

# ME'OROS HA'TZADDIKIM

LIGHTS OF OUR RIGHTEOUS TZADDIKIM



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

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)

✻ **NOACH** ✻

✻ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ✻

## The Power of a Tzaddik

Right after *Purim*, the *Chassidim* who had spent the joyous day in Berditchev with Rav Levi Yitzchok began to disperse. Many had long distances to travel before they reached their homes, and as the roads were still muddied by the melting snows, an early start was important. Although they would be separated from their holy *Rebbe*, they hoped the inspiration they had derived from *Purim* with him would linger until the next time they could be with him. Those *Chassidim*, however, who stayed on in Berditchev for *Pesach* were elated that the *Rebbe* would transport them straight from the exhilaration of *Purim* into the exaltation of his *Seder* table. The anticipation was almost too much to bear.

Rav Avrohom Mordechai of Pintchov yearned to stay in Berditchev with his beloved *Rebbe*, but he knew that this year he could not allow himself that singular spiritual pleasure. His wife was expecting, and his place was at home by her side. But getting home would not be a simple matter. With a sad sigh, he went to take leave of the *Rebbe*.

"I've been here several weeks," he said, "in the presence of the holy *Rebbe*, but I'll have to return home for *Pesach*. My wife is expecting, and I'm afraid I can't spend even another *Shabbos* here. I must leave right away."

"Of course," said Rav Levi Yitzchok.

"But I have a problem," said Rav Avrohom Mordechai. "I heard a rumor that the border I have to cross to get home was closed just recently. I'm hoping that it's not true."

"It is true," said the *Rebbe*.

"Then what shall I do?" said Rav Avrohom Mordechai, wringing his hands. "If it's really closed I'll need an official pass to get through, and I don't have one."

"Don't worry. Before you leave, come in here, and I'll give you a pass."

Rav Avrohom Mordechai was puzzled by the *Rebbe's* response, but he had learned never to question him. With a confident heart and a buoyant step, he prepared to leave Berditchev.

The next day, he went to Rav Levi Yitzchok to take his leave and receive the *Rebbe's berocha*.

"And now for your pass," said the *Rebbe*. He took a blank sheet of paper and dipped his quill into the inkpot on his table. Then he made a small dot on the paper and examined it. Satisfied, he folded the paper and handed it to Rav Avrohom Mordechai.

"*Tzeis'chem lechaim ulesholom*," he said. "Depart to life and to peace."

Rav Avrohom Mordechai put the paper into his pocket. He could not imagine how that paper with its single dot of ink would get him across the border, but he asked no questions.

Two days later, he reached the border crossing. With security tightened, a long line of travelers had formed near a small guardhouse that stood at the roadside. The royal colors fluttered from a flagpole, and armed soldiers stood on both sides of the road glowering at the travelers as a border guard examined their identification papers and took their passports.

Rav Avrohom Mordechai's heart beat faster and faster as his turn approached. Finally, he stood face to face with the guard holding the pile of collected passports.

"Your name," said the guard.

"Avrohom Horowitz."

"Your papers, please."

Rav Avrohom Mordechai handed him the paper. The guard added it to his pile.

"All of you wait here," he commanded, "until the captain approves your papers."

He turned and entered the building. A few minutes later, he returned with the passports, gave them back to their owners and sent them on their way. Only Rav Avrohom Mordechai did not receive his documents.

"You," said the guard, pointing at Rav Avrohom Mordechai. "Come with me."

If Rav Avrohom Mordechai had been apprehensive before, he was terrified now. "You can imagine how I felt, Eizik'l," he would later say to his son-in-law Rav Yitzchok Eizik of Komarno. "Even though I had faith, I was frightened. I remembered that even Yaakov *Ovinu* was worried that because of his sins the *Ribbono Shel Olam* (Master of the Universe) would not fulfill His promise to him, so what could I say? I had no guarantees. I begged the *Ribbono Shel Olam* to protect me in the *zechus* of my holy *Rebbe*, Levi Yitzchok *ben Sara Sosha*, and I stepped into the guardhouse."

The captain was seated at his desk, but when Rav Avrohom Mordechai entered the room he immediately rose and stood at full attention. Then he grabbed a chair and placed

it in front of the desk.

"Please be seated, sir," he said. "Can I get you something to eat or drink?"

"No, thank you," said Rav Avrohom Mordechai, puzzled by the captain's unexpectedly respectful and solicitous behavior.

"Might I inquire, kind sir," said the captain, "as to who you might be?"

"I am a *Rav* returning home."

The captain chuckled. "You enjoy jesting, sir, and so do I, of course. But I would really like to know who you are."

"I told you," said Rav Avrohom Mordechai. "I'm a *Rav*."

"But that is impossible!"

"Why is it impossible? Look at my beard, my sidelocks, the fringes on my garments. I'm a *Rav*, I tell you."

It slowly dawned on the captain that Rav Avrohom Mordechai spoke the truth, but that confused him even more.

"I don't understand," he said. "If you really are a *Rav*, how can it be that you are so close to the king?" He held up the paper in front of Rav Avrohom Mordechai's face. "Look! Your papers bear the king's own signature. Not many people are accorded this honor."

Rav Avrohom Mordechai stared at the paper but saw only the tiny dot of ink in its center.

"So how is that you are so close with the king?" asked the captain.

Rav Avrohom Mordechai remained silent.

"Of course," said the captain, "I understand. It is not for me to inquire too much into matters that do not concern me. But I am at your service, sir. Whatever you need, just ask for it. It would be my greatest honor to accommodate you. What can I do for you, sir?"

"Well, there is something," said Rav Avrohom Mordechai.

"Your wish is my command."

"I am still far from my destination, and it is important that I get there quickly. Could you provide me with a coach and fast horses?"

"Instantly!" said the captain. He gave the order, and within a very short time, a comfortable coach and two fresh horses were standing before the guardhouse.

When Rav Avrohom Mordechai came home, he looked at Rav Levi Yitzchok's letter once again, and still, he saw only the single black dot. He put the letter into the strongbox in which he kept his most precious valuables and locked it with a key. Perhaps he might need it again someday.

Sometime later, one of his cousins, a respected *Talmid Chochom*, approached him. "You know, Avrohom Mordechai, that I'm a *Misnaged*," he said. "I'm opposed to the *Chassidim*, but I respect you as a wise and pious man. I know that you always travel to Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev. Why don't you tell me what you see in him?"

"Come," said Rav Avrohom Mordechai. "I'll show you a truly wondrous thing."

He took down his strongbox and opened it with the key. The cousin looked on in

anticipation as he lifted the lid of the strongbox. Rav Avrohom Mordechai reached into the box for the letter, but it wasn't there. He rummaged frantically through all of its contents, but there was no sign of the letter. It had vanished into thin air.

Rav Avrohom Mordechai related this amazing story to his son-in-law Rav Yitzchok Eizik of Komarno, who told it to his son Rav Elozor of Komarno. One time, Rav Elozor shared a *Rosh Chodesh seuda* with Rav Shlomo Shapira, the *Rav* of Munkacs and the author of *Shem Shlomo*.

"Tell me a story you heard from your father," said Rav Shlomo, "but only a story that has never been published. I've already read all those that have been published."

"Very well," said Rav Elozor. "My father once told an interesting story that happened to my grandfather Rav Avrohom Mordechai of Pintchov when he was in Berditchev." Then he proceeded to tell him the story of the paper with the ink dot.

"Who knows how many favors," commented Rav Shlomo, "the *malochim* exacted in return for this favor for the Berditchever?"

Rav Elozor nodded. "I had the same thought. But then I thought that my grandfather needed that favor because he had no other way of getting home. At that moment, it was important."

Rav Shlomo told the story to his grandson, Rav Chaim Elozor Shapira, the author of *Minchas Elozor*, who later also became the *Rav* of Munkacs. Years later, Rav Chaim Elozor told the story to a group of *Chassidim* in Beregszasz, among them his *talmid* Rav Yitzchok Adler. Afterward, Rav Chaim Elozor asked Rav Yitzchok Adler to accompany him to Nyíregyháza for a *bris*.

"As it happens," said Rav Yitzchok, "there is a border between Beregszasz and Nyíregyháza, and I do not have a pass to get across. If the *Rebbe* can give me a pass, I would happily accompany him anywhere."

Rav Chaim Elozor smiled. "You want me to give you a pass such as the one Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev gave Rav Avrohom Mordechai of Pintchov?"

"Yes, I do," said Rav Yitzchok.

"This cannot be done these days," said Rav Chaim Elozor.



## **Dvar Torah**

For all his righteousness, Noach did not fulfill his purpose in this world. According to the *Arizal*, he was punished by having to return to the world as a *gilgul* (reincarnation) after he died. He came back as Moshe.

Why was Noach punished? Because, says the *Arizal*, he failed to rebuke his generation. Therefore, he returned as Moshe, who constantly taught and rebuked the people. But why indeed didn't *Noach* rebuke the people of his generation? Furthermore, we find no mention in the *Torah* that Noach davened to *Hashem* to spare his generation from destruction. Why indeed didn't he daven for them?

There are two types of *Tzaddikim*, explains Rav Levi Yitzchok. There is one type of *Tzaddik* who is focused inwardly. He serves *Hashem* with great diligence and sincerity, but

he does not reach out to others. There is also a different type of *Tzaddik* who is the opposite of insular. He reaches out to other people and draws them closer to *Hashem*. He is the *Tzaddik* that the *Talmud* describes (*Kiddushin* 40a) as “good for Heaven and good for people”. These two types of *Tzaddikim* are represented respectively by Noach and Avrohom.

