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זכות רפואה שלמה

מיכאל בן שלי

מלכה בת רחל

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)

NASO

❖ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ❖

Sowing the Seeds of the Zera Kodesh

Dvar Torah

VeIsh es Kedoshav Lo Yihiyu – Bamidbar 5:10

It says in *Pirkei Avos* 5:21 - Whoever finds merit and advocates on behalf of the public good... public merit is attributed to him (the merit of the masses belongs to him).

The Ropshizter explains that this *Mishna* can be used to explain the meaning of our *pasuk* - Each person's *Kedoshuv, Lo Yihiyu* - whenever a person sanctifies others with *kedusha*, causing them to repent and return to *Hashem* through *teshuva*, they are his, this *shefa* now belongs to him and *Hashem* sends down an influx of abundant blessings and supernal *kedusha* down unto him for this advocacy.

The Ropshizter gives another interpretation based on the statement of Chazal in *Bava Metzia* 107b "Decorate yourself before asking others to do so," before you rebuke others and teach them the correct path make sure you yourself are living the example. This then can be read as the meaning of our *pasuk: VeIsh es Kedoshav* - when you tell others to act in a manner of holiness and sanctity and instruct them how to behave, *Lo Yihiyu* - make sure you follow that path, so that you shall be *Naeh Doresh veNaeh Mekayem* - someone who fulfills well what he teaches others to do as.

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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

The Holy Lights Of The Ohr Hachaim

Two Offerings Hidden and Revealed

"He offered on the first day his offering" (7:12).

The *Ohr HaChaim* notes the apparently superfluous repetition of the words "offering his offering". The *Ohr HaChaim* explained above in his comments to 7:1 how the letters of the *Torah* are counted, numbered and refined, hewn from a holy source which is awesome and wondrous to any who can recognize these hidden mysterious wonders. He notes that it is forbidden to add even one letter as he expands there on the mysteries of letters that seem superfluous or misspelling words that hint at deep meanings. Here too the *Ohr HaChaim* teaches that none of these seeming repetitions are in fact unnecessary. Instead, he points out that there were two offerings and two sacrifices being brought here: the one actual physical offering and the other the spiritual self-sacrifice of giving to *Hashem* of one's own abilities, offering to *Hashem* your faculties and your talents and sacrificing to *Hashem* that unique part of yourself that only you can grant Him. This offering to *Hashem* is the true *Korban*, the hidden sacrificial offering that Nachshon is being credited here with by the second mention of his offering. It is not a superfluous repetition; rather a lesson of what self-sacrifice can really mean and should be.

You should know, says the *Ohr HaChaim*, that together with a person's sacrifice are bound up all of his *kochos*, his talents, abilities and spiritual powers that are his alone to offer. The offering up of a *Korban* binds all these together and acts as a channel, allowing us to offer up these intangible offerings together with the tangible animal sacrifice!

Nachshon went first, to demonstrate that although he was the chief *Nosi* of the *shevet*, he did not hold himself to be so great that just because of his family inheritance or pedigree he was too important to sacrifice; rather, he considered himself to be an ordinary tribesman and was therefore willing to act expendably and commit an act of supreme, ultimate self-sacrifice when he plunged headfirst into the sea at *Kriyas Yam Suf*, as the Egyptians chased us following the Exodus. The *Medrashim* of *Chazal* (*Sota* 37a) teach us that this supreme act of self-sacrifice was the merit needed to split the sea.

The *Ohr HaChaim* sees this hinted at in his name. He cites the *Medrash Tanchuma* on pasuk 48 where *Chazal* learn that the names of the *Nesi'im* contain hints and *deroshos* to teach us about them, their history, ancestors and merits that allowed them to be the ones to offer *Korbonos* for *Chanukas HaMizbei'ach*. The *Ohr HaChaim* says that Nachshon *ben* Aminodov can be read as *Nachshol*, (the *nun* can be interchanged with a *lamed* because they are from the group of letters called dentals, pronounced by the teeth), the waves of the sea, hinting at his act of jumping into the waters. *Amiodov* hints at his *nedivus*, his willing act of self-sacrifice to give up his life for Am Yisrael.

The Voice of Hashem Spoke

“The voice spoke to Moshe” (7:9).

The *Ohr HaChaim* notes the strange conjugation of the verb *medaber*, whose tense seems to indicate that the voice itself was doing the talking. The *Ohr HaChaim* cites his previous comments to *Shemos* 20:1, where he explained that any spoken word that emerged from *Hashem* created a *Maloch* and this *Maloch* spoke to the prophet who was having a vision. This, explains the *Ohr HaChaim*, teaches us why the *Torah* constantly tells us that *Hashem* spoke to Moshe saying, *leimor*; why tell us over and over that *Hashem* told Moshe or any other *Novi leimor*? The answer is that according to this explanation, *Hashem* told, and this created a *Maloch*, and the *Maloch* spoke. That is what is meant by *leimor* – it is the *Maloch* created by *Hashem's amira* or *dibur* that says over *Hashem's* message to the *Novi*. This is why our *pasuk* says that the voice spoke to him; it means that *Hashem's* voice was doing the speaking, because it created a *Maloch* and that *Maloch* spoke. Therefore, this verb is correctly conjugated, for it was in fact the voice of *Hashem* [as a *Maloch*] itself that was doing the talking!



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 *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 אלה המגן מבעל הפלא יועץ על פְּרֶשֶׁת ויצא עמוד כ"ד]

הַרְיֵנִי מִדְּלִיק נֵר זֶה לְמִנוּחַת וְלַעֲלֹוֵי נְשָׁמַת אָבִי / אִמִּי מוֹרְתִי / הַצַּדִּיק _____
בְּ/בֵּית _____, יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלְקֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁתְּקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים
וּבְרְצוֹן כָּל מַעֲשֵׂה הַטּוֹב שֶׁאֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה, בֵּין בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה, בֵּין בְּדִבּוּר, בֵּין בְּמַעֲשֵׂה וַיְהִי הַכֹּל
לְזָכוֹת וְלְמִנוּחַת וְלַעֲלֹוֵי לְנִשְׁמוֹת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּבְפֶרֶט לְנַפְשׁ רּוּחַ וְנִשְׁמָה שֶׁל אָבִי / אִמִּי /

צדיק _____ יהי רצון שתהינה נפשותיהם צרות 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 ☜



YAHREZITS BEGINNING SHABBOS NASO

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

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

☞ 12th of Sivan ~ Begins Friday Night (Jun 14th)

- * **Rav Avrohom Weinberg**, Slonimer *Rebbe*, the *Bircas Avrohom*, (5741/1981);
- * **Rav Dovid Pardo** of Sarajevo, *mechaber* of *Chasdei Dovid* on the *Tosefta*, and *Maskil L'Dovid* on *Rashi*, (5552/1792);
- * **Rav Chaim Yisrael** of Pilov, son of Rav Dovid of Kotzk, (5665/1905);
- * **Rav Menachem Mendel** of Bar, one of the early great *talmidim* of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*. A short story about Rav Menachem Mendel of Bar: Once, while *davening*, Rav Menachem Mendel of Bar thought to himself, "How can I *daven* to *Hashem* when I am so full of *aveiros*?" He figured this was a holy thought until he pondered it for a while but realized that such thoughts never bother him while he's eating, only while *davening*, so it must not be a real holy thought. He immediately banished this thought from his mind, (5525/1765).

