

ME'OROS HA'TZADDIKIM

LIGHTS OF OUR RIGHTEOUS TZADDIKIM



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יעקב משה בן דבורה שירה
ואברהם יהודה בן שרה רבקה

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)

❖ **SHEMINI** ❖

❖ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ❖

The Nesivos Shalom cites the previous Slonimer Rebbe who explains that the reason that in most years Parshas Shemini and Tazriah-Metzorah fall out during Sefiras HaOmer and serve as a prelude to Shavous is because they deal with the laws of kosher food - what is permitted and forbidden to eat, as well as the laws of purity and negaim. These concepts prepare one for Kabbalas HaTorah on Shavous. This week's parsha culminates with the verse "VeHiskadishtem VeHayisem Kedoshim", sanctify yourselves and be holy. During Sefiras HaOmer, as we work on our midos to purify and sanctify ourselves, we learn about doing so even regarding things that are mutar - permitted things - such as food and laws of purity. Even in the permitted realms, a Jew must add sanctity to himself and be even more holy.

HOLY FOOD - SHABBOS GILUI MATZOS

The Yismach Yisrael cites the holy Koznitzer Maggid who says that the Shabbos after Pesach is called Gilui Matzos! Because this is the Shabbos that reveals what the matzos have done. Eating matzah - which the Zohar refers to as - Michlah DeAsvasa or Michla DiMehaymenusa, the bread of healing and the bread of emunah and faith, is supposed to ingrain, deep within us the fundamentals of Yiddishkeit. You are what you eat! Your body is made up of the building blocks of the nutrients from the food we ingest, digest and are built from. Eating matzah - the unleavened bread of healing and faith, is supposed to change our biological, chemical and spiritual makeup and inject us with a dose of health and faith - truly

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a bread of Asvasa - healing and MeHaymenusa - faith. Thus, after eating and living off matzah for a week, the first Shabbos afterwards, the matzos are revealed and all the potential work they have instilled in us is actualized and we can observe the wonderful results!

The Yismach Yisrael also uses this to explain our custom, the Shabbos after Pesach, of using keys to knead the challos, also known as Schlissel Challah. Keys allude to Yiras Shomayim - fear and awe of Heaven as Chazal teach (Gemara Shabbos 31): whoever has acquired Torah learning yet lacks fear and awe of Heaven, is compared to someone who seeks to enter the king's treasury but was only given the keys to unlock the inner gates and not to the outer gates. Yiras Shomayim is the key to the outer gate and one cannot access Torah if he doesn't possess the key of Yiras Shomayim.

From this Gemara we see that fear of Hashem is compared to keys. Thus, when we knead our challos with the keys, we are symbolically saying that we are instilling Yiras Shomayim in our bread and when we later eat the challos, this Yiras Shomayim will enter us, permeate our beings and essence with Yiras Shomayim just as the matzos did. This Shabbos, the actualized potential of Yiras Shomayim from our matzos will be instilled and revealed in us.

May Hashem help that it indeed permeates us and the lives of our families and loved ones and instills in us all Ahavaso VeYiraso - love and awe of Hashem and His Torah, Amen.



As the Shabbos after Pesach is known to be an auspicious time for Parnassa, here is a thought-provoking mashal on what our outlook and perspective should be on all the goodness that Hashem sends us.

"Know the G-d of your forefathers." (Divrei HaYamim I 28:9)

There was once someone who was stuck on the roof of a tall building and was desperately searching for a way that the passersby below would notice him. After waving and shouting and still not being noticed, he finally came up with an idea. He began to empty his pockets and threw down all his money. As bills and coins rained down from 'Heaven', he watched dejectedly and despondently as the passersby, one by one, picked up and pocketed the money - never wondering how it came to lie there.

Still, he fervently wished that someone would take notice of him. He therefore came up with a brilliant idea! He began to gather stones and clods of mud and dirt and began to hurl these 'missiles' downward. This worked all too well and sure enough the enraged passersby all cast their eyes heavenward, shaking their fists in fury at who it was that dared hurl rocks at them for no good reason! "All I wanted was for you to take some notice of me!" he yelled back. "If you would have looked up when I threw down the money, I would not have needed to try again with stones!"

Rav Elimelech Biderman explained this Mashal: Hashem wishes that we know Him and acknowledge Him. To this end, He sends us our parnassa and livelihood, daily raining down on us straight from Heaven. Unfortunately though, people take no notice! If they do not see Who is sustaining and feeding them, and they do not seek to know from where their Shefa and bounty comes from, then sometimes there needs to be a last resort of rocks and stones. Different forms of trouble and calamity may be needed to rouse and awaken people to

understand The Source of all the good that they received up until then. Obviously, Hashem would rather rain down upon us His gifts - so raise your eyes heavenward and acknowledge with thanksgivings the goodness of shefa and beracha He rains down upon us.



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 *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 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 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 ❁



YAHRTZEITS BEGINNING SHABBOS SHEMINI

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

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

* 24th of Nissan ~ Begins Friday Night (Apr 17th)

- * **Rav Moshe** of Premishel, *mechaber* of *Mateh Moshe*, (5366/1606);
- * **Rav Chaim Menachem Heschel** of Zhinkov (1837–1893). Succeeded his father, Rav Meshulam Zusia, and expanded the *Chassidus* throughout Russia, Ukraine and Serbia. Some of his *Divrei Torah* are found in the *sefer Shemuos Tovos*, (5653/1893);
- * **Rav Yosef Friedman** of Rimanov, (5673/1913);
- * **Rav Eliyohu Akiva Rabinowitz** of Poltava, (5677/1917);
- * **Rav Avrohom Yehoshua Heshel Weinberg**, the Slonimer *Rebbe* of Tel Aviv, (5738/1978);
- * **Rav Chaim Yitzchok Chaikin**, *Rosh Yeshiva* of Aix-les-Bains, (5755/1995).