Noach was an insular *Tzaddik*. He “walked with the Almighty”, as the *Torah* tells us (*Bereishis* 6:9); in other words, he walked only with *Hashem* and with no one else. He withdrew from the world and society and served *Hashem* in the privacy of his own life. Avrohom, on the other hand, was an expansive *Tzaddik*. He went out into the world and proclaimed the greatness of *Hashem*. He reached out to people wherever he went and drew them closer to *Hashem*.

The *Torah* speaks about Noach’s *toldos*, his progeny, but nowhere does the *Torah* speak about Avrohom’s *toldos*. Why not? Because the number of Avrohom’s progeny was vast. The *Talmud* tells us (*Sanhedrin* 99b) that teaching someone *Torah* is considered like fathering him. And indeed, the *Torah* tells us (*Bereishis* 12:5) about the people Avrohom “made” in Choron. How did he “make” them? By teaching them *Torah*, as *Targum Onkelos* translates. All these people were thenceforth considered Avrohom’s children, and they were too many to enumerate. But Noach, who did not reach out to other people and teach them *Torah*, only had three children, and these are the *toldos* that the *Torah* enumerates.

Why was Noach so insular? Why didn’t he reach out to his generation? We find a clue when the *Torah* tells us (*ibid.* 7:7) that Noach entered the *teiva* (ark) because of the waters of the *Mabul* (Flood). *Rashi* explains that Noach was “of little faith” and did not enter the *teiva* until he was forced to do so by the rising waters. How can we understand this statement that he was of little faith when the *Torah* specifically tells us (*ibid.* 6:9) that he was “righteous and unblemished”?

It would seem that Noach’s lack of faith was in himself. He was exceedingly humble, and although he was certainly righteous and unblemished, he saw himself as being no better than anyone else. He did not think he was worthy of rebuking other people, and although the *Talmud* tells us (*Mo’ed Kotton* 16b) that a *Tzaddik* has the power to nullify Divine decrees, he did not consider himself capable of exercising such great power through his *tefillos*. He reasoned, therefore, that if he were to be saved, so would the rest of the people of his generation be saved. Thus, there was no point in entering the *teiva*. Only when the rising waters practically engulfed him was he compelled to enter the *teiva* against his own judgment.

The difference between an insular *Tzaddik* and an expansive *Tzaddik* with regard to effecting change in the world can also be understood on a deeper level. It is quite possible that only the expansive *Tzaddik* who reaches out to other people has the power to nullify decrees. The insular *Tzaddik* is guided by the Divine letters of the *Torah*, while the *Tzaddik* who reaches out is the one who guides the Divine letters. In other words, reaching out to others endows the *Tzaddik* with tremendous power, a power so great that he can nullify decrees and virtually bend the world to his will. How do we explain the connection between reaching out and this power?

It is because the *Tzaddik* who reaches out to rescue the Divine sparks from the grip of

the *klippas*, the impure husks that capture them, must come into contact with the physical world. There is tremendous power and passion in the physical world, and when the *Tzaddik* reaches out to rescue the Divine sparks he is touched and affected by that power and passion. But being a sincere and dedicated *Tzaddik*, he is not brought down from his high spiritual level. Instead, he is able to capture that passionate power, harness it to his service of *Hashem* and, thereby, raise it to a much higher level.

Noach, who was too humble to reach out to other people, never had the opportunity to infuse his service of *Hashem* with this passionate power, and therefore, he was not able to nullify a Divine decree. That power was wielded only by *Tzaddikim* such as Avrohom and Moshe.



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**

[תְּפִילָּה הַנִּמְצָאת בַּסֵּפֶר אֶלֶף הַמִּגֵּן מִבַּעַל הַפֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ עַל פְּרֻשֵׁת וַיֵּצֵא עֲמוּד כ"ד]

הַרְיֵנִי מִדְּלִיק נֵר זֶה לְמִנוּחַת וּלְעִילוּי נִשְׁמַת אָבִי / אִמִּי מוֹרְתִי / הַצַּדִּיק \_\_\_\_\_  
 בֶּן/בַּת \_\_\_\_\_, יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלְקֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁתִּקְבַּל בְּרַחֲמִים  
 וּבְרָצוֹן כָּל מַעֲשֵׂה הַטּוֹב שְׁאֵנִי עוֹשֶׂה, בֵּין בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה, בֵּין בְּדִבּוּר, בֵּין בְּמַעֲשֵׂה וַיְהִי הַכֹּל  
 לְזָכוֹת וּלְמִנוּחַת וּלְעִילוּי לְנִשְׁמוֹת עַמְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּבְפֶרֶט לְנַפְשׁ רוּחַ וְנִשְׁמָה שֶׁל אָבִי / אִמִּי /  
 צַדִּיק \_\_\_\_\_ . יְהִי רָצוֹן שְׁתִּהְיֶנָּה נַפְשׁוֹתֵיהֶם צְרוּרוֹת בְּצִרוּר הַחַיִּים.

### **Translation:**

Behold I am lighting this lamp for the resting and uplifting of the soul of my father/my mother/the *Tzaddik* \_\_\_\_\_ the son/daughter of \_\_\_\_\_. May it be Your will before you, *Hashem*, our G-d and the G-d of our forefathers, that all my good deeds whether

in thought, speech or action be done for a merit and a resting and an elevation of the souls of your nation Yisrael. It should be especially for the soul of my father/mother/the *Tzaddik* \_\_\_\_\_. May it be Your will that their souls be bound in the bond of life.

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

4) Study some of his teaching or writings.

See more at: [www.yeshshem.com/hilulah.htm](http://www.yeshshem.com/hilulah.htm)



## ❁ GEDOLIM BE'MISASAM YOSER ❁



Yahrzeits for week beginning Shabbos Noach

[http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim\\_yahrzeits/Cheshvan](http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim_yahrzeits/Cheshvan)

Biographical information and yahrzeits compiled by Reb Manny Saltiel and [www.anshe.org](http://www.anshe.org)

### \* 6<sup>th</sup> of Cheshvan ~ Begins Friday Night (Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>)

- \* **Rav Yehuda HeChassid**, founder of the Churva *shul* in Yerushalayim, (5461/1700);
- \* **Rav Shlomo Dovid Yehoshua Weinberg**, the *Admor HaTzo'ir* of Slonim, (5704/1943);
- \* **Rav Yechiel Menachem** of Alexander-America, (5749/1988).

### \* 7<sup>th</sup> of Cheshvan ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Oct 24<sup>th</sup>)

- \* **Rav Yehuda Meir Shapiro** of Lublin (1887–1933). His father, Rav Yaakov Shimshon Katz of Shatz, Romania, was a descendant of Rav Pinchas Koretz, a disciple of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*. His mother, Margala, was the daughter of Rav Shmuel Yitzchok Schor, author of *Minchas Shai*, and a descendant of the author of *Tevu'as Shor*. He was also a descendant of Rav Bechor Shor of Orleans, one of the *Ba'alei Tosafos*. He was married in 1906 and took his first appointment, *Rav* of Galina, in 1911. In 1921, he became *Rav* of Sanok, then in 1924 *Rav* of Piotrkov. It was while there that he wrote his *sefer Or HaMeir*. Also in 1923, he began the first cycle of *Daf Yomi*, having shared this idea at the first *Knessia Gedola* of *Agudas Yisrael* the previous year. That first cycle began on *Rosh HaShana* in 1923 and was completed 2702 days later on *Tu Bishvat* in 1931. His other major project was to found the *Yeshiva Chachmei Lublin* in 1930, (5694/1933);
- \* **Rav Simcha Elberg**, editor of *Pardes* journal, (5756/1995);
- \* **Rav Yehuda Tzvi Eichenstein** of Rozdol (or Rozla), author of *Daas Kedoshim* (1791–1847). The son of Rav Moshe of Sambor and son-in-law and successor of Rav Zvi Hirsch of Zidachov, he became the *Rebbe* of Rozdol and was considered one of the leading *mekubolim* of his generation, (5608/1847);
- \* **Rav Nosson Dovid Rabinowitz** of Shidlova (or Shidlovtze), (5626/1865);
- \* **Rav Yerachmiel Tzvi** of Biala-Shedlitz, (5666/1905);
- \* **Rav Yisrael Weltz**, *Rav* of Budapest and author of *Teshuvos Divrei Yisrael*, (5734/1973);
- \* **Rav Avrohom Meisles**, *mechutan* of the *Rema*, (5360/1599);
- \* **Rav Shimon Deutsch** of Dobornil, author of *Nachalas Shimon*, (5562/1801);
- \* **Rav Tzvi Hirsch** of Tomoshev, a *talmid* of Rav Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, (5631/1870);
- \* **Rav Dovid** of Sevorn, (5675/1914).

### \* 8<sup>th</sup> of Cheshvan ~ Begins Sunday Night (Oct 25<sup>th</sup>)

- \* **Rav Menachem Nachum Kaplan (Nachumke)** of Horodna, Lithuania (1811–1879). When he was nine years old, he lived in the home of Rav Yehuda Leib Ganker and learned with this wealthy man every morning. Later, he wandered through Lithuania until he came to Amshina, where he studied under Rav Avrohom Kahane. Eventually, he was accepted to the *Mirr*

*Yeshiva* and became close to its *mashgiach*, Rav Yisrael Heller. He married the daughter of a wealthy man, but after a number of years, his father-in-law died. Poverty-stricken, Rav Nachumke took a job as a *shamash* in the *Chevras Shas Bais Medrash* in Korodna. However, his fame spread, and many throughout Eastern Europe came to observe him and learn from him. Among those was the *Chofetz Chaim*, then only fifteen years old, (5640/1879);

- \* **Rav Yaakov Rosenheim**, founder of *Agudas Yisrael*, (5631–5726/1870–1965);
- \* **Rav Meir** of Narbonne (*HaMeili*) (1190–1263), author of *Sefer HaMeoros* (halachic material on *Berochos*, *Chullin*, and *Seder Mo'ed*). Died in Toledo, Spain, (5024/1263);
- \* **Rav Meshulam Shaltiel** (1870–1926). Born in Sofia, he moved to Yerushalayim while still very young, (5687/1926);
- \* **Rav Moshe Yosef HaKohen Tawil**, *Zaken Rabbanei* Aram Soba (Aleppo, Syria). Founded the *Degel HaTorah Yeshiva* with Rav Shlomo Zafrani, (5738/1977).

