rav Ben Tzion's only son, the *Rosh Yeshiva* understood what had occurred.

The funeral of Rav Ben Tzion Abba Shaul, which took place on the 19th of *Tammuz*, 5758, was attended by masses of Jews from all circles and sects. A brief glance at the list of *Rabbonim* who delivered *hespedim* at the funeral and during the *shiva* week indicates that they represented the entire spectrum of *Chareidi* Jewry. At the funeral, everyone bemoaned the great loss to *Klal Yisrael*.

Rav Eliyohu, his son, was one of those who delivered a eulogy.

"My father," said Rav Eliyohu, "did not belong to a particular circle. He was linked to *Klal Yisrael*. He drew everyone closer and loved all. He shared the suffering of the community, grieved over its

pain, participated in its sorrow and rejoiced on its happy occasions. Everyone who encountered him felt a close kinship with him, and *Klal Yisrael's* love for him was complete and genuine. Everyone loved him and Jews from all circles came to pay him final respects."

On the last day of *shiva*, a miracle occurred. A car loaded with explosives was placed in the center of Yerushalayim. Suddenly, the car went up in flames. People rushed over to save the driver, not realizing that the car had been full of explosives – or that the driver had been a terrorist.

Had the bomb exploded in the town's center as the terrorist had intended, an enormous disaster would have occurred.

We don't know what happened to all those patients in the ambulances that sped past the *Porat Yosef Yeshiva* and received Rav Ben Tzion's blessings. We also don't know what went on in Heaven at the end of the *shiva* after his passing. But we can surmise.

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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 ב"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 היים 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.

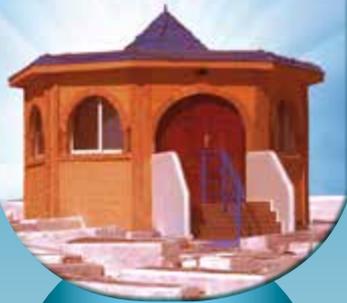
She transmitted a strong value system stressing *Emunas Hashem* and *Tzaddikim*. Her love for stories of *tzaddikim* gave her *chiyus* and she conveyed that *chizuk* to anyone who met her. In her eighty-nine years of life, there wasn't one person who had an untoward word or adverse feelings about her. 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 הגיורה)
נפטרה בש"ט בת תשעים שנה
ביום כ"ד לחודש כסלו (ערב חנוכה) שנת תשע"ח לפ"ק
תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה
ותקים לתחייה לקץ הימין מהרה תנ'צ"ב'ה'

Balak

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Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

Pachad David

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

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



MASKIL LEDAVID

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

"One Who Toils and Achieves, Believe This"

"You shall not curse the people, for it is blessed!" (Bamidbar 22:12)

Chazal tell us that Yisrael had no greater enemy than the wicked Bilam, who wished to annihilate them with his curses, but Hashem in His great kindness prevented him from accomplishing this. He put a bridle in his mouth so that he was unable to curse, and when he saw that this power was taken from him, he asked to bless the people. Hashem replied, they do not need your blessings "for it is blessed!" This can be compared to the maxim said about the bee – "Neither from your sting nor from your honey."

Of course, when Bilam asked to bless the people, he did not really intend to offer them his blessings. His true intention was to curse; his blessings were really curses and this is why Hashem secured his mouth.

What was the source of Bilam's deep hatred of Am Yisrael? Why did he loathe them to such an extent that he wished to wipe them out?

Chazal tell us (Avot 5:19) "...[whoever has] three different traits is among the disciples of the wicked Bilam... Those who have an evil eye, an arrogant spirit, and a greedy soul are among the disciples of the wicked Bilam." This evil eye was the crown of all of Bilam's corrupt traits. His envy is what ruined him. One who possesses this despicable trait will find it very hard to face another's success. He can't make peace with someone else's achievements and prosperity.