* 25th of Nissan ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Apr 18th)

- * **Rav Chaim Halberstam** of Sanz, *mechaber* of *Divrei Chaim* (1793–1876 [some say he was born 1797]), founder of the Sanzer *Chassidim*, born in Tarnograd, Poland. At the age of eighteen, he was appointed *Rav* of the small town of Rudnik, where he became a close *talmid* of Rav Naftoli Tzvi of Ropshitz. In 1830, he became *Rav* of Sanz, where he stayed for forty-six years. He had fifteen children, including Rav Yechezkel of Shinov. His third son, Rav Meir Nosson, died of an epidemic at an early age; his son, Rav Shloime, became the first Bover *Rebbe*. Another scion of Sanz, Rav Yekusiel Yehuda Halberstam, the Klausenberger *Rav*, has erected several towns, *Yeshivos* and a modern medical center in Eretz Yisrael, as well as *Yeshivos* in New Jersey and New York. The Sanz *Chassidim* have a *yichus* document showing that they are descended via the *Maharal* of Prague from Rav Yosef I of Rome and back to Dovid *HaMelech* [10th of Nissan, according to others], (5636/1876);
- * **Rav Nachum Tzvi Goldberg**, (1922–2006). Born to Rav Kalman Avrohom Goldberg, *Rav* of Vasilkov, he moved with his family to America in 1926. As a *bochur*, he learned with Rav Shlomo Heiman for five years, then moved to Lakewood to learn with Rav Aharon Kotler for nine years (1943–1952). As a married man, he moved back to the East Side and taught at *Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yaakov Yosef* (RJJ) for over twenty years. After his father was *niftar* in 1968, he replaced him as *Rav* of *Adas Yisrael*. In 1973, he also became administrator of *Ezras Torah* and made out the checks for all the *yungeleit*, (5766/2006).

* 26th of Nissan ~ Begins Sunday Night (Apr 19th)

- * **Yehoshua bin Nun**. Buried in Timnas Serach in Har Efraim, (1354–1244 BCE);
- * **Rav Nachman Tulchiner** *ben* Rav Avrohom *HaLevi*, prominent *talmid* of Rav Nosson of Breslov, (5644/1884);
- * **Rav Ephraim** *ben* Rav Aharon Navon, the *Machaneh Ephraim* (1677–1735). Born in Andrinople to Rav Aharon, he married the daughter of Rav Yehuda Ergaz. He served as chief *Rav* of Constantinople, (5495/1735);
- * **Rav Moshe Teitelbaum**, the Satmar *Rebbe*. He succeeded his uncle, Rav Yoel. *Mechaber* of *Beirach Moshe*, he is buried in Kiryas Yoel, (5766/2006).

✧ 27th of Nissan ~ Begins Monday Night (Apr 20th)

- ✧ **Rav Arye Tzvi** ben Chanoch Fromer of Koziglov Hy"d, Rosh Yeshiva Chachmei Lublin, (5703/1943);
- ✧ **Rav Yeshayohu Osher Zelig Margulies**, a Yerushalmi *Mekubol*, *mechaber* of *Kumi V'roni*, (5729/1969);
- ✧ **Rav Yehuda Kahana**, the *Kuntres HaSefeikos*, (5579/1819);
- ✧ **Rav Levi Yitzchok Greenwald**, the *Tzelemer Rav*. He arrived in America in 1939, just before the onset of World War II, after his *Bais Medrash* was destroyed on Kristallnacht, and re-established his *Bais Medrash* in Williamsburg. He also established one of the first *Chassidische Yeshivos* in America, *Arugas HaBosem*, named after his father, the Chuster *Rav*, who was known as the *Arugas HaBosem*, (5740/1980);
- ✧ **Rav Sholom Moshe Ungar**, son of Rav Shmuel Dovid Ungar, a descendant of the *Abarbanel*, who was himself a descendant of Dovid *HaMelech* (1916–2003), born in Krumpach, Slovakia. In 1941, he married the daughter of Rav Simcha Greenberg, an ardent Munkatcher *Chassid*. Supported by his father-in-law, Rav Sholom Moshe learned *bechavrusa* with his brother-in-law, Rav Meir Greenberg, later to become the *Kezmarker Rav* of New York. Rav Sholom Moshe worked with another brother-in-law, Rav Michoel Ber Weissmandl, in rescue operations during the War. Deportations from Nitra began in *Elul* of 1944. The Nitra *Yeshiva* (of two hundred *bochurim*) was the last *Yeshiva* in Europe to remain open and was liquidated on the 17th of *Elul*. Hiding in the forest for the remainder of the War, Rav Sholom Moshe lost his father, his wife and his three children. In 1947, he was officially named *Rav* of Nitra. In 1948, the Nitra *kehilla* was established in Mount Kisco, Westchester County, New York, (5763/2003);
- ✧ **Rav Avigdor Miller** (1908–2001). Born in Baltimore, Rav Avigdor attended public school like all the other Jewish boys from religious homes, and studied *Torah* with his grandfather and other local *Rabbonim*. At the age of fourteen, he left to study at *Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yitzchok Elchonon*, which at the time was the only Jewish high school offering high-level Jewish studies in the United States. It was there that he met future leaders of U.S. Jewry, such as Rav Nosson Wachtfogel, Rav Yehuda Davis and Rav Mordechai Gifter. They met secretly in Rav Miller's dormitory room to hear a *shiur* in *Mesillas Yeshorim* by Rav Yaakov Yosef Herman. In 1932, he followed Rav Aizik Sher to Slobodka, where he spent six years learning. In 1935 he married his life partner for sixty-four years, Ethel Lessin. The first rabbinical position which Rav Avigdor accepted was in Chelsea, Massachusetts. In 1945, Rav Miller was offered a job as *Mashgiach* of *Chaim Berlin* by Rav Hutner, a position he kept for nineteen years. He was then invited by Young Israel of Rugby to be their unofficial *Rav*. The *shul* was located at East 49th Street in the East Flatbush section of Brooklyn, and his position became official in 1946–47. He began writing his first book, *Rejoice O Youth*, in 1963. In 1964, when *Yeshivas Chaim Berlin* moved to Far Rockaway, Rav Miller decided to resign and devote himself full-time to his congregation and his writing. He finished writing the book in 1965, (5761/2001).