## ✧ 9<sup>th</sup> of Cheshvan ~ Begins Monday Night (Oct 26<sup>th</sup>)

- \* **Rabbeinu Osher ben Yechiel**, the *Rosh* (1250–1327). One of the three primary *Rishonim* on whom Rav Yosef Karo relied for the *Shulchon Aruch*. Rav Osher's family traced its lineage to Rabbeinu Gershon. Rav Osher learned under Rav Meir of Rotenberg. After ten years as the successor of Rav Meir and the leader of German Jewry, he escaped German persecution and settled in Toledo, Spain, (5088/1327);
- \* **Rav Yosef Yehuda Leib Bloch** (1860–1930). Born in Rusein, he succeeded his father-in-law, Rav Eliezer Gordon, as *Rosh Yeshiva* of the *Telshe Yeshiva*. Telshe is one of the oldest towns in Lithuania, situated in the north-western part of Lithuania on the shores of Lake Mastis, and was already mentioned in the chronicles of a Crusader Order in 1320. Jews settled in Telshe at the beginning of the seventeenth century. 2,500 people lived in Telshe in 1797, of them 1,650 were Jews (66 percent). By 1870 Telshe had 6,481 residents, including 4,399 Jews. Rav Yosef Leib already began studying under Rav Leizer at the age of fifteen, in Kelm, and married Rav Leizer's daughter at the age of twenty-one. Rav Yosef Leib initiated many innovations. In 1894, he attempted to introduce *mussar* to the *Yeshiva's* curriculum, and in 1897 he brought Rav Yehuda Leib Chasman to serve as the *Yeshiva's Mashgiach*. [*Hamodia* 2005: 7<sup>th</sup> of *Cheshvan* 1929], (5691/1930);
- \* **Rav Shimon Shkop** of Grodno (1860–1939). Born in Turz, Poland, Rav Shimon studied in Mir at the age of twelve, and then Volozhin at the age of fifteen, with Rav Chaim Soloveitchik. He was brought to Telshe in 1885 by his uncle, Rav Lazer Gordon. Rav Shimon's brother-in-law, Rav Shlomo Zalman Abel, was one of the three founders of the *Telshe Yeshiva*. He taught at Telshe for eighteen years. He succeeded Rav Alter Shmuelevitz as *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshiva Shaarei Torah* in Grodno, from 1920 to 1939, transforming it into one of the finest *Yeshivos* in Poland and beyond. In 1929, Rav Shimon Shkop came to America to raise funds for the *Yeshiva*, and accepted Rav Dov (Bernard) Revel's invitation to serve as *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshiva Rabbeinu Yitzchok Elchonon* in New York. However, at the request of the *Chofetz Chaim*, Rav Shkop returned to Europe after six months. In 1939, the Soviet Red army marched into Grodno during the *Asseres Yemei Teshuva*. Most of the *talmidim* fled to Vilna, but Rav Shimon Shkop was too old and sick to travel and remained behind with a few *talmidim*. He passed away a month later. Rav Shimon Shkop is the author of *Shaarei Yosher*, (5700/1939);
- \* **Rav Yehuda Horowitz**, the *Stutchiner Rebbe*, (5742/1981);
- \* **Rav Dovid Laniado** of Aram Soba (Aleppo, Syria), author of *LiK'doshim Asher Ba'Aretz*, (5731/1970).



## ☞ 10<sup>th</sup> of Cheshvan ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Oct 27<sup>th</sup>)

- \* **Gad ben Yaakov Ovinu**, (1566 BCE–1441 BCE);
- \* **Rav Yechiel Michel** of Krakow, author of *Seder Gittin*, (5421/1660);
- \* **Rav Aryeh Leib** of Stanislov, author of *Nachlas Aryeh*. The city of Stanisławów was founded in the year 1654 by the Hetman (commander) and Starosta (County Administrator) of the Halicz region, Jędrzej Potocki, and was named after his son Stanisław. Armenians and Jews were invited and promised, in the founding charter of the city of May 7, 1654, the right to settle in the city and the right to establish a house of prayer on the land that was given to them. In a special charter from September 17, 1662[6], Jędrzej Potocki granted the Jews (Żydzi talmudowi) the right to settle permanently in the city and the right to engage in commerce and crafts in the same measure as “the members of the Polish, Ruthenia and Armenian nations”. In 1732, the Jewish population was 1,470 souls from among a total population of 3,321, (5510/1749);
- \* **Rav Meir**, *Rav* of Lelov and of Ostroha, author of *Meir Nesivim*, (5550/1789);
- \* **Rav Avrohom Oppenheim**, author of *Eishel Avrohom on Shulchon Aruch*. (Not to be confused with Rav Avrohom Dovid Wahrman of Butchatch, author of a *sefer* with the same name), (5587/1826);
- \* **Rav Yosef Meir**, *Rav* of Golina, (5592/1831);
- \* **Rav Yitzchok Schick** of Karlin, the *Keren Ora*, (5612/1851);
- \* **Rav Meir Shapit** of Kobrin, author of *Nir Liyerushalmi*, (5633/1872);
- \* **Rav Dov Beirish Weidenfeld**, the *Tchebiner Rav* (1881–1965). His maternal grandfather was the seventh link in an unbroken chain of *poskim* beginning with the *Shach*. Beirishel's paternal grandfather was a disciple of Rav Yaakov Loeberbaum, author of *Nesivos HaMishpot*. His father, Rav Yaakov Weidenfeld, founder of the *Kochav MiYaakov Yeshiva*, was his primary teacher until he was *niftar* in 1894, just two weeks prior to Rav Beirishel's *bar mitzva*. Thereafter, he became a student of his two older brothers, Rav Yitzchok of Horimlov (where Beirishel was also born) and Rav Nachum of Dombrova. At the age of nineteen, Rav Beirish married Rebbetzin Yachat, the daughter of Rav Yisrael Yosef Kluger of Tchebin. At the age of twenty-four, he received *semicha* from Rav Yitzchok Shmelkish, the *Bais Yitzchok*. His wife administered a modest coal business to support him. In 1923, after twenty years of learning, he assumed the title of *Tchebiner Rav*. Along with his wife and youngest daughter, the *Rav* was deported to Sverdelovsk, Siberia, in late 1940. With the dissolution of the labor camp, the *Rav* escaped to Buchara. The *Tchebiner Rav* arrived on the eve of *Pesach*, 1946, in Yerushalayim, which he was to call home for the rest of his life, settling in the Shaarei Chessed neighborhood. His responsa were collected in the *sefer Doveiv Meishorim*. His son-in-law and successor as *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Kochav MiYaakov* was Rav Boruch Shimon Schneersohn.

## ☞ 11<sup>th</sup> of MarCheshvan ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Oct 28<sup>th</sup>)

- \* **Rachel Imenu**
- \* **Rav Mencham Nachum** – Me'or Eynaim of Czernoble

## ☞ 12<sup>th</sup> of MarCheshvan ~ Begins Thursday Night (Oct 29<sup>th</sup>)

- \* **Rav Yehuda Tzadka**, *rosh yeshiva* of Porat Yosef (1909-1991). Born in Yerushalayim, Rav Yehuda was a great-great grandson of Rav Tzadka Chutzin, author of *Tzedaka U'mispat*. His mother, Simcha, was the Ben Ish Chai's niece. The Tzadka family lived in the Beis Yisrael neighborhood of Yerushalayim. When he was 12 years old, Yehuda Tzadka enrolled in the Porat Yosef Yeshiva in the Old City. There, he became very close to Rav Ezra Attia. At the age of only 27 years, he was appointed to teach at the yeshiva. Among Reb Yehuda's first students was Rav Ovadia Yosef. In time, Rav Yehuda became the

menahel ruchani, and with the petira of Rav Ezra Attia in 1970, he was appointed to new Rosh Yeshiva.

\* **Rav Nachum** of Shadik, Yerushalayim

\* **Rav Moshe Kramer**, Av Beis Din in Vilna. His surname, “Kramer” is derived from the Yiddish word for storekeeper. He owned a store, which his wife ran. And as a result, he always insisted on not being paid for his rabanus (1648)



## 🌸 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 שתיתן 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 Yehuda Meir Shapiro of Lublin, 7<sup>th</sup> of Cheshvan

The story occurred on Shabbos Bereishis in the Beis Midrash of Rav Yisrael of Tchortkov.

Among the many guests was the Rav of Sanok, Rav Meir Shapira, who was later famous as the Rosh Yeshiva of Chachmei Lublin and the founder of the Daf HaYomi movement.

On Shabbos morning after the Krias HaTorah, the door to the Rebbe's private

room opened and the Rebbe himself made an unusual appearance where, before the astounded Chassidim, he honored the Rav of Sanok, Rav Meir Shapira, to bless the new month and to lead the prayers for Mussaf. This was an unusual occasion to say the least; however, Rav Meir took the amud, and led the congregation.

His powerful sweet and melodious voice awoke a strong outpouring of the soul

and a holy excitement among the Chassidim and many later recounted that the aura of sanctity resembled Yom Kippur. The sweet niggunim and songs plucked the strings of their souls and they were all moved by Rav Meir Shapira's heartfelt prayers.