☞ 13th of Sivan ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Jun 15th)

- * **Rav Shraga Yair Rabinowitz** of Biala'varzig, son of Rav Nosson Dovid of Shidlovtza and *mechaber* of *Aron Eidus*, (5672/1912);
- * **Rav Efraim HaKohen Katz** of Vilna, the *Sha'ar Efraim*, (5438/1678);
- * **Rav Avrohom Yitzchoki**, *Tzaddik* in Yerushalayim, *mechaber* of *Zera Avrohom*, (5489/1729);
- * **Rav Chaim Yisrael Morgenstern** of Pilov *ben* Rav Dovid of Kotzk *ben* Rav Menachem Mendel of Kotzk. He wrote *Sha'alu Shelom Yerushalayim* and *Ma'aseh HaMenora*, which are included in *Sefer She'eris Yisrael*, (5665/1905);
- * **Rav Yaakov Meir** *ben* Rav Shlomo Betzalel Biderman (1869–1941). He married into the Gerrer Dynasty (as son-in-law of the *Sefas Emes*) and was very involved in *Agudas Yisrael*. He passed away in the Warsaw Ghetto, (5701/1941);
- * **Rav Yitzchok Isaac Weiss** of Spinka, the *Chakal Yitzchok* (1875–1944). Born to Rav Yosef Meir, the *Imrei Yosef*, who was the founder of the Spinka court and a *talmid* of Rav Yitzchok Isaac of Ziditchov. Rav Isaac'l succeeded his father as *Rebbe* when Rav Yosef Meir passed away, in 1909. He was also *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshiva Bais Yosef* (named after his

father). Rav Yitzchok Isaac was the leader of thousands of Spinka *Chassidim* throughout Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Romania. He, along with most of his followers, perished in the Holocaust, and the dynasty was rebuilt by his grandson, Rav Yaakov Yosef, (5704/1944);

- * **Rav Yaakov Mutzafi**, *Mekubol* and *Rav* of the *Sefardic Eida Chareidis* in Yerushalayim (1900–1983). The son of Rav Ezra and Mazal Mutzafi, Rav Yaakov was born in Baghdad into a distinguished rabbinical family. He acquired most of his *Torah* knowledge from his grandfather, Rav Moshe. He also learned in the *Bais Zilka Bais Medrash*, where his *chavrusa* was Rav Salman Chuji Abudi, who later became an important *Dayan*. Rav Yaakov married the daughter of Chacham Sasson Dangur, who appointed him *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Dorshei Torah*. After World War II, Rav Yaakov moved to *Eretz Yisrael* and served as the *Chazan* and *Maggid Shiur* in the *Shemesh Tzadka shul* for thirty years, (5743/1983);
- * **Rav Refoel Yona Tikochinsky** (or Tikotinsky), *Rosh Yeshiva* of Yerucham, (5749/1989).

✧ 14th of Sivan ~ Begins Sunday Night (Jun 16th)

- * **Rav Chaim** *ben* Rav Yitzchok of Volozhin, (1749–1821), born January 21, 1749, in Volozhin when it was a part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. He left there in 1821 (5581) while it was under the control of the Russian Empire. It is part of present-day Belarus. Rav Chaim was a *Rav*, *Talmudist* and ethicist. He was popularly known as “Reb Chaim Volozhiner” or simply as “Reb Chaim”. He was a *talmid muvhok* of the *Vilna Gaon*, and wrote *Nefesh HaChaim*, *Ruach Chaim* (a commentary on *Pirkei Avos*) and *Nishmas Chaim* (a collection of responsa). He also founded the *Volozhin Yeshiva* in 1803. In *Nefesh HaChaim*, he teaches about mind over matter and emphasizes the power of *Torah* study and fulfillment of *mitzvos* to bring a Jew close to *Hashem*. He also says it is an *inyan godol u’segula nifla* to erase and cancel “harsh judgements” if one implants in his heart that *Hashem* is the true G-d and אין עוד מלבדו (*Devorim* 4:35) – there is no power except for *Hashem*. If one does this, *Hashem* may help him through “natural” means or supernatural means, as the *Gemora* (*Taanis* 25a) teaches, when Rav Chanina *ben* Dosa’s daughter had no oil to light the *Shabbos* candles, but had vinegar, which miraculously stayed lit, to which he said, “the One who tells the oil to burn also told the vinegar to burn”, (5581/1821);
- * **Rav Moshe** *ben* Rav Pinchas Dovid *HaLevi* Horowitz, *Bostoner Rebbe* in New York, (5745/1985);
- * **Rav Chaim Dovid Amar**, *talmid* of the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh*;
- * **Rav Nissim Yagen**, (1940–1999) born in Yerushalayim to *Chacham Yaakov*, a regular at Rav Mordechai Sharabi’s *Bais Medrash*. Rav Nissim was the eldest son in a family of fourteen children. When he was twenty, he went to Lakewood to learn with Rav Aharon Kotler and Rav Shneur Kotler for four years. He also became close to the *Mashgiach* Rav Nosson Wachtfogel. He married a year later and continued his studies in several *kollelim*.



During this time, he regularly attended the *mussar shmuessen* of Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz and Rav Sholom Schwadron. His first appointment was as *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshivas Ohel Mo'ed*. His first step in reaching out to the secular community was to organize a religious community in Givat Ada near Chaifa on behalf of *Yeshiva Ohr Somayach*. He became the *Rav* of the community that numbered one hundred families. When he returned to Yerushalayim a few years later, he was appointed the *Mashgiach* in *Yeshiva Or Boruch* in Bayit Vegan. It was during the 1973 *Yom Kippur* War that Rav Nissim resolved to dedicate his life to helping Jews return to *Yiddishkeit*; shortly after the war, he founded *Arachim*. He may truly be considered among the founding fathers of the *teshuva* movement. In 1979, he founded *Kehillas Yaakov Kollel* on Yosef Ben Matisyohu Street for *ba'alei teshuva*, which he continued to run until the end of his life, (5759/1999);

- * **Rav Elozor Menachem Mendel Biderman**, the *Lelover Rebbe*, (5761/2001);
- * **Rav Yaakov Yisrael V'Yishurin Rubin** of Sasregen (1884–1944) *ben* Rav Boruch of Gorla, scion of Ropshitz. Murdered in Auschwitz. Wrote *hago'os* on *Shulchon Aruch*, (5704/1944).

✧ 15th of Sivan ~ Begins Monday Night (Jun 17th)

- * **Yehuda** *ben* Yaakov Avinu, founder of the tribe of Yehuda, for whom all Jews are so named. Born on the 15th of *Nissan* in Aram Naharayim, Iraq, in 1565 BCE, he was *niftar* at the age of one hundred and nineteen in Egypt in 1446 B.C.E. (2324). When Yehuda, the fourth son of Lea and Yaakov, was born, Lea said, “This time let me gratefully praise *Hashem*” (based on the Hebrew infinitive, *l'hodot*, “to praise”). This is because this fourth son meant that she was being given more than her share of sons. The *Medrash* teaches that both Lea and Rochel knew that each of Jacob’s four wives would share in bringing the twelve tribes into the world. By having a fourth son, Lea realized that she was being rewarded for her spiritual work.

Yehuda first demonstrated leadership when he suggested that his brothers sell Yosef to a caravan of Ishmaelites (rather than leave him in a pit to die). But the cover-up story that his brothers then told Yaakov (that Yosef was dead) so upset Yehuda that the *Torah* says, “And it was in that time, and Yehuda went down from his brothers...” (*Bereishis* 38:1)

Yehuda married a Canaanite woman and had three sons: Er, Onan and Shayla. When his first two sons unexpectedly died (having successively married Tamar), Yehuda promised Tamar that she would marry Shayla when he came of age. Later, when Tamar realized that Shayla would never be given to her, she dressed like a harlot and seduced Yehuda. He gave her his staff, cord and signet as collateral for payment. Tamar became pregnant, and when Yehuda found out, he demanded that she be burned for harlotry. When she displayed his collateral (proving the paternity), Yehuda publicly admitted his guilt. Tamar gave birth to twins, Peretz and Zerach. By acknowledging his responsibility, Yehuda finally became a true leader. This story teaches us about a law of reincarnation regarding men who die childless.

Years later, when the brothers needed to return to Egypt for food, it was Yehuda who convinced Yaakov to allow Binyomin to go, as Yosef had demanded. Yehuda offered Yaakov his solemn pledge that he would bring Binyomin home safely. And when Binyomin was framed with the crime of stealing the royal goblet, Yehuda stepped forward and offered himself up as a bondsman instead of Binyomin. The *Zohar* explains this meeting as a

unification of the spiritual world, as represented by Yosef, and the physical world, as represented by Yehuda, as the progenitor of Dovid *HaMelech* and eventually the *Moshiach*.