✧ 28th of Nissan ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Apr 21st)

- ✧ **Rav Moshe Halberstam** (1932–2006). Born in the town of Tshakawe, Galicia, to Rav Yaakov Halberstam, he was a great-great-great-grandson of the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz. As a youth, he studied at *Yeshiva Bais Avrohom Slonim* under the *Nesivos Sholom* of Slonim. His *Rebbe Muvhok* was Rav Shmuel Wosner. He delivered *shiurim* for decades in a *kollel* for

halocha that he headed and was a member of the *Eida Chareidis Bais Din*, and *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshivas Tshakawe*. In 1997, he was appointed a member of the *Badatz*. He published a collection of responsa called *Divrei Moshe*, founded the *Vaad HaRabbonim LeInyonei Tzedoka* and was the head of the *tzedoka Chibas Yerushalayim Kupas Rebbe Meir Ba'al HaNes*. His son-in-law, Rav Mattisyohu Deitch, founded the *Yad Rama* Institute under the guidance of the greatest *halachic* authorities of today, which deals with solutions for problems in *halocha* and medicine, (5766/2006):

- * **Rav Shabsai Sheftl Horowitz II**, (1590–1660). The son of the *Shela HaKodosh*, Rav Shabsai studied under his father and under Rav Shlomo Ephraim Lunshitz. After his father left for *Eretz Yisrael*, he became *Dayan* of Prague. He then became *Rav* of Fuerth, then Frankfurt am Main and then Posen, where he founded a *Yeshiva*. In 1654, he was appointed *Rav* of Vienna. In 1649, he published his father's work, *Shnei Luchos HaBris*, along with his own extensive introduction, *Vavei HaAmudim*, (5420/1660);
- * **Rav Yichye ben Yosef Tzalach**, the *Maharitz*, founder of the Baladi community of Yemen (1713–1805). He is described as “without question...the greatest *Rav* and exponent of Jewish law ever to have been produced by Yemen”. By 1795, he was serving on the *Bais Din* of Sanaa, (5565/1805);
- * **Rav Yehoshua** of Ostrova, son of Rav Shlomo Leib of Lentcha, and *mechaber* of *Toldos Odom* (1819–1873). He was a *talmid* of Rav Moshe of Kobrin (whose *yahrzeit* is tomorrow), (5633/1873);
- * **Rav Yosef Yozke** (or Yuzpe) Rosenberg of Zalkava, *mechaber* of *Yad Yosef* (on the first three *perokim* of *Bova Metzia*) and *Revid HaZohov*, (5665/1905);
- * **Rav Yehoshua Pinchas Bombach** of Ushpetzin (or Oswiecim) [note: according to a frequently told story of the brothers, Rebbe Reb Elimelech and Rebbe Reb Zusha, this city would later be called Auschwitz, (5681/1921);
- * **Rav Yissochor Leib Weinberg** of Slonim, (5688/1928);
- * **Rav Arye Shapira**, *Rosh Yeshiva Volozhin* [also known as Valozhyn, Volozhy'n, Wolozyn, Volozine, and Wolozine; note: perhaps this is a typo, and is instead referring to Rav Rephael Shapira, the son-in-law of the *Netziv*, who succeeded him until 1881; or possibly Rav Yaakov Shapira (*niftar* 1936);
- * **Rav Shem Klingberg ben Rav Avrohom Mordechai**, the *Zaloshytzer Rebbe* of Cracow, from the Komarna dynasty. Killed in a concentration camp. One of the greatest *Mekubolim* of his time, he wrote *sefer Oholei Shem*, (5703/1943);
- * **Rav Aharon HaKohen Rosenfeld**, the Pinsk-Karlin *Rebbe* (1927–2001). For many years, he served as a *Maggid Shiur* in the *Eitz Chaim Yeshiva*, and then in the *Belz Yeshiva* in *Eretz Yisrael* and Belgium. When he was only thirty his wife was *niftar*, leaving him with five small children. He later married the widow of Rav Chaim Halberstam, who raised the orphans and brought them to marriage. On *Pesach* 1991, on the *Yahrzeit* of his grandfather, Rav Aharon of Karlin, he was appointed *Admor* of Pinsk-Karlin, (5761/2001).

* **29th of Nissan ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Apr 22nd)**

- * **Rav Moshe Pallier** of Kobrin (1784–1858). A close follower of Rav Mordechai of Lechovitch and his son, Rav Noach, he became the first *Rebbe* of the Kobrin dynasty in 1833. His teachings are collected in *Imros Taharos*, (5618/1858);
- * **Rav Mordechai Sholom Yosef Friedman**, *Sadigerer Rebbe*, the *K'nesses Mordechai* (1897–1979), the son of Rav Aharon of Sadiger, and grandson of the second Sadigerer

Rebbe, Rav Yisrael, (5739/1979).

✱ **30th of Nissan ~ Begins Thursday Night (Apr 23rd)**

- ✱ **Rabbeinu Yosef HaLevi ibn Migash** (*Rimigash*), *talmid* of the *Rif* (1077–1141). As head of the famous academy of Lucena, Spain, Rav Yosef taught numerous *talmidim*, including Rav Maimon, father of *Rambam*. *Rambam*'s praise of Rav Yosef is uncharacteristically effusive. "The depth and scope of his wisdom astound all who study his words," said the *Rambam*. Having absorbed Rav Yosef's teachings from his father, *Rambam* refers to Rav Yosef as "my teacher", (4901/1141);
- ✱ **Rav Chaim Vital** (1543–1620), sometimes referred to as Rav Chaim Vital Calabrese, since his family was from Calabria, Italy. He was born in Tzefas, two years after his family moved there from Italy. Rav Chaim's father, Rav Yosef, was famed as an expert scribe whose *tefillin* were much sought after, having been written in holiness and purity, and with special kabbalistic intentions. At age fourteen, Rav Chaim studied the revealed aspects of *Torah* under Rav Moshe Alshich, one of the foremost *Rabbonim* in Tzefas, then studied *Kabbola* under the leading kabbalistic luminary in the world at that time, Rav Moshe Cordovero (*Ramak*). In the year 5330 (1570), Rav Yitzchok Luria (the *Ari*) came to Tzefas from Egypt. After the passing of his teacher, Rav Moshe Cordovero, Rav Chaim became attached to the *Ari*, quickly becoming his chief *talmid*. He describes his initiation into the *Ari*'s new approach to *Kabbola* as follows: "When I [first] came to my teacher of saintly memory [the *Ari*] to study this wisdom under him, he was about to leave for Teverya. He took me with him. We boarded a boat, and as we were sailing [across the Kinneret] at a point opposite the arches of the Old Shul of Teverya, my teacher dipped a cup into the water and gave it to me to drink. He told me that now I would be able to grasp this wisdom [the teachings of *Kabbola*] for I had just drunk water from the well of Miriam [which is buried in the Kinneret]. From that time on I began to enter the depth of this wisdom." Within a year of his initiation into the *Ari*'s teachings, Rav Chaim had become famous throughout *Eretz Yisrael* and the Diaspora as one of the great *Mekubolim*. When the *Ari* was *niftar* in 5332 (1572), a mere two years after Rav Chaim had begun studying with him, Rav Chaim was almost universally regarded as his successor. He began teaching the kabbalistic insights he had received from his master to his many *talmidim* and thus he became the revered leader of a significant group of *Mekubolim*. He also gained a reputation as a miracle worker, a healer and a master of practical *Kabbola*. He was able to discern the nature and history of the souls of men. In 5347 (1587), Rav Chaim was appointed a leading judge in the rabbinical courts in Yerushalayim. He remained in Yerushalayim for several years and then returned to Tzefas. He moved to Damascus in 5354 (1594) where he passed away in 5380 (1620) at the age of seventy-seven. He wrote *Eitz Chaim*, *Sha'arei Hakanos*, and *Sha'arei Kedusha* (a guide to achieving *Ruach HaKodesh* and *Nevua*), and edited and organized all existing manuscripts of the words of the *Arizal*, today known as *Kisvei Arizal*, (5380/1620);
- ✱ **Rav Avrohom Broide** of Frankfurt, (5477/1717);
- ✱ **Rav Nesanel Weil**, *Av Bais Din* of Karlsruhe and *mechaber* of *Korban Nesanel*. On October 17, 1750, he was elected to be *Oberland-Rabbiner* for both Markgrafschaften of Baden-Durlach and Baden-Baden, as well as all the Unterlande. His son, Rav Yedidya Taya Weil, is the *mechaber* of the *Haggoda Marbeh Lesaper*, (5529/1769);
- ✱ **Rav Yaakov Emden** (1698–1776), known as *Yaavetz* (*Yaakov ben Tzvi*), son of the *Chacham Tzvi*. Settled in Altuna in 1733. He was involved in a famous controversy over an