The wicked Bilam possessed this evil eye and could not bear witnessing Am Yisrael's success. His heart pined when he saw Hashem accompanying His people at every step of the way, showing concern for all their needs, protecting them with Divine Intervention and leading them in a miraculous way "as a nurse carries a suckling". His difficulty in accepting this was the cause of the fierce hatred that burned in his heart against Am Yisrael, and the root of his desire to destroy them.

There is an obvious question that begs clarification: If Bilam was indeed so wicked, how did he merit becoming a prophet? The verse tells us about Bilam (Bamidbar 24:16): "Knows the knowledge of the Supreme One". Chazal tell us that he knew how to reckon the moment when Hashem was angry; he was able to foretell the future and he even achieved Moshe Rabbeinu's level of prophecy, as it says, (Devarim 34:10): "Never again has there arisen in Israel a prophet like Moshe". Chazal expound on this, "In Israel there never has arisen, but among the nations, there has arisen."

How is it possible that Bilam achieved these high levels of prophecy if he possessed such bad middot, a profound hatred for Am Yisrael and abominable deeds?

The answer is simple and clear: The wicked Bilam did not work on himself to achieve these lofty levels. They were given to him as a free gift, without any toil on his part. He never desired to sanctify himself and did not

try to purify his thoughts in order to achieve spiritual greatness. On the contrary, he behaved with total abandonment and gave his evil inclination full permission to mislead him in his abhorrent path. All his bad traits were deeply entrenched in him.

Nevertheless, Hashem gifted him with a free gift of prophecy from His treasury and elevated him to great levels, all in order to prevent the nations coming with a fabricated complaint that if they too had prophets, they would have repented.

With a clear distinction between the holy and profane and between the pure and impure, Moshe Rabbeinu a"h merited his exceptional levels after striving and toiling greatly for them. He was considered as one of the disciples of Avraham Avinu a"h, who possess beautiful middot and upright ways, as the Tana says "Those who have a good eye, a humble spirit, and a meek soul are among the disciples of our forefather Avraham." Moshe Rabbeinu showed great self-sacrifice and worked on himself immensely in order to achieve these good traits.

Already in his youth as he was growing up as a prince in the wicked Pharaoh's palace, Moshe was not enticed by wealth. Upon observing his brothers' suffering as a result of their enslavement by Pharaoh, he would remove his royal clothes and ease their workload. Similarly, he would comfort them and offer them words of encouragement by saying, "if only I could die instead of you". This is how Moshe developed the traits of kindness and humility, until his humility became his crowning glory. These positive traits became ingrained in him and were an integral part of his personality, for he toiled and strove to achieve them. Moshe Rabbeinu a"h merited pure yirat shamayim and exceptional closeness to Hashem, more than any other human being, due to the power of those elevated traits.

It is important for us to realize that unfortunately Bilam's counsel (to cause the Bnei Yisrael to sin with immorality) has not disappeared and until today still exists and is flourishing. Just as then, many of the Bnei Yisrael were ensnared by his trap of impurity – so too today, Bilam's counsel which presents itself in the form of our generation's massive technological advancements such as the internet and non-kosher cell phones, has caused many soldiers to fall r"l. Each and every one of us is obligated to be vigilant and protect ourselves from these dangers. We must be prepared to employ much effort and toil in order to safeguard ourselves and this is each and every person's sacred obligation. On the other hand, a person need only begin the undertaking and try to sanctify himself and purify his heart, thoughts and feelings, while distancing himself from hideousness and all similar matters, and then certainly he will feel Hashem supporting him in his journey towards purity and holiness, for one who makes the effort to purify himself, is blessed with Heavenly assistance.

