

ME'OROS HA'TZADDIKIM

LIGHTS OF OUR RIGHTEOUS TZADDIKIM

THIS WEEK!
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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)

PINCHAS

❖ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ❖

HOW PINCHAS SAVED ZIMRI

"The name of the Ish Yisrael who was slain, who was slain with the Midianite woman" (25:14).

The *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* is bothered by the seemingly repetitive mention of the word "slain" or "struck (down)" in our *pasuk*, as opposed to the single occurrence of the word in the following *pasuk* referring to the Midianite princess, Kozbi. He tells us, therefore, that this *pasuk* can be read in one of two ways: either as "The name [and soul] of the *Ish Yisrael* was struck down [because] he was struck by the Midianite woman [spiritually]", or as "The name of the *Ish Yisrael* who was struck down [physically by Pinchas], he was struck by the Midianite woman [spiritually, through his relationship with her]".

The *Ohr HaChaim* points out that Zimri was struck twice: physically, his body was struck down and slain by Pinchas who, in a zealous act of righteousness, killed him; and his soul was also struck down by his relationship with Kozbi, the Midianite princess, which defiled his name and his inner essence, the Jewish soul. The *Ohr HaChaim* says that this is why the *pasuk* points out the name of the *Ish Yisrael* - because we know that a person's name influences and expresses his soul's nature (*Berachos 7b, Yoma 83b*). When Zimri sinned with Kozbi, he fatally wounded his own name, together with his Jewish soul, dealing himself a lethal blow even before Pinchas slew him.

Nonetheless, the *Ohr HaChaim* concludes in the name of the *Mekubolim* that "*Lo Yidach Mimenu Nidach*" - no one is ever left behind; there is hope and a *tikkun* (rectification) for every Jew, no matter what. All the sparks of *kedusha* will eventually be ingathered and uplifted. No

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matter how far a Jew might stray and - Heaven forbid - blemish or defile his soul, *Hashem* guarantees that it will be rectified and will return to its root source in the end.

Therefore, says the *Ohr HaChaim*, the *pasuk* still calls Zimri an *Ish Yisrael* - an Israelite, a Jew. The *pasuk* testifies that although his act was sinful, and, since he was killed in the midst of sin, he surely did not have time to do *teshuva*, nonetheless he is still called *Yisrael* - he still achieved his *tikkun*. How? Pinchas did that for him. Pinchas' act was not a random act of vigilante justice or murder; it was a zealous act of righteousness *LiSh'ma* - for the honor and glory of *Hashem*, with pure motivations. Thus, by killing Zimri, Pinchas did him the ultimate favor and was *mesaken* him, there by atoning for his sin and elevating his soul.



הילולא

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hebrew Tefilla for Lighting a Yahrzeit or Hilula Candle

[תְּפִילָה הַנִּמְצָאת בְּסֵפֶר אֶלֶף הַמִּגֵּן מִבְּעַל הַפֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ עַל פְּרֻשַׁת וַיֵּצֵא עֲמוּד כ"ד]

הַרְיֵנִי מִדְּלִיק נֵר זֶה לְמִנוּחַת וּלְעִלּוּי נְשָׁמַת אָבִי / אִמִּי מוֹרְתִי / הַצַּדִּיק _____
בֶּן/בַּת _____, יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלְקֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁתִּקְבַּל בְּרַחֲמִים
וּבְרָצוֹן כָּל מַעֲשֵׂה הַטּוֹב שֶׁאֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה, בֵּין בְּמַחְשָׁבָה, בֵּין בְּדִבּוּר, בֵּין בְּמַעֲשֵׂה וְיִהְיֶה הַכֹּל
לְזָכוֹת וּלְמִנוּחַת וּלְעִלּוּי לְנִשְׁמוֹת עַמְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּבְפֶרֶט לְנַפְשׁ רוּחַ וְנִשְׁמָה שֶׁל אָבִי / אִמִּי /
צַדִּיק _____. יְהִי רְצוֹן שְׁתִּהְיֶנָּה נְפֻשׁוֹתֵיהֶם 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



☞ GEDOLIM BE'MISASAM YOSER ☞



YAHARZEITS BEGINNING SHABBOS PINCHAS

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

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

☞ 19th of Tammuz ~ Begins Friday Night (Jul 10th)

- * **Rav Yitzchok Isaac** *ben* Rav Yoel Leib *HaLevi* Herzog was born December 3, 1888 (29th of *Kislev* 5649) in Łomża, Poland. He became chief *Rav* of Ireland and later *Eretz Yisrael* (1888–1959). His father, Rav Yoel Leib Herzog (1865–1933) was chief *Rav* of Paris. From his birth until his sixteenth birthday, Rav Yitzchok studied at the feet of his father. He was given *semicha* by Rav Yaakov Willowski (the *Ridbaz*, *mechaber* of a *peirush* on the *Yerushalmi*). In 1916, he was named chief *Rav* of Belfast, Ireland. Later he served in the same post in Dublin, and later he became chief *Rav* of all of Ireland. Following the passing of Rav Avrohom Yitzchok *HaKohen* Kook in 1935, Rav Herzog was invited to become *Eretz Yisrael's* second *Ashkenazi* chief *Rav*. He served in that capacity from 1933 until his *petira*. He is the *mechaber* of the *Heichal Yitzchok*, (5719/1959);
- * **Rav Yona Stenzel**, initiator of *Halocha* and *Mishna Yomi*, (5729/1969);
- * **Rav Bentzion Abba Shaul** *ben* Rav Eliyohu, *Rosh Yeshiva* of Poras Yosef, great *Sefardi Tzaddik* who was recognized as one of the greatest *Halachic* authorities of his time, (5758/1998);
- * **Rav Eliezer Yehuda** *ben* Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel, *Rosh Yeshiva* of Mir. His father was the *Alter* of Slabodka. He married the daughter of Rav Eliyohu Boruch Kamai (*Rosh Yeshiva* of Mir) in 1903. Between 1939 and 1941, because many businesses were taken over by the Soviet government, the Mir *Yeshiva* left Belarus. Rav Finkel, many other *Rabbonim* and *Yeshiva* students went to Lithuania because that country was still independent. The story of the escape of Mir *Yeshiva* to Shanghai during World War II has been the subject of several books. After the war, the *Rabbonim* and students founded the Mir *Yeshiva* in Brooklyn, New York. Rav Finkel survived to establish the Mir *Yeshiva* and moved the *Yeshiva* to Yerushalayim in 1944, (5725/1967).



☞ 20th of Tammuz ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Jul 11th)

- * **Rav Nosson Nota Hanover Hy"d** *ben* Rav Moshe was a *talmid* of the *Maharshal* and *mechaber* of *Yaven Metzula* and *Shaarei Tzion*, a very popular kabbalistic *sefer* of *tefillos* and *minhogim*. He was killed by a stray bullet. (*Kabbola* teaches that there are no stray bullets), (5443/1683);
- * **Rav Yisrael** of Rikel, murdered in Kavakaz, (5583/1823);

