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

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)

MIKEITZ

⌘ CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA ⌘

Shabbos Noam HaNeshomos

Noam Elimelech on the Parsha

Dvar Torah

By Breaking Our Desires We Rechannel Them to Kedusha

And they [the brothers] said [to the man in charge of Yosef's household] If you please, our master, we initially came down to purchase food, but it happened when we arrived at the inn and opened our sacks and behold each one's money was in the mouth of his sack...so we have brought it back now in hand, we also brought over other money in hand to buy food; we do not know who put our money back in our sacks. (43:20-22)

The Rebbe Reb Melech explains our *pasuk* as a *mussar* lesson, teaching us how to overcome our desire for food and other physical things and instead channel it toward a desire for spiritual growth:

"And they said, "If you please, our master, we initially came down to purchase food" – The Noam Elimelech reads this *pasuk* as a confession of the soul to its Master, Hashem, saying, "Ribbono Shel Olam – Master of the World, we know the real reason we came down to this world is *lishbor ochel* (*lishbor* also means 'to break') – our real mission in this world is to break our desire for food and other worldly desires and extravagances, as it says in the

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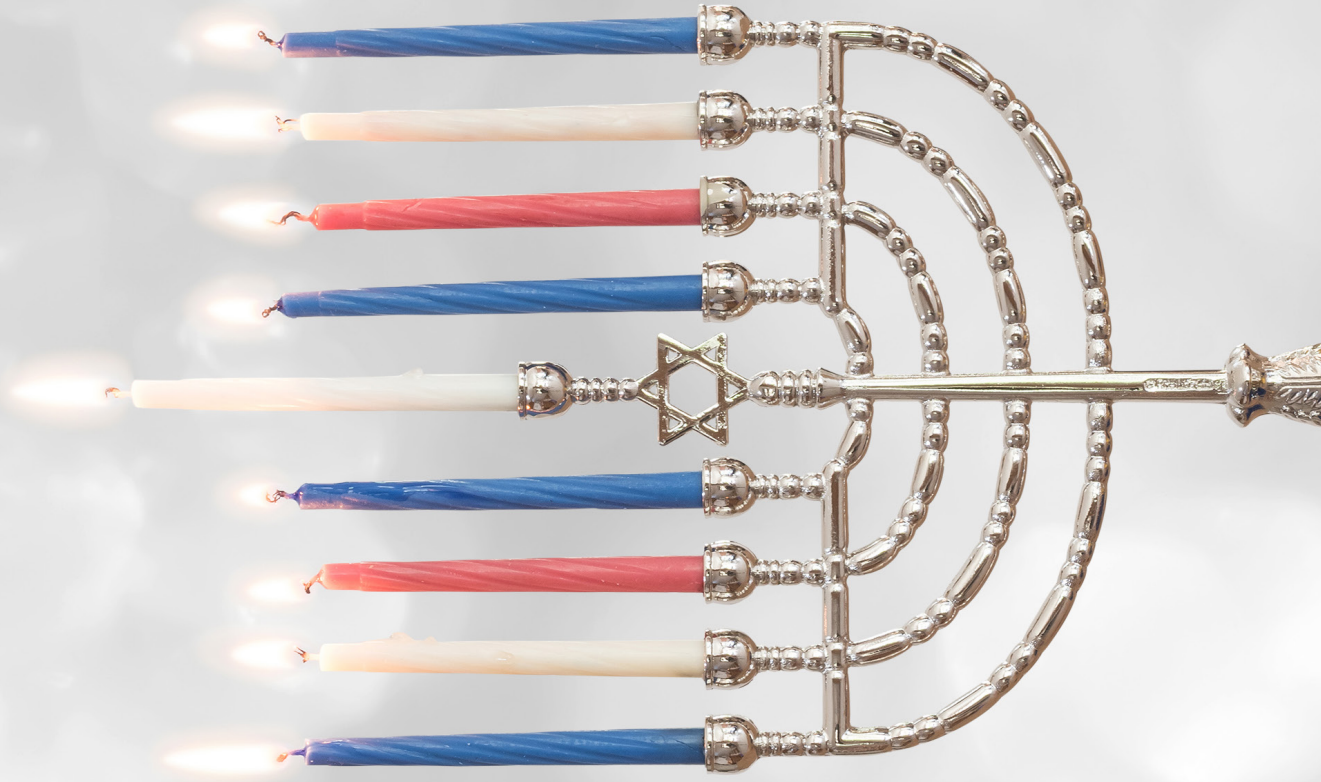
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Gemora (Nidda 30b), “They ask him to take an oath that he will be a *Tzaddik* and not a *Rosha*,’ and we all accepted upon ourselves to fulfill this oath.”

“But it happened when we arrived at the inn” – But this is what happened when we arrived here at the inn – for this world, like an inn, is but a temporary stop on the journey of life.

“And we opened our sacks” – We opened up our stomachs and took a look inside to examine our habits, and we discovered that “behold each one’s money was in the mouth of his sack”. *Kesef* (“money”) can also be translated as “desire” and we discovered that all our desires are for physical things!

“So we have brought it back now in hand” – We have now returned and done *teshuva* with all our might!

“We also brought over other money in hand to buy food” – We must strengthen ourselves and rechannel our *kesef* – desire – toward spiritual and holy matters instead.

“We do not know who put our money back in our sacks” – We do not know where those negative desires for physical things came from; surely they did not come from us but rather from outside ourselves, from the *Yetzer Hora* – and now we repent and regret (based on *Yirmiyah* 31:18), so rescue us and atone for us over our sins (based on *Tehillim* 79:9), *Amen*.



Sowing the Seeds of the Zera Kodesh

The Ropshitzer on the Parsha and Chanuka

Breaking Down Barriers to Rule Over Ourselves and Draw Down Shefa

“Now Yosef was the *shalit* – the ruler – over the land; he was the *mashbir* – the provider – to all the people of the land” (42:6)

Rav Naftoli Ropshitzer, a *talmid* of the Rebbe Reb Melech, cites the above quoted *peirush* from his Rebbe in his own *sefer*, the *Zera Kodesh*, and expands upon it.

The Ropshitzer cites a *Medrash* that Yosef merited to rise to power as viceroy because he was able to overcome the advances of Potiphar’s wife. He suggests that the *Medrash* must understand *mashbir* to mean “he who breaks his desires”, similar to what the *Noam Elimelech* taught, as we explained above.

The *pasuk* is therefore telling us according to the *Medrash* that because Yosef broke his own desires, subjugating and ruling over himself, he was therefore called a *mashbir*, and consequently became a ruler – a *shalit*. By a person breaking his own evil desires, passions and inclinations toward negative behavior, says the *Zera Kodesh*, he becomes a ruler, ruling over himself with the power to break down any further barriers and draw down an abundance of blessings. He thus becomes a ruler and a *Tzaddik*.

Really, explains the Ropshitzer, *Hashem* is constantly sending us *shefa* and blessings, pouring them down to us in abundance from on high on a daily basis, as it says in *davening*, “Every day He opens the doors and gates of the East and breaks open the windows of the firmament” (*Birkas Yotzer Ohr* on *Shabbos*). The word for “window” is *chalon*, spelled *ches*

lamed nun and can stand for the acronym *notzer chessed lo'alofim* –Hashem has abundant loving-kindness for us in the thousands! This is sent to us as an influx of *shefa*, an abundance of *berocha* from the thirteen attributes of divine mercy. However, there are various obstacles and barriers that prevent this *berocha* and *shefa* from reaching us. Just like a window shade prevents the light from penetrating the window, there are things that prevent the flow of *shefa* and *berocha* through the heavenly windows: our desires and sins. When we break down these barriers, all the *shefa* from the thirteen attributes can flow down unchallenged. [Translator's note: the *Arizal* teaches (*Pri Etz Chaim* 19:4) that on each night of *Chanuka* the thirteen divine attributes of mercy are awakened when we light the candles – see below where the *Ropshitzer* connects these teachings to *Chanuka* in another way.]



Chanuka – a Time for Teshuva and Simcha

In the *sefer Ayala Shelucha*, the *Ropshitzer* further expands this teaching and explains that our *pasuk* is saying that *Yosef* was the *shalit* because he was the *mashbir*; the reason *Yosef* became a viceroy was because he broke his desires. He then became a *mashbir*, providing sustenance for the entire world! He who breaks down his desires and rules over his *yetzer* is a *Tzaddik*, called a *mashbir*, who then has the power to break down any barriers that separate us from *Hashem*, drawing down *shefa* and sustenance onto the whole world.

In *Ayala Shelucha*, the *Ropshitzer* observes that our *Parsha* always falls on *Chanuka*, and he connects the power to break down barriers to the power of the *Chanuka* candles. *Hashem* commanded us to light the *Chanuka* candles in order to instill in us the power to of *teshuva* by awakening our hearts to remember and see that *Hashem* will shine favor on us, just as he did for our forefathers, in those days, at this time. Now, during the exile, our eyes are shut and our hearts are blocked. Because of our sins, we sit in the darkness of *Golus*, ruled over by other nations, and a great barrier is erected between us and *Hashem*, and we cannot gaze on the light of His countenance. We are prevented from seeing *be'ohr pnei Melech Chaim* (*Mishlei* 16:15) from *Avinu Shebashomayim*! As *Hashem* says, "I shall hide My face...because of the evil that they have done" (*Devorim* 31:18). This concealed divinity causes us great darkness, like it says in *Tehillim* 18:12: "His darkness conceals Him".

So it was in the exile of *Golus Yovon*, among the wicked Greeks who defiled our oils, which represent our wisdom as is known (*Menochos* 86 and *Zohar* III 34a). In their wickedness they defiled our wisdom and our Jewish minds, our *sechel* (intellect) was rendered *tomei* (impure) and our hearts forgot divine wisdom. When the hands of the *Chashmono'im* were victorious and they guided us to do *teshuva*, saving us from our enemies and subjugating the Greek rulers, they purified the defilement and they refined and purified our wisdom and minds by drawing down supernal wisdom, insight and knowledge from on high to us, the holy nation of *Klal Yisrael*. This enlightened our eyes with a pure, white light of holy divine wisdom to understand how to do *teshuva*, as we say, "They purified Your *Mikdosh* and lit candles in Your holy chambers".

The *Ropshitzer* sees this idea hinted at in the *gematria* of *lehadlik ner Chanuka*, which equals the *gematria* of *ohr chodosh*:

Lehadlik Ner Chanuka:

(*lamed* = 30 + *hei* = 5 + *dalet* = 4 + *lamed* = 30 + *yud* = 10 + *kuf* = 100 = 179) (*nun* = 50 + *reish* =

200 = 250) (*ches* = 8 + *nun* = 50 + *vov* = 6 + *kaf* = 20 + *hei* = 5 = 89) = 518 plus the *kollel* = 519

Ohr Chodosh:

(*alef* = 1 + *vov* = 6 + *reish* = 200 = 207) (*ches* = 8 + *dalet* = 4 + *shin* = 300 = 312) = 519

The *roshei teivos* (initial letters) of *lehadlik ner Chanuka* are *lamed*, *nun* and *ches*, spelling *chalon* – a window. This is the window that allows the pure light to illuminate His wisdom to flow toward us, as we say in *davening*, “Every day He opens the doors and gates of the East and breaks open the windows of the firmament (*Birkas Yotzer Ohr* on *Shabbos*).