Afterwards, as the Chassidim passed before the Rebbe to receive his Git Shabbos blessing, Rav Meir too passed before him. "I did not know that the Rav of Sanok knew how to lead the prayers so well?!" exclaimed the Rebbe. "I too did not know this," said Rav Meir innocently, "until the Rebbe revealed this to me as well!"

The Rebbe invited Rav Meir to kiddush and after the meal they secreted themselves in the Rebbe's private room for a long drawn out conversation. When Rav Meir left the Rebbe's room, his face shone with a supernal other worldly aura.

During that conversation, Rav Meir's powerful gift of prayer was mentioned once again, on which he commented, "If I have such a gift perhaps I should become a Chazzan. It would be appropriate since I am a descendant of Rav Pinchas Koretzer before whom all the gates of prayer were open!"

Upon hearing these words, the Tchorokover grew suddenly serious and after a few moments he said, "Rav of Sanok, allow me to tell you a tale about the holy Rebbe Reb Zisha of Annipoli, brother of the illustrious Rebbe Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk.

Once, when the Rebbe Reb Zisha was wandering in self-imposed exile from land to land, he arrived in Galicia. He had heard of Rav Yuzpa, the famous Rosh Yeshiva of Zolkava, and decided to travel there since his wondrous shiur, discourses in Talmudic topics, were quite legendary.

The Rebbe Reb Zisha travelled there and when he reached Zolkava, he entered Rav Yuzpa's Yeshiva and Talmudic academy. At that time, Rav Yuzpa was in

the midst of a Talmudic pilpul, a deep discussion of the tractate's sugya and all his students were absorbed in his profound words so much so, that no one noticed the Rebbe Reb Zisha's appearance in the Yeshiva at all.

The Rebbe Reb Zisha was dressed as a wandering vagabond, in tattered rags with his walking stick and bundle in hand. He went and sat in the corner and listened as well to the Talmudic discourse Rav Yuzpa delivered without removing his eyes from the orator for even a moment.

After the lecture had ended, the Rebbe Reb Zisha approached the Rosh Yeshiva and said to him, "Thank you so much! You deserve such a Yasher Koach for the lecture you delivered! I have heard of your great erudition and scholarliness from afar and about your wonderful lectures and therefore I decided to travel and hear them myself first hand. Believe me, it was well worth the long and arduous journey!"

Rav Yuzpa heard the words of praise and answered, "Well, I am glad that you enjoyed the lecture and that you heard words of Torah wisdom which you enjoyed, so I understand why I find favor in your eyes. However how can you find favor in my eyes? Why, I do not yet have the pleasure of knowing you, who are you and where are you from?" asked Rav Yuzpa to his guest.

"Oh, how can a vagabond such as me find any favor in anyone's eyes? I do not even know how to learn or study Torah. Why, I know nothing at all!" declared the Rebbe Reb Zisha.

"Impossible," countered Rav Yuzpa, "It cannot be that you have no wisdom or sanctity. I sense that deep inside you there is some hidden treasure which causes you to find favor in my eyes," concluded the Rosh Yeshiva.

"I only know how to pray," concluded the Rebbe Reb Zisha. "Well, what Jew doesn't know how to do that?"

Every Jew knows how to pray,” exclaimed Rav Yuzpa with wonder. “But I know the proper way to pray before the Master of the World!” added the Rebbe Reb Zisha.

“If so, reveal it to me! Teach me the secrets of your prayer,” requested Rav Yuzpa. “Very well then, come let us go somewhere private and I will open the gates of prayer before you,” suggested the Rebbe Reb Zisha.

“And so,” concluded the Tchortkover Rebbe to Rav Meir Shapira, “the two entered a room and secluded themselves. The Rebbe Reb Zisha taught the Rosh Yeshiva the secrets of prayer and they pierced deep into Rav Yuzpa's soul. He grew aflame with excitement and declared, “I will leave my Yeshiva and go after this man! Just as Elishah followed Eliyahu, and then perhaps during that time I will learn at least how to pray just one proper prayer in my lifetime! I will learn to stand before the Master of the World in prayer and to concentrate with true purity. Yes, I will get up right now and leave my Yeshiva!”

“No, no Rav Yuzpa,” countered the Rebbe Reb Zisha. “Let me explain something to you. Our sages taught us that just as man's facial features are different from one another, so too are their minds different. There are millions and billions of people living in this world, and each one has a different face from the other. Just as their outer appearances differ, so does their inner essence, their souls and their purpose

in life. Each soul can reach its own personal beauty equally. This is why Hashem create so many people, because each of them has his unique personal purpose to fulfill, a lofty and supernal goal. Just as there are many people, there are many goals and aspirations for each individual. Each person has to fulfill his own aspirations and goals with the tools, talents and character traits that Hashem has given him. This is why our sages taught that one should always study from where his heart desires. Since man's heart aspires to his personal goal that Hashem expects of him to fulfill. You, Rav Yuzpa, have the talent and power to inspire students and teach them Torah. Heaven bestowed this ability upon you to deliver such beautiful Talmudic lectures and discourses. Leave the gates of prayer for someone like me,” concluded the Rebbe Reb Zisha.

The Tchortkover ended the tale and turned to Rav Meir Shapira, who understood the meaning of the Rebbe's words. Later in life, when Rav Meir was the head and Rosh Yeshiva of Chachmei Lublin, he told those close to him about that Shabbos in Tchortkov saying, “With that story, the Rebbe put me in my proper place and set me on the proper path in life to fulfill my unique mission and purpose - to teach and spread Torah through chinuch of the next generation of Am Yisrael – the Jewish nation.”



## Rav Shimon Shkop of Grodno, 9<sup>th</sup> of Cheshvan

### **Rav Shimon Shkop in Montreal**

Rav Shimon Shkop (1860–1939) was the outstanding *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshivos Telshe* and Grodno. Based on the Talmudic methods of his mentors, Rav Chaim Soloveitchik and the *Netziv*, he synthesized his own method, resulting in the deep and penetrating analysis of Rav Chaim with the straightforwardness and

clarity of the *Netziv*. He embarked on fund-raising assignments for the *Yeshivos* in England, Canada (as we shall see), and the United States. While in the States he stopped at Yeshiva University to deliver a lecture. He was so well-received that he was asked to come onto the faculty as *Rosh Yeshiva*. After repeated attempts to get him to relocate to the States he finally acceded

in 1928, and did in fact become *Rosh Yeshiva* of YU. He did return to Europe, though, after heavy criticism from leading *Rabbonim*. Rav Zelig Epstein, a grandson-in-law, later succeeded him as *Rosh Yeshiva* Grodno in the American branch of the *Yeshiva*. Rav Zelig Epstein was *niftar* in 2009.

Rav Shimon Shkop had traveled to Montreal to raise money for the *Yeshiva*. He stayed at the home of a certain wealthy man, who was known for his generous contributions to worthwhile causes. When he arrived on this particular occasion he found his usually magnanimous host in joylessness and frustration. He had conveyed to Rav Shkop that great trouble loomed for him and his family. As his family grew it became apparent that more room was needed for the children and more space was also needed for a larger meeting hall for community activities which the man hosted on a weekly basis. An addition was built onto the side of the house, but it was found out later that the addition extended a total of one foot onto the neighbor's property, a very petty amount, considering that both he and his neighbor had ample property to begin with. The problem was that a malcontent *kvetcher* lived next door, and demanded that something be done about the extension. But it wasn't just "something" that she was after. Under Canadian law at the time, if an extension had been built onto another person's property, purposely or inadvertently, the law said that the encroached-upon property's owner had the right to tear down the entire house of the neighbor, and not merely the addition. And this was the case with the *kvetcher*. She demanded that the entire house be demolished. Rav Shkop's host and his lawyer first fought with the old woman. They screamed and they yelled. He then tried entreating her, but she was not moved. He brought her flowers, then chocolates, and increasingly lavish gifts. And then there was more yelling.

Finally, upon Rav Shkop's visit, he asked him for an *eitza* (advice). Surely, Rav Shkop could think up some sort of solution. And this is what Rav Shkop had to say:

"Go to *shul*. Go as soon as possible the next time the *Torah* will be taken out. Make sure you're called up for an *aliya* (to be called up to the *Torah* to make a *berocha*). Afterward, go with your lawyer to speak with the woman one more time."

Was that all? Would getting an *aliya* save his house from being demolished? The next morning, Monday, he went to *shul*, and requested an *aliya* from the *Gabbai*. He called his lawyer after *minyan*, and the two rushed to the stubborn woman's house next door. And the man said to her, pleadingly, "This is the last time; I promise you that this is the last time I will bother you about the house. Please, PLEASE don't let the city tear down my home. It's only one foot of land. I'll cut away at the extension if you would like, but please not the entire home."

The woman, now confused, looked him in the eye, and said, "Tear down your house? Why would I want to tear down your house? Who would be such a miserable person to tear down a neighbor's entire home over a disputed foot of land? Please do as you like. It's all right by me."

The man and his lawyer were flabbergasted. They offered the woman a polite "thank you" and practically tiptoed out of the house in fear that she might regain her senses and retract her words.