Before his passing, Yaakov gave each of his sons a blessing reflecting their personalities and their futures. To Yehuda, Yaakov said, “Yehuda, your brothers shall praise you... The scepter shall not depart from Yehuda...and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples...” While much of Yehuda’s blessing (not included due to length) is understood by the Sages to be an allusion to the time of *Moshiach*, Yaakov clearly conferred the role of leadership upon Yehuda and his descendants (the Davidic dynasty) – (*Medrash Tadshe*), (2324/1446 B.C.E.);

- * **Rav Yitzchok** of Posen, *Rebbe* of the *Mogen Avrohom* and *mechaber* of *Shailos U’teshuvos Be’er Yitzchok*, (5445/1685);
- * **Rav Yedidya Refoel Chai Abulafia**, *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshiva Bais Kel*, *Yeshiva* of *Mekubolim* in Yerushalayim, (5629/1869);
- * **Rav Sholom Shekalo**, *Tzaddik* of the Syrian community of Aram Soba, (5679/1919).

❖ 16th of Sivan ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Jun 18th)

- * **Rav Mordechai Menachem Mendel** *ben* Rav Yisrael Yitzchok Kalisch of Vorke, *talmid* of the Kotzker, (5628/1868);
- * **Rav Sholom Eliezer** *ben* Rav Chaim Halberstam of Ratzfort, *Hy”d*, son of the *Divrei Chaim*, murdered in Auschwitz, (5704/1944);
- * **Rav Gedalya Nadel**, son of Rav Reuven Heschel Nadel, born in the Lithuanian city of Shavel (1923–2004). When he was thirteen, his parents moved to *Eretz Yisrael*, and made their home in Balfouria, a small settlement in the Valley of Yizre’el. He became the *Chazon Ish*’s closest *talmid*. Though he never gained the prominence that some of the *Chazon Ish*’s other confidants assumed with the passing of the *Chazon Ish* in 1953, Rav Nadel did become the head of the *Vizhnitz Yeshiva*. Rav Chaim Kanievsky was Rav Gedalya’s *chavrusa*. At the advice of the *Chazon Ish*, when Rav Gedalya was still young, he began to study in the *Lomza Yeshiva* in Petach Tikva. He married the daughter of Rav Eliyohu Weiner, a *talmid* of the *Chofetz Chaim*, (5764/2004).
- * **Rav Sholom Frischman** of Satmar, *Hy”d*, *ben* Rav Yosef Arye Leibish of Tomashov, (5704/1944);
- * **Rav Boruch Yosef** *ben* Rav Yisrael Zak of Kureslov, *Kobriner Rebbe* of New York. He was the son-in-law of Rav Dovid Tzvi Rabinovich of Kobrin and a descendant of Rav Yechiel Mechel of Zlotchov. He wrote *Bircas Yosef* and many other *seforim*. He is interred in Mount Judah Cemetery in Queens, New York, (5709/1949);
- * **Rav Yeshua Heschel** *ben* Rav Moshe Dov Landau, *Hy”d*, *Vitka Rav*, (5704/1944).

❖ 17th of Sivan ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Jun 19th)

- * **Rav Tzvi Hirsh Broide**, *Rosh Yeshivas Kelm*. His wife was *Rebbetzin* Nechama Leba Broide, the daughter of the *Alter* of Kelm. He became very close to his *talmid*, Yechezkel Levenstein, the future *Mashgiach* of Mir and Ponevezh, (5673/1913);
- * **Rav Aharon** of Karlin, the *Bais Aharon* (1802–1872/5632), son of Rav Osher of Stolin. He was named for his illustrious grandfather, Rav Aharon *HaGodol* of Karlin, the first *Karliner Rebbe*, and thus he is also known as Rav Aharon II Perlow of Karlin. He was also known as the *Mlynover Rebbe* and the *Freilicher Rebbe* (the latter a term describing his happy

disposition). Later in life, he was forced to move to Stolin, several miles away from Karlin, and the dynasty has been known as Karlin-Stolin ever since. His insights were anthologized in the *sefer Bais Aharon*, (5632/1872);

- * **Rav Moshe Vorhand** of Makava (or Makó), Hungary, the *Ohel Moshe* (1862–1944). His descendants include Rav Zeev Vorhand, the “Prague Rav” from Manhattan, and the Lemberger boys, Rav Simon, Rav Mendel, Rav Efraim, Rav Avrom, Rav Shlomo and Rav Osher, all *Rabbonim* like their father, father-in-law, grandfather and great-grandfather, (5704/1944).

✧ 18th of Sivan ~ Begins Thursday Night (Jun 20th)

- * **Rav Avrohom HaKohen Rappaport Shrentzel**, *Rosh Yeshiva Chevron* (1584–1651). As a youth, he learned under Rav Meshulam Feivush, the *Rav* of Cracow. He married the daughter of Rav Mordechai Shrentzel of Lemberg and continued his studies under Rav Yehoshua Falk in that city. He founded a *Yeshiva* and taught there for forty-two years. He authored *Shailos U'reshuvos Eisson Ho'Ezrochi*, (5411/1651);
- * **Rav Yerucham HaLevi Levovitz**, legendary *Mashgiach* of the *Mirrer Yeshiva*. Jews first began to settle in the town of Mir early in the seventeenth century, but the town itself is mentioned in records for 1345. There were over eight hundred Jews in Mir by 1806. By the end of the nineteenth century, there were more than three thousand Jews in Mir (62 percent of the town population). The *Mir Yeshiva* was founded in 1815. During WWI, the *Mir Yeshiva*, headed by Rav Eliezer Yehuda Finkel, moved to Poltava in Ukraine and did not return until 1921. Rav Yerucham was born around the year 1874 in Luban, Belarus. In his teens, he went to learn in Slabodka, becoming one of the top *talmidim* of the *Alter*, Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel. In his early twenties, he attended Kelm, under Rav Simcha Zissel Ziv. After Rav Yerucham's marriage, he learned in seclusion for eight years, covering the entire *Shas*. Then he became the *Mashgiach* of the *Chofetz Chaim's* *Yeshiva* in Radin. He became *Mashgiach* at Mir in 1910, a position he kept for twenty-six years. Among his *talmidim* were Rav Shimon Schwab and Rav Dovid Povarsky, who later became *Rosh Yeshiva* of Ponevezh. His *shmuessen* were published posthumously by his *talmidim*, (5696/1936);
- * **Rav Yissochor Dov Ber** *ben* Rav Yitzchok, the *Saba Kadisha* of Radushitz (Radoszyce; Radoshitz), (1765–1843/5603). He was one of the legendary *Chassidische Rebbes* of his generation. Known as a great miracle worker, he was mainly a *talmid* of the *Chozeh* of Lublin and the *Yid HaKodosh*, Rav Yaakov Yitzchok of Peshis'cha, but also learned from the *Maggid* of Kozhnitz, *Apta Rav* and many others. He used to say, “I served one hundred and twenty *Ba'alei Ruach HaKodesh*. Many make the pilgrimage to his *kever* for the *Yahrzeit*, (5603/1843);
- * **Rav Yaakov Elimelech** and Rav Chaim Menachem Mendel Paneth of Dezsh, (5704/1944);
- * **Rav Moshe Mordechai Shteger**, *mechaber* of *Megged Shomayim*, a *peirush* on *Pri Megodim* on *Yoreh Dea*, (5704/1944);
- * **Rav Avrohom Yosef Pesachovitz**, *mechaber* of *Be'er Mayim*, (5713/1953);
- * **Rav Aharon Cohen** (1905–1961). Born in a small village near Kovno, Lithuania, his father, Rav Avrohom Mordechai *HaKohen*, was a *Rebbe* of small children, and his grandfather, Rav Yosef *HaKohen*, was known as the *Masmid* of Eishishok. When Germany conquered Lithuania, his family moved to Ukraine and Rav Aharon learned at Lomza. After the war, he returned to Kovna and learned at Slabodka. In 1925, he joined the first group of *talmidim* sent by the *Alter* of Slabodka to Chevron. The *Rosh Yeshiva* at Chevron, Rav Moshe

Mordechai Epstein, took him as a son-in-law. He served as *Rosh Mesivta* for thirty years. Childless themselves, he and his *Rebbetzin* raised several orphans. His monumental work was called *Bais Aharon*, (5721/1961);

- * **Rav Yisrael Zev Gustman**, *talmid* of Rav Shimon Shkop, was on the *Bais Din* of Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky at age nineteen. He opened the *Netzach Yisrael Yeshiva* in Rechavia, Yerushalayim, (5751/1991);
- * **Rav Moshe Leib Shapiro**, *mechaber* of *Taba'os HaChoshen*, (5732/1972).