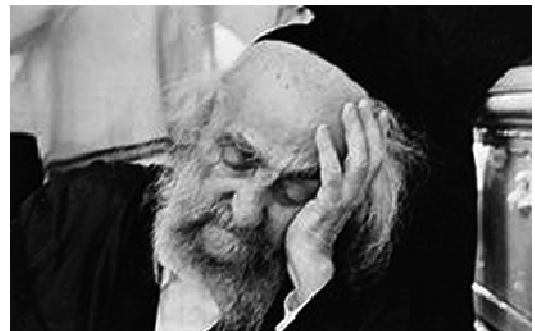
- * **Rav Moshe Yehuda Twersky** of Trisk-Chelm, *mechaber* of *Imrei Mi*, (5697/1937);
- * **Rav Avrohom Yitzchok Bloch**, Telzer *Rosh Yeshiva*, brother of Rav Eliyohu Meir Bloch and second son of Rav Yosef Leib Bloch (1860–1929). Upon his father's *petira*, Rav Avrohom Yitzchok assumed the leadership of both the *Yeshiva* and the city of Telz, although he was not yet forty. The *Yeshiva's* end in Europe began in the summer of 1940, when the Soviets, who had occupied Lithuania, ordered the *Yeshiva* closed. The Nazis entered the city on *Rosh Chodesh Tammuz* of 1941. After three terrible weeks of torture, on the 20th of *Tammuz* the Nazis massacred the male population of the city, including the *Yeshiva's* administration and student body. The women and children of Telz were killed on the 7th of *Elul*. (2nd of *Tammuz*, per *Yated* 2006), (5701/1941);
- * **Rav Avrohom Chaim Na'eh**, *posek*; *mechaber* of *Shiurei Torah* and *Ketzos HaShulchon* (b. 1890), one of the leading *poskim* in *Eretz Yisrael*. His *shiurim* for units of measure are among the most well known, even by those who do not use them. He is the *mechaber* of *Ketzos HaShulchon*, *Shiurei Torah* and *Gesher HaChaim*. Born in Chevron to Rav Menachem Mendel Na'eh, *Rosh Yeshiva* of the *Sdei Chemed's Yeshiva*, *Mogen Avos*. Later, he studied at Rav Yehoshua Leib Diskin's *Yeshiva*, *Ohel Moshe*, under Rav Yehoshua Leib's son, Rav Yitzchok Yerucham. In 1912, he published his *Chanoch LaNoar*, which contains the laws necessary for *bar-mitzva* youths. With the outbreak of WWI, the Turks, who were in control of *Eretz Yisrael*, expelled anyone who did not possess Turkish citizenship. Most of the expelled Jews clustered in Alexandria. Rav Avrohom Chaim opened *Yeshivas Eretz Yisrael* there. This *Yeshiva* had two hundred *avreichim* and *Talmidei Chachomim*, who had been exiled from Yerushalayim, supported fully by Rav Avrohom Chaim during the entire war. There, he wrote *Shenos Chaim*, a special *Kitzur Shulchon Aruch* for *Sefardi* Jews. In Teves of 1918, he returned to *Eretz Yisrael* and served as *safra de'daina* (personal secretary) of the *Eida Chareidis*, under Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, the *Rav* of Yerushalayim. In 1948, he founded the *Vaad HoRabbonim* of Agudas *Yisrael*. Later, he helped found the *chareidi* weekly newspaper, *Kol Yisrael* (later still, he was one of the prime movers behind *Hamodia*), (5714/1954);
- * **Rav Hillel Lichtenstein**, the *Krasna Rav*, (5739/1979);
- * **Rav Chaim Shaul Karelitz** (b. 1912), *Av Bais Din* of *Badatz She'eiris Yisrael*, *Mashgiach Ruchani* of *Yeshivas Bais Meir* and *Talmud Torah Tashbar*, nephew of the *Chazon Ish*, learned at Kosovo, Barnaovich (under Rav Elchanon Wasserman), Kaminetz (under Rav Baruch Ber Leibowitz), and Lomza in Petach Tikva, (5761/2001);
- * **Rav Betzalel Rakow** (b. 1927), born in Frankfurt, Germany. His father, Rav Yom Tov Lipman, studied in Volozhin under Rav Isser Zalman of Slutzk. After *Kristallnacht*, his family left via Antwerp to England, in 1939. Rav Betzalel learned at Rav Moshe Schneider's *Toras Emes*, along with Rav Moshe Sternbuch and Rav Tuvia Weiss. By age eighteen, he became very close to Rav Elya Lopian and Rav Yechezkel Abramski. He then joined the Gateshead *Kollel*, marrying three years later. In 1956, he became the *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Etz Chaim* in Montreaux, Switzerland, where he developed a close relationship with Rav Yechezkel Weinberg and the *Brisker Rav*. In 1963, he became the *Rav* of Gateshead, where he remained until his *petira*. He is the *mechaber* of *Birkas Yom Tov*. He was the brother of Rav Bentzion Rakow, *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Chayei Olom Yeshiva*, but he was also the *Rav* of *Bais Medrash Heichal HaTorah* and a leader of Agudas *Yisrael* in London, (5763/2003).

21st of Tammuz ~ Begins Sunday Night (Jul 12th)

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

22nd of Tammuz ~ Begins Monday Night (Jul 13th)

- * **Rav Shmuel ben Yoel ibn Shuiv**, *Rav* in the Aragonese community of Salonica. His father, who was born in Spain and moved to Salonica in 1495, authored *Olas Shabbos*, *Nora Tehillos* and *Ein Mishpot*, (5288/1528);
- * **Rav Mano'ach Hendel**, *mechaber* of *Chochmas Mano'ach*, (5371/1611);
- * **Rav Shlomo HaLevi ben Rav Meir** of Karlin, *Hy"d* (born 1740 or 1738). A student of the *Maggid* of Mezritch, as well as of Rav Aharon the Great of Karlin, whom he succeeded in 1772, he was murdered *al Kiddush Hashem*, stabbed by a Cossack while in the midst of the *Amida* prayer. After his passing, Rav Aharon *HaGodol's* son, Rav Osher, became *Rebbe*, (5552/1792);
- * **Rav Avrohom Grodzenksi**, *Hy"d. Mashgiach Ruchani* of the Slabodka *Yeshiva*, murdered *al Kiddush Hashem*, along with his sons, Yisrael, Zeev and Eliezer, and his daughter, Miriam. A collection of his thoughts is recorded in *Toras Avrohom*. His last three years were spent in the Kovno Ghetto. An account of that period in his life was written by his daughter, Rebbetzin Wolbe, who became the wife of Rav Shlomo Wolbe, entitled *Ve'emunos'cha Baleilos*. On June 23, 1941 (27th of *Sivan*), German bombardment of Lithuania put a stop to the learning in Slabodka, as Kovno took the brunt of the attack, (5702/1942);
- * **Rav Levi Yitzchok ben Rav Avrohom Noach Bender** (born 1897). Born in Grodzisk (near Warsaw), he was sent to *Yeshivas Mokov* when he was ten, where he became drawn to Breslov *Chassidus*. The teachings of Rav Nachman (who was *niftar* in 1810) were transmitted chiefly by his *talmid*, Rav Nosson Sternhartz, who transcribed the *Rebbe's* teachings and conversations. After Rav Nosson's *petira* in 1844, the torch of Breslov was carried on by a number of leaders, including Rav Nachman of Tulchin (*niftar* 1884) and Rav Nachman of Tcherin (*niftar* 1894). The fourth generation of leaders included Rav Yitzchok Breiter (*niftar* around 1943) and Rav Avrohom Chazan (Rav Nachman of Tulchin's son, *niftar* in 1917). Rav Levi Yitzchok, one of the fifth-generation leaders, was a *talmid* of Rav Avrohom Chazan. The sixth-generation leaders of our time include Rav Yaakov Meir Shechter (born 1931), one of the well-known *Gedolim* of *Eretz Yisrael*. After his father-in-law's passing, Rav Levi Yitzchok moved with his family to Uman, where he remained for twenty years until 1936. After five years in Moscow, Rav Levi Yitzchok, his wife and his daughter moved to Tashkent in



Uzbekistan, Central Asia. In 1945, the family moved to nearby Samarkand, known as the Yerushalayim of Uzbekistan, which had a much larger, loyal Jewish community. In 1949, Rav Levi Yitzchok arrived in *Eretz Yisrael*, where he helped build Breslov *Chassidus* into the vibrant community of today, and helped establish the main Breslov *Bais Medrash*, near the border of the Mea Shearim district, (5749/1989);

* **Chacham Yosef Yedid**, Syrian *Rav* in America, (5776/2016).

✧ 23rd of Tammuz ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Jul 14th)

* **Rav Moshe Cordovero (*Remak*)** (born 1522), one of the most famous *Mekubolim*. The *Remak* was the son of Rav Yaakov, one of the exiles from Cardova, Spain. He studied *nigleh* (revealed *Torah*) under the great *Mekubolim* Rav Shlomo *HaLevi* Alkabetz (who would become his brother-in-law) and Rav Yosef Karo. Rav Chaim Vital was among his greatest *talmidim*. He was the *mechaber* of *Tomer Devora* and *Pardes Rimonim*. In the latter book, he systematized all Kabbalistic knowledge that had been revealed until then. In his *sefer Ohr Ne'erav*, he explains the necessity of studying *Kabbola* but also criticizes those who study this subject without prior *Torah* knowledge, pointing out that one must first study *Torah*, *Mishna* and *Gemora* before studying *Kabbola*. He also wrote a comprehensive commentary on the *Zohar* entitled *Ohr Yokor*, but it was not published for four hundred years. Publication of this multi-volume work was finally begun in 1962 and completed in 1989. Although he served as *Rosh Yeshiva* and as a *Dayan*, his fame rests on his contribution to Kabbalistic literature and thought. The Satmar *Rebbe*, Rav Yoel, had a *kabbola* (receiving) from the *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz that the *sefer Tomer Devora* is a *segula* against the “known disease” – may *Hashem* save us – and if one is not able to learn it himself, he should have someone read it in front of him. (It is available in English translation). There is a story told about his burial. When he was about to be buried, two different towns were striving for the right to bury him. He had told his students that the one who could *see* the fire when he was buried would be the next teacher and the whole world would follow his method. At the burial, the only person who could see the fire was the *Ari HaKodosh*, who was new in town, (5330/1570);

* **Rav Yechezkel Katzenellenbogen**, the *Knesses Yechezkel*, (5509/1749);

* **Rav Dovid Morgenstern** of Kotzk, son and successor of the Kotzker *Rebbe*, Rav Menachem Mendel;

* **Rav Gedalya Aharon Kenig** (Koenig), *mechaber* of *Chayei Nefesh*, founder of Kiryat Breslov in Tzefas. He was succeeded by his son, Rav Elozor Mordechai Kenig, (5741/1981);

* **Rav Nechemia Alter**, son of the *Sefas Emes*, (5702/1942);

* **Rav Yaakov Yosef** of Ostrah, (5609/1849);

* **Rav Shaul Moshe Zilberman**, the *Viershaver Rav*, and *mechaber* of *Pardes Shaul*, (5699/1939).