amulet (*kameya*) written by Rav Yehonoson Eibeshutz, Rav Yaakov claiming that the amulet demonstrated an acceptance of *Shabsai Tzvi*, (5536/1776);

- * **Rav Chaim Meir Yechiel** of Drohbitch, (5684/1924);
- * **Rav Moshe Hershler**, editor of *Talmudic Encyclopedia* and publisher of many *Sifrei Rishonim*, (5751/1991);
- * **Rav Yaakov Berav**, (5306/1546).



❧ HILLULA DE'TZADDIKA ❧

WHAT'S BEHIND YAHRZEIT MEANINGS & CUSTOMS

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

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

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



❧ GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM ❧

STORIES & ANECDOTES

Rav Chaim ben Arye Leibush Halberstam of Sanz, 25th of Nissan

Mechaber of Divrei Chaim

Rav Mordechai of Slonim used to tell the following stories about the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz:

Our Tzaddikim Comfort Us

The *Chassidim* in Sanz were once sitting around the table telling *sippurei Tzaddikim* when the *Divrei Chaim* himself

entered and said to them, “There is a bird named the *Re'em*, whose feet are covered in hideous boils and this embarrasses him so much that he hates his life and feels like he wants to end it by killing himself. But the Creator gave him a gift – he has wondrous, beautiful plumage that covers the entire top half of his body. When he sees his own

dazzling feathers he is comforted and filled with *simcha*. So it is with the body of Klal Yisrael. When we look at ourselves and see our despicable lowliness and how unworthy we are, we are filled with sadness and despair. But when we see the holy *Tzaddikim* and *Gedolim*, we comfort ourselves and are filled with joy.”



Free Bird

A different time, the *Chassidim* in Sanz sat and discussed *Chassidus* well into the night past *chatzos*. The *Divrei Chaim* himself entered and remarked, “When hunters capture a bird and place her in a cage, she approaches the bars of her cage and comes to the locked door. She pecks at it again and again, coming back over and over. Even though all her previous efforts were in vain, she doesn’t give up and tries again and again...maybe this time she will be successful. So too regarding *Chassidim* – they try all manner of tricks and strategies to overcome the *yetzer hora* and free themselves from his bondage. They never give up. Even when it feels like they tried previously and were unsuccessful, they try over and over until they escape his clutches and run free from darkness into light.”



Are You Holier Than a Neshoma?

The Sanzer *Rav*, the *Divrei Chaim*, once asked a guest who had come to spend an uplifting spiritual *Shabbos* in Sanz, where he was staying and what he was eating. “Is that what I came to Sanz for?” retorted the *Chassid* incredulously, “to sleep, eat and drink?!”

The *Divrei Chaim* replied, “Are you any better than the *neshoma*? Do you think you are somehow greater than your soul? The soul comes down to this world with only one purpose: to serve her Creator. Still, if she is not provided with food, drink

and sleep as she needs to live, she will depart her body and go!” (*Maamar Mordechai Slonim* #4–6)



How Can They Sleep at Night?!

The *Divrei Chaim* was renowned for his charity. He not only gave away thousands for *tzedoka*; he could not sleep when money was left over in his home.

When he first heard about safes that people kept at home to guard their wealth and money from thieves, he queried his family asking them, “Can’t the thieves steal the keys to the safe?”

His family explained that people slept with the keys under their pillows. Incredulously, the *Divrei Chaim* cried out, “How can a person sleep at night if he hasn’t already given out all his money for *tzedoka*?!” (*Haggoda Darchei Chaim Sanz*)



What If She Had Been Your Wife?

The Sanzer *Rav*’s *gabbai*, Moshe Yehoshua, stood at the *Rav*’s doorway looking in with wonder and astonishment; since when did the *Divrei Chaim* sit and study without his housecoat?! “Where is the *Rav*’s *chalatel*?” asked the *gabbai*. The *Divrei Chaim* patiently explained how a poor widow had just been to ask for a donation. “What should I have done?” the *Divrei Chaim* excused himself to the irate *gabbai*. “I had no money left, so I gave her my *chalatel* to pawn for some money.”

“But *Rebbe*,” persisted the *gabbai*, “why did you have to give your own *chalatel* off your back?”

“You wouldn’t ask me that question,” leveled the *Divrei Chaim* sternly, “If that poor widow had been your wife!” (*Ner Yehoshua* page 281–282)



He Can Always Say He is the Sanzer Rav's Son!

When the time came for the *Divrei Chaim's* son, Rav Boruch of Gorlitz, to marry off one of his daughters, he approached his father, the Sanzer Rav, and asked him for money, to which the Sanzer Rav replied, "At this time I have none."