❁ 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 Shraga Yair Rabinowitz of Biala'varzig, 13th of Sivan

Mechaber of Aron Eidus

Born in 5600 (1840), Rav Shraga Yair Rabinowitz was the son of Rav Nosson Dovid of Shidlovtza, who was the son of Rav Yerachmiel of Peshis'cha. From his earliest years he demonstrated special qualities. No one was surprised when Rav

Shraga later became *Rebbe*. Rav Shraga Yair married the daughter of Rav Yekusiel Shmelke, the son of Rav Moshe Leib of Sassov. Following the *petira* of his father on the 7th of *Marcheshvan* 5626/1865, Rav Shraga Yair was appointed *Rebbe* in

Shidlovtza and then in Biala'varzig. After a fire broke out in Biala'varzig destroying most of the city, Rav Shraga Yair moved to Radom and then back to Shidlovtza.

Rav Shraga Yair was *niftar* on the 13th of *Sivan* 5672/1912 at the age of seventy-two. He was succeeded by his only son, Rav Nosson Dovid. His daughter originally married Rav Chaim Elozor Schapira of Munkacs, but they divorced

because they did not have children. She remarried Rav Chaim Hager of Antiniya. Rav Shraga Yair had another son-in-law, his nephew, Rav Yosef Eliezer of Radom.

Rav Shraga Yair's *Divrei Torah* were published under the name *Aron Eidus*.

Zechuso yogen aleinu.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-13-sivanjune-11/
for more information.



Rav Chaim of Volozhin, 14th of Sivan

Author *Nefesh Hachaim* And *Ruach Chaim On Avos*

Born on the 8th of *Sivan* 5509/1749 (though there is another opinion that he was born on the 7th of *Sivan*), Rav Chaim of Volozhin (Belarus) was the son of Rav Yitzchok, a wealthy and pious Jew, and Rebbetzin Miriam, the daughter of Rav Yisrael Rappaport, *Rav* of Peisk.

Rav Chaim was apparently brilliant from early childhood. In his youth, he studied under the *Shaagas Arye* who was then *Rav* of Volozhin (Lithuania). Later, when the *Shaagas Arye* left the city, Rav Chaim learned under Rav Refoel Hamburger, who later became *Rav* of Hamburg (*mechaber* of *Veshov HaKohen*, among other *seforim*).

Rav Chaim's diligence and erudition were striking. By the age of twenty-two he had completed the study of *Shas*, including its commentaries. He eventually became a leading *talmid* of the *Vilna Gaon*, who greatly influenced his way of thinking and approach to *Torah* study.

In 5550 (1790), Rav Chaim became *Rav* of Wilkomi but refused to take a salary. Instead, he opened a factory that produced wool, thereby serving as *Rav shelo al menas lekabel pros*. Many merchants were displeased with the new *Rav*, especially those who dealt in wool. During *Shabbos davening*, a vicious person once asked Rav Chaim the time of the

molad. The *Rav* replied that he did not know, suggesting that he check in the *luach*. His reply led some arrogant townspeople to question: "What kind of *Rav* doesn't know the time of the *molad*?" Later on, he warned his *talmidim* that whoever served as a *Rav* must know when the *molad* would occur.

This attitude eventually drove him out of the city. Rav Chaim subsequently returned to Volozhin, serving as a *Dayan* there on a voluntary basis. Due to declining *Torah* study among the youth and the growing influence of the *Maskilim*, in 5563 (1803) Rav Chaim eventually founded the first *Yeshiva* in Volozhin, *Yeshivas Eitz Chaim* (the *Volozhiner Yeshiva*), which from its very outset became famous throughout the land – a place where thousands of men flocked to study *Torah*. The *Yeshiva* illuminated the *Torah* world, and from it emerged tremendously gifted *talmidim*, *Torah* giants who brought light to the world through their *Torah* and sanctity. This *Yeshiva* became the prototype for other subsequent *Yeshivos* in Eastern Europe established during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He fasted on the day the cornerstone was laid. According to his son, Rav Yitzchok of Volozhin, Rav Chaim cried so profusely for the future of the *Yeshiva* that "the hole for the *even hapina* (cornerstone) was "dug"

with [his] tears.

Rav Chaim set high standards for admission to his *Yeshiva*, insisting on extreme diligence. His *talmidim* numbered in the hundreds. The existence of the *Yeshiva* served to defy the various enlightenment movements that were threatening *kedushas Klal* Yisrael. Rav Chaim provided a measure of pure, *Torah*-minded guidance and leadership to *Klal* Yisrael. Though the *Yeshiva* suffered much persecution due to its refusal to offer secular studies, and was eventually closed down by the Russian authorities in 5652 (1892), it paved the way for dozens of subsequent *Yeshivos* that followed its *derech*.

(Adapted from the *hashkofa* portion of Rav Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusa Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 761, Killing Two Birds With One Stone –

www.torah.org.il/learning/ravfrand/5772/vayakhel.html for more information)



Rav Chaim's works include *Nefesh HaChaim* on *hashkofa* and *Ruach Chaim* on *Pirkei Avos*. His most important responsa are found in *Chut HaMeshulosh* and *Kedushas Yom Tov*. Rav Chaim was *niftar* on the 14th of *Sivan* 5581 (1821) at the age of seventy-two. His son, Rav "Itzele" Volozhiner, replaced him as head of the *Yeshiva* in Volozhin. Rav Itzele was succeeded by his two sons-in-law, Rav Eliezer Yitzchok Fried and Rav Naftoli Tzvi Yehuda Berlin, the *Netziv*.



The Berocha and the Amen of a Special Late-Night Visitor

I once heard the story that Rav Chaim Volozhiner was extremely *makpid* (meticulous or stringent) in his custom that he would not recite the *berocha* over drinks and food unless there was someone else

present to answer *Amen*. One night at a very late hour, Rav Chaim was up studying *Torah* when he was seized with a terrible thirst. Now he was in a quandary for there was no one up in his home to answer *Amen*. To awaken a member of his household at such a late hour was unthinkable and so Rav Chaim had just resigned himself to having to overcome the thirst and going to sleep, when unbelievably there was a knock on the door. One of the *talmidim* from the *Bais Medrash* had come to ask Rav Chaim a question regarding the *sugya* in the *masechta* of *Gemora* he was studying. As Rav Chaim listened to the question, he pondered the answer and happily took a drink, recited the *berocha* and heard the *bochur* answer *Amen*. Afterward, he answered the *talmid's* question and continued studying.

The next day, when he entered the *Bais Medrash*, he approached the *talmid* and expressed his wonder that he had been up so late and his admiration for his diligence in his studies, asking him if the answer he had given had indeed resolved his question. The *talmid* stared at his *Rebbe* in amazement and bewilderment and declared, "But *Rebbe*, I was asleep last night; it was not I who came and asked you those questions." The only question left for Rav Chaim was, then, who was that special "Heaven-sent" guest who had come just at the right time to answer *Amen*...?

www.zchusavos.blogspot.co.il/2007/05/reb-chaim-of-volozhin.html



The Kaddish

Rav Aharon Kotler told over the following story:

There was a man who donated large amounts of money every month to the *Yeshiva* of Volozhin. Rav Chaim, the *Rosh Yeshiva*, went to visit the man to thank him. The generous benefactor told him that he had no family and the only thing he

wanted in return was for someone to say *Kaddish* and learn *Mishnayos* for him when he left this world. Rav Chaim assured him that he would do that personally.

Several years later this man was *niftar*, and Rav Chaim attended the funeral, which was on a very hot summer day. After returning home, Rav Chaim, remembering his promise, immediately starting learning *Mishnayos* for the *neshoma* of this man. He was learning *Seder Toharos* and was having trouble understanding a *Mishna*. From his toiling to understand the *Mishna* and from the heat, Rav Chaim fell asleep. While asleep, the recently deceased benefactor came to him in a dream and thanked him for learning *Mishnayos* for him and proceeded to fully explain the *Mishna* that Rav Chaim could not figure out. After this incident, Rav Chaim said that he always knew that one who supported *Torah* would get to learn and understand *Torah* in *Olam Haba*, but he never realized how fast this happens. The funeral had been just hours ago and this man was explaining one of the most difficult *Mishnayos* to one of the greatest *Torah* scholars of the generation.