✧ 24th of Tammuz ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Jul 15th)

* **Rav Yitzchok Grodzinski** of Vilna, (5626/1866);

* **Rav Yitzchok Kolitz** (born 1922), born in Elita, Lithuania, to Rav Eliyohu Dovid Nachman Kolitz, *Rav* of the town and a *chavrusa* of the *Chazon Ish* for many years. His father was *niftar* when he was three years old. After spending several years in public school, Rav Yitzchok went to Slabodka when he was ten years old. In 1935, he moved to *Eretz Yisrael*

with his mother and older brother. At the age of fourteen, he met Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer, with whom he developed a close relationship for life. He learned at Chevron and became close to Rav Yechezkel Sarna. After the 1948 war, he became a *Maggid Shiur* in a *Yeshiva* in Rechovot; during that time, he became a *ben bayis* of the *Chazon Ish*. In 1955, he was appointed a *Dayan* in Tel Aviv, then *Av Bais Din*, then chief *Rav* (following Rav Bezalel Zolti). [25th of Tammuz, per *Hamodia* 2007], (5763/2003);

- * **Rav Yaakov Yosef** *ben* Rav Dov (born 1840). Born in Krozhe, a province of Kovno, he studied in the Volozhin *Yeshiva* under the *Netziv*, where he was known as Rav Yaakov Charif because of his sharp mind. He was one of the foremost students of Rav Yisrael Salanter. In 1888, he accepted an invitation to become the first and only chief *Rav* of New York, as elected by the Association of American Orthodox Hebrew Congregations. He also took an active role in establishing the *Eitz Chaim Yeshiva*, founded in 1866. He authored *Le'Bais Yaakov*. He is buried in Queens, New York, at Union Field Cemetery. Large crowds go to *daven* there on the *Yahrzeit*, and the cemetery opens earlier and closes later on the *Yahrzeit*. Rav Yoel, the Satmar *Rebbe*, encouraged people to go to his *kever*. People also go there throughout the year to *daven* for *yeshuos*, (5662/1902);
- * **Rav Amrom Yishai Bilitzer**, *Rav* of Szerencz, (5649/1889).

25th of Tammuz ~ Begins Thursday Night (Jul 16th)

- * **Rav Yosef Yitzchok Rottenberg**, head of Belgian community, (5756/1996);
- * **Rav Aharon Berachia** *ben* Moshe of Modina, a student of the *Rema*. He was the *mechaber* of *Ma'avar Yabok*, a collection of *mitzvos* related to *bikur cholim* and everything having to do with the dead until burial, (5399/1639);
- * **Rav Meir HaLevi** of Apta *ben* Rav Shmuel, *mechaber* of *Ohr LaShomayim*. He was the *Rav* of Apta after the *Ohev Yisrael*, who moved to Mezhibuzh, after sensing that Rav Meir was supposed to become *Rav* of Apta. He was a *talmid muvhok* of the *Chozeh* of Lublin. One of his most famous *talmidim* is the *Tiferes Shlomo* of Radomsk, (5587/1827 or 5591/1831)
- * **Rav Yeshaya Zilberstein** of Veitzen (Wac), *mechaber* of *Maasei LaMelech*, (5690/1930);
- * **Rav Yisrael Eliyohu Yehoshua Trunk** (born 1821). Born in Plotsk, he received most of his teaching from his father, who was *niftar* when he was just eleven. As a teenager, he spent three months with the Kotzker *Rebbe*, whose direction he followed for the remainder of his life. When he was twenty, Rav Yisrael Eliyohu Yehoshua founded a *Yeshiva* and served as *Rav* in Shrensk for seven years. Later in Vorka, his fame as a *posek* grew. In 1860, he moved to Kutna, which lies near Gustenin and Zichlin. The first record of Jews in Kutna is a document from 1513, in which King Zigmund of Poland grants a year's moratorium to the gentile debtors of three Kutna Jews: Moshe, Shlomo and Liebke. Rav Yisrael Eliyohu Yehoshua published several *seforim*, including *Yeshuas Yisrael*, on *Choshen Mishpot*; *Yeshuos Malko* and *Yovin Da'as*. His only son, Rav Moshe Pinchas, succeeded him as *Rav* in Kutno. The demise of the Kutna *kehilla* came when the Nazis finished liquidating its remaining Jews on March 26, 1942, (5653/1893);
- * **Rav Arye Leib**, the *Sha'agas Arye*, (5545/1785).



❧ HILLULA DE'TZADDIKA ❧

WHAT'S BEHIND YAHRZEIT MEANINGS & CUSTOMS

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

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

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



❧ GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM ❧

STORIES & ANECDOTES

Chacham Ben Tzion Abba Shaul, 19th of Tammuz

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

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

“Because I really love people,” was his unassuming reply.

This love for his fellow Jew (*Ahavas*

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

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

Once, someone greatly offended Rav Ben Tzion. “Did you recite the prayer that night?” a friend asked him. “To tell you the truth,” replied Rav Ben Tzion, “I found it very hard to forgive him. Twisting and turning in bed, I said, ‘*Hashem*, my anger is justified. But what should I do? Skip the

prayer?’ Then I sat up in bed and for a long time struggled to judge that person favorably. When I was certain that I no longer bore a grudge against him, I placed my head on the pillow and recited the prayer.”

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



Miraculous Beginnings

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

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

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

After much wandering, the family settled in Yerushalayim, and became

followers of Rav Tzadka Chutzin.

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

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

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



Marriage and Teaching

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

During that period, there were still no *Bais Yaakov* schools in *Eretz Yisrael*, and the Sharabani daughters were

considered very unusual in that they wanted to marry *Torah* scholars. When Hadassa became engaged, people tried to dissuade her from marrying Rav Ben Tzion because he planned to devote his life to *Torah* study. But she ignored them. True to her goal, she enabled her husband to study *Torah* after their marriage even under the most difficult circumstances.

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

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

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



Advice that Works

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

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

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

The father followed Rav Ben Tzion's advice, but it proved to be rather complicated. Taking a seriously ill patient out of the hospital is no simple affair, since in such cases hospitals refuse to release medical records to the patient's relatives.

In this case, the hospital staff went so far as to call in the police, and it was only due to the intervention of a community leader that charges weren't pressed against the family.

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

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

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

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

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

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



"But I'm Not a Talmid Chochom"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"When he recovered from a serious stroke," Rav Mutzafi concluded, "he nonetheless came to the weddings of his students. At one wedding, his arrival aroused much excitement. Forming circles, the students began to sing *Yomim al yemai*

melech tosif – 'Add days to the lifespan of the king.'

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



Love of Hashem

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

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

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



Honoring His Parents and Wife

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

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

In addition, on *Shabbos* mornings, he would walk back to his parents' neighborhood and pray in the *Ohel Rochel shul* founded by his father.

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

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

Rav Ben Tzion practiced what he preached.



Serving Hashem with Joy

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

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

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

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

A newcomer to *Torah* once feared that the *mitzvos* would be too burdensome for him. Rav Ben Tzion encouraged him, saying, “There’s no reason to feel pressured. Every morning, volunteer to serve *Hashem*. Don’t obligate yourself, but volunteer. Volunteer to put on *tefillin*. It’s not so hard. Here, let me show you how.

Volunteer to pray, adding on more and more *tefillos* each day. It’s a privilege to serve as a volunteer in *Hashem*’s corps.”



His Approach to Torah Study

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

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

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

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

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

Although Rav Ben Tzion was well known for his brilliance and clarity of thought, he tried to remain unobtrusive and did not rush forward to issue *halachic*

rulings. Until the passing of Rav Ezra Attia, he refused to issue *halachic* rulings even to his students or close acquaintances, out of respect for his mentor.