A few days passed and some wealthy Jews came to visit the *Divrei Chaim* and left him a sizeable donation. Rav Boruch was overjoyed; surely now, when he had asked his father for help, he would get the much-needed funds for his daughter's upcoming wedding. But alas, that was not to be. As soon as the wealthy Jews left, the Sanzer Rav sent for a local pauper, and he gave all the money he had just acquired to the poor Jew, so that he could marry off his daughters.

When Rav Boruch came in to see his father and requested money for his daughter's chasuna, the *Divrei Chaim* explained, "I have already donated all the money to that poor Jew to marry off his daughters."

Hearing this reply, Rav Boruch burst into bitter tears of disappointment and cried, "Why am I any worse than him? Don't I also need money to marry off my daughter?!"

The holy Sanzer Rav explained how he saw matters differently. "You are my son. You can go anywhere, travel to any town or city and people will recognize you and give you money to help you marry off your daughter just because you are the son of the Sanzer Rav. However, this poor Jew has no one. If I don't give this pauper money, who will?" (*Eser Tzachtzachs* Chapter 9 #22)



Who Needs Seforim?

A pauper once approached the *Divrei Chaim* complaining that he had to marry off his daughter but lacked the

necessary funds. The *Divrei Chaim* did not hesitate and replied, "Look, I have no cash left, but I have a house full of *seforim*. Surely you can sell or pawn them for the funds you need? I have no real need of *seforim* when I can learn in the *Bais Medrash*."

The pauper did not need to be told twice and did not wait for the Sanzer Rav to change his mind. He quickly ordered a wagon and loaded the *Divrei Chaim's* entire library of *seforim* onto it. He drove the cartload of *seforim* into town, sold them all for a hefty sum and married off his daughter. The Sanzer Rav from then on simply went to the *Bais Medrash* to learn. "Who needs *seforim* when there are plenty in the *Bais Medrash*?" he explained to his astounded *gabbai* and family. (*Haggoda Darchei Chaim Sanz*)



Sukka Decorations

The Bobover Rav once told how on *Erev Sukkos* the *Divrei Chaim* told them all how there is an extra special *mitzva* of *tzedoka* on *Erev Sukkos* and that this is the most beautiful decoration a *sukka* can have, because the *Ushpizin* (heavenly guest) of the first night is none other than Avrohom *Avinu*, whose attribute is *chessed*. We therefore give extra *tzedoka* to merit to have Avrohom, the pillar of *chessed*, as a guest in our *sukka*.

That *Erev Sukkos*, continued the Bobover in his story, the *Divrei Chaim* had already given away all his money. However, the Sanzer Rav felt as if he had not yet properly fulfilled the *mitzva* of *tzedoka* to its true extent. What did he do? He noticed all the *esrog* merchants packing up and heading home. The Sanzer Rav went and begged them to lend him their money. "Surely you have money from selling *esrogim* – lend me some for *Noy Sukka* – for decorations to light up my *sukka*!" And they did, and the Sanzer Rav immediately began to purchase the most exquisite *sukka*

decorations he could think of –distributing all that money to the poor for *tzedoka!*

(*Zemiros LaAter Pesora* p. 154 cited in *Ner Yehoshua* page 265)



Rav Arye Tzvi Ben Chanoch Fromer of Koziglov Hy”d, 27th of Nissan

Rosh Yeshiva Chachmei Lublin

On the Same Level?

The Koziglover *Rav* reprinted Rav Arye Leib Tzintz’s *sefer Shiurei Kometz HaMincha* together with his own marginal glosses and commentary. After the *sefer* was again well known and available, a *yungerman* approached the Koziglover *Rav*, and asked him to *daven* and give a *berocha* for his sick daughter to have a *refua sheleima*. His daughter was very ill, the doctors had despaired of a cure and said that her life was in danger. Quickly he rushed to the *Rav* and begged him to save his daughter’s life!

When the Koziglover *Rav* heard this request he responded, “How can I help? Can I change *Hashem*’s mind? And if you just want me to recite some *Tehillim*, well, that you too can do. Why are my *Tehillim* any better than yours?!”

The *yungerman*, however, disagreed, persisting and arguing, “When Rav Leibush *Charif* (a nickname for the *Maharal Tzintz*, whose *sefer* we just mentioned above the Koziglover *Rav* had reprinted) just said the words, ‘May *Hashem* help – *Hashem ya’azor*,’ that was enough for a *yeshua* and a miracle to occur!”

“How can you compare me,” argued the Koziglover *Rav*, “to Rav Leibush *Charif*? What kind of comparison is there even – are we on the same level?”

Again, the *yungerman* remained undeterred and argued back, “Why then did you place yourself on the same page as him (referring to the aforementioned glosses and commentary that the Koziglover *Rav* had published on the *Maharal Tzintz*’s *sefer*)?”

No further arguments back helped and finally he gave in and responded, “Okay, you win!”

His face changed and took on an ethereal expression. He turned to the *yungerman* and said those very words: “*Hashem ya’azor* – *Hashem* will help,” and He did. The deathly ill girl recovered completely in a miraculous manner. (*Marbitzei Torah Me’olam HaChassidus* Vol. 6 p. 53)



Rosh Yeshiva Chachmei Lublin

Rav Arye Tzvi Fromer, the Koziglover *Rav*, was first asked by Rav Meir Shapiro to take over the position as *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Chachmei Lublin* even during Rav Shapiro’s lifetime and that he would step down, but the Koziglover *Rav* refused. He was too close to his *talmidim* and simply did not want to leave them and his friends behind. Yet when Rav Meir Shapiro passed away at the young age of forty-six and the *hanhola* asked the Koziglover *Rav* once again to accept the position of *Rosh Yeshiva*, he saw it as his duty and could not refuse. One of his *talmidim* described *Shabbos* in the *Yeshiva* when the Koziglover *Rav* *davened mincha* before *Shabbos*, crying and sobbing tears like a river. After a fiery *Kabbolas Shabbos*, he began to publicly recite the portion of *Zohar* printed in the Friday night *zemiros* and explain it out loud, his only public *shiur* in *Zohar*, and this lasted sometimes for so long, sometimes for hours, that those *Talmidim* who had already gone to sleep were often woken up with a start to hear his loud voice booming as he recited *Kiddush*

so late at night before dawn broke! Regarding his *davening* on *Shabbos* day, they would say, whoever never heard the Koziglover *Rav* say *Nishmas* (which lasted over half an hour alone, as he enunciated

each word lovingly) never tasted the true taste of *tefilla* in his entire life! (*Marbitzei Torah Me'olam HaChassidus* Vol. 6 p. 54–55, p. 59)



Rav Moshe Ben Yisrael of Kobrin, 27th of Nissan

Lovesick for Chassidus

When Rav Moshe Kobriner first joined the *Derech HaChassidus* he yearned to travel to Rav Mordechai of Lechovitch, but his father-in-law was a strong *Misnagged* and staunchly forbade his son-in-law to go. This went on until Rav Moshe's yearnings and pangs were so strong that he became sick, so sick that they brought in a physician to diagnose his illness. The doctor declared that he was lovesick – his passionate desire and yearning for something was so strong that it was making him physically ill.