Therefore, explains the Ropshitzer, we celebrate these days in every generation to awaken in our hearts the desire for *teshuva*, to recognize that our King will deliver us, and in Him shall our hearts rejoice, for *simcha* only comes from an abundance of goodness and favor – as we see that people who have children, wealth, silver and gold are happy of heart. Therefore, we should rejoice over all the goodness and favors, the miracles and kindness that *Hashem* has done for us in those days past. He removed from us the wicked Greek rulers, who wished to prevent us from fulfilling *Hashem’s mitzvos*, as *Chazal* say (*Megillas Antiochus*) that they tried to prevent us from keeping *Shabbos*, *Mila* and *Chodesh*, whose *roshei teivos* are *shin*, *mem* and *ches* and spell *same’ach* – joy.

Therefore we recite the thirtieth *perek* of *Tehillim*, *Mizmor Shir Chanukas Habayis* – whose *roshei teivos* are *mem*, *shin*, *ches*, *hei*, which spells *simcha*, and the words of the *berocha lehadlik ner Chanuka* equal the same *gematria* as *nogila venismecha bo* – we shall rejoice in *Hashem!*

Lehadlik Ner Chanuka

(*lamed* = 30 + *hei* = 5 + *dalet* = 4 + *lamed* = 30 + *yud* = 10 + *kuf* = 100 = 179) (*nun* = 50 + *reish* = 200 = 250) (*ches* = 8 + *nun* = 50 + *vov* = 6 + *kaf* = 20 + *hei* = 5 = 89) = 518

Nogila Venismecha Bo

(*nun* = 50 + *Gimmel* = 3 + *yud* = 10 + *lamed* = 30 + *hei* = 5 = 98) (*vov* = 6 + *nun* = 50 + *shin* = 300 + *mem* = 40 + *ches* = 8 + *hei* = 5 = 409) (*bais* = 2 + *vov* = 6 = 8) = 515 + the three words themselves = 518



OHR HACHAIM

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

Praises For The Holy *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh*

Three Segulos – *refua*, * *shemira* * and *zera shel kayoma*

The *Gedolei Yisrael* recommended studying the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* not only as a way to be spiritually uplifted and for success in material matters, but also for its many wondrous *segulos*:

Once, when Rav Pinchas Koritzer's son was sick, he ordered him to study a page of *Ohr HaChaim* each day as a *segula* for a *refua sheleima*. (*Imrei Pinchos Shaar HaTorah* #133)

Rav Avrohom Elimelech of Karlin-Stolin remarked, "Dem lernen *Ohr HaChaim* das iz a *segula* zu *heintige machlos* – that studying the *sefer Ohr HaChaim* is a *segula* against today's diseases." (*Pri Yesha Aharon*)

Rav Pinchas of Koritz said that keeping a copy of the *sefer Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* in one's home was a *segula* for *shemira* – safeguarding the home. (*Imrei Pinchas, Shaar HaTorah* #53)

On different occasions, *Tzaddikim* remarked that the *sefer Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* is a *segula* for *zera shel kayoma* – healthy children. The *segula* is to study the *sefer* on an ongoing basis on every *Erev Shabbos*, and this *segula* has been reported to be tried and true. There is also a *segula* to study on *Leil HaSeder* the portion of *Ohr HaChaim* on the *pasuk* in *Shemos* 13:8 *Vehigad'ta levincha* – "and you shall tell your son", to merit having sons. (*Shivchei Ohr HaChaim*)

Some connect this *segula* with the *mesora* that *Tzaddikim* said the reason the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* never had children was that he channeled all his creative efforts into his holy *sefer* to give birth to novel concepts, insights and *chiddushim*. Since all his power to produce offspring was instead channeled into his *sefer*, it would make sense that it contains the *segula* for having children. (Rav Binyomin Mendelson, *GAV"D Komemiyus*, in the name of Rav Simcha Bunim of Ger – *Libom Shel Yisrael*)

Last week, after the *Ohr HaChaim shiur* here in *Beit Shemesh*, the *Maggid Shiur*, the son of Rav Nosson Nota Biderman of Lelov-Yerushalayim, told me how recently, two *yungeleit* here in *Beit Shemesh*, whom he knows personally, both married for several years with no children, decided to try out this *segula*. They accepted upon themselves to study together *bechavrusa* the *sefer Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* every day after davening for ten minutes. After having done this for about a year, both of them were *B"H* blessed with healthy children – *zera shel kayoma!*



The Nusach HaTefilla of the Ohr HaChaim

(To Be Recited On Rosh Hashana After Elokai Netzor And On Yom Kippur Before The Yud-Gimmel Middos Shel Rachamim, When The Shatz Says Vayaavor Hashem Al Ponov – In The Tefilla Yeshora Berditchever Siddur, It Is Also Presented Before The Daily Tachanun In The Same Place, Before The Yud-Gimmel Middos)

May it be Your will, our Father, our King, our G-d, the very light of our *nefesh, ruach* and *neshoma* – our lower soul, spirit and our higher soul, on behalf of Your covenant which You sealed for the thirteen attributes of mercy which are never left unheeded and unanswered, which You never turn away empty-handed from before You. Please remember our love and return Your Divine Presence, the *Shechina*, to our holy *Mikdosh*, the Temple, and delight in us once again as You have in the past! Because Your departure is as painful and difficult to us as the departure of our soul from our body! Our innards pine away and our souls expire for the time of the redemption of Your *Shechina* and for Your holy abode, the Temple, and we desire Your good will! We hereby beg, plead and cry before You, *Hashem*, merciful Father, over the exile and *Golus HaShechina*. Save Your *Shechina, Hashem!* And attach

and bind our souls in *dveikus* to Your heartfelt love, which is pleasant and sweet for our souls and spirits, and may the King return to the halls of His palace!



The Holy Lights Of The Ohr Hachaim

“*And it was at the end*” (*Bereishis* 41:1).

The *Ohr HaChaim* points out that the *loshon* of our *pasuk*, *vayehi*, indicates pain and suffering, because now begins the *Golus* and the reason behind it. Although this *Golus* had been decreed many years before, it was not specifically decreed at that time that the exile would take place in *Mitzrayim*. Egypt is known as *Kur HaBarzel* – the purifying furnace that heats molten rock and removes impurities so that the strongest metal emerges. And as *Tosafos* (*Shabbos* 10b) and the *Raavad* (gloss to *Rambam’s Hilchos Teshuva* ch. 6) indicate, the Egyptians enslaved and subjugated the Jews more harshly than they were supposed to, as it says: “and they forced them to labor and they caused them to suffer.”

The *Ohr HaChaim* gives another reason why our *pasuk* uses a language indicating pain and suffering: it heralds the tidings of the upcoming famine. *Hashem*, so to speak, suffers with us, as *Chazal* say (*Megilla* 10b) regarding the *pasuk* in *Shemos* (14:20).

The *Ohr HaChaim* adds that this also hints to the suffering of *Yosef HaTzaddik*, who had to suffer to additional years in prison after interpreting the dream of the royal cupbearer – the *sar hamashkim* – because he was originally supposed to be freed two years earlier (*Bereishis Rabba* ch. 89) and because he asked the *sar hamashkim* to remember him and mention him – *zechartani vehizkartani* – for those two requests [that were improper for someone of *Yosef’s* spiritual stature to make], he was punished with two more years of imprisonment and suffering.

Chazal say (*ibid*) that *Mikeitz* means the end or *keitz* of the darkness. This alludes to the upcoming end of the dark one, the *yetzer hora*, who is known as *keitz kol bossor* – the end of all flesh. For he, the *yetzer*, caused the *Tzaddik* to suffer two more years. This is why *Hashem* prevented his freedom for two years, for that time was on *Rosh HaShana*, a time of *zikoron*, when *Hashem* remembers us (*Rosh HaShana* is called *Yom HaZikoron*) but because the *yetzer* caused *Yosef* to rely on the *sar hamashkim* and ask him to remember him and mention him – *zechartani...vehizkartani* (*Bereishis* 40:14) – for those two requests he spent two more years in prison, since *Hashem* held back his mention and memory for two *Rosh HaShanas*.

“*And whoever has a palate with discerning taste should taste of our words and find them as sweet as wafer in honey.*” וְטַעְמוֹ כְּצַפִּירֹת בְּדָבָשׁ

(*Ohr HaChaim*, *Shemos* 3:13)



The Angel That Came to Our Aid During the War of Chashmonai Against the Greeks

“*And you shall chase your enemies and they shall fall before you by the sword*” (*Vayikra* 26:7)

Says the holy *Tzaddik*, *Rav Chaim ben Attar*, in his *sefer Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* on *Chumash Vayikra*, that the words in our *pasuk* “by the sword” hint at a miraculous defeat of

our enemies by an angelic being, wielding a fiery sword, similar to the miracle that happened to *Bnei Chashmonai*, who saw an angel wielding his sword against the enemy (*Yosifon* ch. 22) ["And there appeared between heaven and earth a being clothed in golden raiments and riding a fiery horse of flame, wielding a spear, his back toward the *Chashmonai* army and facing forward against the army of the Greeks]. This is what our *pasuk* hints to, that they shall fall by the sword – wielded by an angel.



Moshe Prophesied Regarding the Greek Defeat and the *Chashmonai* Victory

"Strike the loins of those who rise up against him and his enemies, so that they will not recover" (*Devorim* 33:11)

Says the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh*: Our Sages taught (*Bereishis Rabba* 99:2) that the prophecy relates that *Malchus Yovon*, the Greek kingdom, would be defeated at the hands of the *Chashmonaim*. This is why the *pasuk* says "and his enemies shall fail to rise and recover". Even when the time is ripe and auspicious for enemies to arise and be more powerful and rule over *Bnei Yisrael*, a time when we are weak and subdued, nonetheless even at that time "they shall strike the loins of the enemy that rises up against us" – and so it was that they emerged victorious in a miraculous and wondrous way!



Kedushas Levi On Chanukah

Chanukah falls in Kislev, the month of Yaakov's death, in whose merit Miracles occur. The month is also the third, counting from Tishrei, and that corresponds to Levi, and that is why the Miracle was performed by the Kohanic Family of the *Chashmonai*.

Kislev is the Month in which Chanukah occurs. For Kislev corresponds to Yaakov,¹ and Miracles are in the merit of Yaakov, as is known; and therefore, the principal Miracle of Chanukah occurred in this Month. This Month is also the third, counting from Tishrei as the beginning of the year, which corresponds to Levi, the third of the Tribes (See "Tikkunei Zohar," Tikkun 18, 32; and in the "Kisei Melech" *ibid.*) And therefore, the Miracle was accomplished through the agency of the *Chashmonai* and his sons, for Priests are part of the Tribe of Levi.

On the *Yamim Noraim* HaShem remembers the People of Israel for Good. But it is not until Chanukah that the People see that Good in their minds' eyes. And that is why the celebration of the Holiday involves lamps, for they are a **source of light**. Similarly, the main celebration of Purim is through speech, for then the *Megilah* is read. And the celebration of Pesach is through deed, for then we eat Matzah.