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

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

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



S.O.S.!

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

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



Communal Involvement

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

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

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

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

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

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

the younger generation as his primary goal.

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

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



How Can I Stay Home?

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

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

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

'Linked to Klal Yisrael'

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

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

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

"My father," said Rav Eliyohu, "did not belong to a particular circle. He was linked to *Klal Yisrael*. He drew everyone closer and loved all. He shared the suffering of the community, grieved over its pain, participated in its sorrow and rejoiced on its happy occasions. Everyone who encountered him felt a close kinship with him, and *Klal Yisrael's* love for him was complete and genuine. Everyone loved him and Jews from all circles came to pay him final respects."

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

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

We don't know what happened to all those patients in the ambulances that sped past the *Porat Yosef Yeshiva* and received Rav Ben Tzion's blessings. We also don't

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במה שעושה תיקוני עירובין להתיר הטלטול מכניס קדושה בהמקום... ואשרי חלקם של המשתדלים בעשיית עירובין בכל מקום האפשרויות... וכדי להרחיב מקום קדושה.

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know what went on in Heaven at the end of the *shiva* after his passing. But we can surmise.

{This article originally appeared in
Yated Ne'eman - Matzav.com Newscenter}



Rav Amrom Yishai Bilitzer, 24th of Tammuz

Rav of Szerencz

Rav Amrom Yishai *HaLevi* Bilitzer was born in 5594/1834. His father was Rav Yitzchok Isaac Bilitzer, the Rav of Nagiada, Slovakia, *mechaber* of *Be'er Yitzchok*.

Rav Amrom Yishai learned under Rav Chaim Sofer, the *mechaber* of *She'eilos U'Teshuvos Machaneh Chaim*.

He married *Rebbetzin* Shifra, the daughter of Rav Shlomo Heiman, a noted *Talmid Chochom* from Ungvar.

He was appointed the first official Rav in Szerencz, a growing *Kehilla* in the northeast region of Hungary. He was instrumental in its growth, establishing a Yeshiva there in which Torah was taught up until the Holocaust.

Rav Amrom Yishai corresponded regularly with his Rebbe, Rav Chaim Sofer. There are many *teshuvos* written to Rav Amrom Yishai in *She'eilos U'Teshuvos Machaneh Chaim*. Rav Chaim Sanzer, in a *teshuva* to Rav Amrom Yishai (*Divrei Chaim*, vol. 2, *Orach Chaim*, *siman* 5), lavishes upon him titles such as *Charif* and *Chassid*.

His son-in-law Rav Feivish Tzvi Gross, in his *sefer Nachlas Tzvi*, also praises him highly.

Rav Amrom Yishai served as Rav in Szerencz for thirty-five years, a period of spiritual growth for his *Kehilla*. He was *niftar* on the 24th of Tammuz 5649/1889 at the age of sixty-five and was buried in Szerencz.

He was succeeded by his illustrious son, Rav Pinchos Bilitzer, *mechaber* of *Giv'as Pinchos*, where many of Rav Amrom Yishai's *chiddushim* are printed.

His sons-in-law were Rav Chaim Mordechai Adler, Rav of Paryia; Rav Yehuda Leib Lemberger-Lvov, Rav of Ruszhani; and Rav Meshulom Feivish Zvi Gross of Brooklyn, *mechaber* of *Nachlas Tzvi* and *Ateres Tzvi*.

His descendants have erected an *ohel* over his *kever* in Szerencz.

Zechuso yagen aleinu.

www.hamodia.com/features/this-day-in-history-24-tammuzjuly-22/



Rav Arye Leib Ben Osher Ginsberg of Metz, 25th of Tammuz

Mechaber of Shaagas Arye

Rav Aryeh Leib was born in 5455/1695 in Lithuania. His father was Rav Osher, Rav in Pinsk and one of the leading Rabbonim of his time. Rav Aryeh Leib was renowned for his *hasmoda*.

It is related that once, when in Frankfurt, he lodged at the home of Rav

Pinchos Horowitz, *mechaber* of the *Haflo'a* and *Ponim Yofos*. The "simple" guest asked for three Gemaros for the night — *Yevomos*, *Kesubos* and *Kiddushin*. The *Haflo'a* was surprised, but willingly fulfilled his guest's request. Some hours later, the *Haflo'a* peeked into the room of his guest and saw him laboring over the Gemara,

learning *daf* by *daf*. By morning he had finished all three *masechtos*, no small feat by anyone's standards. The Haflo'a began to ask him questions on his learning. Within minutes, he realized that this guest was none other than Rav Aryeh Leib, the *Sha'agas Aryeh*.

His first position was as Rosh Yeshiva in Volozhin, where one of his prized *talmidim* was Rav Chaim Volozhiner.

Interestingly, even after his *sefer Sha'agas Aryeh* was published, he found it hard to achieve a suitable position and was constantly forced to move on. But in 5526/1766 he was appointed Rav of Metz, where he served until his *petira*.

When he became Rav of Metz, the *Sha'agas Aryeh* was nearly seventy years old. The leaders of the community were concerned over the appointment because he was already an elderly man. He asked them how long they expected a Rav to serve. "For about twenty years," they responded. He was *niftar* twenty years later, at ninety.

A few months before his *petira*, Rav Aryeh Leib invited the community to a *Siyum HaShas*. He was in especially high spirits at this *Siyum*. When he was asked the reason for his *simcha*, he explained that this was his thousandth *Siyum* on the *Shas*.

Rav Aryeh Leib was *niftar* on the 25th of Tammuz 5545/1785. (Some give the day of his *petira* as the 15th of Tammuz; other sources give it as the 25th of Sivan.)

He wrote *Sha'agas Aryeh*; *Gevuras Ari* on *Maseches Yoma*; and *Turei Even* on *Maseches Rosh HaShana*.

Zecher tzaddik livrachah.

www.hamodia.com/features/day-history-25-tammuzjuly-23/

Blumka's Kloiz

The *Shaagas Arye* was a great *Gaon*, yet he had his detractors. When he set up his *Yeshiva* in Minsk not all the citizens and residents were counted among his

supporters. So many were those who could not stand his sharp wit and criticisms that one *Erev Shabbos* his opponents simply took the *Shaagas Arye* and his wife, loaded them and their meager possessions onto a cart and had them run out of town, so far out that they would have been stranded with no means to even make *Shabbos*!

Among the masses though, there was one poor, simple woman who appreciated the *Shaagas Arye's* greatness. She did not let the *machlokes* or the *Shaagas Arye's* detractors dissuade her. Blumka was her name, and selling candles and *challa* was her occupation. As the *Shaagas Arye* was being led away in disgrace, she pushed her way through the throngs until she reached the cart. There she handed the *Shaagas Arye* and his wife candles and three *challos* for *Shabbos* so that at least they would not lack these meager necessities. The *Shaagas Arye* was greatly moved and he gave her his *berocha*: "May *Hashem* repay your kindness and reward you with wealth and honor!" Blumka eventually became a wealthy businesswoman and built a *shul* called Blumka's *Kloiz*. (*Hillula Kadisha* p. 516–517)



The Shaagas Arye's Sefer

Rav Neta Freund related that the reason that the *sefer Shaagas Arye* deals so much with *Mesechta Berochos* was simply that the *Shaagas Arye* was so poor that he could not afford to purchase a *Shas*, let alone own many volumes of *Talmud* either.

There was a wealthy merchant woman who recognized the value of *Torah* study and she owned a large, beautiful *Shas*. She used to lend out one volume at a time to various *Rabbonim* and *Talmidei Chachomim* as they needed. To the *Shaagas Arye* she lent out the volume for *Mesechta Berochos*. A week later, the *Gaon*, the *Shaagas Arye*, tried to return it and exchange it for another *Mesechta* and

she answered back, "Oh no, you cannot fool or cheat me so quickly! No one can complete learning one *Mesechta* so fast – no way!" And so the *Shaagas Arye* was forced to hold on to the *Mesechta Berochos* for so long and much of his *sefer* was therefore written on topics therein. (*Maasei Tzaddikim* p. 12)



A Berocha for Rav Zalmale of Volozhin

When the *Shaagas Arye* left Minsk he traveled to Volozhin and settled there for some time. He served as the *Rav* of Volozhin but did not remain there for long because the salary was very poor.

Among the *ba'alei batim*, there was one wealthy Jew, Rav Yitzchok (later famous as the father of Rav Chaim the *Rosh Yeshiva*, *mechaber* of *Nefesh HaChaim* and his brother Rav Zalmale of Volozhin), who had an extensive library of *seforim* and the *Shaagas Arye* was a frequent guest in their home studying *Torah*.