After Rav Aharon Kotler finished the story, a *talmid* asked Rav Aharon why he should not leave the *Yeshiva* and support many *Torah* scholars – after all, then he would know all that *Torah* in *Olam Haba*. Rav Aharon responded beautifully, “It is 100 percent true that you will know all that *Torah* in *Olam Haba*, but what kind of *Olam HaZeh* will you have without learning *Torah*?” (Similarly, Rav Elozor Shach was once speaking with one of the great supporters of *Torah*. Rav Shach said that he was really not sure which of them would get more reward in *Olam Haba*, but that he himself definitely had the better *Olam HaZeh*.)



Shas is Shas

In the time of Rav Chaim of

Volozhin, there was a *ba'al bayis* who had completed the entire *Shas*. Rav Chaim would stand up for him whenever he entered the room. The *talmidim* of Rav Chaim felt that it was an affront to his *kovod* to stand up for a *ba'al bayis*. They protested to Rav Chaim, saying that although the *ba'al bayis* did learn *Shas* and spent a lot of time learning, he did not know *Shas* in depth, so it was not appropriate for a great *Gaon* like himself to stand up for him.

Rav Chaim answered that there are two types of *Shas*: the Vilna *Shas*, which was a beautiful *Shas* with a quality print, and another *Shas* printed in Poland, which was of lesser quality with inferior print. Rav Chaim explained that if one had these two *Shasim*, he would not say the inferior *Shas* is not a *Shas*, he would merely say it was not as beautiful. Similarly, someone who knows *Shas* is someone who knows *Shas*, and therefore it is appropriate to treat him with the proper *kovod*.

www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/Rav-Chaim-Volozhin-Shas-Is-Shas/3540



The Smuggler's Coffin Was Perfect, but the Tears Were Too Late

Rav Chaim Volozhin tells a *moshol* about a group of smugglers pretending to carry a dead body in a coffin, in an attempt to smuggle goods across the border. For some reason, the border guard became suspicious and asked them to open the coffin in order to see the deceased person. When the coffin was opened and the goods were revealed, the smugglers began to cry, realizing the severe punishment awaiting them.

“Your crying is just a few moments too late,” said the border guard. “Had you cried or even shown a bit of sadness as you passed before me, I would never have suspected any foul play. Your lack of tears or remorse when carrying a dead body

made me suspicious enough to doubt the validity of the contents.”

Ashrei odom mefached tomid – “Fortunate is the person who is always afraid” (*Mishlei* 28:14). Rav Chaim Volozhin says that we must not be complacent about all our *aveiros* as life rolls along. We must be worried about the consequences and do *teshuva* before the moment of reckoning comes. The gates of tears are never closed. If we cry our tears beforehand we can avoid the punishment altogether.

www.revach.net/tefilah/mashal/Rav-Chaim-Volozhin-The-Smugglers-Coffin-Was-Perfect-But-The-Tears-Were-Too-Late/3859



The Shaagas Arye Gives a Berocha to Two Brothers in Volozhin

There was a wealthy Jew who lived in Volozhin named Rav Yitzchok, who was not only wealthy, but was a great *Talmid Chochom* and was stringent in *mitzvos*. He traveled often on lengthy trips for business, and when he returned he was always laden with expensive gifts for his family.

One time before Rav Yitzchok left on another trip, his wife requested that instead of bringing her a gift, he should buy a complete *Shas* for their home. In those days, a complete *Shas* was very expensive, but Rav Yitzchok decided to fulfill his wife's request, and bought a beautiful *Shas* on that trip.

When he returned, Rav Yitzchok and his wife decided to benefit the community with the *Shas*, by lending out the *masechtos* to the people of the city. Rav Yitzchok was busy with his business, so his wife took responsibility for lending out the *Shas*.

One day, the *Gaon*, Rav Arye Leib, *mechaber* of the *Shaagas Arye*, arrived in Volozhin. The *Gaon* heard that it was possible to borrow *Shas masechtos* in a certain home, and he immediately made his way to Rav Yitzchok's house. Rav

Yitzchok's wife was very excited that such a great *Gaon* was gracing her house. She told the *Shaagas Arye* that anytime he needed a *masechta*, she would send one of her servants to the *Gaon's* lodging place so he wouldn't have to exert himself to come to the house.

The *Shaagas Arye* stayed in Volozhin for an extended period of time, and whenever he needed a new *masechta*, Rav Yitzchok's wife would send it to him. Before Rav Arye left the city, he visited Rav Yitzchok's house, and blessed him and his wife. He said, “I bless you that you should be *zoche* to two sons who will light up the eyes of Yisrael with their *Torah*. One son will be *zoche* to teach the *Shas* to others, and the second son will be so well learned in the entire *Torah* that he won't need a *Shas* at all!

The *Tzaddik's berocha* was fulfilled in full, and Rav Yitzchok and his wife subsequently had two sons. One was the *Gaon*, Rav Chaim of Volozhin, who established a *Yeshiva* and was *zoche* to many *talmidim*, and the second son, Rav Zalman, knew the entire *Torah* by heart backward and forward. (*Vekorosa LeShabbos Oneg*)

www.revach.net/stories/story-corner/The-Shaagas-Aryeh-Gives-A-Bracha-To-Two-Brothers-In-Volozhin/3743



The Meshuloch's Expense Account

In *Parshas Vayakhel*, the *Torah* says that “*Hashem* has proclaimed by name Bezalel, son of Uri, son of Chur, of the tribe of Yehuda. He filled him with the ‘spirit of *Elokim*’, with wisdom, with understanding and with knowledge, and with every craft – to make artistic designs (*v'lach'shov machashovos*) to work with the gold, with the silver and with the copper...” [*Shemos* 35:30-32].

We will explain this last expression (*v'lachshov machashovos*) through a famous story told about Rav Chaim of

Volozhin, the preeminent *talmid* of the *Gaon* of Vilna and the founder and first head of the *Yeshiva* in Volozhin, Lithuania. The Volozhiner *Yeshiva* started in the early 1800s and was the first “modern day *Yeshiva*”, after which many other such schools were modeled.

In addition to being the “Granddaddy” of all *Yeshivos* in terms of its educational curriculum, the Volozhiner *Yeshiva* also founded many other practices associated with later *Yeshivos*, including the institution of *meshulochim* (hired fundraisers sent by an institution to distant communities to collect funds for the *Yeshiva*).

The Volozhiner *Yeshiva* had several such charity collectors who went around from city to city and from village to village in various locations in Eastern Europe. One of them came to the head of the *Yeshiva*, Rav Chaim, and told him that there were flaws in the system. In those days, the way a *meshuloch* traveled around was with a hired wagon driver, who provided the rough equivalent of a car service. The *meshuloch* complained that he was wasting his time and the *Yeshiva*'s time with the inefficiency of the setup. First, it was not easy to find wagon drivers, and then the wagon drivers had multiple stops with many passengers. He argued that if he were given his own horse and cart, he could save significant time and be much more effective for the *Yeshiva*. He further said that when he came into donors' homes shabbily dressed, he did not make a good impression. He suggested that if the *Yeshiva* could afford to provide him with a proper suit and coat, as a type of uniform to indicate he was representing a high-class institution, the results would be more impressive.

Rav Chaim Volozhin was sympathetic to the *meshuloch*'s arguments. He understood that “to make money you need to spend money” and he authorized the purchase of a horse and cart as well as a

dignified set of clothing for the *Yeshiva*'s designated fundraiser.

Rav Chaim had the practice of reviewing receipts from each city where he would send fund-raisers to collect. There was one Jew in a certain city who always used to give generously to the *Yeshiva*. He was not a wealthy man, but rather a simple villager who nonetheless gave a sizable donation each year, way beyond his means. Rav Chaim noticed that the next time this particular *meshuloch* went to this man's village, the man did not give anything at all to the *Yeshiva*. Rav Chaim inquired as to what happened. The *meshuloch* told him, “I don't know. I came into him like always and I expected a warm reception and a sizable donation as usual, but this time he gave a cold shoulder and no donation. I don't know why!”

Rav Chaim was perplexed. He told his *meshuloch*, “Let us both go together to see this fellow and ask him again for a donation.” They both went and knocked on his door. The fellow was blown away that the greatest *Rav* of the generation, the famous *talmid* of the *Gaon* of Vilna, was standing before him! He invited them in and after the initial niceties and refreshments, Rav Chaim got to the purpose of his visit. “What happened? All these years you gave us such a nice donation, and this year you cut us off completely?”