The Principle is that on Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur the Holy One, Blessed is He, remembers the People of Israel for Good, but it is not until Chanukah that the People of Israel perceive that Good intellectually, for "...*the eyes of the People...*" (*BaMidbar* 15:24)² is explained by Rashi (*Taanis* 24a) as referring to the wise

¹ **Manuscript Editor Footnote:** The connection with the Month of Kislev is the verse (*Bereshis* 50:11), "*The Canaanite inhabitants of the land saw...*" ("Mishnas Chassidim," Maseches Cheshvan-Kislev, Chapter 1, Mishnah 3), which was said at the time of the death of Yaakov, in the Month of Kislev; See "Bnei Yissachar" Section on Kislev-Teves, Essay 1, Letter 1.

² The reference of the verse is to a case where the Sanhedrin mistakenly ruled that a form of idol worship was permissible.

men of the People.³ And therefore, the celebration of Chanukah is by means of lamps, for they are a **source of light** and make vision possible. And afterwards, the main celebration of Purim is through speech, for then Megilas Esther is read aloud in public, and on Pesach the main celebration is through deed, and therefore we eat Matzah.⁴ But again on Chanukah, sight and vision are primary, and its time of celebration is the Month of Kislev, the connection to which is the verse (*Bereshis 50:11*), “*The Canaanite inhabitants of the land saw...*” (“Mishnas Chassidim,” Maseches Cheshvan-Kislev, Chapter 1, Mishnah 3), that speaks in terms of “seeing.”

The inaugurations of the Mishkan, First Temple and Second Temple took place in Nissan, Tishrei and Kislev, respectively.

The inauguration of the Mishkan took place on Rosh Chodesh Nissan (Shemos 40:17), the inauguration of the First Temple was in Tishrei (“Pesikta Rabasi” 6:5) and the inauguration of the Second Temple took place in Kislev (Chaggai 2:10,18)⁵, each according to its special quality. The Miracles which took place at the time of the

Mishkan occurred close to Nisan; therefore, its inauguration took place then. And the Second Temple, in connection with which the Miracle involving the House of Chashmonai occurred in the Month of Kislev, had its inauguration at that time. And the inauguration of the First Temple occurred in the Month of Tishrei. The underlying reason is this: The Mishkan represented what the **body** is capable of conceiving in terms of the existence of a Creator, Blessed is He, and the Temple represented what the **soul** is capable of conceiving in terms of the existence of the Creator of the Universe. And the time that the soul is most active in apprehending the Creator is Tishrei, because of the Forgiving of sins that occurs at that time, while in Nisan the body is most active in apprehending the existence of a Creator of the Universe, for it is through Miracles and Wonders that the body apprehends.

Because the soul is eternal, the Temple is called the Eternal House. But the Temple is also called a Mishkan. And the Mishkan is also called a Temple. For there is a connection between the two entities. The soul takes pleasure in what the body takes pleasure in, because it is the body that ensures the existence in “This-World” of the Soul, to serve HaShem. And the soul’s activity in serving the Creator is also a source of tranquility for the body.

Therefore, the Temple is called the Eternal House (I Kings 8:13), because the soul is eternal while the body is transient. And the following statement of our Sages, Z”L (Eruvin 2a) shows clearly that this is true: “How do we know that the Temple is also referred to as a Mishkan, and that the Mishkan is also referred to as a Temple?” For in truth there is a connection, by virtue of which the soul takes pleasure as well in what the body takes pleasure, for it is the continued existence of the body that ensures the continued existence of the soul in “This World,” to serve the Creator, Blessed is He and Blessed is His Name, and the opposite is also true; namely, that the soul’s activity in serving the Creator, Blessed is He, is also a source of tranquility for the body. And that is the reason why the Mishkan, that is more closely associated with the body, is also referred to as a Temple, and why the Temple is also called a Mishkan; upon reflection this will become obvious.

³ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** See “Shir HaShirim Rabbah” 1:15, 2; “Zohar HaKadosh” Part 2, text beginning “*The sweet smell*”

⁴ Although on Pesach, speech is also a major component of the celebration, because we are obligated to recount the events of the Exodus at the Seder.

⁵ The reference given in the text of the Kedushas Levi before us in I Kings is not correct.

Now we will explain, by way of an analogy, the disagreement as to whether it is permitted to use the light of the Chanukah Lamp or not. A mighty King has come to visit two poor individuals. One is impressed by the King's wealth; the other, by the fact that the King has come to visit him. Similarly, when HaShem performs Miracles; One person appreciates the Miracle itself; the other, by the fact that HaShem does Miracles for human beings.

Miracle itself, that HaShem, May He be Blessed, has performed. This is analogous to the poor person who is very much impressed by the wealth of the King in and of itself, so does he rejoice in the Miraculous Kindness that was performed for him. But the other type of poor person does not rejoice in the Miracles per se, for he realizes that the Holy One, Blessed is He, created all the Worlds and that He is Omnipotent. Rather, his pleasure in contemplating the Miracles derives from the fact that they are evidence that the Holy One, Blessed is He, as it were, wears humanity as a garment, because He performs Miracles for human beings. For this reason he feels joy as, in the analogy, the more sophisticated poor man rejoiced that the mighty King chose to spend the night and be involved with him. So again does the more sophisticated observer of Miracles rejoice at the fact that the Mighty and Omnipotent King chose, as it were, to dwell among human beings.

The disagreement with regard to the permissibility of using the light of the Chanukah Lamp depends on the difference in perspective with respect to HaShem's Miracles. The view that one may appreciate the Miracle in itself for the benefits that it has afforded human beings, will hold that it is permissible to use the light of the Chanukah Lamp. The view that one should, rather, appreciate the fact that the Infinite G-d has chosen to involve Himself with human beings, will assert that it is prohibited to use the light of the Chanukah Lamp.

we are guided by the verse, "...no eye has seen, O G-d, beside You..."⁶(Berachos 34b). For that reason, this opinion holds that it is forbidden to make use of the light of the Chanukah Lamp.

Now we will explain by an analogy, with the Help of Heaven, the statement of Chaza"l (Shabbos 21b) that **there is a disagreement as to whether it is permitted to use the light of the Chanukah Lamp or whether such usage is prohibited.** The analogy is as follows: A mighty King comes to spend the night in the house of a poor person. Now, it is natural that when a mighty King comes to visit someone, one sees the magnificence of his wealth and his greatness, and this poor person also rejoices in his heart when he sees the great wealth of the King, wealth beyond anything he had ever seen before. But the poor individual who is also wise, does not rejoice over the great wealth of the King, for he knows that from the perspective of the King, his wealth is insignificant; rather, he rejoices in the very fact that the King has decided to spend the night with him, in his house. So it is when HaShem, May He be Blessed, performs Miracles for human beings, one rejoices in receiving the benefit of the

And this disagreement, where one opinion maintains that it is permitted to make use of the light of the Chanukah Lamp, is in alignment with the idea that it is appropriate to rejoice that HaShem, May He be Blessed, performed this Miracle, whose benefit is of "This World," **for him**, and "This World" exists **for the purpose of human beings benefiting from it**; for that reason this opinion considers it permissible to make use of the light of the Chanukah Lamp. And the other opinion, that it is forbidden to make use of the light of the Chanukah Lamp, corresponds to the perspective that rejoices in HaShem, May He be Blessed, Himself, for He chose to clothe His Radiance, as it were, with human beings. From this perspective, any benefit derived from the Miracle is inconsequential, and is only evidence of a much greater idea, far above the concerns of "This-World," and it is not permitted for human beings to make use of anything that is not of "This-World," for regarding such matters

⁶ The full text of the verse quoted is, "For since the beginning of the world man has not heard, nor perceived by the ear; **neither has the eye seen, O G-d, beside You, what He has prepared for them that wait for Him.**" (Yeshayahu 64:3) The Talmud cites this verse to demonstrate that Torah Scholars do not condition their righteous behavior on any reward that they might receive in the World-to-Come; they prefer to trust HaShem regarding such matters.

We say in the “Shemoneh Esray,” “We thank You for Your Miracles that are **with us** every day...” where the expression “**with us**” means that there was a significant **Arousal from below**, but we also say “And for Your Wonders and Your Benefits performed at all times” where here we refer to Miracles in connection with there was **not any Arousal from below**, but the Miracles were delivered simply as an Arousal from Above, as were the Miracles of the Exodus, or the Dew. The Miracle of Chanukah is an example of a Miracle that involved significant Arousal from below; namely, the valiant battle of the Maccabim against Antiochus and the Hellenistic Syrians.

war.

In the Book of Daniel, it is written that the Kingdom of Antiochus is compared to a goat. It is known that the goat is the most contemptuous of animals, and that it is more contemptuous to disobey a King in his palace than outside of it. Of all Israel’s enemies, Antiochus was the only one who tried to destroy the Faith of the Jews while their Temple stood.

their periods of domination, the Temple was not standing.⁹ It is for that reason that Antiochus is called the “he-goat,” because he was the most contemptuous of all of Israel’s enemies.

In the “**Shemoneh Esray**” we say, “(We thank You) for Your Miracles that are **with us** every day,” the expression **with us** is used with precision, referring to those Miracles that are performed for us due to our own actions. And we also say, “And for Your Wonders and Your Benefits performed at all times – evening and morning and afternoon;” note that in this expression the term “with us” does not appear, for we are not the cause; rather, He pours down Abundance, so to speak, without any Arousal from below. And I will explain to you, with the help of Heaven, that regarding the Miracles that accompanied the Exodus, HaShem, May He be Blessed, accomplished them without any Arousal from below⁷ (See the “Pri Eitz Chaim,” the Section on “Chag HaMatzos,” Chapter 1), unlike what happened on Chanukah, where the Miracles occurred partially due to the actions of those on the Lower Level, for the Chashmonai and his sons did battle with the Wicked Antiochus (Book of Yosiphon, Chapter 20). Therefore we say on Chanukah, “*Let the pleasantness...*” (*Tehilim 90:17*), where the idea is continued in *Tehilim 91*, at the time of the lighting of the Chanukah lights, for there it is said, “*And establish for us the work of our hands.*” (Siddur Rav Shabbsai in the name of the Ramban and the Besh”t); This to hint at the Miracle of Chanukah, which occurred in part due to our own vigorous efforts in battle, but in truth, HaShem, May He be Blessed, crowned our efforts with success and gave us victory in the

Now in the Book of Daniel (Daniel 8:5)⁸ it is written that the Kingdom of Antiochus is compared to a goat, and similarly in the Table Songs of Shabbat it is said (the reference is to the Table Hymn, “HaShem is Blessed Every Day”), “And the he-goat raised himself over the mighty ones,” because the goat is known to be the most contemptuous among the animals, as our Sages say in Beitzah (Chapter 3, 25a). And that, indeed, is why it is called “Eiz,” for “being contemptuous” in Hebrew is “me-iz.” And the Kingdom of the wicked Antiochus was more contemptuous than any of Israel’s previous enemies. For it is known that it is more contemptuous to disobey a King **in his palace** than outside of it. And that was exactly the level of his contempt, for he tried to sever the bonds of the Jewish People and their Faith **while the Temple was standing**, unlike Egypt and Madai and Persia, for during their periods of domination, the Temple was not standing.⁹ It is for that reason that Antiochus is called the “he-goat,” because he was the most contemptuous of all of Israel’s enemies.

⁷ Indeed, the People of Israel were commanded by Moshe, “*HaShem shall do battle for you, and you shall remain silent.*” (*Shemos 14:14*)

⁸ The full text of the verse referred to is as follows: “*And as I was considering, behold, a he-goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground; and the goat had a large horn between its eyes.*” This is a reference to the Greek Empire that is about to come into conflict with the Persian Empire and destroy it.