It so happened that once during his studies, Rav Yitzchok's wife, who was expecting a baby, was seized with strong labor pains. Knowing that the *Shaagas Arye* was sitting and studying *Torah* in the next room, and not wanting to cause him any *bitul Torah*, she amazingly she held back from crying out in pain. Silently she bore the labor pains so as not to disturb the *Shaagas Arye's* learning. Eventually, the *Shaagas Arye* learned of this and was so moved by her *mesirus nefesh* that he gave her a *berocha*. "*Ribbono Shel Olom*, this woman held back from calling out for the sake and honor of *Torah*! In this *zechus*, bless her that the son born to her grow to be such a great *Torah* scholar that the entire world will know of his genius!" The child was named Rav Shlomo Zalman and grew to become the great Rav Zalmale Volozhiner. (*Hillula Kadisha* p. 519)

The *Gaon* of Vilna met the *Shaagas Arye* and testified that the *Shaagas Arye* was able to recall the entire order of the *Shas* in his memory within just one hour's time span of thinking. (*Hillula Kadisha* p. 522)



His Holy Countenance While Wearing Tefillin

The *Shaagas Arye* was once traveling by covered wagon when thieves set upon them and attempted to rob the driver of his money.

The *Shaagas Arye* sat robed in *tallis* and crowned in *tefillin* studying. When he heard the commotion and understood what was happening, he put his head out of the covered wagon to see what was going on. The thieves saw his face and fled, terror-struck, running for their lives at the sight of the holy *Tzaddik*. The wagon driver was simply amazed. "*Rebbe*, why did those robbers turn tail and run away like that all of a sudden?"

The *Shaagas Arye* answered him, "It says in the *Torah*, 'And all the nations of the world shall see that the name of G-d is called upon you and they shall fear you'. *Chazal* teach that this *pasuk* refers to *tefillin*. When they saw the *tefillin* on my head, they ran for their lives!" (*Hillula Kadisha* p. 528)



Go Gezunterheit

When the *Shaagas Arye* was appointed *Rav* of Metz there was one wealthy merchant who refused to sign the document appointing the *Shaagas Arye* as *Rav*. His name was Yehuda *Charif* and he based his rejection on the fact that the *Shaagas Arye* had only served as *Rav* of Volozhin, a small town, and *Rosh Yeshiva* of Minsk, and how could those positions compare to the great city of Metz?!

One day, Yehuda *Charif's* daughter

lost her sanity. She eventually became so ill that the doctors knew no cure and the family suffered greatly. With modern medicine having given up on her, Yehuda Charif turned to any source of possible treatment. Eventually he heard of a miracle worker, a *Ba'al Shem* who was supposed to be able to cure any one. When this impostor came to Metz, the *Shaagas Arye*, who was well acquainted with this joker and his ilk, sent the fake *Ba'al Shem* packing and chased him out of town. Yehuda Charif was incensed. He was so angry that his daughter's possible cure was chased away by none other than the *Rav*, the *Shaagas Arye*, whom he already disliked and held a grudge against that he decided that enough was enough.

He sent his poor, sick, mentally ill daughter to the *Shaagas Arye*. She was disturbed and she would sing, dance and make a disturbance at all times of day. Her

nuisance so greatly disturbed the *Shaagas Arye* that he could not learn *Torah* and so he turned to her gently and said softly and kindly, "My daughter, why are you acting so crazy? For how long will you be this way? Please go home *gezunterheit*," (which literally means "go home healthy") and so she did; she went home healed and healthy, sound in body and mind!

"Please, Daddy," she greeted her amazed father, "please change my tattered and ripped dress." Yehuda Charif fell before the *Shaagas Arye* pleading and begging the *Rav's* forgiveness and asked to be allowed to add his name to the certificate of appointment. From then on his great affection for the *Shaagas Arye* knew no bounds and they became great friends. He followed the *Rav's pesakim* and lent his hand to help the new *Rav* of Metz. (*Toldos Rabbeinu HaShaagas Arye*, page 97b)



Tikkun Chatzos During The Three Weeks

It is the *minhag* of many great tzaddikim to rise each night at midnight for *Tikkun Chatzos* and mourn bitterly the *churban Bais HaMikdash* and the *galus* of the *Shechina*. Many people who do not say *Tikkun Chatzos* during the year are *noheg* to say it during the three weeks.

The Mishna Berura (551:103) cites the writings of the Arizal that one should cry for the Bais HaMikdash for half an hour

after midday each day during the three weeks. In the famed Yeshiva of Pressburg they used to say *Tikkun Chatzos* at midday during the three weeks. Others argue with this *minhag* and say that *Tikkun Chatzos* should only be said privately as this is an emotional time an individual should spend alone with *Hashem*. (*Pischei Tshuvos*)

[www.revach.net/halacha/tshuvos/Tikkun-Chatzos-In-The-3-](http://www.revach.net/halacha/tshuvos/Tikkun-Chatzos-In-The-3-Weeks/512)

Weeks/512



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 מעניר נירעדהאז יע"א
 ונכדת הרה"ק רבי אהרן צבי טערקלטיוב זי"ע מבריד
 אשת הרה"ח מו"ה אברהם חיים ע"ה גאלדענבערג
 (מתוך אמונה טהורה) בדרך המסורה (והתנהגה כאשה כשרה)
 לכל משפחתה, היא הודה היא הדרה - נקיה וטהורה
 היוצר וצר צורה (וקיבלה הגיורה) נפטרה בש"ט בת תשעים שנה
 ביום כ"ד לחודש כסלו (ערב חנוכה) שנת תשע"ח לפ"ק
 תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה
 ותקים לתחיה לקץ הימין מהרה תנ"צ'ה'

Zera

Shimshon



Pinchas

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 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 מביכאל זצ"ל
בעל הזרע שמשון זיע"א
ויה"ד שיתקיימו בנו ברכותיו של אותו צדיק

לזכר נשמת

יעקב יצחק בן שושנה אסתר

לזכות
כל ישראל

הנני נותן לו את בריתי שלום (כה' יב')

Behold, I give him my covenant of peace (25:12).

Rashi writes that Pinchas took his reward rightfully.

This statement clearly needs explanation since if someone does something that merits reward, obviously, they take their reward rightfully? Many of the Meforshim explain Rashi's statement, each in his own way – the Zera Shimshon explains it as follows:

The Medrash (Bamidbar Rabba 21:1) says, great is the (blessing of) 'Shalom' that was given to Pinchas since the world stands only on peace. As well, the Torah is all Shalom, we daven for Shalom three times a day etc.

On this Medrash, the Zera Shimshon asks that it sounds as though the Shalom that was given to Pinchas was different than the Shalom that the Medrash continues to speak about since the Medrash refers to the Shalom that was given as 'great'?

The Medrash (Bamidbar Rabba 11:16) teaches that Shalom is so great that even if the Jewish people serve idols – the Satan is not able affect the Jewish people with his prosecution.

From here we see the greatness of peace being that it weakens the Satan's power. However, until Moshiach comes, there will not be absolute Shalom and in turn, this means that Satan will always be able to be somewhat effective even in times of peace.

However, the peace that Pinchas merited was different than the peace that the Medrash continues to speak about. The peace that Pinchas merited was entirely free of any rule of the Satan as is seen by that fact that Pinchas didn't die (he is Eliyahu Malach Habris). This is why the Medrash singles out the peace that Pinchas merited – since it is indeed different.

This explains what Rashi writes, 'Pinchas took his reward rightfully'.

Usually, when a Tzaddik wishes to live in peace in this world, like Yaakov Avinu did, the Satan fights against it, since with Tzaddikim, the attribute of judgment is very strict. Pinchas on the other hand, totally nullified the Satan's dominance over him with his act of zealousness. Therefore, even though everyone else eventually receives the reward that they deserve, and rightfully so, however, this cannot happen as long as they are in this world since the Satan would fight against this - even on the smallest grounds. Only in the world-to-come can one claim his rightful reward. Pinchas, who wasn't affected by the jurisdiction of the Satan, was able to receive his reward rightfully in this world, unaffected by the Satan's interferences.