The two, elated, went back to Rav Shkop for some clarity. After all, the woman had been adamant for months about tearing down the house. It just didn't make any sense. Rav Shkop explained, "It is brought down in the *Mishna Berura* that the person getting an *aliya* should follow along with the *Ba'al Koreh* (*Torah* reader) by actually looking down onto the *klaf* (parchment). One should also look into the *Torah*, close enough that he sees the *osiyos* (letters) during *hagbah* (the lifting of the *Torah*). During an *aliya*, however, he sees

the *osiyos* up close, and this brings him a special *zechus*. In addition, there is a special light that emanates from the *Torah*, and when one looks into the *Torah* he becomes infused with this light. You went to the woman's house almost directly after becoming infused with this light, and when she looked into your face, the radiance of the light touched her soul, and this woman, who was formerly irrational, unreasonable, foolish and absurd, now became

levelheaded, sensible, reasonable and decent. And this is how she came to change her mind."

This story became famous throughout the Jewish community of Montreal, and also among the family of Rav Shkop. The story is still told today by members of the family of Rav Zelig Epstein and other grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Rav Shkop.

[www.rebbestories.blogspot.com/2011/02/rav-shimon-shkop-in-montreal.html](http://www.rebbestories.blogspot.com/2011/02/rav-shimon-shkop-in-montreal.html)



## Rachel Imenu, 11<sup>th</sup> MarCheshvan

### Rachel Cries in Distress To Save Her Children

#### Kedushas Levi by Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev ~ Parshas Vayetzeh

And behold Rachel his daughter is coming with the sheep." (See Bereshis Rabbah 70:10) Since Rachel is coming with the flocks of sheep which refers to the Jewish people who are called Tzon Kedoshim— holy sheep and therefore she is constantly nullifying the prosecuting agents and causing peace up above, as is written in the sefer Chasdei Hashem regarding a story that whenever there is a time of trouble and calamity Rachel comes and cries out to cancel and nullify all the troubles from Bnei Yisroel



### From the Sefer Chasdei Hashem

The sefer Chasdei Hashem by Rav Moshe Mordechai Margolios was printed in Cracow in the year 1589. On page 47b he writes:

(Yishaya 53:7) As a sheep is silent before her shearers, so too our Matriarch Rachel is shorn and in distress. As the verse

says (Yirmiyahu 31:14) A voice in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel crying over her children refusing to be comforted."

I must copy a great matter here which I saw written regarding an incident that happened close to our times. In the country of Ashkenaz (Germany) there were several congregations that were forlorn and despondent in their distress from being harassed and maltreated and jailed.

Among them was a great man by the name of Rav Moshe Naiyas. They said that one time during the night they heard a bitter voice call out "Woe is to me, over my children!" They told of the incident to Rav Moshe Naiyas and he answered them: Do not worry and do not fear, because shortly we will all be able to return to our homes in peace. And so it was.

When he was questioned as to the crying they had heard he said that this was the voice of our matriarch Rachel, and that when Yisroel are distressed Rachel cries over her children and calls out before Hashem until He answers her saying stop your voice from crying.



## Rav Mencham Nachum of Czernoble, 11<sup>th</sup> of MarCheshvan

Me'or Eynaim

Rav Tal Zwecker heard this story from Rav Moshe Weinberger Mara DeAsra of Aish Kodesh, Woodmere, New York, who heard it from the ba'al ha'maase himself (the protagonist of the story). There was once a talmid chacham who was not a chassid. Unfortunately, as he grew older his eyesight deteriorated and he was slowly becoming blind, rachman litzlan. His family urged him to visit Rav Yoel of Satmar, well known for his blessings and their wondrous ability to miraculously aid and heal other. However, he refused stating that he was no chassid and would not go to a chassidish rebbe for a beracha.

Eventually as his eyesight grew worse and he could no longer study or learn Torah his family convinced him to visit Rav Yoel'ish not because of his fame or stature as a wonderworking rebbe but as his fame as a talmid chacham, for the Gemara tells us to request the blessings and prayers of a talmid chacham for the sick. Rav Yoel, told him that he should study the chassidishe sefer Me'or Eynaim (which means the light of the eyes) and that that would aid his failing eyesight -Tzaddik gozer, a righteous tzaddik decrees and Hashem fulfills. The more he studied the more he regained his eyesight until Baruch Hashem he was able to see normally once again!

Rav Chaim Meir Hagar author of Imrei Chaim of Vizhnitz once told his chassidim on the occasion of the Czernobler's yahrzeit, that the sefer Me'or Eynaim, Se Macht Lichtig Der Oigen – It enlightens the eyes!

He once told the following story:

During one of the Me'or Eynaim's many travels he stayed at a Jewish inn and spent the night. The innkeeper and his wife were simple Jews and when the Czernobler began to recite Tikkun Chatzos and when

the sounds of his loud sighs, moans and crying reached the ears of his hosts they were startled.

“Surely our guest is not feeling well,” declared the innkeeper's wife. “Please go and see to him.” The innkeeper went downstairs with a candle in hand, and as it cast its light in the darkness he was startled to hear the moaning, groaning, sighing and crying continue to come from the guestroom. He knocked and opened the door apologizing, “I am sorry to disturb you, but I overheard your pain, are you not feeling well, how can we help you?”

The Rebbe turned to his host and explained, “Thank G-d I am Baruch Hashem feeling fine, however I was just reciting Tikkun Chatzos.” “Hmmm. . .Tikkun Chatzos?” asked the puzzled innkeeper scratching his head and pulling at his beard, “what's that?” “It is the prayer recited over the destruction of our holy temple, the beis hamikdash,” explained the Rebbe patiently. “What is the beis hamikdash?” asked the innkeeper.

The Czernobler proceeded to explain how all the Jews once dwelled in the holy land, and how Hashem had commanded them to build a temple, and how they had worshipped there before it was destroyed due to our many sins and we were dispersed in the exile. “And soon,” explained the Rebbe with a note of yearning and longing, “Moshiach will come and gather us all in from the exile, bring us back up to Eretz Yisroel, surely you anticipate his coming any day as we all do?”

At this query the simple innkeeper grew even more perplexed, “Hmmm. . .I am not sure let me go and ask my wife.” He went back upstairs, told his wife about their guests special prayers of the temple, explained to her what he had said and asked her opinion on the matter. “Go and

tell our guest,” said the innkeeper's wife, “that we have Baruch Hashem saved some money, here we own a flock of geese, some property and we have a way of life, why should we give all that up and move to Eretz Yisroel when Moshiach arrives?” The innkeeper turned and relayed his wife's words to the Rebbe. “Go and tell your wife that here in galus,” explained the Rebbe, “while we are in exile among the nations, the goyim torture and hurt us making our lives difficult and miserable, in Eretz Yisroel that will all end.”

Nodding his head in understanding the innkeeper went back to his wife and related to her what the Rebbe said adding “Don’t you remember what happened last week when Ivan, our neighbor got drunk and smashed all our windows? In Eretz Yisroel the Rebbe promises we will not have these problems!” he stated. The innkeeper's wife thought a bit and then her eyes filled with a light of understanding

and her expression filled with comprehension.

“Aha, I've got it! Go and tell the Rebbe, I have a solution. Here we are comfortable and settled. We own property and the only problem are the goyim. Tell the Rebbe that when Moshiach comes he will solve all our problems by taking the goyim with him to Eretz Yisroel!”

When the holy Czernobler heard the innkeeper's answer, he said “Now I understand the meaning of the verse in Parshas VaEra Shemos 6:6 Hashem says “I will take you out from the sufferings of Mitzrayim,” I will cause you to no longer be able to suffer and endure the exile and then you will want to go out. That is our sin,” exclaimed the Rebbe, “we have become so settled to living in the exile in our complacency we are happy and believe there can be nothing better, how wrong we are!”



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 טערקלטויב זי"ע מבריד  
 אשת הרה"ח מו"ה אברהם חיים ע"ה גאלדענבערג

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

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

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

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

נפטרה בש"ט בת תשעים שנה  
 ביום כ"ד לחודש כסלו (ערב חנוכה) שנת תשע"ח לפ"ק

תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה

ותקים לתחייה לקץ הימין מהרה תנ'צ'ב'ה'



# Zera Shimshon



# Noach

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 Reggio, 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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 מיכאל זצ"ל

בעל הזרע שמשון זיע"א

ויה"ר שיתקיימו בנו ברכותיו של אותו צדיק

זרע של קיימא

שרה חנה בת לאה

שרה בת מרים

פעצלא בת יפה

לרפואה שלימה

תינוקת מרים בת אפרת

רוני דינה בת סימי

דוד בן שרה

לזוג הגון במהרה

אלישבע נעמי בת רחל

לאה בת שרה חנה

לאה בת מרים

The Zera Shimshon points out that throughout the pessukim that lead up to Hashem's decision to bring the mabul, the reason given keeps on switching between adultery and theft.

First the passuk says (Bereishis 6:11), ותשחת הארץ, *the land became destroyed*, which refers to adultery, then the passuk says, ותמלא הארץ חמס, *the land was full of robbery*, implying that both these sins were the factors that lead up the mabul. However, the next passuk only mentions השחתה, it says, והנה נשחתה כי השחית כל בשר, *Hashem saw that the land was destroyed and mankind had destroyed his way* etc. which refers to adultery. There is no mention of theft. Following that, Hashem tells Noach that the time has come to destroy the world since the land is filled with theft - there is no mention of adultery?

Another question that the Zera Shimshon asks is that Rashi brings the Yerushalmi that says that wherever immorality is found, Hashem sends a punishment that does not differentiate between the good and the bad people. Rashi quotes this to explain the punishment of the mabul. However, Rashi himself brings a Midrash that says that the sin that made Hashem finally decide to bring the mabul was חמס, theft. The Yefeh Toar writes that these two Medrashim cannot be reconciled. Nevertheless, says the Zera Shimshon, they must be!

The Zera Shimshon answers the questions as follows.

The Gemara (Berachos 32a) relates that Moshe Rabbeinu told Hashem that the reason why the Jewish people sinned and made the Golden Calf was because Hashem gave them too much gold. Such luxury causes sin. The Gemara says that Hashem agreed with Moshe Rabbeinu.