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Hilula

17 - Rabbeinu Yehuda Ben Harosh

18 - Rabbi Yosef Kapach

19 - Rabbi Ben Zion Abba Shaul,
Rosh Yeshiva of 'Porat Yosef'

20 - Rabbi Avraham Chaim
Na'eh

21 - Rabbi Rachamim Nahori, Av Beit
Din of Paris

22 - Rabbi Shlomo of Karlin hy"d

23 - Rabbi Moshe Kardavira

24 - Rabbi Yehoshua Bardugo



Walking in their Ways

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



Words of our Sages

Doubly Blessed

Imagine the devastation of a woman who was told, after numerous tests and treatments, that she was infertile and could never bear a child. This woman could not digest this terrible prediction. In spite of the doctors' ominous words, she placed her faith in Hashem, the ultimate Doctor. She came to me time and again, begging for my prayer and blessing that she should merit bearing children.

Of course, I acquiesced to her requests and offered my heartfelt blessings. But I added a caveat: she should not place undue hope in my blessings, for, according to the laws of nature, she could not bear children. It would be a shame to raise her hopes only to have them repeatedly dashed.

One day, this woman visited me. She felt that she was pregnant. At first, I didn't take her seriously. But on second thought, I changed my mind. I advised her to see a doctor and check if she was, indeed, expecting a baby.

To the amazement of all, her determination to bring her own child into the world became a reality. Not only was she expecting, but she was expecting twins. After nine months, she gave birth to a healthy boy and girl.

The night before the brit, her husband dreamed that eighteen thousand euro were stolen from him. The very next day, that is what happened. When he recounted this incident to me, I immediately saw the connection between his dream and his circumstances.

Eighteen is the numerical equivalent of the word חי (alive). In contrast, we are taught that a poor man is considered as if dead. When the money was stolen, this man became a pauper, as if divested of life. But Hashem, in His infinite mercy, brought the remedy before the malady and granted him a double portion of life through his twins, born to him most miraculously.

Rabbi Salman Mutzafi's Secret Siddur

Throughout our history, the holy Sages of each generation have always conducted themselves with the utmost modesty and humility and attached much significance to this way of life. They distanced themselves completely from honor and fame, which is in direct contrast to the non-Jewish authorities, for whom their most prominent and compelling insinuation can be summed up by the verse that we find in this parsha: "For I shall honor you greatly" (Bamidbar 22:17).

The Navi Micha (in this week's Haftarah, Micha 6:8) cautions Bnei Yisrael about this harmful attribute: "Walk humbly with your G-d". This concept was manifest by the Gedolei Yisrael throughout the generations, their outstanding achievement in Torah was mirrored by their outstanding humility.

In actual fact, the whole concept of fame and publicity stems from an impure source. This is why Am Yisrael's leading characteristic is their modesty and inner focus. The greater the degree of humility, the more Torah and yirat shamayim will be found in that person.

The Gaon Rabbi Ben Tzion Mutzafi shlita, in the sefer 'Doresh Tzion', describes the personality of his illustrious father, Rabbi Salman zt"l. He was accustomed to going to the Kotel each day, for the afternoon and evening prayers. He used to take along the 'Siddur Rashash' and direct his prayers according to all the sublime intentions of the Rashash. He kept this siddur concealed in a special covering and would stand in a corner, with the siddur half closed. This is how he would pray for about half an hour.

"One of the people who had come to pray was curious to learn about this sefer that my esteemed father was praying from. He approached my father and tried to get a glimpse of the sefer. Realizing this person's intentions, my father immediately closed the siddur and turned it on its side, so that he shouldn't be able to identify the sefer. But the person was unrelenting and maneuvered his head to take a look at the back of the sefer, maybe this would enable him to discover the name of the sefer... My father took the siddur, put it inside his coat and then continued praying by heart. Afterwards he explained, "I gave up praying with all the lofty thoughts of the Rashash, just so that they shouldn't see me praying from the Rashash's siddur and exclaim, "What a great tzaddik"..."

The 'Peleh Yo'etz' writes that actions and customs that are performed because that is the halacha – are permitted to be done in public, but 'milei d'chaseduta' – customs of piety- should be performed in privacy and not in the limelight.

Do you wish to act piously? On the contrary, be pious with your Creator. Do you wish to be stringent? This is definitely commended but be stringent with yourself. Don't broadcast it! Don't flaunt it!