לעילוי נשמת דוד בן תמר



שבת שלום



Pinchas

July 11th 2020
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20 - Rabbi Avraham Chaim Na'eh

21 - Rabbi Rachamim Nahori, Av Beit Din of Paris

22 - Rabbi Shlomo of Karlin hy" d

23 - Rabbi Moshe Cordovero

24 - Rabbi Yehoshua Berdugo

25 - Rabbi Yisrael Yehoshua of Kutna, author of 'Yeshu'ot Malka'

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

Pachad David

Published by Mosdot "Orot Chaim U'Moshe" in Israel

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

Each Jewish Person Contains an Element of Hashem's Name

"Take a census of the entire assembly of the Children of Israel, from twenty years of age and up, according to their fathers' houses, all who go out to the legion in Israel"

(Bamidbar 26:2)

Hashem commanded Moshe and Elazar son of Aharon the Kohen, to conduct a census of Am Yisrael, following the plague that struck them due to Zimri ben Salu sinning with the Midianite woman, Cozbi daughter of Tzur. Rashi explains the reason for this command at this juncture: Like a shepherd who counts his flock after it has been ravaged by wolves, G-d, in the role of a shepherd to his flock, wanted to count His children who had survived the plague, to see how many remained.

This counting presents an interesting phenomenon. To all the family names, the letter 'heh' is added as a prefix and the letter 'yud' as a suffix, for example (Bamidbar 26:5), "of Chanoch, the Chanochite family (משפחת החנוכי); of Pallu, the Palluite family (משפחת הפלאי)". Those letters form a Name of G-d (יה) as if to say, explains Rashi that G-d testifies to the purity of the nation. The Midrash (Shir HaShirim Rabbah 4:12) explains why this was necessary. The nations reviled the Jews, saying, "How can the Jews trace their genealogy according to their tribes? If the Egyptians controlled their bodies, surely they had the power to violate their wives!" To this G-d replied, in effect, that He would append His Own Name to their family names to attest to their chastity in Egypt (Rashi). The letter 'yud' alludes the man [איש] and the letter 'heh' to the woman [אשה] (see Sotah 17a). Since the husband and wife, and the family name, contain the Name of Hashem, this serves as testimony that they married and bore children in holiness.

Attaching the Name 'yud-heh' to each family name of Bnei Yisrael, is a form of testimony and 'kashrut certification' of the pure origin of every single family of the nation. This fact is actually an open miracle. The Egyptians had control over the Jewish people's bodies and enslaved them, but these same people had no control over the Jewish wives who remained solely under the authority and supervision of their Jewish husbands. This remarkable reality is even more powerful in light of the fact that the Egyptians enslaved Am Yisrael using 'peh rach', soft words, meaning they tried to be clever

and make out as if they seek their good, and as we know soft-spoken speech, gold, silver, jewelry and other gifts, speaks to women. So the great wonder is how, despite all this, the wives were not enticed by the Egyptian's gifts and soft-spoken words, and remained faithful to their husbands.

The Torah publicizes that throughout the years of enslavement, there was only one exception, which is a remarkable testimony to Jewish family purity and morality (Vayikra 24:11). Shelomit daughter of Divri was the only Jewish woman who was forced by an Egyptian man, and this was due to her nature and habit of chattering to one and all and asking of their welfare, a practice which is contrary to the ways of modesty.

We are told (Tehillim 121:5), "Hashem is your protective Shadow at your right hand". When do Yisrael merit Hashem being their Shadow? When they are united and stand by each other's right-hand side, feeling a mutual responsibility for each other and taking care to honor each other. Man's soul is part of G-d's essence; this is Hashem's Shadow that accompanies man. It is something that cannot be perceived, just like a shadow that is formed from the Sun, is always dark. But when Hashem removes His Shadow from man, he loses his spark of life and dies. Without Hashem's Shadow, a person cannot exist in His world, and just like the Shade departs when man dies, so too sins cause Hashem's Shade to depart.

Hashem's Shadow, which is present as long as man is alive, cannot be perceived, in line with the verse (Shemot 33:20), "for no human can see My face and live". The human eye is not capable of seeing Hashem's presence. When a person distances himself from Hashem and His Torah, when a person neglects Torah and mitzvot and does not seek to cleave to Hashem's ways, he automatically loses the adornment of the G-dly Name (יהוה), which alludes to Hashem's grandeur and unity with Yisrael, and he no longer represents the goal of creation. Instead of man being called by this Name, he is termed (Tehillim 92:7) "a boor cannot know, nor can a fool understand this". Then the nations of the world come with a claim that this type of person is a mamzer (child born from an invalid marriage). Even though there is no trace of truth in their words, nevertheless man will not be able to refute this rumor.



Walking in their Ways

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

Striking a Cord of Connection

In 1993, a woman in Houston underwent medical testing for an advanced growth in her vocal cords. She was told to undergo surgery of the vocal cords in order to save her life, after which she would be able to speak only by means of a special apparatus implanted in her throat.

In her distress, this woman came to me and poured out her heart, relating the far-reaching consequences of this decision.

"That shall never be!" I declared unequivocally. "You will speak using your own voice. Your vocal cords will remain intact, but only on condition that you undertake stricter adherence to Torah and mitzvot."

The woman accepted my words, but her condition continued deteriorating. She was left with no choice but to have her vocal cords removed.

The doctors were certain that there was no recourse other than to operate on her vocal cords. Imagine their bafflement, and the woman's delight, on discovering in the operating room that they could save her life without removing her vocal cords.

One year later, the woman came to thank me for my blessing in the merit of my forefathers zya"a, and to relate the great miracle that she had experienced. Baruch Hashem, today she speaks normally and has made great strides in her Avodat Hashem.

The Haftarah

"The words of Yirmiyahu" (Yirmiyahu 1)

The connection to Shabbat: The Haftarah speaks about the prediction of calamity that Yirmiyahu Hanavi prophesized, concerning the destruction of the Holy City of Yerushalayim and the exile of Am Yisrael. This is the first of the three special Haftarot that are read during the three weeks preceding Tisha B'Av.

Guard Your Tongue

Distance Yourself from Ba'alei Lashon Hara

One must be very careful not to fix one's place in the Beit Knesset or Beit Midrash next to ba'alei lashon hara (habitual speakers of lashon hara), for they will accustom him with their bad trait of speaking negatively about others and cause him to do the same. Besides, their idle chatter will also often cause him to miss answering 'Amen yehe shemei raba' and 'Barchu', and prevent him from hearing the reading of the Torah and the Chazan's repetition of the Shemone Esrei, among other great sins.



In Our Father's Path

The Aunt is Not the Right Address!

Concerning Pinchas son of Elazar son of Aharon the Kohen, the subject of this week's Parsha, we are told, "And Pinchas arose and executed judgment (ללפיו), and the plague was halted" (Tehillim 106:30).

Our Sages (Berachot 6b) interpret the term 'ויפלל', as an expression of prayer (תפילה). Pinchas prayed to Hashem Yitbarach that He should bless his efforts with success and that His Name be sanctified through his killing Zimri son of Salu.

Indeed, in the merit of this prayer, Pinchas merited exceptional Heavenly Assistance and many miracles were performed for him. The Gaon Rabbi Reuven Elbaz shlita points out that this should serve as an important lesson for us, concerning the power of prayer. It is a clear demonstration of the great power of prayer, through which man can generate exceptional wonders.

Rabbi Shmuel Hominer zt"l was a true servant of G-d. He once related that he had a good friend, an avreich with very little means, who had a rich aunt who lived in America. Before each Chag, she would send him a considerable sum of money, which would help support his family for the next few months.

But sometimes worrying thoughts wormed their way into the Avreich's heart: "What will be, our children will soon be of marriageable age, how will I cover the cost of their weddings?"

In his distress, he turned to his aunt and expressed his concerns. The aunt calmed him down: "You have no need to worry, I will sponsor your children's weddings." The avreich was reassured and rejoiced at his good fortune of meritizing this rich aunt who was so generous with her money...

Soon after, the avreich's oldest daughter became engaged to a fine talmid chacham. He committed himself to a sizable dowry, relying on his aunts' promise. He

wrote to his aunt, informing her of this happy occasion. The aunt was delighted to hear the news and promised to forward a sum of money, as they had discussed. A few days later, a letter arrived from America. The avreich opened the letter and was utterly dismayed. Inside the envelope was a check for a small sum, nowhere near the amount that he had undertaken to provide.

He tried to hint to his aunt that the amount she had sent was not enough to cover the numerous expenses, but she did not seem to get the message. Left with no choice, he was forced to go from house to house collecting donations, so that he could follow through with the amount he had promised to give his daughter.

A year passed, and his second daughter became of age. This time he was wise enough not to rely on his aunt. He beseeched Hashem to support him and assist him, realizing that only Hashem can help him.

When this daughter became engaged, he informed his aunt of the news, thinking to himself, "Even if she sends the amount that she sent last time, it will still be of help."

A short time later a letter arrived. He opened the envelope without any expectations, but how great was his surprise when it turned out that this time his aunt had sent him a most substantial sum, enough to cover all the wedding expenses!

This avreich turned to Rabbi Shmuel Hominer, asking him to explain what was going on.