⁹ And indeed, Rome felt that it had to destroy the Temple in order to destroy the Jewish Faith.

The question is asked, “Why did Chaza”l establish a memorial for the Miracle of Esther, but not for the Miracle of Gideon or the Miracle of Chizkiyahu?” It is possible to answer that in those other cases, the main deliverance occurred on Pesach! But at first glance, that doesn’t really make sense, because Haman as well was hung on Pesach! For that reason, Esther asked for a separate remembrance for her Miracle, as a remembrance of the month in which the lottery fell, which makes sense, especially in light of the fact that Purim celebrates hiddenness and randomness, as in a lottery.

Regarding that which we asked in the work “Kedushas Levi” that we compiled (See the first “Kedushah” for Chanukah), Why is it that the Sages established a remembrance for the Miracle of Chanukah, but not for the Miracle of Gideon (Shophtim; Chapters 6-7)¹⁰, nor for the Miracle of Chizkiyahu (II Kings 19:35)¹¹ ? It is possible to answer that the defeat of Sancheriv and of Sisera occurred on Pesach, as is mentioned in the Aggadah and the Midrash (“Shemos Rabbah,” 18:5 and the “Midrash Panim Acherim,” Alternate Version, Chapter 6). But if so, why did they make a remembrance for the Miracle of the defeat of Haman, which is the basis of the Holiday of Purim (in the Month of Adar), when Haman was hung also on Pesach?¹² And with this, we will understand the statement of our Sages, Z”L, in Gemara Megilah 7a, “Esther sent a request to the Sages, ‘Establish a remembrance for me for all generations...’ ” – which is somewhat difficult to understand, because why would Esther imagine that the Sages would not establish a remembrance for the Miracle, even without her specific request, in order to express gratitude to HaShem? But the difficulty that the Sages, Z”L, faced was that since Haman was hung on Pesach, where would they establish a separate remembrance for the

Miracle of Purim, since praise was already being given to HaShem then (in the Month of Nisan) for the Miracles of the Exodus from Egypt? For that reason, Esther made a separate request “Establish a remembrance for me for all generations” in remembrance also of the Month on which the lottery had fallen, and the “*Month that was converted for them from mourning to great joy*” (Esther 9:22). But since the main Aspect of the Miracle, which was the destruction of Haman, occurred on Pesach, Esther had to make a separate request of the Sages, “Establish a remembrance for me for all generations.”

On Chanukah we kindle 36 lights, which means 36 lights are also kindled in Heaven, for a total of 72, corresponding to the 72-letter Name of G-d. If we include the “Shamash,” the number becomes 88, the Gematria of “Pach,” a trap, represented by the Kingdom of Antiochus. The Ari, Z”L, wrote that 88 is also the Gematria of the Hebrew initials of the expression “*Our soul waits for HaShem*” and also the initials of the words “to light the Lamp of Chanukah.”

On Chanukah we kindle 36 lights, and in the sense of there being a correspondence between what exists on earth and what exists in Heaven (“Zohar HaKadosh,” Part 1, 35a), 36 lights are kindled in Heaven, and the sum of the 36 above and the 36 below is 72, corresponding to the 72-letter Name of HaShem, Blessed is He. And counting the Shamash, the total of the lights of Chanukah is 44, and corresponding to that number are 44 in Heaven, giving a grand total of 88, corresponding in “Gematria” to “Peh”=80 and “Ches” = 8 or “PaCH,” as in “*The trap (“pach”) was broken, and we escaped.*” (Tehilim 124:7); where the “Trap-of-88” represents the Kingdom of Antiochus, and by our destruction of his “trap,” we caused there to be kindled 88 lights Above and 88 lights Below. Therefore, the Ari Z”L wrote (“Pri Eitz Chaim” Section on Chanukah, Chapter 4) that the initials of “Nafshenu Chiksah LaHaShem” – “Nun,” “Ches,” “Lamed” - “*Our soul waits for HaShem*” (Tehilim 33:20) is also

88, and so is the expression “to kindle the Chanukah lights.”¹³ (See this analysis there) Therefore, the “Gematria” of the initials of the Chanukah Blessings is also 88 (“PaCh”), alluding to the 88 lights of Chanukah, as mentioned above.

¹⁰ Verse Shophtim (4:22), shown in the text of “Kedushas Levi,” does not relate to the military victory of Gideon, but rather to the earlier victory of Barak and Devorah over Yavin, King of Canaan, and his general, Sisera.. Gideon’s victory over Midian is described in Shophtim, Chapters 6-7.

¹¹ The full text of the verse cited is, “*And it came to pass that night, that the Angel of the L-rd went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred eighty five thousand. And when they rose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.*”

¹² Ms. Ed. Footnote: See Rashi on Megilah 15a, text beginning “The First Day of the Holiday of Pesach...” and in the Maharsha in Part 1, ibid.

¹³ Initials of “L’Hadlik Ner Chanukah” are “Lamed,” “Nun,” “Ches”

This paragraph touches on the famous discussion as to whether the “Kindling of the Lights Accomplishes the Command” or “Placement of the Lamp Accomplishes the Command.” The former opinion focuses on the idea that the one who performs the Command should be full of enthusiasm for His Service; which is precisely the meaning of “Kindling” while the latter view focuses on the result of the enthusiasm; namely, that the person carrying out the Command places his Love into a Holy vessel about which he is enthusiastic in His Service.

partakes of the Aspect of Kingliness,” for since the Creator is being crowned as King by means of this Enthusiasm, the person performing the Command acquires Tranquility in the Service of the Creator, Blessed is He.

The Ari, Z”L writes that the sum of the “Nerot Chanukah,” including the “Shamashim” is 44, equal to the running sum of the 4-Letter Divine Name. In combination with the 45-Letter Divine Name, the sum is 89, equal (+1) to the Gematria of the word “Nachal” or the initials of “L’Hadlik Ner Chanukah.” But the question arises, “What do these Divine Names have to do with Chanukah?”

(or “L”) = 30, of “Nun” (or “N”) = 50, and the value of “Ches” (or “Ch”) = 8” – till here are his words. But at first glance the above calculation is strange, for what is the relationship of the two Divine Names to the Lights of Chanukah?

Chaza”l said “Yisrael arose in **His Mind**” and **Thought** is the inner meaning of **nothingness**, which is the Source of Flow of Abundance to Israel, as Chaza”l said, “**nothingness** is the **Sign of Israel**.”
24:7) “*Let water flow...*”¹⁵

Our Sages, Z”L, said (Shabbos 22b) that the “Kindling of the Lights Accomplishes the Command.” That is to say, that a person should be full of enthusiasm for His Service, and that is, precisely, the meaning of “Kindling.” But since in being enthusiastic, there are two types of people; one who is enthusiastic concerning things of no value, while the Righteous person, who is enthusiastic only about Holy things, is considered by that enthusiasm to accomplish “Placement,” “HaNachah,” because “Tranquil Placement” (“Menuchah”) is the name attached to the vessel into which Love is placed; for in its placement, there is a feeling of tranquility for the Love that dwells there. And that is according to the opinion that “Placement of the Lamp Accomplishes the Command.” That is, that there should be, corresponding to the “Kindling,” a “Placement;” meaning that the person carrying out the Command should place his Love into a Holy vessel about which he is enthusiastic in His Service. And it was to this idea that those wise in the Wisdom of Truth (See the “PriEitz Chaim,”

Section on Chanukah, Chapter 4), alluded when they said that “Placement partakes of the Aspect of Kingliness,” for since the Creator is being crowned as King by means of this Enthusiasm, the person performing the Command acquires Tranquility in the Service of the Creator, Blessed is He. We find in the writings of the Ari Z”L (“Pri Eitz Chaim,” Section on Chanukah, Chapter 4) regarding the inner meaning of the fact that the sum of the Lights of Chanukah is 36, and counting the “Shamash” the sum is 44, that this corresponds to the running sum of the “Gematriot” of the combinations of the 4-Letter Divine Name “I will Be” - spelled “Aleph,” “Heh,” “Yud,” “Heh” – such that, where **G** represents Gematria, **G**(“Aleph”) = 1, **G**(“Aleph,” “Heh”) = 6, **G**(“Aleph,” “Heh,” “Yud”) = 16, **G**(“Aleph,” “Heh,” “Yud,” “Heh”) = 21 and the sum of the **G**’s is 44. **And in combination with the 45-Letter Divine Name**, the sum is 89, equal to the Gematria of the word “**Nachal**” (spelled “Nun,” “Ches,” “Lamed”), plus 1 for the word itself, which in turn is equal to the Gematria of the initials of “**L’Hadlik Ner Chanukah**” where the value of “Lamed”

(or “L”) = 30, of “Nun” (or “N”) = 50, and the value of “Ches” (or “Ch”) = 8” – till here are his words. But at first glance the above calculation is strange, for what is the relationship of the two Divine Names to the Lights of Chanukah?

It seems to me possible to explain that our Sages, Z”L, said (“Bereshis Rabbah,” 1:4), “Yisrael arose in **His Mind**,” and **Thought** is the inner meaning of nothingness (“Zohar HaKadosh,” Part 1, 246b), and that nothingness is the Source of the Flow of Abundance to Israel, as our Sages, Z”L, said (Shabbos 156a), “Ayn Mazal L’Yisrael” – meaning that “**‘Ayin’ (nothingness) is the Sign of Israel,**”¹⁴ as it is said (*BaMidbar*

¹⁴ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** See Selections from “Meor Aynayim” text beginning, “When Avraham wanted...” where the author cites this interpretation in the name of the “Besh’it” (Baal Shem Tov)

¹⁵ The entire text of the verse cited is, “*Let water flow from his wells, and his seed shall be by abundant waters; His King shall be exalted over Aqag, and his kingdom shall be upraised.*”

Nothingness is hinted at by the two letters “Aleph” and “Yud.” “Aleph” begins the Divine Name “Eh”-“He”-“Ye”-“H” and hints at the Oral Torah, hidden within the Written Torah; “Yud,” the Root of the Divine Name “Ha”-“Va”-“Yah”-“H,” hints at the Written Torah, the Source of the Oral Torah.

the Oral Torah, for the Oral Torah is hidden within the Written Torah.¹⁷ And the Letter “Yud” is the **root of the Divine Name “Ha-Va-Ya-H”** – Blessed is He (“Tikkunei Zohar” ibid.), and it hints at the Written Torah.¹⁸

In the verses in Parashas Shemos in which HaShem answers Moshe’s question as to how to identify Him to the People of Israel, we find the following: First, HaShem gives His Name as “I will be” and HaShem says to Moshe to tell this, using the word “tomar,” which contains the Letter “Aleph,” representing nothingness. Then He mentions the Name “Ha-Va-Ya-H,” where the first Letter is “Yud,” also representing nothingness. Although “Aleph,” which alludes to the Oral Torah, is more invisible than “Yud,” which alludes to the Written Torah, the same word, “tomar” is used to indicate speech, because speech is based on “Superior Intellect,” which is the inner meaning of nothingness.

“Amirah” (containing the “Aleph,” also associated with the “Ayin”) for the speech of the Higher Worlds is based on the Aspect of “Superior Intelligence” compared to the Lower Worlds.