His father-in-law realized that it was Rav Moshe's yearnings for the Lechovitcher that was the root of this sickness and so he finally relented and agreed to allow him to travel. His father-in-law hired a coach, wagon and some horses, and they set out. As they neared their destination, slowly but surely Rav Moshe's condition improved. Seeing that his son-in-law was getting well, the father-in-law decided to turn back around. When Rav Moshe saw them going back, his illness returned and he had a total relapse. Seeing that there was no other option, they turned back again to Lechovitch. When they arrived in Lechovitch, it was the *Shabbos* before *Selichos* and Rav Moshe quickly absorbed the *Derech HaChassidus* and became an ardent and devoted *Chassid* of the *Rebbe* he would one day succeed. (*Yehi Ohr* p. 229 #480)

In Kobrin the *davening* was so intense, with such *mesirus nefesh* and *dveikus* that there were specially appointed

Chassidim whose job it was to revive all the other *Chassidim* who fainted during *Nishmas*. (*Yehi Ohr* p. 232 #489)



The Kobriner's Sayings and Praises

The Lechovitcher said regarding Rav Moshe Kobriner: Every day he reveals a new meaning and discovers a new *derech* in the concept of *Bechol derochecha do'eihu* – “Know *Hashem* in all your ways”. A different time he remarked how even the angels and *seraphs* did not recognize the Kobriner's true stature.

Rav Yisrael Rizhiner said to Rav Moshe Kobriner, “When you travel and come to me I can smell your fragrance like the bouquet of *Eretz Yisrael*, even when you are still fifty meters off, and your *emes* can be felt at several miles distance!”

The Kobriner used to say regarding the wording of the first *berocha* of *Shemone Esrei*, *koneh hakol* – that *Hashem* acquires each and every gesture that a Jew does for *Hashem's* sake and accepts them all as long as they are *emes*. (*Toras Avos* p. 293 #114, #129)



How is it Going?

Rav Mordechai of Slonim related about the Kobriner:

The *Alter Slonimer Rebbe* once visited *Piyesk* and an old *Yid*, who was not a *Chassid* but had visited Kobrin, told him what Rav Moshe Kobriner had said:

“*Di velt zagt az es macht zich nisht*

vi es vilt zich, miz men velt vi es mach zich. Ober se iz duch a to'us. Be'emes – az men vil vi es macht zich, macht zich vi es vilt zich! – There is a saying that people say: If things are not going how you would like them to go, we must like the way they are going. [We need to accept it they way things are.] This, however, is a mistake, emphasized the Kobriner. The truth is the opposite: if we like the way things are going, then things go the way we like them to!" He explained: If you accept the judgment and decisions of Heaven, if you accept how things are going by accepting how they have been decreed, then *Hashem* will fulfill your will and things will go the way you like.



Emunas Chachomim

Rav Moshe was once asked what *Emunas Chachomim* is. He responded, "True *Emunas Chachomim* is to believe with full faith that you yourself are not a *chochom!*



His Histalkus

Before his *petira* he remarked, "The thing I am truly ashamed of is that the *Bais HaMikdosh* wasn't rebuilt in my lifetime." And before he left this world his body changed form so that his sinews and veins began to bulge on his head until they formed the shape of the letter *shin* [like on the *Tefillin Shel Rosh*] (*Maamar Mordechai Slonim* #29, #30, #36-37)



Rav Chaim Ben Yosef Vital, 30th of Nissan

Talmid Ha'Arizal

How Rav Chaim Vital Came to the Arizal and Drank From Miriam's Well

Rav Chaim Vital lived in Damascus and for a period of some months the *Arizal* kept coming to him in his dreams each night and spoke with him, urging him to come to Tzefas to learn from him. "Come and I shall reveal to you secrets that have never before been revealed since the Creation of the world!" Rav Chaim, however, took no heed of these nightly visions, and assumed at the time that his own learning was superior to the *Arizal's* – after all, he had already authored his own *sefer* of commentary on the holy *Zohar*. One day, after contemplating the matter, Rav Chaim finally agreed to visit the *Arizal* and see for himself if his nightly visions were true and what the *Arizal* could teach him.

He traveled to Tzefas and and

approached the *Arizal*, testing him through a certain *ma'amar* in the *Zohar*, a very difficult passage that Rav Chaim Vital already thought he understood very well. The *Arizal* revealed the meaning of the passage of *Zohar* together with profound, hidden secrets that were so powerful and awesome that when Rav Chaim Vital heard them he felt his soul almost leaving his body! Rav Chaim then asked about the meaning of a different passage of *Zohar* and the *Arizal* opened for him many more openings of great spiritual light. Eventually, Rav Chaim became humbled before the *Arizal* like a servant before his master. When he asked for another explanation, the *Arizal* held up his hand and replied, "Sorry, the boundary is here. You are unworthy of knowing more."

Hearing this, Rav Chaim was extremely distressed. He went home, donned sackcloth and began to cry and wallow in ashes and dirt, pouring the ashes

on himself and wailing, bemoaning his unworthiness, begging to be found worthy of studying *Toras HaKabbola* from the *Arizal*. He fasted and cried all night in prayer to *Hashem*.

The next day he fell before the *Arizal*, kissing his hands and feet and the hem of his robes and cried, prostrating himself, begging to be worthy of studying and learning from him. "Please, for *Hashem's* sake, do not send me away empty-handed!"

The *Arizal* responded, "Really I should turn you away for having held back so long from coming before me for some three months. However, your fasting and mourning in sackcloth and ashes have succeeded and now I shall not hold back any more secrets of *Torah* from you."

Rav Chaim sat among the *talmidim*

but he would learn and forget, learn and forget, again and again, over and over – until they traveled to Teverya.