The 'Chidah' writes, (quoting from the 'Zohar'): If a person publicizes his deeds – he will receive his reward in This World, whereas the punishment for his arrogance he will receive in the Next World. Not only will he not receive reward for his deeds in the World of recompense but will even be punished for them.

On the other hand, one who keeps his ways concealed, Hashem protects him and conceals him from negative powers, as it says in Tehillim (101:2-3): "I walk constantly with innocence of heart within my house...I despise doing wayward deeds, it does not cling to me." The fact that he hides and conceals his deeds in This World, will bring about the fulfillment of the verse "How abundant is Your goodness that You have stored away for those who fear You" (ibid 31:20). He will receive his true reward in the Next World.

The Haftarah

"The remnant of Ya'akov will be" (Micha 5-6)

The connection to the parsha: The haftarah speaks about Hashem's kindness that He performed with Am Yisrael, by directing Bilam's heart to bless the people. This is the same topic as the parsha which tells us about the wicked Balak, king of Moav and the wicked Bilam who intended to curse Am Yisrael, however in the end they blessed them.



Guard Your Tongue

Publicizing His Great Kindness

In the previous halacha we mentioned that when praising someone, one must take care that the praise should not lead to loss for the person being spoken about. Another example of this could be one who receives a loan from his friend and publicizes this great kindness. This could cause unscrupulous people to take advantage of this benefactor, which may result in him losing his money.

We can apply the following verse to this idea: "If one blesses his friend loudly from early in the morning, it will be considered a curse to him." (Mishlei 27:14)



Pearls of the Parshah

Who is Suited to Bless?

"For I know that whomever you bless is blessed" (Bamidbar 22:6)

The Tzaddik Rabbi Meir Abuchatzera zya"a, told over that in his country of origin- Morocco, there was a simple person to whom people used to go to ask for blessings, and many times his blessings were indeed fulfilled.

Rabbi Meir's son, the Admor Rabbi Elazar zya"a asked his father to explain this phenomenon (brought in the sefer 'Pekudat Elazar').

Rabbi Meir replied that true the man was simple and his father too was known as a simple person, but his father was also well known for his charitable acts.

Among all the kind deeds that he performed, he also used his profession as a tailor to this end. He was accustomed to collecting old or torn clothes from people, which he would then take the time to repair so that they were once again fitting to be worn and distribute them to poor people. It was merit of his father's good deeds that gave his son the merit of his prayers to be accepted.

In the same vein, there is a story told about the Alter of Slabodka. When he was ill, he sent a message to various gedolim and tzaddikim, asking them to pray for him. He also asked the town's pharmacist to pray for him. He explained that since the pharmacist helps others by preparing medications which serve to heal them, he has great merits and therefore his blessings will bear fruit, just like the prayers of a tzaddik or holy person.

Bilam's Sin in Walking

"G-d's wrath flared because he was going" (Bamidbar 22:22)

What is the implication of "because he was going"?

The Gemarah (Berachot 7a) tells about a Sadducee who was a neighbor of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi. The Sadducee used to bother him greatly and Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi wished to get rid of him.

There is a certain moment in the day, at sunrise, when wrath is present in the world. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi wished to be awake at that moment so that he could curse the Sadducee; this would ensure that his curse would be fulfilled. How do we know when this moment occurs? When the crest of a rooster turns completely white.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi took a rooster and waited for the opportune moment.

However, just as the moment arrived – he fell asleep. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi understood that this was Heavenly ordained so that his wish should not be fulfilled.

The sefer 'HaTzaddik Rabbi Shlomo' explains that Bilam wished to curse the Bnei Yisrael and wished to do so at the exact moment when Hashem's wrath flared up. What did he do? He took a rooster and waited for the right moment, but when he saw that he was about to fall asleep, he started walking back and forth so as to keep himself awake. This is the meaning of "G-d's wrath flared up because he was going" – Hashem was angry with him for stubbornly trying to keep himself awake in order to intend his curse for the moment of Hashem's wrath.