This is what Rabbi Shmuel replied:

"The first time, you turned to your American aunt to come to your aid and assist you with the wedding expenses. You did not turn to Hashem, therefore the aunt sent whatever she sent. But this time, you understood that you cannot rely on your aunt, Hashem is the only address. This time you realized, "From where will come my help? My help is from Hashem" (Tehillim 121:1-2), and indeed you turned to Hashem and prayed to Him from the depths of your heart. Therefore, Hashem answered your prayer and sent you the full amount that you required, and He did this through your aunt!"

How great is the power of prayer! This teaches us to what extent a person must throw his burden on Hashem and pray to Him from the depths of his heart, and then he is assured that no prayer goes unanswered.



Pearls of the Parsha

Treasures

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



Fulfilling the Mitzvah Through One's Grandchildren

"Our father died in the Wilderness...and he had no sons" (Bamidbar 27:3)

The daughters of Tzelafchad said about their father, "and he had no sons". These words require further explanation, for they are written in the past tense, implying that although he did not have sons, now he has, or he will have in the future. But how can this be? Had he not already died?

Rabbi Ya'akov HaKohen Gadisha zt"l, one of the Rabbanim of Djerba, in his sefer 'Mei'ayin Yavoh', presents a wonderful explanation, based on the Shulchan Aruch (Even Ha'ezer 1:5) that rules that after giving birth to a son and daughter, one is then considered as having fulfilled the mitzvah of bearing children. The 'Knesset HaGedolah' writes that if one has two sons, and one of them gives birth to a daughter, then that granddaughter is considered as his own daughter, and he has fulfilled this mitzvah.

The 'Aroch HaShulchan' adds that this is also the case if one has two daughters and one of them gives birth to a son. With regards to the mitzvah of having children, that grandson is considered as his own son.

This being the case, we can now understand the expression "and he had no sons". It is written in the past tense, because if after his daughters marry they will give birth to sons, then they will be considered as Tzelafchad's own sons.

Challenges Strengthen a Person

"And on the fifteenth day of this month is a festival; for a seven-day period matzot shall be eaten" (Bamidbar 28:17)

Since great caution and alacrity is required when baking matzot so that they should not become chametz, seemingly we would be better off not eating matzot at all, than having to face such a hard challenge. Why then does the Torah obligate us to eat matzot on Lail Pesach?

The Gaon Rabbi Ben Zion Abba Shaul zt"l, addressed this difficulty, explaining that the Torah is teaching us a great principle in avodat Hashem. The fear of committing a sin does not have the power to reject a mitzvah. On the contrary, understanding the severity of the sin will help us to fulfill the mitzvah correctly.

This conforms with the Brisker Rav's interpretation of the Chazal (Avot 3:8), "Whoever forgets anything of his Torah learning, Scripture considers it as if he bears guilt for his soul". A person who forgets his learning should not say, had I not studied Torah, I would not have to bear guilt for my soul, therefore it is preferable for me not to learn. Rather, the truth is that had he not studied Torah, he would definitely have been considered guilty, and now that he studied Torah and forgot his learning, it is considered only 'as if' he bears guilt for his soul.

Even though we are not free to withdraw from studying Torah, we must not be concerned about being unable to study all that we are required, for we are not required to complete the task (see Avot 2:21). As Rav Nachman son of Yitzchak said (Eruvin 65a), concerning avodat Hashem we are considered as 'hired day workers'. He specifically did not use the term 'contractors', since a contractor is always under pressure for he knows that he will only receive his wages when he completes the job. Whereas a hired worker, even though he may not do anything without permission from his boss and his time is not his own, nevertheless he is not under pressure to complete the job for the main thing is that he should keep working and not be lax. We too must constantly occupy ourselves with Torah study and not withdraw from it, without concerning ourselves that we might not succeed in completing the study of the entire Torah.

Love of Hashem with No Ulterior Motives

"Pinchas son of Elazar son of Aharon the Kohen, turned back My wrath from upon the Children of Israel when he zealously avenged My vengeance among them so I did not consume the Children of Israel in My vengeance. Therefore, say: Behold! I give him My covenant of peace" (Bamidbar 25:11-12)

The correct way of writing the name 'Pinchas' is without a 'yud' (פנחס), but in the above verse, the Torah adds the letter 'yud' (פינחס). Chazal explain that Hashem added the 'yud' from His name to Pinchas' name, as a testimony that when he killed Zimri, he did so for the sake of Heaven and not for personal honor or other motives. Pinchas could not remain silent in face of the terrible sin that Zimri son of Salu, leader of a tribe, committed. He took a Midianite woman and approached Moshe, asking him, "Is this Midianite woman permitted to me?" Moshe Rabbeinu replied, "She is forbidden". Zimri then brazenly retorted, "and the daughter of Yitro, also a Midianite, who gave you permission to marry her?" Pinchas who was present, could not bear the antagonizing comparison of the two women, the Midianite woman with whom Zimri wished to sin, and Tziporah, wife of Moshe Rabbeinu, who had converted according to the law. He therefore took a spear and pierced Zimri and the Midianite woman, killing them both.

He acted completely for the sake of Heaven, for out of his great love for Hashem, he could not bear to witness this person sinning in public. The proof of his motive is that his zealous act brought about the cessation of the plague that had taken the lives of twenty-four thousand men. This shows that the power that pushed Pinchas to perform this holy act of zealousness, was pure love for Hashem without any personal benefit.

The Gaon and tzaddik Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler zt"l, author of 'Michtav M'Eliyahu', writes that love for Hashem without any subjective interferences, is measured by the degree of a person's love for, and connection to, other things. It is not possible to truly love Hashem and the futile pleasures of this world too. True love must be focused on Hashem alone, and this was the level that Pinchas achieved. He loved Hashem with his entire being, and using this power, he killed Zimri for the sake of Heaven. Hashem added the letter 'yud' from His Own Name to Pinchas' name, which testifies that he acted for the sake of Heaven.

If so, the finest proof of our love for Hashem is when we show self-sacrifice and relinquish something that we love and desire, for the love of Hashem, exactly as Pinchas did. If a person does not rise early in the morning to pray, how can he say that he loves Hashem, for if he would have a flight to catch, he would definitely arise bright and early.



A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA

Once a year, we are required to carry out profound labor in the recesses of our animalistic soul and sacrifice our material wishes and desires on the altar of repentance. This takes place on Rosh Hashanah when we are commanded to sacrifice ourselves as a burnt-offering for Hashem.

The Poskim explain that the reason why the Selichot prayers are said for at least four days prior to Rosh Hashanah, is because korbanot were required to be examined for four days prior to offering them on the altar. Concerning all the korbanot mentioned in Parshat Pinchas it says "You shall offer a burnt-offering", while concerning the offering brought on Rosh Hashanah it says, "You shall make a burnt-offering". This teaches us that on Rosh Hashanah a person should make out as if he is offering his very self, and this is why Chazal established that we examine ourselves for any sins and repent for them, for four days prior to Rosh Hashanah.

Inherent in Rosh Hashanah, Hagaon Rabbi Shimshon Pincus zt"l points out, lies the principle of self-sacrifice. Every Jew is obligated to offer himself as a burnt-offering, meaning he must be prepared to sacrifice his soul for the sake of Hashem. We are not talking about a peace-offering, where the owner too, partakes of the offering, but a burnt-offering where the entire animal is completely burnt for Hashem. We must sacrifice everything for the sake of Hashem Yitbarach.

The problem is that the concept 'mesirut nefesh' has become common language, we consider every little thing as 'mesirut nefesh'... We will therefore discuss the meaning of true mesirut nefesh, and how it comes to expression in our daily lives.

Harav Pincus related an incredible story:

An American Jew once stayed at the home of R' Yoshe Ber Soloveitchik zt"l, Rosh Yeshiva of Brisk. While talking about his family he mentioned: "By us there are no luxuries, only basic needs"...

In reply, R' Yoshe Ber zt"l related the following story: The small villages in Russia did not have a Talmud Torah for the children, and those who could afford it would hire a 'melamed' to teach their sons. One day, one

of the wealthy people made a party, serving bountiful, tasteful food.

At the end of the banquet, a delectable compote was served. The melamed approached Yankele, one of his young students, and said, "Do you remember that we learnt about breaking one's desires? Now is the appropriate time to put this into practice." Yankele replied: "I agree with what we learnt, but right now, I cannot give up this essential delicacy. I will break my desires with the next portion..."

This is how it goes, said R' Yoshe Ber. Everybody agrees that the first helping is essential, while the second helping is already considered a 'luxury'. However, the entire dispute revolves around when does the first helping end and the second helping begin...