When they reached Teverya they took a small boat and sailed on the waters of the Kinneret. They sat in the boat together, Rav Chaim Vital and the *Arizal*, until they reached two large pillars, the ruins of an ancient *shul*. The *Arizal* took a small flask and filled it with water from between the sunken pillars and gave Rav Chaim Vital to drink, and told Rav Chaim, "Now you will be able to hold onto this wisdom and stop forgetting, for these waters are from the wellsprings of the *Be'er Miriam*." Rav Chaim stopped forgetting and was able to remember and gain insight into the depths of wisdom of the secrets of *Torah*. (*Shivchei Ha'Arizal*)



SHLISSEL CHALLAH

Shlissel Challa

The *Apta Rav* asks why we use a key to mark the *challos* on the *Shabbos* after *Pesach*, because surely the *minhag* of our forefathers is *Torah*!

The *pasuk* says in *Shir HaShirim* (5:2), "Open for me, my sister, my beloved." The *Medrash* there says that *Hashem* is asking *Knesses Yisrael* to open for Him just a small opening, the size of the eye of a needle and He will reciprocate and open for them an opening the size of a large hall. Says the *Apta Rav*, *Knesses Yisrael* is compared to a bride, and a woman is sometimes compared to bread, as in *Bereishis* 39:6 (see *Rashi* there).

On *Pesach* all the heavenly gates and the doors of the supernal mind called the *Mochin Illo'in* are open. After *Pesach* they are locked once more and it is up to us to open them. This is why we mark the *challa* on the *Shabbos* following *Pesach* with keys, symbolizing that we are making an opening, and asking that *Hashem* open for us His great treasury and command the heavens above to open for us. Just as *Hashem* sent our forefathers the *mon* during the month of *Iyar* which we bless on this *Shabbos*, so may He bless us.

In the *Likkutim Chadoshim* at the end of *Ohev Yisrael*, the *Apta Rav* gives us three more reasons for the *minhag* of baking *shlissel challa*:

The first reason is that this is the period when Bnei Yisrael stopped eating from the *mon* and began to eat from the produce of *Eretz Yisrael*, as it says in *Yehoshua* 5:11 that after *Pesach* they began to eat produce and stopped eating *mon*. Everything has its corresponding gate and we ask *Hashem* to open for us the gates of *parnossa* at this time, when we are no longer receiving *mon* from Heaven. We therefore make the shape of a key on the *challos* to

hint at the fact that we are asking *Hashem* to open up the gates of *parnossa* for us.

The second reason for this *minhag* is that we are now counting the seven weeks of the Omer, which amounts to forty-nine days, alluding to the fiftieth gate of the attribute of *Bina*. As we proceed from gate to gate, each gate has its key and so we make the shape of a key.

The third reason is based on *Shir HaShirim* 1:11 where the *pasuk* says, *torei zohov na'aseh loch im nekudos hakosef*.

In the *Mishkon* we find that three precious metals were used (*Shemos* 25:3): gold, silver and copper. Gold precedes silver. However, in the story of Creation we read (*Bereishis* 1:3), "And *Hashem* said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light". This is the light of *Avrohom Avinu* - the light of *chessed* (loving-kindness) [alluding to silver], and afterward we learn about the second day, whose attribute is *gevura* (strength), which hints at gold. Here silver precedes gold. The reason for the change in order is that the world is created through *chessed*, as it says (*Tehillim* 89:3) that the world is created through *chessed*. Therefore *chessed*, which alludes to silver, precedes *gevura*, which hints at gold. However, the *Mishkon*, a microcosm of the entire world, constructed in miniature as a place where *Hashem's* presence, the *Shechina*, would restrict Herself in *tzimtzum* to dwell therein, represents an act of *gevura*. Gold therefore precedes silver in its construction.

Gold is vocalized with the vowel *pasach* in the construct form, as in *Shemos* 38:24: *zehav hetenufa*. This is the *nekuda* of *chessed* and *chochma*. *Pasach* also means an opening or a gateway and alludes to the opening where all manner of *chessed* comes from. This is what the *pasuk* in *Shir HaShirim* alludes to. The *Mishkon* contains the *tzimtzum* of *torei zohov* but it is tempered by the *nekudos hakosef*, the vowels or *nekudos* of *pasach*, which is *chessed*.

The *Shabbos* after *Pesach* is always in the second week of *Sefiras HaOmer*, which corresponds to the attribute of *Gevura*. However, it is vowelized with *keseif* and *pasach* which is *chessed*, the gate through which all blessings flow. Since every gate has a key, we make the shape of a key on the *challos*.



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

(מתוך אמונה טהורה) בדרך המסורה (והתנהגה כאשה כשרה) לכל משפחתה,
היא הודה היא הדרה - נקיה וטהורה היוצר וצר צורה (וקיבלה הגוירה)

נפטרה בש"ט בת תשעים שנה
ביום כ"ד לחודש כסלו (ערב חנוכה) שנת תשע"ח לפ"ק
תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה
ותקים לתחיה לקץ הימין מהרה תנצ"ב'ה'

Zera Shimshon Shemini

The Zera Shimshon, Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachmon Michael Nachmani, was born in 5467 (1706/1707) into an illustrious family with great Rabbinical lineage. He studied the revealed and concealed parts of the Torah by the Torah greats of his day.

He served as Rav of Modena, Pisa, Sayna and Rigyov, Italy, and was recognized as a holy and pious individual, as well as a tremendous Torah scholar in all areas of Torah. He passed away on the 6th of Elul 5539 (1779).

His Seforim were named, Toldos Shimshon (The 'Offspring' of Shimshon) on Pirkei Avos and Zera Shimshon (The 'Seed' of Shimshon) on the Parshi'os of the Torah. In his introduction, he explains that since his only son had died during his lifetime, he wrote his Seforim to perpetuate his own memory after his passing.

The following is his passionate request to learn his works.

"I implore of you with ten terms of supplication to choose from my Chiddushim (novella) the piece that finds favor in your eyes, for your learning will sooth my soul etc..."

"This righteousness will stand by you forever – to 'eat' in this world, and be satiated in the next. In this merit, Hashem will repay you with children, health and sustenance.

"...and now my brothers and friends etc. do a true kindness, and with your eyes you will see children and grandchildren surrounding your table, houses filled with all that is good, wealth and honor will not cease from your children..."

לזכר נשמת

רבינו שמשון חיים בן רב נחמן מייכאל זצ"ל
בעל הזרע שמשון זיע"א
ויה"ר שיתקיימו בנו ברכותיו של אותו צדיק

לזכות כל עם
ישראל לגאולה
וישועה בכל מקום
שהם

קח לך עגל בן בקר לחטאת (ט' ב')

Take for yourself a young bull for a sin offering (9:2)

Rashi says on this passuk, 'So that it should be known that Hashem forgave Aharon for the sin of the Egel with this Korban.'