Hashem Watches Over

"He declaimed his parable and said: "The words of Bilam son of Beor, the words of the man with the open eye; "the words of the one who hears the sayings of G-d, who sees the vision of Sh-ddai, while fallen and with uncovered eyes" (Bamidbar 24:3)

The Gaon of Tshebin zt"l explains the above verse in the name of Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin:

"The words of the man"- when things don't go according to a simple person's desire, he declares: "the open eye" – Hashem, as if, is not watching over him. (Some commentaries say that "open eye" means that Bilam was blind in one eye.)

On the other hand, "the one who hears the sayings of G-d" – a G-d fearing person who heeds Hashem's word, he "sees the vision". Even when he is in a "fallen" state, he realizes that there are "uncovered eyes"; Hashem is watching over him and this situation is Hashem's wish.

Treasures

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



Impressed? Yes. Transformed? No!

The wicked Bilam was impressed with Bnei Yisrael and said (Bamidbar 24:5) *"How goodly are your tents, O Ya'akov"*. The Gemara tells us (Sanhedrin 105b) that the tents refer to the houses of worship and study houses where Bnei Yisrael sit and occupy themselves with Torah study.

Bilam's admiration is very similar in nature to the amazement and astonishment of many people who come to visit Torah institutions and yeshivot.

For these people, it is their first close-up glimpse of the Torah world. Their eyes feast on the sight of hundreds of avreichim studying in a Kollel, or precious yeshiva bachurim sitting and delving into the holy Torah. At this overwhelming moment, it is easy to guess how moved they are by this incredible sight; they suddenly comprehend the boundless beauty and glory of our Holy Torah. How much respect they feel at that moment for those who dismiss all mundane pleasures and devote themselves singularly to Torah study!

But if this powerful sight touched their hearts to such an extent, how come it does not leave its mark afterwards? The marvel and awe that these people feel, slowly takes a back seat, and we don't find that they rush to become part of this yeshiva experience?! Why indeed do we not see any fundamental change?

The answer is simple: it is none other than a tactic of the evil inclination. True, he allows a person to be impressed and amazed at what he sees, but he makes sure that his innermost, latent feelings, the ones responsible for true change, will not be aroused. This is how the yetzer hara prevents a person from following in this beckoning path. This is the reason why it is so hard for a person to let go of his bad habits, and how easy it is for him to continue following the arbitrariness of his heart and fulfilling his hearts' desires, without accepting the burden of Torah and mitzvot. And so, he remains on his corrupt path, without rectifying his ways.

This is what happened with the wicked Bilam. He was very impressed with Am Yisrael and when he saw them sitting in groups and studying Torah, he cried out "How goodly are your tents, O Ya'akov". But as far as he himself was concerned, he wasn't prepared to change.

From his point of view, it was simply impossible to be bound by the laws of the Torah and to live his life according to its commandments. It would be simpler for him to continue behaving with abandonment and being misled by the pull of his evil inclination. It is then obvious why this admiration did not show results.



"LET HER BE PRAISED"

Portrayal of the True 'Eshet Chayil'

In memory of Rabbanit Mazal Madeleine Pinto

"כפה פרשה לעני וידיה שלחה לאביון"

"She spreads out her palm to the poor, and extends her hand to the destitute"

A wonderful story, told over by one of the Torah Sages zt"l, is brought in the sefer 'Lehagid':

"One day, we were carefully treading between the graves inside the large Vilna cemetery, when suddenly our eyes caught sight of an intriguing inscription on one of the tombstones: "Here lies..., son of..., passed away on... and buried on..."

The inscription concluded with the following words: "She spreads out her palm to the poor and extends her hand to the destitute".

This is a quotation from 'Eishet Chayil', a song ascribed to the Woman of Valor, yet here it was written as a testimonial to a man! This was a most surprising and definitely unusual phenomenon.