We will now mention several examples:

The first example is lashon hara, one of our greatest challenges. There is hardly a person that does not speak lashon hara, including harsh and angry words.

Where does the inner urge to speak lashon hara stem from?

The principle of the matter is that there are four levels, or realms, in the creation: 'domem' (inanimate objects), 'tzome'ach' (animate elements), 'chai' (living creatures) and 'Medaber' 'medaber' (speaking, human, the highest level referring to man who is the only living creature endowed with the power of speech). Speech is an expression of man's intellect, which distinguishes him from other living creatures. This is what lies behind a person's inner need to speak lashon hara and other forbidden forms of speech.

Therefore, when demanding from a person not to speak lashon hara, he feels as if he is being asked to give up his life. Remaining quiet is perceived by all as lacking intellect! What is required from man is not only to control himself from speaking lashon hara for a few moments and then after half an hour, let everything out... This is also hard work, but it is not 'mesirut nefesh'.

The meaning of 'mesirut nefesh' is that in a certain matter, even something minor, a person creates an essential transformation in his lifestyle. To become, as if, less intelligent in man's eyes. This kind of change is almost like giving up one's life!

This then, is the meaning of mesirut nefesh, a burnt-offering! Even if with this act a person does not repent for all his sins, but since through this he has offered 'a piece of his life', this merits him with the level of repentance that reaches until the Throne of Glory!

Another example: There are people for whom letting two hours pass without listening to the news, borders on life and death... They have an urgent need to know what is happening throughout the world. It could be that not everyone understands this urge, but for one who is affected by this Yetzer Hara, abstaining from hearing or reading the news is considered as a matter of life and death for him! Without analyzing all the latest happenings, he feels as if he is imprisoned in a chicken coop, in direct contrast to human nature.

Indeed, Jews from previous generations were also involved in what was happening 'in the world', but their world was a different world. It was the world of Torah. One day they spoke with Abaye and Rava, the next day with Rabbi Akiva, and so forth. They lived their lives with Hashem Yitbarach. The point is not one mitzvah more or less, but a whole different lifestyle.

For a contemporary Jewish person to merit achieving this level, he must make a substantial change in his lifestyle: to stop taking an interest in what is going on in the world. To be able to pass by the letterbox and not stop to read the newspaper, not even a quick glance at the headlines. To be prepared to enter the Beit Midrash as 'an ignorant fool' who has no idea of what is happening in the world, and there meet up solely with Hashem, the G-d of Israel.

Another very common example is Shabbat Kodesh. The Shulchan Aruch rules that on Shabbat one is forbidden to say, tomorrow I will do..., or, tomorrow I will buy... It is similarly forbidden to spend time in idle talk.

This means that even conversation that is considered as 'chatter' is forbidden on Shabbat. What then, is left for us to do the entire Shabbat? The simple meaning of the word 'Shabbat' comes from the word 'הַתִּיבַשׁ', strike. We were gifted twenty-four hours to live with Hashem Yitbarach alone!

Just as it is considered mesirut nefesh for a non-observant Jew to observe the Shabbat, since to disconnect himself from his phone, radio and car for twenty-four hours is extremely hard for him and he feels like he is handcuffed, so too for us, it can often be very difficult to abstain from discussing secular matters on Shabbat.

This kind of change requires mesirut nefesh, and this is our avodah on Rosh Hashanah and during the rest of the year, "you shall make a burnt-offering". This is mesirut nefesh for the sake of the glory of Heaven!

MEOROS RAMCHAL PINCHOS

THE POWER OF A LEADER

"Let the Lord, the G-d of spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, who will go forth before them and come before them, who will lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the Lord will not be like sheep without a shepherd." (Pinchos 27:16-17)

The *Ramchal* cites *Chazal* that say that Moshe said before *Hashem – Ribono Shel Olam – Master of the World!* It is revealed and known before you that each and every private individual has his own root [from where he comes and that he is attached to on High] therefore the mind and opinions of each individual are different than their fellow.

However, the difference is that a leader is not to be that individual, rather he must incorporate and include everyone [and their disparate minds and opinions and unite them] therefore he can endure and unite all of their minds and opinions.

Therefore, if an individual is a loner the powers of evil and darkness called *sitra achra* from the other side can overcome and defeat him, whereas a leader cannot be defeated because he has a great mighty power that comes from the unity of everyone that he leads, his followers' *da'as*.

THE POWER OF THE KORBANOS AND THEIR PLEASING FRAGRANCE AND AROMA

The one lamb you shall offer up in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer up in the afternoon. . . A continual burnt elevation offering – *Olas Tamid*, as the one offered up at Mount Sinai, for a pleasing fragrance – *Reiach Nichoach*, a fire offering to the Lord. (Pinchos 28:4-6)

The *Ramchal* explains that the secret of the sacrificial offerings is to repair and rectify all of the world and uplift the fallen sparks of holiness back to their former respective station from the forces of darkness known as the *klippos*.

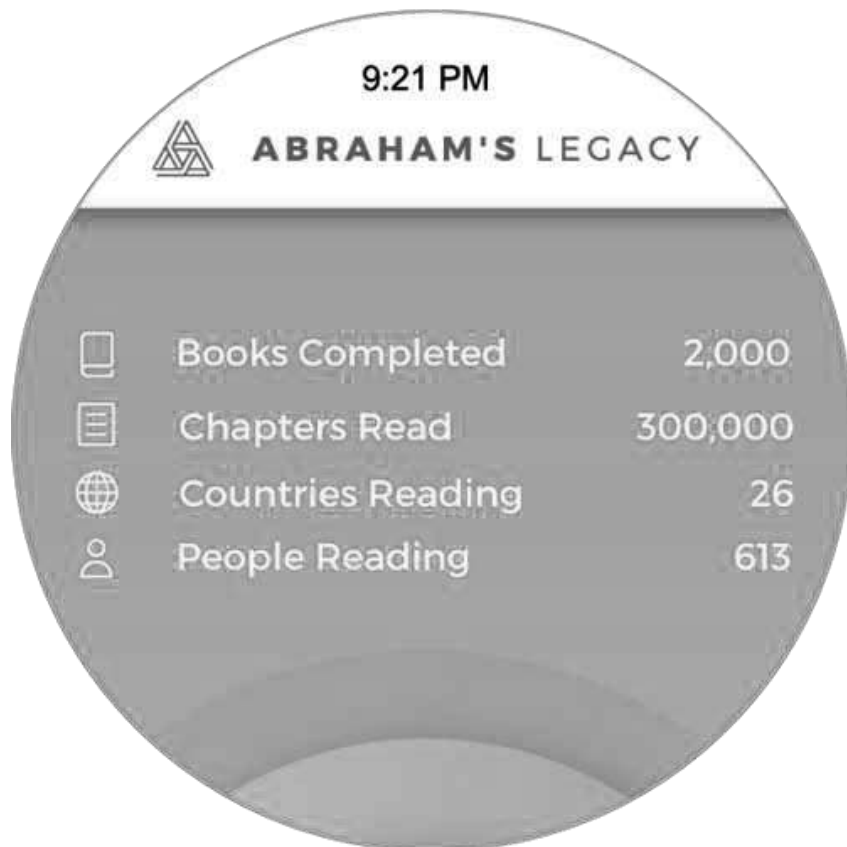
The *Chazal* learned that the word in our *pasuk echad* – as in one lamb, really means *meyuchad* – the best and prime choice for the offering teaching us that we should select the best choice from among the entire flock for the *korban*.

The secret behind this, says *Ramchal*, is that each and every day the sparks are uplifted [by our *avodah*] however those sparks that arise and ascend are the best choicest among them, those have been most repaired rectified and refined to the highest state, those are ready for ascension. Therefore, down here we too needed to select the prime choice the best from the flock to serve as the *korban*.

The *Ramchal* explains the reason why the *korban* is named *Olas Tamid* – a continual elevation offering, since the *korban tamid* was the vehicle for uplifting these sparks. This is the secret of the *Reiach Nichoach* – the pleasing fragrance – as the *Zohar* teaches us that when a *neshama* ascends up on high a great pleasing fragrance comes before *Hashem haMakom*, and this is the same concept mentioned here by the *korban olas tamid* – that the sparks continuously ascend up from among the *klippos*. When they were mixed in with the *klippos* they had a horrific stench like something rotten and disgusting. However, now that they ascend refined and repaired, they give off a pleasing aroma and a great fragrance. Therefore, since the *segula* of *korbanos* is that they uplift the sparks they also give off this great fragrance as well therefore our *pasuk* says about the *olas tamid* that it gave a pleasing fragrance – *reiach nichoach*.

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