The simple Jew responded, “Every year when I sacrificed and gave my contribution, I thought to myself, ‘I am giving to the Volozhiner *Yeshiva* – the preeminent *Torah* institution in the entire region – so young men can sit and learn *Torah* and develop into great Jewish leaders.’ But when I saw your well-dressed *meshuloch* come with his own cart and his own horse I asked myself, ‘Is this what I'm giving my money for – for a horse and cart and finery?’ I wanted my money to go for the study of *Torah*, not for transportation costs and a uniform!”

Rav Chaim Volozhin told him, “I want to explain the matter to you by interpreting a *pasuk* in *Chumash*. After the *Torah* already told us: ‘And *Hashem* filled Bezalel with the spirit of *Elokim*’, what does the *Torah* mean to tell us when it adds the fact that he is one knows *lach’shov machashovos* [literally ‘to think thoughts’] to do with the gold, the silver and the copper?”

Rav Chaim explained that Bezalel was given a special form of *Ruach HaKodesh* [Divine Spirit]. There was gold used for the items in the *Mishkon* that were at the pinnacle of holiness – the *Aron*, the *Menora*, the *Shulchon*, and the *Mizbei’ach* (of incense). There was also money used in the *Mishkon* for things that were not as holy, for example, the boards and the curtains. Bezalel had the Divine Spirit to know that when a person gave money strictly for the sake of Heaven with a highly spiritual intent, that was money used for the holiest of the *kelim* (vessels). When a person gave money with ulterior motives, then Bezalel knew to earmark that money for the boards, the curtains, or the less “holy” utensils in the *Mishkon*.

“This is the interpretation of the *pasuk*: Bezalel looked into the precious metals that were given and he knew why they were given and therefore what to do with them. The same is true with donations to our *Yeshiva*. There are people who give money strictly so that the young men can learn *Torah*; they are not interested in any of the amenities or the bells and whistles. However, some people cannot focus in on the main purpose of a *Yeshiva*. If they see a physical dump or they see a representative of the *Yeshiva* who is poorly dressed without adequate means of transportation, they will be turned off by that. It is for the latter category of contributors that I had to

dress up my fund-raiser and give him his own horse and wagon. Rest assured, I know the holy intent with which your contribution is given. Your money goes only to support the *Torah* learning of our *talmidim*. It is the money of the other people who focus on material matters that is used to purchase the horse and carriage and wardrobe of my *meshuloch*.

www.torah.org/learning/ravfrand/5772/vayakhel.html



Giving Tzedoka Like a Goy

The *meshuloch* of the famed Volozhin *Yeshiva* came to a potential donor who was willing to give a donation. However, he refused to give it to the *meshuloch* and insisted on sending it directly to Rav Chaim Volozhin. Along with the donation he wrote to Rav Chaim that the money could only be used to benefit the *Yeshiva* and the *meshuloch* may not get a percentage of the money.

Rav Chaim read the letter and promptly sent the money back. He wrote to the donor that this is the way a goy gives *tzedoka*. The non-Jew only gives directly to his god, while a *Yid* is happy to let others benefit from his money.

We see this in *Parshas Emor*, wrote Rav Chaim. When the *Torah* discusses the *Korban* of a non-Jew (*Emor* 22:18) it says: *asher yakrivu lashem l’ola*. The non-Jew only donates an *ola* that goes purely to *Hashem*, but does not offer a *shelomim*, which the *Kohanim* eat from as well. (*Yagdil Torah*)

Zechuso yogen aleinu.

www.revach.net/tzedaka/lessons-in-tzedoka/Parshas-Emor-Rav-Chaim-of-Volozhin-Giving-Tzedoka-Like-A-Goy/5040

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-14-sivanjune-12/



Rav Yitzchok of Posen, 15th of Sivan

Mechaber of Shailos U'teshuvos Be'er Yitzchok

Rav Yitzchok of Posen was the son of Rav Avrohom and the son-in-law of the *Rosh Yosef*. He was the *talmid* of Rav Yona Teumim, the *Kikoyon D'Yona*. Initially, Rav Yitzchok served as *Rav* in Loitsk. He then moved to Vilna, replacing Rav Moshe, the *Chelkas Mechokek*. Later, Rav Yitzchok was appointed *Rav* in Posen, replacing Rav Sheftel Horowitz, the son of the *Shela HaKodosh*. In Posen, Rav Yitzchok founded his *Yeshiva* and answered many *shailos*, which were published as *Shailos U'teshuvos Be'er Yitzchok*.

Rav Yitzchok was seen as the *Posek HaDor* and held in high esteem by all of the *Gedolei HaDor*. However, he *paskened* with humility. His *Yeshiva* attracted hundreds of *bochurim*. The most famous

among them was Rav Avrohom Abali *HaLevi* Gombiner, the *Mogen Avrohom*, who quotes Rav Yitzchok numerous times in his work on *Shulchon Aruch*.

Rav Yitzchok served as the head of the *Va'ad Arba Arotzos*. In 5443 (1683), he agreed to the printing of *Maginei Zohov*, which answered the questions of the *Nekudos HaKesef* on the *Turei Zohov*.

Rav Yitzchok was *niftar* on the 15th of *Sivan* 5445 (1685). He was succeeded by Rav Yaakov of Posen, a *Talmid Chochom* and a *parnas*. Rav Yitzchok's son-in-law was Rav Fishel of Ladmor.

Zecher Tzaddik livrocha.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-15-sivanjune-13/ for more information.



Rav Sholom Eliezer ben Rav Chaim Halberstam, of Ratzfert, Hy"d 16th of Sivan

When Rav Sholom Eliezer'l was on the train to Auschwitz, his saintly father, the *Divrei Chaim*, appeared to him and offered to save him from the certain death that awaited. Rav Sholom Eliezer'l replied, "I'm ready to be killed *al Kiddush Hashem* together with my *kehilla*!" (They were on the same train).

When he entered the waiting room where they were forced to undress before they were shoved into the gas chambers, Rav Sholom Eliezer'l met a *Yid* he had known from his hometown who was in charge of collecting the clothes. When that *Yid* saw the *Rebbe*, he started to cry bitterly. When the *Rebbe* asked him why he was crying, he replied, "Doesn't the *Rebbe* know what happens in the other room?" The *Rebbe* told the *Yid*, "Of course I do. I'm ready to sanctify *Hashem*'s name, but still, why are you crying?"

So, the *Yid* answered, "*Rebbe*, today it's you – tomorrow it will be me." [People who manned the gas chambers were routinely killed fairly quickly, even though they were young and able to work, because the Nazis, *yimach shemom*, did not want anyone who knew too much of their 'secret' to live too long.]

Responded the *Rebbe*, "If you will allow me to take my *tzitzis* into the gas chambers, I guarantee that you will survive the war.

True to the *Tzaddik's berocha*, this fellow survived the war and related this story to Newsweek magazine on the fiftieth anniversary of WWII.



His Holy Neshama Handpicked from Heaven

As is well known, the *Divrei Chaim*

of Sanz was married three times during his life, and from his third wife he had three sons, Rav Aryeh Leibish, Rav Sholom Eliezer of Ratzfert and Rav Yitzchok Yeshaya of Teshechayuv. Rav Sholom Eliezer was a *ben zekunim*, and the other *tzaddikim* and *rebbe*s held him in very high esteem. The Klausenberger used to say that the *Divrei Chaim* himself said that he had seven sons who shined like the seven stars in the heavens, other times he said that they were like seven mirrors.

Rav Elazar Mendel Biderman of Lelov used to tell his son Reb Dovid'l to pay attention and keep an eye on the *Divrei Chaim*'s two younger sons (Rav Aryeh Leibish passed away at a young age in the *Divrei Chaim*'s lifetime) because it was well known that they were the *rebbe*'s youngest sons and were born with extra *kedusha* and sanctity and that they shined even greater than their older brothers.

When Rav Yissacher Dov of Belz once visited Ratzfert during *Chanuka*, Rav Sholom Eliezer inquired when the Belzer *Rav* was lighting candles for he wished to come and see and be present during the *mitzvah*. When the Belzer *Rav* entered and saw that the Ratzferter *Rav* had not yet arrived he waited for him, even when the Ratzferter failed to arrive after waiting a while still the Belzer *Rav* waited for him. When he noticed that the *Chassidim* were growing impatient and felt that it was a slight to the Belzer *Rav*'s honor to wait on another *Rebbe*, he ignored this and continued waiting. After more time passed the Belzer *Rav*'s *gabbai* came and urged the *Rebbe* to light already and that it would be okay to light the *Chanukah* candles even without the Ratzferter *Rav*'s presence. Hearing this the Belzer *Rav* answered:



“What should I do that he had a father who selected his son's *neshamah*?”