The Zera Shimshon brings the following question in the name of the Zera Beyrach: Why did Rashi write, 'So that it should be known'? Why didn't Rashi simply write that Aharon brought the Korban to forgive for the sin of the Egel, what does Rashi mean to add with the words 'So that it should be known'?

The Zera Shimshon himself, asks another question. Why did Aharon bring a young bull as a Chatas offering, while the Jewish people brought a young bull as an Olah offering?

The Zera Shimshon answers these questions as follows:

The Gemara (Rosh HaShana 26a) asks, why does the Kohen Gadol not wear the gold clothes while he does the service in the Kodesh HaKadashim?

The Gemara answers, because a prosecutor cannot become a defender. When the Kohen Gadol comes into the Kodesh HaKadashim, he is doing so to atone, hence defend, for the Jewish people and the color gold bring to mind the of the sin of the Egel and thus, serves as a prosecution, which would defeat the Kohen Gadol's purpose of entering the Kodesh HaKadashim.

The Gemara then asks, isn't the Aron HaKodesh, which is *in* the Kodesh HaKadashim, made entirely out gold?

The Gemara differentiates that man is the one that sinned with gold and therefore, wearing gold color clothing would serve as a prosecution, not so the Aron HaKodesh itself.

Therefore, the Jewish people that actually sinned with the Egel, which was a young bull, had to offer a young bull as an Olah offering, rather than a Chatas (sin) offering since a prosecutor (young bull) cannot become a defender and cannot serve as the sin offering which would atone for the sin of the Egel.

Since Aharon brought a young bull as a *sin* offering (Chatas), it has to be that his involvement in the Egel was not a sin, rather it was considered an mistake (as opposed to an intentional sin), since Aharon's intention was for the benefit of the Jewish people (see further).

This is why Rashi stressed that Aharon brought a young bull for a Chatas - 'So that it should be known that Hashem forgave him for the Egel'. Had Rashi plainly written that Aharon brought the young bull to atone for the making of the Egel, this would have implied that Aharon actually sinned, which he didn't.

What Rashi means to explain *is not* that Aharon's Korban came to atone for his sinful in the involvement of making the Egel since he didn't sin. Rather, it came to atone for his mistaken involvement in the Egel which was solely to benefit the Jews. This is what Rashi means 'So that it should be known etc.' - that Aharon specifically brought a young bull as a Chatas, by doing this it is now known that Hashem did not consider Aharon's involvement in the Egel as a sin, otherwise he could not have offered a young bull to atone for himself, since a prosecutor cannot become a defender.

The Zera Shimshon explains that Aharon's intention when he got involved in the Egel was that since the Jewish people had already said, "Let us make a god for ourselves." At that moment, they had already committed the sin of idolatry as the Gemara (Kiddushin) says, that although when one thinks about doing a sin, it is not held against him, however, when one thinks to do Avodah Zara, it considered as though he has sinned.

However, being that this was only in thought, the Jewish people would not have felt the need to repent. Had they accepted the Torah in this state, they would not have had the ability to keep it properly. For this reason, Aharon felt that if they would actually make the Egel, then, when Moshe Rabbeinu would come back, they would really and properly regret their sin and this flaw would no longer disable them from properly keeping the Torah.

MeOros HaRamchal – Parshas Shemini

THE TIKKUN OF TESHUVAH THROUGH GEVURAH

“*VeAyal le’Olah* and a ram for an elevation burnt offering.” (*Shemini* 9:2)

One of the foundations that the *Ramchal* teaches is that when we sin we cause a *yeridah* – we lower ourselves and our station and we damage and blemish the world.

When we repent and return through *teshuvah* after we fix and rectify the damage done, we need to also perform new *tikkunim* in order to uplift ourselves back to our former station and restore the world to its former state, this requires the power and strength of *gevurah*.

This is the secret the offering of an *ayal le’olah* – an elevation offering where the ram is burned – because the *olah* means elevated and the *ayal* is the secret of *gevurah* that rises and is elevated to *Ima*. [Translator’s note: Even though we cannot begin to fathom the secrets of these supernal attributes - we can all learn the lesson, to repent and do *teshuvah* with strength to repair the damage done.]

THE POWER OF BIRCHAS KOHANIM & ALEINU

“**And Aharon lifted up his hands,**” (*Shemini* 9:22)

The hands have ten fingers corresponding to the ten *sefiros* – the Divine attributes of *Hashem*. When Aharon lifted up his hands towards the people, he was drawing down this power to *Am Yisroel*. And then “he blessed them” and *Chazal* said that this refers to *Birchas Kohanim*.

The *Ramchal* explains that Aharon recited this *beracha* while standing because the secret is that whatever corresponds to the cosmic active masculine attribute of giving and transmitting is done standing, while the cosmic passive feminine attribute of receiving is done while seated down. Therefore, since *Birchas Kohanim* is a transmission and masculine it is performed standing.

The *Ramchal* then explains that after *tikkunim* and rectifications have fixed and repaired, we need to chase away any forces of darkness such as the shells and husks of impurity known as the *klippos*.

Nothing chases away the other side – *stira achra* as effectively as the power of the surrounding lights – *makifim*.

This is what we achieve when we recite the *tefillah* of *Aleinu LeShabayach* after *davening*. Now that we *davened* and through our *tefillah* we affected all the appropriate *tikkunim* – repairing and rectifying appropriately we say *Aleinu* whose purpose is to chase away the other side – *stira achra* using the power of the surrounding lights – *makifim*.

[Translator’s note: therefore the *KolBo* and other early commentators teach that *Aleinu* was what Yehoshua composed and recited when he circled – *makif* round Jericho and caused those walls of the enemy, to tumble down.]

Similarly, after Aharon offered sacrifices and the *korbanos* affected the appropriate *tikkunim* he then recited afterwards *Birchas Kohanim* to draw down the surrounding walls of the lights to chase away the *klippos*.

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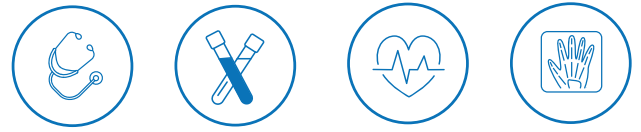
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