Now nothingness is hinted at by two letters of the 22-letter alphabet; that is, by the letter “Aleph,” since sometimes the letter “Aleph” is not pronounced, as in the word “Bereshis” (Spelled “Beis,” “Resh,” “Aleph,” “Shin,” “Yud,” “Soff), where the letter “Aleph” is hidden in its pronunciation, therefore it hints at nothingness because of its great hiddenness. It is also hinted at by the letter “Yud,” because of its minute size, which makes it hard to see, so is the Divine nothingness invisible except to the mind’s eye. Notice now that the “Aleph” is the beginning of the Divine Name “I will Be”¹⁶ - “Aleph,” “Heh,” “Yud,” “Heh,” Blessed is He (Introduction to the “Tikkunei Zohar,” 6b), and it is likewise a hint to

The above principles can be used to explain the following verses: (*Shemos3:14-15*) “You shall say this to the Children of Israel, **‘I will Be’** sent me to you...You shall say this to the Children of Israel, ‘HaShem (using the **Y-H-V-H** Divine Name) the G-d of your forefathers...This is My Name forever...”¹⁹ With respect to the Name “I will be,” the word “tomar” (“You shall say,” spelled “Toff,” “Aleph,” “Mem,” “Resh”), which contains the letter “Aleph,” that is silent in its pronunciation, as explained previously, that therefore represents nothingness, is used. But with regard to the Divine Name “**Ha-Va-Ya-H**,” May He be Blessed, which is based on the “Yud,” the verse says “leOlam,” “Forever,” in accord with the statement of our Sages, Z”L (Pesachim 50a) that the word “leOlam” is written “Haser,” “in **‘diminished’**”²⁰ form, which represents the imperceptible nothingness that is not grasped and that is invisible. Now it is explained that in connection with the Divine Name “I will be,” speech is described as “Thus you shall say” as opposed to the Name “Ha-Va-Ya-H,” where the diminished form of “leOlam” is used, although the Name “I will Be” is greater in its invisibility than the Name “Ha-Va-Ya-H,” May He be Blessed, as is known (See “Shaarei Orah” Section 10); nevertheless, it included in its reference to speech the term based on

¹⁶ This is because “Aleph” is always the first letter of the “first person” future tense.

¹⁷ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** See the Section on the “Unities,” Chapter 7; “For indeed the Divine Name ‘I will be’ – ‘Aleph,’ ‘Heh,’ ‘Yud,’ ‘Heh’ – addresses something that has not yet come into existence.” And in a similar manner, the Oral Torah is embedded within the Written Torah.

¹⁸ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** See the “Zohar HaKadosh,” Part 1, 161b; The Written Torah is the one in which is written the Divine Name of “Ha-Va-Ya-H.”

¹⁹ The following is the full text of the verses cited, “G-d answered Moshe, **‘I will Be’** (using the Name ‘Aleph,’ ‘Heh,’ ‘Yud,’ ‘Heh’) as I will Be.’ And He said, ‘So shall you say to the Children of Israel, ‘I will Be’ has sent me to you.’ ” “G-d said further to Moshe, ‘So shall you say to the Children of Israel, ‘HaShem (using th Divine Name ‘Ha-Va-Ya-H’) the G-d of your forefathers, the G-d of Avraham, the G-d of Yitzchak, and the G-d of Yaakov has sent me to you. This is My Name forever, and this is My remembrance from generation to generation.’ ”

²⁰ That is, it is spelled “Lamed,” “Ayin,” “Lamed,” “Mem” – as opposed to the “Malei,” “Full” form, spelled “Lamed,” “Ayin,” “Vav,” “Lamed,” “Mem”

The Name “I will Be” is associated with the Oral Torah, and the Name “Ha-Va-Ya-H” is associated with the Written Torah. The 1st Temple was associated with the Written Torah, the 2nd with the Oral Torah and the Miracle of Chanukah, that corresponded to the Divine Name “I will Be.”

The term “chalashim,” is translated as “the weak” in the Chanukah version of “Al HaNisim.” That is, weak in his own opinion, and he has doubt as to whether he will be able to defeat his enemy, going back and forth in his mind. The word is also a synonym for “lottery,” where the outcome is unknown, as used in the language of the Mishnah.

lots...” – where the final expression “casting lots” is written as “metilin chalashim.”

Another insight into the use of the word “chalashim” with regard to the Maccabim is that though they were indeed mighty warriors, they did not attribute their victory to their own power, but rather to the intervention of HaShem in their behalf.

Even when we fought bravely for victory, the end result was due to HaShem. The Light of Chanukah enables us to focus our vision clearly on this truth.

However, in the case of Chanukah, where the Redemption of the Chashmonai and his sons were definitely assisted by the People of Israel, who waged war, and when a person takes action, it is most difficult for a person to believe that his actions were not causative in the victory, but rather it was from Him, May He be Blessed, Who was the true Helper. And to achieve this Faith, it is necessary to concentrate on the Creator, Blessed is He, so that through one’s concentration on the Master of Everything, one perceives that everything does indeed come from Him, and it was because of that very concentration, that they merited to receive this great Miracle. And we kindle the Lights of Chanukah, for the nature of a Lamp is to produce light, alluding to vision and focus, because it was through their concentration on the Creator, that they realized that HaShem is the true Victor in Battle.

Now it is established that the Name “I will Be” is associated with the Oral Torah, while the Name of “Ha-Va-Ya-H,” May He be Blessed, is associated with the Written Torah, and also that the First Temple was associated with the Written Torah, and the Second Temple was associated more closely with the Oral Torah, and the Third Temple which will be built soon and in our days will be associated with both of them, and the Miracle of Chanukah took place at the time of the Second Temple, corresponding to the Name “I will Be” that together with the word itself yielded the number 45. That was the intention of the Ari, Z”L.

“**You gave over the mighty into the hands of the weak**” is the language of the Prayer of Chanukah. The Hebrew word “chalash,” translated as “weak,” is used on account of the fact that he is weak in his own opinion; perhaps his opponent will be victorious, and because of that he is afraid to enter into combat. Thus, there is a back-and-forth discussion, so to speak, in his mind, as to whether he will be victorious or whether his opponent will be, and the matter is in doubt, and the expression “shakla v’tarya”²¹ is also used as a synonym for a lottery. For the result of a lottery is also in doubt whether the result will be this or that of the two possibilities; therefore another term for a lottery is “chalash” in the language of the Mishnah (Shabbos 148b), “They were engaged in the practice of casting

An additional explanation of “**You gave over the mighty into the hands of the weak**” is the following: At first glance, weren’t the Chashmonai and his sons also mighty fighters, as is mentioned in the book of Yosiphon (Chapter 20 and Chapter 26)? But rather, they were so righteous that they didn’t attribute their victory to their might; rather, the victory came from HaShem. And this is what they meant by “Chalashim,” “Weak Ones,” that they perceived themselves as weak, for they knew that they could never have achieved victory without the help of HaShem.

Now in all the redemptions experienced by our People, they were not the result of activity on our part; rather, the Holy One, Blessed is He, by Himself, was victorious and subdued the oppressive outer shells without any action on the part of the People of Israel. And even in connection with Haman²², the major part of the Miracle was accomplished by G-d.

²¹ used mainly to describe the back-and-forth logical discussions in the Talmud

²² whose destruction on Purim was perhaps the most concealed Miracle of all

The Ta"z asked, "Why did Chaza"l not make a remembrance for the lives that were saved by the victory?" The answer is that through focus on the Lights of Chanukah, one also realizes that HaShem is the One Who saved the lives.

Regarding the wording of the Blessing, "...Who performed Miracles for our fathers in those days at this time" – the meaning is that the Miracles of Chanukah and Purim were performed by HaShem within Nature and within Time, as opposed to the Miracles of the Exodus, that were performed outside the realm of Nature and above the realm of Time.

Miracles, for everything came from Him, May He be Blessed.

The Holiday is called "Chanukah," for the last 2 letters also spell "Koh," approximately, whereas Moshe prophesied with the language of "Zeh," exactly. For he was above nature and time, while lesser prophets were within nature and time.

above the realm of Time and Nature; he used the language of exactitude, the language of Heaven; namely "Exactly this..." Therefore, Chanukah was called by that name; that is to say, "They encamped in the realm of 'approximation' – in the Aspect of 'Koh,' on the twenty fifth, the letters that spell out the word 'Koh;' their Place of Tranquility, for their Miracle occurred in the midst of Nature.' "

And every year, within these very days, we re-experience Salvation and Redemption.

Your People you performed..." **"as this very day."** Precisely "as this very day" – that is to say, that **also today we experience Salvation and Redemption**, on those very days as it happened in that ancient era.²³

We find in Maseches Shabbos (Shabbos 21b), "What is the nature of Chanukah?"

In Maseches Shabbos, the Gemara defines the Miracle of Chanukah in terms of the small amount of oil lasting 8 days. The Bais Yoseph asks, "Since there was enough oil for 1 day, why wasn't Chanukah established as a 7-Day Hoilday?"

The Gemara explains the Miracle of Chanukah as follows: "...and they found only one cruse of oil, and there was sufficient oil in it for only one day, and a Miracle occurred within it, and they

And now the question of the "TureiZahav" in "Orach Chayim" (Section 671) is answered. His question was "Why did Chaza"l not make a remembrance for the saving of lives by the victory?" But according to the above, we have an answer, for the Lights are also a remembrance for the lives saved, for through their concentration on the Lights, the Jewish soldiers knew that it was the Hand of G-d that accomplished the Miracle to save their lives, and not their might.

In the language of the Blessing, we say, **"...Who performed Miracles for our fathers in those days at this time."** For all other Miracles were above the realm of Time, as was the case in connection with the Miracles performed in Egypt, and in connection with the splitting of the "Yam Suf" and the "Yarden," as well as all other Miracles were indeed timeless, as opposed to the Miracles of Chanukah and Purim, which were within the realm of Time and within Nature, for the Chashmonai and his sons engaged in battle, and on Purim we had Queen Esther. Therefore, in the Blessing over kindling the Lights of Chanukah, we say "...Who performed Miracles...at this **time**;" that is to say, within the realm of Time, which is identified with "This World," in the midst of Nature He performed

And that is why the Holiday is called "Chanukah," for our Sages, Z"L ("Sifri," Matos 2) said, "Moshe prophesied using the language of exactitude, specifically using the language of 'Exactly this...' while all the other prophets prophesied using the language of approximation, using the language of 'About this...' or 'Approximately this...'" – for the language of approximation is appropriate for the blurred and shadowy vision of reality that is available to us in "This World," unlike Moshe "Rabbeinu,"

A"H, the Master of the Prophets, who was permanently attached and fixed above the realm of Time and Nature; he used the language of exactitude, the language of Heaven; namely "Exactly this..." Therefore, Chanukah was called by that name; that is to say, "They encamped in the realm of 'approximation' – in the Aspect of 'Koh,' on the twenty fifth, the letters that spell out the word 'Koh;' their Place of Tranquility, for their Miracle occurred in the midst of Nature.' "

And every year, during these days, that Miracle is revealed again, and HaShem, May He be Blessed, pours out for His People Salvation and Redemption. And that is why we say in the "Shemoneh Esray," "...and for

²³ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** See further on in the First Kedushah, where he explains the idea at greater length, and see also "Bnei Yissachar" on Kislev and Teves Essay 4, Letter 81.

were able to kindle from it eight full days. The following year, they established an eight-day Holiday of Praise and Gratitude to HaShem.” The Rav, the Beis Yosef asks (“Orach Chayim,” Section 670), “Why did they make the Holiday for eight days, since the cruse contained enough oil for one day, the Miraculous Aspect was revealed only for seven days!” See there how he answered the question.²⁴

Kedushas Levi poses another question; by answering it, he intends to answer the Bais Yoseph’s question as well. The major Miracle of Pesach occurred on the 15th of Nisan. Why is the “Korban Pesach” not sacrificed then?

the Torah command us to slaughter it on the 14th?