Our curiosity was aroused and we decided to try and determine the story that lay behind this tombstone. We investigated the archives and tried to find some reference in the old records of the chevra kadisha. We toiled and eventually discovered the name of this person and the tale that lay behind the unusual inscription:

There was a Jew who lived in Greater Vilna, who was devoted to performing charitable acts and benevolent deeds. His affluence was well-known in all the nearby towns, and most interesting, his generosity grew in accordance with his wealth. The more he earned, the more he increased his charitable acts on behalf of destitute Jews. For many years, he freely distributed his money to all who were hard pressed, both to the desperately poor and also to any person who required assistance. The special pleasure that he derived from distributing charity was most impressive. With his entire heart he loved dispersing his assets; he passed on his wealth to all those whose pockets were empty. A true pursuer of righteousness and kindness.

Suddenly a new era arrived. This righteous man started losing his money, his profits slowed down, and one small downfall led to another bigger downfall. He continued losing his wealth until his entire cash flow dried up. He was left with a fancy house, full of silver and gold possessions, but he had no money to distribute to the poor. The entire town was puzzled. The question echoed throughout the streets of Vilna. How could this happen to someone who so freely distributed tzedakah? Why was this generous person punished so severely? Hashem's ways are truly hidden.

The news reached the towns' Dayanim, Rabbanim and Gedolim. They considered the matter and decided to set up a Beit Din to review the situation. Why did this great punishment befall him? Several of the town's Sages sat down together and started delving into the man's conduct. All they could come up with was the following sin: This philanthropist did not heed the words of Chazal who instruct us not to give away more than a fifth of one's assets!

Out of his great desire to distribute tzedakah, he did not pay attention to this and handed out much more than a fifth.

This ba'al tzedakah who was now left without any money, did not give up his charitable ways so quickly. He continued his generosity in a new manner: he started distributing dishes and gifts from his own house, from his personal possessions.

When the Beit Din saw that 'his deeds outnumbered his possessions', they tried to come up with a way to prevent him from emptying out his entire home. They decided to put him under house arrest. "You are forbidden to leave your house", they told him and thought that this will prevent people from approaching him. The poor will not meet him in the street and so will have to search for other generous people to help them.

But the town's poor knew him too well and did not give up. They thought up an ingenious way to request donations. They knocked on his windows and would get together late at night and cry about their poverty, causing the rich man to wake up. He got up and went to look who was causing this commotion. How did he react? He gathered together whatever he could get hold of, all kinds of dishes, silver candelabras, candlesticks, clocks and other valuable items that he had in his home, and being unable to leave his house, he simply threw everything out of his window. This continued for several nights- slowly his house emptied of anything of value. Yet he continued giving with joy and enthusiasm, and with it, it seemed, double the pleasure, until not a single silver or gold item was left.

His last night in this world arrived. Once again, in the middle of the night, he was awoken by two poor people knocking on his window, crying. The (previously) wealthy owner's mercy was aroused and he went into his house to search for something of value to throw to them. He rummaged through his entire house but didn't find anything. All his possessions had already taken up residence in other people's houses. But the poor people did not give up and begged him, "Have mercy on us and on our families who are hungry for bread. Maybe there is still something that you can find?"

The owner went back into his house and once again did a thorough search; in the closets, on top of the closets, until he finally found something. He went out to the porch, holding aloft a golden spoon! The golden spoon that he had received from his wealthy father-in-law, on the day of his marriage. But there were two poor people crying to him and he had only one spoon- what should he do? He scratched his forehead, thought for a moment and then arrived at a simple solution: he broke the spoon into two parts. One of the poor received the handle of the spoon, while the other received the bowl of the spoon. They hurried away to try and sell their fortune and use the money to bring relief to their families.

The next morning the philanthropist was found lifeless in his home. He had returned his soul to his Maker.

This was the story which marked the end of his life and this was the reason behind the inscription from the words of 'Eishet Chayil': "כפה פרשה לעני" – the "כף" – the bowl of the spoon, he gave to one of the poor and "וידיה שלחה לאביון" – the "ידיית" – the handle of the spoon, he extended to the other one...

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