The same is definitely true with the generation of the mabul. The Gemara (Sanhedrin 38a) says that Hashem let them live in a state similar to the world to come. Therefore, says that Zera Shimshon, although adultery is terrible, they could have tried to erroneously excuse themselves that they had so many luxuries and therefore could not help but sinning.

However, the fact that they were involved in theft disproved this since if they had so much good why did they steal. This revealed their true colors; they were wicked people and they now showed that they deserved punishment for all their other sins as well.

With this the Zera Shimshon answers all the questions he asked. The Midrash that says that the decree of the mabul was signed due to theft means that it was theft that proved that they should be punished for adultery since there was no way to blame it anymore on the luxuries. Hence, the Yerushalmi that says that the mabul was cause by adultery doesn't contradict the aforementioned Midrash since the punishment in the end was in fact for adultery, and it was theft that disproved any possible excuse.

Based on this, the Zera Shimshon explains the pessukim as well. First the passuk mentions that the world was destroyed, which refers to adultery, however, the passuk ends off that the world was filled with robbery since this proves that they indeed are deserving of full punishment for adultery. Then, the next passuk only mentions adultery since this is the real cause of the mabul. And then, when Hashem tells Noach about the mabul, He explains that the reason He is bringing the mabul is justified by the fact that the world is filled with thievery.

לזכות חיים דוד בן טוביא חוה להצלחה וסייעתא דשמיא בכל מעשה ידיו ובכל הענינים

זכות רבינו זיע"א יעמוד לזיווג הגון בקרוב עבור שושנה נחמה בת חנה פעכא ולרפואה שלימה ליוכבד בת דבורה ולכל משפחתה

שימלא הקב"ה משאלות לבם לטובה במהרה

ולזכות רבקה רויזא בת פייגא לזיווג הגון בקרוב בתוך שאר ישראל

לזכות החפץ בעילום שמו לזיווג בניו ובנותיו בקרוב בזכות רבינו זיע"א

## *MeOros Ramchal Noach*

### **How and Why did Noach save Og Melech haBashan?**

**And the Lord said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, for it is you that I have seen as a righteous man before Me in this generation. (*Bereishis* 7:1)**

The *Ramchal* explains that Noach and the Ark paralleled the corresponding attributes of *Yesod* – Foundation and *Malchus* – Royalty and this is why Noach who was a righteous man – a *tzadik yesod olam* was commanded to enter the ark to unite *Yesod* with *Malchus*.

The *Ramchal* cites a *Midrash Chazal* (*Pirkei DeRabbi Eliezer* Chapter 23) that Og made a deal with Noach, he Og would be Noach's slave forever if he would be saved from the flood.

The *Ramchal* goes on to explain that Og Melech haBashan was the opposing force of darkness the *klippah* of *yesod* – therefore since Noach was the *tzaddik yesod* he had the job of opening up a hole to feed and sustain Og so he could survive (*Yalkut Shimoni* Noach 56) holding onto the ark (*Targum Yonason ben Uziel Bereishis* 14:13).

The reason Og was allowed to survive was because when the forces of darkness and the *klippas* willingly submit themselves to be subservient to the forces of *kedushah* it is improper to cut them down and destroy them, rather it is better to rectify them via *tikkun* and let them survive as servants – subservient to *kedushah* just as Og became Noach's slave.

Therefore, this incident hints at how the *klippah* of *Yesod* is subservient to the *sefirah* of *Yesod* behind which it stands, and this is how Og was saved by Noach.

However, even when the *klippas* are subservient it is improper to bring them into *kedushah* therefore Og did not enter the *teyva* but hung on outside like a servant waits on his master outside his room and chamber and the *kedusha* sustain them while they remain outside, therefore Noach did not allow Og to enter, rather he fed him while he remained outside.

### **The Generation of the Flood**

During *Dor haMabul* the powers of darkness called the other side – *sitra achra* grew so strong that *Hashem* had to destroy them and remove them entirely from the world. Regarding this we have the saying - *Kol haschalos kashos* – all beginnings are hard & difficult. Once evil was eradicated Noach and Avrohom arrived and the world became settled and they began to teach and announce *Hashem's* presence in the world.

Noach

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Paris • Orh 'Haïm Ve Moché

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

Jérusalem • Pninei David

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

Ashdod • Orh 'Haim Ve Moshe

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

Ra'anana • Kol 'Haïm

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



Hilula

6 - Rabbi Shlomo David Yehoshua, the Admor of Slonim hy"d

7 - Rabbi Meir Shapiro of Lublin, founder of Daf Yomi

8 - Rabbi Nachum of Horodna

9 - Rabbi Shimon Shkop, author of 'Sha'arei Yasher'

10 - Rabbi David Berish Weidenfeld of Tshibin

11 - Rachel Imeinu a"h

12 - Rabbi Yehuda Tzadka, Rosh Yeshiva 'Parat Yosef'

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

# Pachad David

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

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



MASKIL LEDAVID

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

## The Merciful One Wants Your Heart

**"This is how you should make it"** (Bereishit 6:15)

Chazal expound (Mechilta Shemot 12:2) on the verse, "This month shall be for you", that the wording 'this' teaches that Moshe Rabbeinu found it hard to grasp how the moon should appear at the beginning of the month until Hashem showed him an image of what it should look like. We also find this expression concerning making the Menorah, as it says, "This is the workmanship of the Menorah", and similarly concerning the mitzvah of giving half a shekel it says, "This shall they give. All these expressions share the same sentence structure, with the word "this" implying that Hashem showed them with His finger, meaning Hashem had to show Moshe the form because it was a complicated matter.

According to this, it is hard to understand what difficulty Noach had with building the Teivah. Did it require a special expertise that Noach could not fathom how to build it, to the extent that Hashem had to show him? From the wording of the verse "This is how you should make it", it is clear that Hashem showed him an image of how it should look. However, what was the difficulty in building a simple Teivah? If one wishes to say that maybe Noach was not proficient in the art of creating, it cannot be, for his father Lemech named him so saying, "This one will bring us rest (ונמחני) from...the toil of our hands" (Bereishit 5:29). Rashi explains that this was said in reference to the invention of farming tools (which brought them relief), which was attributed to Noach. This shows us that Noach was skilled in construction, if so it seems surprising that Hashem had to show him an image of how the Teivah should look. The main goal of the Teivah was that it should be a place of refuge for men and animals, it contained no inherent intentions or difficult-to-understand allusions, so what was Noach's difficulty?

With *siyata dishmaya* I would like to suggest that Noach's difficulty was in grasping how the Teivah could contain and accommodate all the animals, seven of each pure species and two of each impure species, while the size of the Teivah was, in all, only three hundred amot in length and fifty amot in width (approx. 150 x 25 meters). Besides, how would there be room in the Teivah for enough provisions for each animal for an entire year? Noach also grappled with the difficulty of being able to nourish, on his own, all the numerous animals in the Teivah. Some animals eat in the morning, some in the afternoon, and others at night. If so, this would hardly leave time for him to rest!

Furthermore, how would the Teivah itself survive the boiling waters of the Flood and not fall apart from the extreme heat which rose to several thousand degrees? How would the pitch with which the Teivah was covered, not melt? Noach was also commanded to make a window for the Teivah, as it says (Bereishit 6:16), "A window shall you make for the Ark". Why was the door of the Teivah not enough? And concerning the re'eim (a giant beast)

and Og king of the Bashan (a giant), Noach wondered how they would manage to enter the Teivah due to their size. Chazal tell us (Zevachim 113b) that a miracle was performed for the re'eim and Og, and the waters at the side of the Teivah cooled down and that is where they stood. Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer (Chapter 23) brings that Og king of the Bashan sat on one of the steps of the ladders of the Teivah and swore to Noach and his sons that he will be an eternal slave to them. What did Noach do? He punctured a hole at the side of the Teivah through which he sent food to Og every day, and that is how he survived, as it says, "For only Og king of the Bashan was left of the remaining Rephaim" (Devarim 3:11). All these quandaries made it hard for Noach to understand how to proceed with making the Teivah.

So Hashem showed and taught him how to build the Teivah, together with strengthening his great faith in Hashem Yitbarach. With each board of wood, Noach pledged his faith and trust in Hashem that He will sustain the Teivah, and annulled his own intellect and understanding of how his construction of the Teivah will help save him and the world. Only through the power of the great faith that he had in the Creator, were those miracles performed for him and he both survived and endured life in the Teivah. For had he built the Teivah while his heart was full of doubts in Hashem, then G-d forbid the Teivah would not have survived and this could have endangered the entire world. Therefore, Hashem had to guide him in constructing the Teivah so that it should be built without reservations and with complete faith in Hashem, and indeed Noach believed wholly in the Creator of the World. Even though Chazal tell us that Noach's faith was less than perfect as he believed and did not believe that the Flood would come to the world. No doubt only because of his elevated level, Heaven was more meticulous with him but certainly, he possessed great faith and the proof is that the Teivah did not sink and he and all those with him in the Teivah were saved.

This teaches us that Hashem performs miracles for a person in accordance with the degree of his faith. This is the implication of "Hashem is your protective Shade at your right hand" (Tehillim 121:5). Trust and faith in Hashem are comparable to a person's shadow. Just as if a person straightens up one finger opposite his shadow he will see only one finger, and if he lifts up his entire hand, he will see the reflection of his entire hand, so it is the same with trust in Hashem. If one has a small amount of faith in Hashem, He shows him a small amount of His Divine Providence, and if he has great faith, he experiences a great measure of Divine Providence.