It is possible to answer this question by analogy to a King who gives presents to a number of his subjects, who divide into 2 types. 1 is interested only in free gifts. The 2nd is interested in the nature of the gifts, and also in the fact that a great King desires their love.

The “nimshal,” of the “mashal,” is the Exodus from Egypt, where HaShem did for the People of Israel, Miracles of Deliverance for which there was no cause. Rather, they were performed purely out the greatness of His love for us. Thus, there were two Aspects: the gifts themselves; namely, the Miracles of Deliverance, and the cause: the fact that the Holy One loved the People of Israel. The Miracles were celebrated on the 14th and the cause on the 15th.

Pesach Sacrifice be slaughtered on the fourteenth of Nisan, and that is sufficient explanation for one who has understanding.

Chaza”l said that everything the Rabbis enacted, such as Chanukah, they enacted as per the Biblical model. The Miracle of Chanukah was only 7 days; the extra day was for the 2nd cause.

In my humble opinion, it is possible to respond to other difficulties, and indirectly to resolve as well the difficulty posed by the Rav, the Bais Yoseph, described above. A different question is the following: Why do we slaughter the Korban Pesach on the 14th of Nisan (Shemos 12:6), and celebrate the Holiday with it, is not the main celebration of Pesach concerned with the Exodus from Egypt, and if so, it would have been more appropriate to slaughter the Pesach Sacrifice on the 15th – why, then, did

the Torah command us to slaughter it on the 14th?

But it seems possible to answer this by introducing a “mashal,” an analogy, of a great and powerful King who gives presents to a number of people, and these people fall into two separate categories. One group is not impressed by the specific gift that the King has given them; they are interested only in receiving free gifts. The second group, superior to the first, who have wisdom in their minds, enjoy two types of pleasure: one regarding the specifics of the gift presented, and the second regarding the idea that a great and mighty King desires their love.

And the “nimshal,” the referent, of this analogy is when the King of Kings, the Holy One, Blessed is He, did for us the great Benefit for which we lack the strength to properly praise Him. And that is His taking us out of Egypt, for we find in the Midrash (“Shemos Rabbah” 21:7, “Zohar HaKadosh,” Part 2, 170b) that Satan was complaining about us, “These are idol worshippers...”²⁵ and there was no meritorious act performed below by the People of Israel to cause an Arousal Above, in Heaven. Rather, the intervention in history on their behalf was a gift without cause, and if so, how is it possible for wise men to rejoice **for the gift in itself**, and also for the fact that the Great and Awesome King Himself took us out of Egypt, as the Author of the Haggadah puts it, “I, and not an Angel...” (“Sifri” Tavo 28:6). But in fact, it was purely out of the greatness of His love for us, for He desired us, and **one does not mix one cause of rejoicing with another** (Moed Katan 8b); it was for that reason that the Torah commanded that the

And the statement of Chaza”l is known (Pesachim 30b), “Everything that the Rabbis enacted, they enacted in a manner similar to the Biblical counterpart,” for in the Miracle of Chanukah, there were also two components, and therefore it was necessary to make a remembrance for both causes of rejoicing, for even though the Miracle in itself was only for seven days, they added an additional day to recognize the second cause of

²⁴ This question is world-famous, and has inspired hundreds of answers.

²⁵ “...and these are idol worshippers” – that is, there was no difference between the Children of Israel and the Egyptians; why then is HaShem showing favoritism to the Israelites?

rejoicing.

Haman's threat was physical, so was the celebration; on Chanukah, both were spiritual. As to why the manner of rejoicing over the Miracle of Purim was designated in physical terms, as feasting and rejoicing, and the manner of rejoicing over the Miracle of Chanukah was designated in spiritual terms, expressions of gratitude and praise of HaShem.²⁶ What seems to be true with regard to this matter is that in the case of Purim, the Edict of Haman and Achashverosh was a genocidal decree against the Jewish People (Esther 3:13), and when the Jews heard of it, they began to arouse their hearts in fasting, and each one began to examine his deeds, and they agreed to serve HaShem, may He be Blessed, in Truth and with a full heart. And afterwards, when the Creator, combined his Awesome Might with His Great Kindness, and he saved them from being killed, they experienced with their full senses His Love, May He be Blessed. But regarding the Miracle of Chanukah, because the basic thrust of the edict was to separate them from the observance of our Holy Torah (See the Rambam, Hilchos Chanukah, Chapter 3, Halachah 1), it is possible that His main Salvation, May He be Blessed, was motivated by the Torah, that was Beloved by Him from then and long before then, and therefore the greatness of His love for His People was not recognized as fully, and because of that, the Command to Publicize the Miracle was expressed in different terms, only in the form of expressions of gratitude and praise.²⁷

The primary Miracle of Chanukah was to prevent the enemy from separating us from our Holy Torah. We should dedicate our time on the days of Chanukah in particular, and at all times, to the Study of Torah. We should not fritter our precious time away with silly activities, such as card games. And if so, that the primary Aspect of the Miracle was to prevent the enemy from removing us from our Holy Torah, and the Holy One, Blessed is He, in His Great Mercy, saved us from that edict, it is proper that anyone who is called a member of the People of Israel should fix in his mind to dedicate a major portion of his time to His Torah, May He be Blessed, for they are days fit for that purpose.²⁸ Meaning that every Chanukah HaShem illuminates us with the Light of His Torah, and we should not engage, G-d Forbid, in any kind of silly games. And in particular, I see nowadays that, in our great sinfulness, a tremendous breach has opened in the walls of our People involving playing with cards, and it is considered a trivial matter by those who engage in this behavior. But know for sure that on every card there is certainly a large "Klipah" that should not even be discussed.²⁹ I have sworn that I would not reveal my exact meaning, but only to remove an obstacle from human beings. Know for sure, my brothers and friends, that there are many obstacles involved in the playing of these games: One is that when one is playing a game, it is certain that he will forget his Fear of HaShem; a second is that it appears to me to be equivalent to stealing! And a third is that those who engage in this activity defile themselves with "Klipos" which are not mentionable.

Therefore, it is absolutely essential that we not waste our time, but rather dedicate it to the Study of Torah, and HaShem will illuminate us once again in the Darkness of Exile with His Holy Light. Therefore, I implore you, brothers and friends, that you should not treat this matter lightly; it would be much better that you use that time to study the Torah of HaShem, May He be Blessed, or go to a Torah scholar who is near you to seek Torah from his mouth. Then for sure HaShem will illuminate him with the light of the Miracle, and HaShem, May He be Blessed, will perform for us Miracles and Wonders with His Torah, May He be Blessed, soon and in our days, Amen.

²⁶ The Command to light the Chanukah Lamps is also seen in spiritual terms, as increasing HaShem's Spiritual Light in the World.

²⁷ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** See the "Levush" Section 670 Paragraph 2, where he wrote concerning a similar idea.

²⁸ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** See the "Shela'h HaKadosh," on Maseches Tamid, Chapter "Derech Chaim Tochachas Mussar" ("Ways of Life and Pathways of Ethical Reproof") (Haifa Edition), Letter 152a and in the "Maor Einayim" ("Light of the Eyes") on Parashas Miketz, text beginning "And it came to pass at the end..."

²⁹ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** See "Binas Yissachar Derech Binah" Page 81b, "Kartin is equivalent in Gematria to Satan, and they are associated with 400 large manifestations of plague." And see "Bnei Yissachar" Section on Kislev-Teves, the second essay, note 12 in his comment.

“All the other prophets prophesied using the expression of ‘Koh,’ while Moshe used the expression of ‘Zeh.’” What is the difference? The answer has to do with the fact that there are 2 Aspects of bringing down Abundance from the Upper World: the performance of Commands, that is “Arousal from below.” The other involves the pouring down of Abundance by HaShem out of His Own Nature (“Arousal from Above”)

The Aspect called “Koh,” is based on the idea of proportionality; i.e. corresponding to the degree that a person behaves with “Chesed,” HaShem pours down Abundance upon him; in “Arousal from below.”

to the deeds of the person “below,” provide the response,³¹ so to speak, from “Above.” Meaning that if a person interacts with his peers with the Aspect of Chesed, so will HaShem, May He be Blessed, so to speak, interact with him. Therefore, how desirable it would be to always act with the Characteristic of Chesed, so as to draw down upon oneself the Characteristic of Chesed, and that would be good for him. And it seems that it was to the same idea that our Sages, Z”L, hinted (Kesuvos 111b) when they said regarding the verse (*Devarim 4:4*) “*But you who cleave...*”³² – “Cleave unto His Characteristics; as He is Merciful, so should you be merciful, as He is Gracious...” Also, See Shabbos 133b³³, which means that if you behave with the Characteristic of Chesed, and an Abundance of Chesed descends upon you from Above, then there will a true match, and the fulfillment of “Those who cleave.”

The Aspect of “Zeh,” “exactly this,” associated with the Prophecy of Moshe, alludes to “Arousal from Above,” where the only cause for the Arousal is the great love that HaShem has for the People of Israel.

And the second Aspect refers to (See the “Pri Eitz Chaim” Section on Chag HaMatzos, Chapter 1) the fact that at the time of the Exodus, there was no “Arousal from below.” Rather, it was entirely due to the great Love that caused Him to choose His People Israel as His possession, that caused His Arousal to provide a Benefit for them. We find then that the impact of the Prophecy of Moshe was in the realm of Heaven, of exactitude, of “Zeh,” but the other prophets, who followed the Giving of the Torah historically, which allowed for “Arousal from below,” who were always preoccupied with His Commands and His Torah, May He be Blessed, and corresponding to their good deeds, they “caused” that an impression was made “Above,” and there followed the descent of Abundance, and that was the Aspect of “Koh,” as we

We find in the Gemara (“Sifri” on Matos 2), “All the other prophets prophesied using the expression of ‘Koh,’ while Moshe prophesied using the expression ‘Zeh’...” It is necessary to understand what is the meaning of “Zeh” and what is the meaning of “Koh,” and what is the difference between them. The basic principle is that there are two Aspects regarding bringing down Abundance from the Upper World. One is that through the performance of Commands and doing Good Deeds by those in the Lower World, is caused the setting up of “pipes,” so to speak, for the transfer of Abundance, and this is called “Arousal from below.” The second Aspect is that HaShem, May He be Blessed, pours down Goodly Abundance upon all the Worlds, Upper and Lower, all because of His Characteristic of Overwhelming Goodness; as is His Will at all times, so to speak, to be a **Source of Abundance**. This Aspect is called “Arousal from Above.”