A similar statement was made by the Unsdorfer *Rav*, Rav Shmuel Rosenberg author of *Be'er Shmuel*. He once sent a letter to the Ratzferter asking him for a *beracha* through a *talmid*, Reb Yitzchok Frankel. Reb Frankel asked his *Rebbe* why he was asking him for a *beracha*, “I know the Ratzferter and he is a holy man who many seeks his *berachos*, but you *rebbe* are much elder why do you seek the *berachos* of a *jungerman*?” The Unsdorfer *Rav*'s face flushed with excitement and changed, he stood up and showed him overflowing bookcase to his *talmid* and asked him rhetorically: “You see this bookcase? Obviously, you know that I recognize and know each *sefer* in it and each *sefer*'s place so well that I can take it with my eyes closed? You must know that the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz was as much an expert in the realm of souls, the *olam* of holy *neshamos* when his sons were born, no less an expert than I am in my *seforim shank*, and if he himself selected these souls he knew that they were appropriate and fitting for this generation and now you ask me why I ask for the Ratzferter's *beracha*?!” (*Rabbeinu HaKadosh MeRatzfert*, pages 17-20)



The *Divrei Chaim* Supports Those Who Support His Son

When the Ratzferter once came to Nasoyd, a *chassid* from a village near Nasoyd once came to the Ratzferter for a *beracha* along with the throngs and multitudes seeking his *beracha* and advice from Nasoyd and all the environs. He waited patiently on line and by the time he came in and received a *beracha*, the hour was too late to go back home and so he spent the night in town.

His wife was expecting in her ninth month and was seized by intense labor pains. Seeing the late hour and that her

husband did not come home she felt that she was in trouble. She could not get out of bed and was alone and had no one to summon the midwife. In her pain, anguish and distress she cried herself to sleep. She dreamt and saw a vision of an elderly *tzaddik* who soothed her, comforted her and told her not to worry, “Your husband gave my son a nice sum of money today and asked him for his blessings. As a reward to your husband, I promise you that you will give birth without any danger nor difficulty and I will see to it that your child

is born healthy and he will lie beside you safe and sound when you awake.” And so it was, she awoke having miraculously delivered the child who was safe and sound asleep peacefully by her side. When her husband came in the morning and found her and his baby safe she told him the whole story and he understood how the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz had himself come to help deliver his baby safely and healing his wife as thanks for having supported his son, the Ratzferter Rav. (*Derech Tzaddikim*)



Rav Yeshua Heschel Landau, 16th of Sivan

Vitka Rav

Yichus and Derech HaLimud

Son of Rav Moshe Dov Landau, *Av Bais Din* of Veretzkiya, and grandson of Rav Shlomo Zalman, *Av Bais Din* Dobreh, the *Vitka Rav*, Rav Yeshua Heschel Landau, was related to the *Apta Rav* and also to Rav Yissochor Dov of Belz. His grandfather's mother was the *Apta Rav's* sister, Breindel, and Rav Yissochor Dov's father (Rav Yehoshua Roke'ach) was Rav Yitzchok Meir Zinkover's (the *Apta Rav's* son) son-in-law.

When the *Vitka Rav* visited Belz and greeted Rav Yissochor Dov after *davening*, the Belzer *Rebbe* invited him into his study before *Kiddush* to explain how they were related. When he entered, he found the Belzer *Rebbe* studying *Perek HaZohov* in *Masechta Bova Metzia* with the commentary of the *Shita Mekubetzes*. From this experience, the *Vitka Rav* taught his *talmidim* to “take advantage of your time and study *Gemora* and *Rishonim*, *Talmud* and the early commentators, rather than wasting your time studying *responsa* and *likkutim*.”

The *Vitka Rav* also chastised those who studied many *seforim*. Whereas in Oberland, Hungary, their *Rabbonim* often lived in wealth and had vast libraries while

they could not learn properly, in the Unterland, *Rabbonim* lived in abject poverty and had fewer books – but could learn them better. He claimed that the *Rav* of the *Hadass* was a *Talmid Chochom* because he was poor and only owned *Shas*, *Rambam*, *Tur* and *Shulchon Aruch* volumes. Thus, he was required to study these and review them over and over. This repetition led to his wisdom.



Family

The *Vitka Rav* only had one daughter. He and his wife, Esther Miriam (the daughter of Rav Shlomo Yehuda Weinberger of Bagdhad), did not have children for three years. The *Vitka Rav* asked the *Tomoshover Rebbe* (Rav Yeshua) for a blessing. Some report that the *Tomoshover Rebbe* said, “A daughter will one day walk among you,” whereas others report that he remarked, “He wants a child after three years? Eh, it took me seven till I had children.” Eventually, after seven years, his wife gave birth to their only daughter, Chaya Dreizel.



Rebbes

In his youth, the Vitka Rav traveled to the *Divrei Yechezkel* of Shinova. When the *Divrei Yechezkel* passed on, the Vitka Rav ardently followed his son, the *Divrei Simcha* of Tsheshinov. The Tsheshinover *Chassidim* were known to be very fiery *Ovdei Hashem*, and the Vitka Rav was no exception. After the Tsheshinover *Rebbe* [passed on?], the Vitka Rav followed the *Atzei Chaim* of Sighet.



Avoda

The Vitka Rav devotedly attended the *mikve*, often late at night. He was not deterred by the fact that he was required to travel six kilometers away, by the bloody and merciless beatings of the Germans or the sounds of wild dogs in the wilderness on the road. His *talmidim* accompanying him testified that he never spoke on these nightly excursions. However, his lips constantly moved as he silently reviewed his learning by heart. Once, one of his *talmidim* saved his life when the Vitka Rav failed to emerge from the frozen lake because he could not locate the hole in the ice through which to emerge!

The Vitka Rav afflicted himself, a little, slept on the *Bais Medrash* bench all week long and only in a bed on *Shabbos* and fasted for forty years from one *Shabbos* to the next. His *Rebbe*, the *Atzei Chaim*, joked that on *Shabbos* the only reason he slept in bed was that he could dream a nightmare and thus fast on *Shabbos* as well!

Eventually, on one of his nightly outings to the *mikve*, the Rav and *talmid* were spotted by a wealthy Jewish merchant from Niederhausz, Rav Shimon Nehemeti. Upon hearing that they did this nightly and that Vitka had no *mikve*, Rav Shimon managed to convince the Vitka Rav to move to Niederhausz. Rav Shimon supported him financially, allowing him to

open a *Yeshiva* and teach his *talmidim Torah*. Rav Shimon used to say that when he returned from a long trip buying and selling and was unable to sleep for guilt at the *bittul Torah* the trip had cost him, he reminded himself of the *Talmid Chochom*, “a lone soldier and guardian of *Torah*, the Vitka Rav, sitting in Niederhausz and his learning being supported by me – then I can lay my head down to sleep!”



The Vitka Rav's davening was fiery and loud, full of emotion and motion! He would spring up and jump as high as the ceiling, clapping his hands in passion. His reputedly took no notice of what he did, to the point where his loud banging on the shtender caused his hands to bleed. He was so moved during davening *Kabbolas Shabbos* that he swayed to and fro, banging his head against the wall till he bled. The *Av Bais Din* of Payeh once owned a *Berditchever Tefilla Yeshora Siddur* that sported bloodstained pages of the *Kabbolas Shabbos* service. He explained that the Vitka Rav had *davened* from this *siddur*, the blood from his head-banging dripping unheeded onto the *siddur's* pages.

As *Ba'al Koreh*, the Vitka Rav's voice thundered the *Kriyas HaTorah*. Rivulets of sweat poured down him from concentration and passion. The *gabbai* stood beside him with towels to constantly mop his brow lest the sweat drip onto the scrolls and wet the parchment and *possul* the *Sefer*, Heaven forbid.