In conclusion, the foundation upon which the world is based, is faith and trust in Hashem. This is the meaning of "But the righteous person shall live through his faith" (Chabakuk 2:4). May it be His will that we strengthen ourselves greatly in this holy approach of faith and trust in Hashem Yitbarach, Amen v'Amen.



## Walking in their Ways

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

### Praying for the Success of the Operation

One who tries to fill his days and years with Torah and Yirat Shamayim, and strengthens himself with complete faith in Hashem the G-d of Israel, then Hashem adds days to his life and grants him health, nachat and peace of mind so that he can continue in his holy service.

I heard the following story about an elderly gentleman whose life was in grave danger r"l, and was about to undergo a most complicated operation. The Chinese surgeon explained that the chances of the operation being successful were extremely slight. However, the elderly Jew who believed in Hashem with complete faith, asked the doctor to say a few words before commencing the operation: "With G-d's help the operation should be successful"...

At first, the doctor laughed at the sick man's request and said, "I am not Jewish and do not believe in anything besides medicine, and the medical prognosis is that there are the minutest chances that you will survive this complicated operation". However, the patient did not let up and passionately begged the doctor to recite those words. The doctor, realizing that he was facing an innocent individual who was totally convinced of his faith, eventually relented even though he was a complete heretic. When the patient woke up after the operation was over, these were the words with which the doctor addressed him: "You should know that your life was given to you as a gift. The operation was successful beyond all expectations, despite the complications being even more significant than the original diagnosis. Besides, throughout the operation, I felt that my hands were moving as if on their own, and an unseen Upper Hand was in fact working on you and saving your life." The doctor added to the surprised patient, "I am sure that the words I recited as per your request, that the operation should be successful with G-d's help, were the cause of the operation's success, and I am prepared to promise that from now on, before any feat that I carry out, I will ask for G-d's help." Indeed, with Hashem's kindness, this elderly man, who seemingly had little chance of surviving, lived for many more years.

From this impressive story, we learn that there can be a reality where indeed the time has come for a person to pass away, as was the case with this sick man who was critically ill and under natural circumstances had no chance of surviving the complicated operation. But since his faith in Hashem was so great, and he thereby merited strengthening the non-Jewish surgeon's faith in the G-d of Israel, he therefore merited that Hashem granted him long life since for this kind of person, it is fitting and desirable to add days to his life.

May it be His will that we all merit serving our Creator sincerely and completely. May Hashem increase our days and years of a good life so that we may serve Him, Amen v'Amen.

## The Haftarah

**"Sing out, O barren one"** (Yeshaya 54)

The connection to the Parsha: In his prophecy, Yeshaya mentions the Flood where Hashem swore never to bring another flood, "For [like] the waters of Noach this shall be to Me", and the Flood is the central topic of Parshat Noach.

Ashkenazim add the chapter, **"O afflicted, storm-tossed one"**.

## Guard Your Tongue

### Not Being Meticulous About Observing a Custom

It is forbidden to relate that someone transgressed a commandment, regardless if it is a Torah or Rabbinical obligation, or even a restrictive safeguard that the Sages established, or even just an accepted custom. The Torah views these acts in a negative light, therefore relating the matter involves detrimental speech.

Therefore, one is forbidden to relate that someone transgressed a certain halacha, even in the case where many people are not meticulous about observing this



## In Our Father's Path

### Eating Fish on Shabbat Noach is a Segulah for a Good Life

Eating gourmet fish on this Shabbat of Parshat Noach is a timely act, and is certainly auspicious for a good life. For it became clear that everything that was on dry land died, but the fish of the sea did not die, as the Midrash tells us (Bereishit Rabba 32:11), "'of everything that was on dry land, died', this implies that the fish did not die".

This wonderful segulah of meriting 'good life' by eating fish on Shabbat Parshat Noach, is mentioned in the name of Rabbi Avraham Eiger of Lublin zt"l ('Shevet m'Yehuda'). It correlates with the wonderful statement that emanated from the pure mouth of the holy 'Ateret Tzvi' of Ziditshov zt"l: "Rabbi Shlomoleh of Karlin would say that one who does not eat fish in honor of the holy Shabbat, should be more concerned than the matter about which Chazal say (Yoma 88a) that one should be concerned the entire year. I add to this that one who eats fish in honor of the holy Shabbat, does not need to worry at all in the coming week."

The holy Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov zt"l also promises a three-fold blessing to those who eat fish on Shabbat. As he writes in his sefer 'Bnei Yissachar' (Ma'amarei Shabbatot 1:11): "A reason for this choice mitzvah of eating fish on Shabbat, is that we find in the work of creation that a blessing was given to three things, on three consecutive days. A blessing for the fish on the fifth day, a blessing for man on the sixth day and a blessing for Shabbat on the seventh day. As we know, a three-ply thread will not quickly unravel, so man who eats fish in honor of Shabbat will be blessed with a three-fold blessing and will not quickly be severed."

The 'Dorshei Reshumot' also explains that this matter is hinted to in the words sung by the sweet singer of Israel (Tehillim 23:2) "In lush meadows He lays me down". The Hebrew word 'דשא', meadows, is an acronym for 'אדם, שבת, דגים', fish, Shabbat, man, meaning that these three items enable receiving the three-fold blessing on the day of rest. This is implied by the continuation of the verse "in tranquil waters He leads me", meaning the tranquility of Shabbat.

Why specifically was fish chosen as a Shabbat delicacy? Rabbeinu Yosef Chaim of Bavel zya"a, in his sefer 'Ben Yehoyoda', quotes the Midrash, "'Of everything that was on dry land, died', this implies that the fish of the sea did not die", and explains that fish was chosen as a Shabbat delicacy to teach us that the fire of Gehinom does not have power on Shabbat, just as the fire of the hot waters of the Flood had no power over the fish, in the generation that was judged with boiling water."



## Pearls of the Chag

### Righteous and Perfect Versus Righteous Alone

*"These are the offspring of Noach, Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generations" (Bereishit 6:9)*

Here the verse testifies about Noach "righteous man, perfect" and later on (ibid 7:1) it says "Then Hashem said to Noach, 'Come to the Ark, you and all your household, for it is you that I have seen to be righteous before Me in this generation'. Rashi quotes the Gemarah that from here [the fact that Noach is described as righteous alone] we learn that one only says part of a person's praise in his presence.

The Beit Yosef explains the change in the description of Noach in this way: Noach lived for several generations. He lived through the generation of the Flood and also the generation of the Dispersion. In the generation of the Flood, the main test was immorality, while the generation of the Dispersion sinned by denying Hashem's existence.

The measure of a righteous person (tzaddik) is one who constrains himself from immorality, just as Yosef Hatzaddik was called so because he withstood the test of holiness. However, the description 'perfect' (tamim) is awarded to one who conducts himself with perfect faith, as it says, "You shall be wholehearted with Hashem, your G-d".

At the beginning of the Parsha the Torah describes Noach as "a righteous man, perfect in his generations", for throughout the generations that Noach lived, he was both a 'tzaddik', during the generation of the Flood when he constrained himself from immorality and 'tamim' (perfect) during the generation of the Dispersion when he withstood the test of heresy. However, later on when Hashem spoke to him just before he entered the Teivah during the generation of the Flood, the verse says "for it is you that I have seen to be righteous before Me in this generation" for in this particular generation of the Flood, the description of tzaddik was appropriate.

### They Could Not Be Punished Through Their Money

*"For the earth is filled with robbery" (Bereishit 6:13)*

Rashi writes, "Their decree was sealed only because of robbery". They committed other seemingly more serious sins such as immorality and idolatry, so why was their decree sealed specifically because of robbery?

The 'Yalkut Hagirshuni' writes that it is known that the Merciful One does not inflict people straight away, as we find with the affliction of tzara'at. At first, a person finds the affliction on his house, after that on his clothing and if he still does not repent, only then will his body be afflicted. If so, why here with the generation of the Flood did Hashem not harm their money first? Why was it decreed right away that they be annihilated from the world?

The answer is since their money wasn't theirs! All they possessed was stolen property, so there was no other possibility but to punish the people themselves. Now we understand why their decree was sealed on account of robbery. It was robbery that left no option but to obliterate them.

### The Accuser Himself is Brazen

*"And the earth had become filled with robbery" (Bereishit 6:11)*

The sefer 'Pirchei Shoshana', written by a talmid of Maran the Chafetz Chaim, quotes a nice explanation that he heard from the Gaon and tzaddik, the Chafetz Chaim zt"l. He questioned, the generation of the Flood transgressed serious sins such as idolatry and immorality which are more severe than robbery, so why was their decree sealed specifically because of robbery?

He answered according to a Chazal, "A basket full of sins, which sin is the first to indict? Robbery". Why particularly robbery? He explains the reason according to the Mishna (Avot 4:11) "He who fulfills even a single mitzvah gains himself a single advocate, and he who commits even a single transgression gains himself a single accuser." The angel that is created from the mitzvah or transgression, is created in the same way that the act was committed, for example a mitzvah performed with alacrity creates an agile angel, and one who performs a mitzvah sluggishly creates a sluggish angel, and so forth in all situations.

The act of robbery is usually committed with brazenness, therefore the accusing angel that is created from this act is also brazen. It is possible that even though in a basket full of sins there are many different accusers, nevertheless none of them is so impetuous as to accuse because they were not created with the attribute of brazenness. It is only the brazen angel that was created from robbery who is impetuous. This is why in the generation of the Flood, robbery accused first and foremost, and because of it the decree was sealed.

### The Generation of the Flood Sinned Intentionally and Consistently

The Mekubalim tell us that the generation of the Flood possessed exceedingly elevated and holy souls and they had the power to strive spiritually and achieve the highest level in the service of Hashem.