Now the first Aspect that we mentioned above is called “Koh,” which has the meaning of proportionality; that is, according to the deeds that are done “Below” is the level according to which Abundance is drawn down from “Above.”³⁰ And as I heard from the Baal Shem Tov regarding the Scriptural expression (*Tehilim 121:5*), “*HaShem is your shadow*”- as a living creature standing near its shadow, as the living creature moves, so does its shadow, so is, Blessed is He and Blessed is His Name, according

to the deeds of the person “below,” provide the response,³¹ so to speak, from “Above.” Meaning that if a person interacts with his peers with the Aspect of Chesed, so will HaShem, May He be Blessed, so to speak, interact with him. Therefore, how desirable it would be to always act with the Characteristic of Chesed, so as to draw down upon oneself the Characteristic of Chesed, and that would be good for him. And it seems that it was to the same idea that our Sages, Z”L, hinted (Kesuvos 111b) when they said regarding the verse (*Devarim 4:4*) “*But you who cleave...*”³² – “Cleave unto His Characteristics; as He is Merciful, so should you be merciful, as He is Gracious...” Also, See Shabbos 133b³³, which means that if you behave with the Characteristic of Chesed, and an Abundance of Chesed descends upon you from Above, then there will a true match, and the fulfillment of “Those who cleave.”

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³⁰ This is related to the “Choff HaDimyon;” the grammatical “rule” that states the role of the letter “Choff” in Hebrew; that is, to establish correspondence and proportionality.

³¹ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** See the Shelah HaKadosh at the beginning of the Section “HaGadol” where he cites this explanation in the name of a Midrash.

³² The full text of the verse cited is, “*But you who cleave unto HaShem, your G-d, you are all alive today.*”

³³ This is another Talmudic reference to a similar idea. “Abba Shaul says, ‘*VeAnvehu*’ – *Be like Him; As He is Gracious and Merciful, so should you be gracious and merciful.*”

mentioned above.

Before the Giving of the Torah, the only possibility was “**Arousal from Above**,” because the Good within the People of Israel was entirely “in potential;” after the Receiving of the Torah, we had “Mitzvos.”

those like them,³⁴ when the Response from Above was proportional to the “Arousal from below,” in terms of drawing down, as it were, Abundance from Him, May He be Blessed. And I have already written that this latter influence is called by the name “Koh” – and that accounts for the name of the Holiday, “Chanu-‘koh’.”

The reason we recite the Blessing “...Who Performed Miracles ...” on Chanukah and Purim, but not on Pesach. Is that the Miracles of Chanukah and Purim are attributable to a large extent to the role of women; specifically, the love of men for women. That is, they occurred within Nature, and HaShem worked the Miracle around that fact of Nature.

Shabbos 10a), and similarly with Esther, where at first, he³⁸ loved Haman, but in the end, he loved Esther (Esther 2:9), and thus we see that the Miracle is performed within time³⁹ and thereby within Nature.

The Miracle of Chanukah occurred within Nature and Time, and involved a woman, who is considered a “Recipient” as “This-World” as well is viewed as a “Mekabel.”

a Recipient, for HaShem, May He be Blessed, is a Giver and the World is a Recipient, and we have already written that this Miracle was performed in “This World” and according to the Laws of Nature.

So we see that among His Miracles, May He be Blessed, sometimes He performs them as a response to meritorious deeds performed by those who inhabit the World below, and at other times the Holy One, Blessed is He, shows us Miracles and Wonders, and Signs for Good, only because of His Love for His People, Israel. Therefore, before the Giving of the Torah, Miracles occurred only because of an “Arousal from Above,” but after the Giving of the Torah, which refers to the time of Mordechai and Esther and

Response from Above was proportional to the “Arousal from below,” in terms of drawing down, as it were, Abundance from Him, May He be Blessed. And I have already written that this latter influence is called by the name “Koh” – and that accounts for the name of the Holiday, “Chanu-‘koh’.”

The reason that we recite the Blessing on Hanukah and Purim “...Who performed Miracles...” but we don’t recite that Blessing on Pesach when there certainly also were Miracles performed by HaShem, has to do with the fact that both the Miracles of Chanukah and Purim were attributable to the actions of women (Shabbos 23a and Megilah 4a). It appears that sometimes the Holy One, Blessed is He, performs a Miracle outside of the Laws of Nature, as He did in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians with the Ten Plagues (for which the initials are “**D-TZ-a-CHA-D-a-SHB-A-CH-a-B**”)³⁵ and He split the Sea, and at other times He performs Miracles within the Laws of Nature, as He did on Chanukah, where she³⁶ gave him³⁷ milk to drink, and he slept and she killed him (See the Ran on Maseches

Shabbos 10a), and similarly with Esther, where at first, he³⁸ loved Haman, but in the end, he loved Esther (Esther 2:9), and thus we see that the Miracle is performed within time³⁹ and thereby within Nature.

And that is the explanation of “Who performed Miracles for our fathers, **in those days, at this time**” – a reference to Chanukah, where the Miracle was performed within Time and therefore within Nature, but the Miracle of Pesach was above Time and therefore we do not recite this Blessing on Pesach, for its Miracle was contrary to the Laws of Nature. And therefore, its Miracle involved a woman, for “This World” is viewed as a “Mekabel,”

a Recipient, for HaShem, May He be Blessed, is a Giver and the World is a Recipient, and we have already written that this Miracle was performed in “This World” and according to the Laws of Nature.

³⁴ The question could be asked, “What about the Avos and the other righteous personalities who lived before the Giving of the Torah, where their greatness certainly seems to qualify, and in fact, the Torah accounts of their lives makes clear that indeed they were considered by HaShem to be deserving of Miracles, such as Avraham’s victory in battle over the Four Kings?” Perhaps one might answer that they were certainly the exception, and the rule was that humanity as a whole awaited the momentous event at Sinai to acquire the Torah of Life.

³⁵ **D** corresponds to “Dam,” or Blood, **TZ** to “Tzefardea,” or Frogs, **CH** to “Kinim,” or Lice, **A** to “Arov,” or Wild Animals, **D** to “Dever,” or Pestilence, **SH** to “Shechin,” or Boils, **B** to “Barad,” or Hail, **A** to “Arbeh,” or Locusts, **CH** to “Choshech,” or Darkness, and **B** to “Bechoros,” the Killing of the Firstborn

³⁶ The reference is to Yehudis, whom Kedushas Levi will say more about.

³⁷ The reference is to Holofernes, a Greek Commander.

³⁸ The reference is to Achashverosh, the Persian King.

³⁹ Timing was absolutely crucial, especially in the Miracle of Purim, where Achashverosh had his sleepless night at the same time that Haman was on his way to recommend the hanging of Mordechai.

And since “This World” is viewed as a “Recipient,” the Miracle was performed with the assistance of a woman, who is also viewed as a “Recipient.”⁴⁰

With regard to Yehudis and her role in the events of Chanukah, this rule applies. When the Righteous are trying to elevate “Divine Sparks,” it is sometimes necessary for them to violate a Torah Command. When the People of Israel are sinful, the Righteous act as a “Fifth Column” to break the “Klipah,” as happened in the case of Gideon. This also happened with Yael and the enemy Sisera at the time of Devorah, and with Yehudis and Holofernes at the time of Chanukah, because the Jewish People needed a Salvation.

With regard to the Story of Yehudis and her role in the events of Chanukah (recounted in the Midrash “Maaseh Yehudis”), the following principle may be stated: When the Righteous are trying to elevate “Divine Sparks,” it is sometimes necessary for them to violate a Command of the Torah, as in the case of Gideon, as the Gemara says (Yerushalmi Megilah Chapter 1, Halachah 12, and see also Temura 28b), “Seven forbidden acts were permitted that night in connection with the Altar that Gideon built,” and the reason was that the People of Israel worshipped false gods. Therefore, the righteous who wished to sacrifice to HaShem, had to do something that seemed to be part of their forbidden service, so that by that means they would be able to break the “Klipah.” And similarly, in connection with the Miracle of Devorah, where Yael, the wife of Chever the Kenite, and Sisera⁴¹ were involved, as it says (*Shophetim* 5:27), “...he bowed and fell...there he fell down dead.”⁴² And in truth, at that time, the People of Israel were not worshipping false gods, and therefore nothing occurred that violated the Torah as there was in connection with Eliyahu⁴³ and in

connection with Gideon. But the Jewish People needed to be redeemed, and therefore there occurred what is mentioned in the verse cited above, “...he bowed and he fell...there he fell dead.” And there was not in that generation, G-d Forbid, the sin of “Avodah Zarah,” as the Gemara (Megila 14a) says with regard to the verse, “And she dwelt under the palm tree of Devorah...” (*Shophetim* 4:5),⁴⁴ “Just as the palm...so Israel in that generation...” And similarly in connection with Chanukah, where a national Redemption occurred; therefore Yehudis had to give him cheese, which was symbolic of the fact that this wicked man wanted to have illicit intercourse with her (See the Ran on Shabbos 10a), for in that time they needed a Redemption.

Why was the Miracle of Chanukah performed by the Chashmonai and his sons, who were descendants of the Tribe of Levi? (“Bereshis Rabbah” 99:2)

The answer is based on the Idea of the Four Elements, where **Water** alludes to the Abundance that pours down from HaShem, **Fire** alludes to the Contraction of the Abundance, **Wind** to a middle state, which blows the clouds, which carry the water from place to place, and **earth** alludes to the People of Israel.

And Moshe as well was from the Tribe of Levi, while the rest of the Miracles were performed by descendants of Yehudah? The answer is based on the principle that there are four fundamental elements: Water, Fire, Wind and earth (“Zohar HaKadosh,” Part 2, 24a). Water alludes to the Abundance that pours down from the Creator, May He be

⁴⁰ Vis a vis a man, who is viewed as the Giver.

⁴¹ Sisera was a general of Yavin, King of Canaan, who was then persecuting the Jews.

⁴² The full text of the verse cited is “At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down; at her feet he bowed and he fell; where he bowed, there he fell down dead.”

⁴³ When Eliyahu held his competition with the Prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel, he built a “bamah,” which was forbidden at that time.

⁴⁴ The Gemara says there, “Rabbi Shimon ben Avshalom said, ‘The palm tree is mentioned because of the problem of seclusion of men with women and the sin of worshipping false gods. Just as the palm has only one heart, so was Israel in that generation. It had only one heart and it was dedicated to their father in Heaven.’” Rashi explains the problem of seclusion of men with women as a real problem, because she was a Judge and did not want to be alone with a man while judging his case. Therefore, she chose a tree with minimal shade, to avoid privacy. The idea of the sap is symbolic. Apparently, sap-producing trees generally have sap in all their branches; the sap of the palm, however, is confined to its trunk. **This is symbolic of the People worshipping one G-d as opposed to worshipping multiple gods.**

Blessed, Fire alludes to the Contraction of the Abundance that pours down from the Creator, Blessed is He, Wind alludes to the middle state between Abundance and its Contraction, and earth alludes to the Congregation of Israel which receives the Abundance. And that is the meaning of (*Bereshis 28:14*) “Your seed will be as the dust of the earth.”

Corresponding to the Four Elements, there exist Four Letters that make up the Divine Name “Ha-Va-Ya-H” – which allude to the 1st four sons of Leah. Reuven corresponds to Water, Shimon to Fire, and Levi to the Bridge between them; Yehudah, to the People of Israel. Since on Chanukah there was **only** a Spiritual attack against Israel, Levi was able to come to the aid of the People, without the aid of Yehudah.