During singing *Menucha Vesimcha* on *Shabbos*, the Vitka Rav would jump up over the table and begin to dance for over an hour or two. *Talmidim* would take it in turns to dance because they could not keep up with him or his superhuman strength and passion! They were awed by how

someone who was fasting could serve *Hashem* aflame for hours with the strength and vigor that much younger and fitter individuals lacked. (Editor: My mother lived across the street from the *Vitka Rav* and clearly remembers the *Vitka Rav* dancing with the *Torah* for hours on end on *Simchas Torah*, his feet barely touching the floor. It was as if the *Torah* carried him.)

Someone once entered the *Bais Medrash* and found the *Vitka Rav* lying prostrate on the floor, arms and legs outstretched in supplication and *tefillos*, crying bitterly. When he noticed that he was caught in the act he begged the individual not to tell [then maybe we shouldn't tell either?].

Sadly, when the cursed Nazis liquidated *Niederhausz*, they marched the *Vitka Rav*, *Rav Shimon* and all the Jews to the slaughterhouse of *Auschwitz*. Together with *Rav Sholom Eliezer'l* of *Ratzfurt*, his pure, holy soul was returned to its Maker. Incidentally, both knew that they were going to be a *Korban Oleh* for *Kiddush Hashem* and remarked that they were ready to meet their Maker, accepting *Hashem's* decree with *ahava*. May *Hashem* avenge their murder, and may the memory of the righteous stand for us a blessing.

[Editor: My family personally heard the *Satmar Rebbe*, *Rav Yoel*, bestow on the *Vitka Rav* the title of *Ish Kodosh V'tohor* (a holy and pure person).]



Rav Aharon Ben Osher Perlow of Karlin, 17th of Sivan

Mechaber of Bais Aharon

His Birth and Naming

After the passing of *Rav Shlomo* of *Karlin*, his *talmidim*, *Rav Mordechai* of *Lechovitch* and *Rav Osher* of *Stolin*, used to travel together to *Rav Boruch* of *Mezhibuzh*. One time, when they were together with *Rav Boruch*, he sent them home after a few days and on *Erev Rosh Chodesh Sivan* *Rav Osher's* wife gave birth to a baby boy. At the *bris*, *Rav Mordechai* of *Lechovitch* was honored with reciting the *berochos* and *kerias hashem* and he named the newborn baby *Moreh Moreinu HaRav Rav Aharon!* – Our Master, the *Rebbe Rav Aharon*, after his illustrious grandfather, *Rav Aharon HaGodol* of *Karlin*, *mechaber* of *Kah Echsof* and *talmid* of the *Maggid* and the *Ba'al Shem*. He then placed his hands on the baby's head and blessed him with a threefold *berocha*: “*Du zolst zich nisht naren, un G-tt nisht naren, un leiten nisht naren* – You should never fool anyone [you should be true to your name], not yourself, not G-d and not

others!” (*Me'orei Aish* p. 199–200)



A Neshoma From Simcha

Rav Osher used to relate that he and his wife traveled to many *Tzaddikim* to be blessed until they merited their one and only son, *Rav Aharon*, and testified that he drew *Rav Aharon's neshoma* from the root source on high of the *mitzva* of *Sukka* and the four species. It was well known that *Rav Aharon's kedusha* and *avoda* were all his life, and he was always full of *simcha* [as is known that *Sukkos* is *Zeman Simchoseinu*]. (*Me'orei Aish* p. 200)



A Letter to Heaven

A *yungerman*, a *Chassid* of *Rav Aharon*, used to travel from town to town earning his living as a merchant. Before his travels he used to come to *Rav Aharon* to receive his *berocha*. One time, he came in as usual and before he received his parting

berocha, Rav Aharon asked him what he had taken with him on his trip. Puzzled by the unusual question, he began listing all his personal effects: clothing, tools, luggage, food and the wares that he had sold. After listing a lengthy list of all his travel gear and clothing, Rav Aharon persisted and inquired further, “And what about *tachrichim* – funeral shrouds?”

Hearing this, the poor *yungerman* understood that the *Rebbe* was hinting to him about his imminent passing. He was dumbstruck with shock and fear and stood stock still, unable to utter a sound.

“Do not worry and do not fear. When you travel, you need to make sure to take with you whatever you will need for your upcoming journey,” explained the *Rebbe*.

Rav Aharon then took a pen and paper and wrote a letter, folded it, placed it in an envelope, addressed it and placed it in another blank envelope and sealed it, so that the address remained hidden. “Take this letter with you and ask that it be placed together with you on your final journey.”

The *yungerman* traveled and when he reached the town of Kriminchik, he fell deathly ill. There he was met by Rav Yitzchok, a fellow Karliner *Chassid*, who collected the *Maamados*, the monthly stipends the *Chassidim* donated for the upkeep of the *Rebbe*’s court and household. Rav Yitzchok, who later related this tale, heard of a fellow *Chassid* lying on his deathbed and went to visit the sick *yungerman*.

“How are you faring?” asked Rav Yitzchok.

“You see my state,” answered the sick merchant. “Soon I shall be gone.”

When the sick *yungerman* told Rav Yitzchok about the letter, Rav Yitzchok asked to see it. He removed it from the outer concealing envelope and saw that it was addressed to Rav Osher of Stolin, the *Rebbe*’s father, who had since passed away

and was in the *Olom HaEmes*. Rav Yitzchok was greatly distressed and realized that the meaning of this letter being given to the sick man before him to deliver to the *Rebbe*’s father in the *Olom HaEmes* could mean only one thing: the *Rebbe* knew that this *yungerman* would soon go on his final journey and be able to deliver the letter!

Rav Yitzchok declared, “Give me this letter to deliver for you, and I shall lie down and take your place!”

The sick *yungerman* argued and stood his ground. “If the *Rebbe* gave me this letter to deliver, then it is my job to see it through and no one else’s! Please stay with me and don’t leave me alone and make sure the *Chevra Kadisha* places the letter in my hand on my final journey!”

“I promise you this on two conditions: that you come back to me and relate your final journey and what occurred to you after leaving this world, and that you make sure to deliver the letter to whom it is addressed and give it over to no one else, no matter what!”

And so it was. Rav Yitzchok stayed with the sick *yungerman* until he breathed his last. The *Chevra Kadisha* prepared his body and as they buried him, they placed the letter in his hands. Again Rav Yitzchok repeated the warning as they buried the *yungerman*, “No matter what – deliver the letter only to the addressee and to no one else!”

After some time, the deceased appeared to Rav Yitzchok in a dream and related how he had felt no pain and was approached by an angel asking if he had a letter addressed to Rav Osher of Stolin. The *yungerman* replied that he did but he was obliged to deliver the letter to Rav Osher himself. “The angel took me further through several heavenly chambers and supernal realms and we were greeted by a new group of angels. Here the angel turned back and said he was not allowed further

and neither was I. These angels demanded that I hand them the letter and I refused, stating emphatically that I must deliver the letter to Rav Osher myself. They took me through several heavenly worlds, where again we stopped and were greeted by another new group of angels. This scenario repeated itself several times; each time the former angels said they could not continue and neither could I and the new angels commanded me to hand over the letter, but I stood my ground, remembering your warning and I said I would only deliver the letter to Rav Osher myself. Finally, we entered Rav Osher Stoliner's supernal chamber. More than this I am forbidden to reveal to you!" (*Me'orei Aish* p. 228–230)



How Rav Aharon Was Also Buried Alongside the Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh

On *Motzo'ei Shabbos, Parshas Behaalosecha*, in *Sivan 5632*, the *Chassid*

Rav Ze'ev Pinsker, who lived in the Old City of Jerusalem, and who had basked in Rav Aharon's presence before moving to *Eretz Yisrael*, slept and dreamed that the streets were filled with *Yidden*. The old city streets were overflowing with Jews accompanying a funeral bier. The *levaya* passed him and he joined the throngs of Jews accompanying the *niftar* on his final journey. They finally stopped on Har HaZeisim and there beside the *tziun* of the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh*, they buried the *niftar*.

After the *levaya*, Rav Ze'ev asked people who had passed away. They told him it was the *Rebbe* Rav Aharon of Karlin. Rav Ze'ev woke with a start, his heart beating madly, and in the morning, when he related his dream in *shul*, his fellow worshippers discounted it out of hand and refused to believe it – until the sad news reached them that on *Motzo'ei Shabbos* Rav Aharon had indeed left this world. (*Me'orei Aish* p. 292)



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)
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