But Chazal have told us that one who is greater than his friend, his Evil Inclination is proportionally greater. This is how the Yetzer Hara was victorious and succeeded in defeating them, bringing them down to the depths and leaving them bereft of the ability to climb out. One who sins purposely and intends to be wicked, and despite recognizing the Creator he deliberately rebels against him, Hashem hates him and wishes to annihilate him, as it says (Malachi 1:2-3), "yet I loved Ya'akov. But I hated Esav". Generally, even the wicked Hashem does not hate but rather waits for them to repent and return to Him, as children who return to their father's lap. If so, why here does Hashem say "But I hated Esav"?

The answer is that Ya'akov and Esav originally studied Torah together, and certainly on Shabbat when all of them sat around the Shabbat table, both Ya'akov and Esav merited observing the holy and righteous conduct of the Avot. Ya'akov Avinu a"h indeed absorbed from them an immense measure of holiness, Torah, and Yirat Shamayim. Esav too was given all the conditions to be righteous and pious like his brother Ya'akov, but he intentionally and deliberately did not want to draw upon the holiness of the Avot, and his heart did not want to absorb the purity of their spirit. He chose the path of evil for himself as a way of life. He wished to live a life of abandon and debauchery even though he knew and recognized the correct path, the path of Torah.

This kind of person who is deliberately wicked, Hashem cannot bear him for he is not compelled to act in this way, he does not sin unintentionally. Esav knew the Creator yet nevertheless purposely rebelled against him, and this is why Hashem said, "But I hated Esav".

This was also the case with the generation of the Flood. They too sinned intentionally and persistently turned away from the path of Hashem, knowingly and deliberately. Even though they were aware of their merits, and knew that they possessed elevated and powerful souls and that they were descendants of Adam HaRishon who was Hashem's handiwork, and also merited seeing Cain repent and observed the sign that Hashem inscribed on his forehead. They nevertheless sinned and committed the most serious sins and distanced themselves from Hashem purposely and with insolence. That is why Hashem hated them and wished to wipe out their name from the world, for Hashem said, what do I gain from giving them life, they will continue to sin against Me and transgress My will and disregard My Torah. Therefore "I will blot out Man whom I created from the face of the ground".



## TIMELY MESSAGE

**T**he Torah tells us that the Flood was on the earth for forty days, and during those forty days all earthly life ceased, as it says (Bereishit 7:21-22), "And all flesh that moves upon the earth expired...All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, of everything that was on dry land, died". In addition, it also says, (ibid 7:23), "And he blotted out all the existence that was on the face of the ground, from man to animals to creeping things and to the birds of the heavens; and they were blotted out from the earth".

Rabbeinu Chaim ben Attar zya"n, in his holy sefer 'Ohr Hachaim', explains that besides the expiration that is mentioned in the first verse, all the remains of the dead were also wiped away through the profusion of hot and cold water. All the corpses became like water and it appeared as if they had never existed.

With this, apparently, the role of the Flood came to an end.

But the Torah writes differently. "And the waters strengthened on the earth a hundred and fifty days" (ibid 24). Meaning, for another one hundred and fifty days the waters continued increasing on the earth, until "G-d remembered Noach and all the beasts and all the animals that were with him in the Ark, and G-d caused a spirit to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, and the rain from heaven was restrained." (Bereishit 8:1-2).

What was the purpose of this additional rain?

The Holy Ohr Hachaim goes on to explain: "The intention was to announce that Hashem commanded the waters to strengthen. When Hashem commanded the waters in the Six Days of Creation, "Let the waters teem" (ibid 1:20), so too now He commanded them to increase. That is why we find that after the entire universe was wiped out, the verse says "and the waters strengthened", although this was seemingly unnecessary for even the corpses of the creatures had been wiped out.

The true reason why the waters strength-

ened is simply that the waters were engaged in fulfilling the command which Hashem had ordered them, and they were not supposed to find reasons why not to strengthen even though the entire universe had already been wiped out.

Just like the waters of the Flood, we too are obligated to fulfill Hashem's wish without making all kinds of calculations and without trying to understand the purpose behind fulfilling various mitzvot.

### I Cannot Do Such a Thing

The sefer "Sha'al Avicha V'yagedcha" brings the following story, which proves that if a person is determined to observe Hashem's commands just as he was instructed without changing an iota, or trying to adapt them to the reality of life, as we see fit, he merits special Divine Assistance.

In the first year of his Rabbinical leadership as the Rav of Brisk, a Jew was caught transgressing the law and was sentenced to death. According to the government regulations, anyone sentenced to death was given the opportunity of reciting a confession before he was killed. A Jewish person recited vidui with his Rav, and I'havdil, a non-Jew with a priest.

And that is what happened in this case too.

At the appointed time of execution, in the midst of the Shabbat day, a special messenger was sent to the Brisker Rav, in the name of the regional governor, who presented him with a document ordering him to accompany the messenger to the jail to recite vidui with the Jew who was sentenced to death.

When the Rav saw the order, he replied shortly and forcefully: "I am not going."

And why did the Rav refuse? He was of the opinion that by going and saying vidui with the offender, this would hasten his death, for until he says vidui they would not kill him.

His refusal was firm and uncompromising. When they tried to explain that if he does not accompany the messenger, the government will order a different Rav to come, he replied, "If they do this, I cannot stop them, but as for myself, I am not doing such a thing since it is forbidden according to Torah law.

The messenger left and returned to the governor empty-handed. On hearing the turn of events the governor was filled with rage and hurried to send a more senior official to the Rav's home.

He arrived and not only forcefully demanded that the Rav accompany him to the prisoner, but also added harsh, serious threats and told him unequivocally that he

will suffer for his refusal, for as a Rav he is obligated to carry out the instructions of the law.

But he too returned empty-handed and told the governor that the Brisker Rav had not changed his mind.

On hearing these words, the governor flew into a rage and personally went over to the Rav's home.

When the townspeople saw the governor's carriage outside the Rav's home, they were filled with dread. They surrounded the Rav shouting, "The Rav is bringing destruction to the town! The Rav is putting all of us into danger!"

But the Rav remained firm and did not change his mind. He once again made it clear to them that it does not occur to him to transgress a Torah command for the sake of fulfilling this order.

Indeed, even when the governor stood before him and gave over the order in addition to warnings and open threats that he will be punished for his refusal with the full severity of the law, the Rav was not deterred and did not accede to his demand.

Filled with anger, the governor left the Rav's home without adding another word.

The congregants remained in the Rav's room, frightened and expecting the worst...

The News; Pardon was Granted

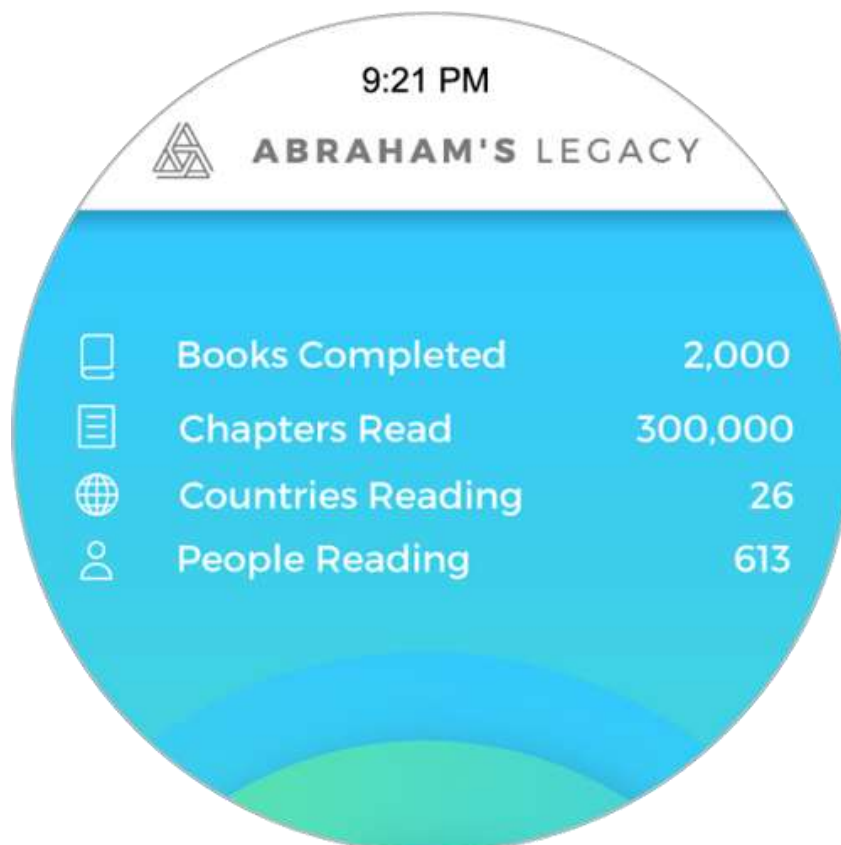
Within a short time, the entire town of Brisk was in an uproar. There were those who sided with the Rav and those in opposition. There were some congregants who agreed with the Rav's decision not to deviate one iota from the Torah law, and others who forcefully claimed that he was obligated to carry out the governor's order despite the Torah law, so as not to endanger the rest of the congregants.

But both sides never imagined what would happen a few hours later, in the form of a telegram that arrived at the governors' home on Motzei Shabbat, informing him of the astonishing news that pardon had been granted to the Jew who had been sentenced to death!

Now everyone understood that if not for the Rav's stubbornness, that pardon would not have been applicable... It was specifically the Rav's uncompromising devotion to Hashem's command that saved a Jewish life! (Umatok Ha'or)

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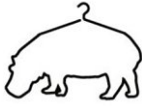
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