Now corresponding to these four Elements there exist four letters that make up the Divine Name “**Ha-Va-Ya-H**,” Blessed is He,⁴⁵ and the letter “Heh” represents “Malchus,” Kingship (See the Introduction to the “Tikkunei Zohar,” Page 6b, and See also “Eitz Chaim,” Section 1, Branch 5), referring to the first four Tribes to whom Leah gave birth, until she had a temporary cessation of childbearing; namely, Reuven, Shimon, Levi and Yehudah. Now Yehudah also corresponds to the final “Heh” of the Divine Name “**Ha-Va-Ya-H**,” Blessed is He, and he represents “Malchus” (“Zohar HaKadosh,” Part 3, 151a), while the Letter “Dalet” signifies the Congregation of Israel.^{46,47} Now all of the Miracles were performed because there was a desire to harm the People of Israel; therefore the Miracle had to be performed by Yehudah, who corresponds to the People of Israel. For Reuven corresponds to Water, Shimon corresponds to Fire, and Levi corresponds to the bridge that connects Water and Fire⁴⁸ - while Yehudah corresponds to the Community of Israel, but here – where the enemy’s intention was “only” to “accomplish” spiritual destruction of the Jewish People, to remove them from their Torah observance, therefore the Miracle was accomplished by Levi, and the Torah was also given through the agency of Moshe, who was also from the Tribe of Levi.

The following question will now be addressed: **Why is it that the majority of the Holidays fall when the moon is full or nearly full, such as Purim, Pesach and Succos, with the exception of Chanukah?**

The answer is that the People of Israel are identified with the Moon. On the major Holidays as well as Purim, an enemy tried to do physical harm to the Jews; to eclipse the moon, so to speak. So the Holiday took place when the moon was full. On Chanukah, however, there was no such attempt to physically destroy the Jewish People; rather, an attempt to force them to abandon their unique Spiritual Source, the Torah. in the days of the Chashmonai

Similarly, the Holiday of Rosh HaShanah falls at the beginning of the Month,⁴⁹ but Rosh HaShanah, which is the Day of Judgment (Rosh HaShanah 32a), should not be considered with regard to this question. The idea is that sometimes HaShem, May He be Blessed, performs Miracles and Wonders for His People, Israel, to wreak vengeance against those who rise against them to harm them, and sometimes HaShem, May He be Blessed, Blessed is He, performs Miracles and Wonders for His People, Israel, to take revenge against those who would cause a different kind of harm to the Jewish People; namely, they wished to remove the People of G-d from His Torah, even though they had no intention of causing physical harm to the Jews. As was the case and his sons, where the wicked Antiochus wanted to cause the People of

⁴⁵ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** See the “Sefer Yetzirah” Chapter 2, Mishnah 1 in the interpretation of the Rokeach there, and See also the “MeOrei Ohr” Fourth Section, Letter 24.

⁴⁶ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** For the Aspect of “Malchus” has no antecedent; See the “Zohar HaKadosh, Part 2, Page 218; And similarly “Dalet” – comes from the root of “Daloh,” as is explained in Maseches Shabbos 104a.

⁴⁷ The name Yehudah is made up of “Ha-Va-Ya-H” – plus “Dalet.”

⁴⁸ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** See the “Zohar HaKadosh,” Part 1, 154b, where it is explained that Reuven’s nature was one of “Chesed,” Kindness, Shimon’s of “Gevurah,” Might, and Levi’s of “Tiferes,” Harmony that was a combination of both of theirs. And in “Zohar HaKadosh,” Part 2, 24a and in the Comments of Moreinu HaRav Rabbi Chaim Vital where it is explained that Water represents “Chesed” and Fire represents “Gevurah” and Wind represents “Tiferes.”

⁴⁹ Indeed, Rosh HaShanah is referred to as the Holiday when the Moon is “covered up.”

Israel to forget the Holy Torah (See the Rambam, Hilchos Chanukah, Chapter 3, Halachah 1), even though they had no intention of harming the People of Israel physically.⁵⁰

“And You...stood with them at the time of their trouble” refers to the time when the enemy tried to separate them from their great Spiritual Heritage.

And that is the hint suggested by the fact that in our prayers, we say, “And You, in Your Great Mercy, stood with them at the time of **their trouble**,...” – that is to say, that it was, indeed, **their trouble** that the enemy tried to have them forget their spiritual heritage, Your Holy Torah, even though they did not intend doing them physical harm, it was

nevertheless perceived by the People as **their trouble** when they were being forced to abandon the Torah of HaShem.

The eight days of Chanukah fall when the moon begins to disappear, as assimilation took its toll, even disappeared for a moment when its fate hung in the balance, but then rose again due to the Miracle of HaShem and the heroism of the Maccabim, to shine with Spiritual Brightness.

The reason for this is that it is written (*Tehilim 84:12*) “*For the L-rd of Hosts is a sun and a shield...*” and the Community of Israel is called “the moon” (“Zohar HaKadosh,” Part 1, 236b), for the sun illuminates the moon (*ibid.*) and behold! All the Miracles and Wonders that HaShem has done for us, for example on Purim and Pesach and the other Holidays, the main reason for the Miracle was that an enemy wished to do physical harm to the People of Israel. Therefore, those Holidays fall when the Moon is full, to allude to Israel... But on Chanukah, the main reason for the Miracle was that the enemy rose up **against the Torah**, to remove the

People of Israel from its observance, G-d Forbid, and therefore there is no allusion to the Moon, and therefore the Holiday falls at a time not coincident with the fullness of the Moon. Similarly, the Holiday of Shavuot is associated with the Giving of the Torah, therefore it is also not celebrated when the moon is full, and Chanukah does not fall when the Moon is full, but rather when it is disappearing, when it is invisible and when it begins to shine again.

“We kindle these lights to celebrate the Miracles...which You did...by the hands of Your Holy Priests...these lights...and we are not permitted to make ordinary use of them...”⁵¹

We find in the Gemara, “Chizkiyahu said, ‘I am going to sleep, and I will let HaShem...fight the battle’ ” because if a Jewish soldier attributes any aspect of a victory to his own efforts, even if he has fought the battle with all his strength, he lessens the effect of the Miracle.

For we find in the Gemara (“Pesichta D’ EichahRabbasi” 30a and See also Sanhedrin 95b), “Chizkiyahu said, ‘I am going to sleep, and I will let HaShem, May He be Blessed,

fight the battle’.” because the principle is that if a person has to fight a battle, if he performs in the course of the battle any act which hastens his victory by the ordinary natural laws of battle, if he regards his contribution as on the level of nothingness, that he regards his acts as utterly trivial, then his acts do not harm the Miracle, but if, G-d Forbid, he imagines that his acts contributed in any measurable way to his victory, G-d Forbid, that lessens the effect of the Miracle.

If one performs an act, and it has the Aspect of nothingness in his eyes, as did their victory in the eyes of the Maccabim, then he may not make use of it.

Now indeed, the Chashmonai and his sons, even though they did contribute in a major way, in the natural order, to the victory, they regarded their efforts as Nothing, because the Chashmonai and his sons were imbued with the secret of the Oral Torah, because they began the legacy of Shammai and Hillel, Shemaiah and Avtalyon, and just as the First Temple

represented the Written Torah, in the Aspect of nothingness, in the same manner did they represent the

⁵⁰ **Ms. Ed. Footnote:** See above, text beginning “Why is it that the Miracle of Purim...?”

⁵¹ The full text of this prayer is as follows: These lights we kindle to celebrate the Miracles, the Wonders, the Salvations, and the victorious battles which You performed for our ancestors in those days at this season by the hands of Your holy Priests. During the eight days of Chanukah, these lights are sacred

Oral Torah, in the Aspect of nothingness. Now there is a distinction: When a person performs an act and the act has significance in his eyes, then he **is permitted** to make ordinary use of it, but if his act had in his eyes the Aspect of nothingness, then it is completely Holy, and he is **not permitted** to make ordinary use of it. And this is the explanation of “These lights we kindle to celebrate the Miracles... by the hands of Your Holy Priests...” – but they regarded their contribution as Nothing; therefore, one is not permitted to make ordinary use of them, for they are entirely Holy.

Some great Kedushas Levi quotes:

- * “Whosoever does not have the good attribute to always see only goodness and straight forwardness in the Jewish people, if he lacks the good and holy trait to constantly tell and retell the praises of Israel, that Israel should always be praised and exalted in his eyes, and he lacks the trait of advocating meritoriously on the behalf of the Jewish nation, Israel, His holy nation. Then he should know that surely he will not merit all the days of his life to enter the gate of Divine Service for Avodas HaBoreh to serve his Creator.” (Pisgamin Kadishin #18)
- * “It is well known that Moshe is called a Tzadik, since he argues and finds righteousness before Hashem to teach their merits regarding everyone.” (Parshas Noach)
- * “The mouth was created solely to speak words of Torah and to advocate meritoriously on behalf of Israel.” (Parshas Bo)
- * “Behold the Blessed Creator chose only Israel, therefore no one has the right to say anything negative about Israel, only to Melamed Zechus – teach the merits of Israel” (Parshas Bo)
- * “Moshe petitioned Hashem that He appoint a leader for Israel that will always advocate meritoriously on their behalf.” (Parshas Pinchas)
- * “When down here below we act kindly and advocate meritoriously on behalf of each one of Israel, to judge them favorably and give them the benefit of the doubt, then also up above the same attribute is awakened and they also advocate meritoriously on his own behalf and also onto all the Jewish people and their descendants with kindness.” (Parshas Shoftim)
- * “Similarly, Tzadikim in these times have the power to explain and elucidate the Torah as they will. . . They have this power regarding other things as well, to change the will on high transforming from a negative decree heaven forbid, to a positive one. Because a Tzadik rules over the awe and fear of Elokim.” (Likutim on Shanu Chachamim)
- * “Such is the way of the righteous Tzadikim to increase kindness in the world. . . Because it is a pleasant fragrance that wafts up from the Tzadikim and their handiwork which is pleasing before Hashem. Through the handiwork of the Tzadikim

love is awakened up above and this rains down abundant blessings on us below.”
(Kedusha on Chanukah #5)

- * "Man should know just how much joy and happiness he himself causes in all the worlds when he serves Hashem. . . When he takes these things to heart, how much will he be excited and his heart be aflame within him, that he not separate himself nor detach himself from cleaving in Dveykus to Hashem for even one moment!" (Perush Agados #3)
- * "Surely the merit of the Gaon the author (may His memory be for the life of the coming world) and the holiness and sanctity of his writings and works should guard and shield every place they shall be found to come them in a river of peace." (The words of both the Holy Apta Rav and Rav of Zhitomer in their approbations to Kedushas Levi)



הילולא

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hebrew Tefilla for Lighting a Yahrzeit or Hilula Candle

[תְּפִילָּה הַנִּמְצָאת בְּסֵפֶר אֶלֶף הַמִּגֵּן מִבְּעַל הַפֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ עַל פְּרִשְׁת וַיֵּצֵא עֲמוּד כ"ד]
הַרְיֵנִי מִדְּלִיק נֵר זֶה לְמִנוּחַת וְלַעֲלֹוֵי נְשִׁמַת אָבִי / אִמִּי מוֹרְתִי / הַצַּדִּיק _____
בְּ/בֵת _____, יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלְקֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁתִּקְבַּל בְּרַחֲמִים
וּבְרָצוֹן כָּל מַעֲשֵׂה הַטּוֹב שֶׁאֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה, בֵּין בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה, בֵּין בְּדִבּוּר, בֵּין בְּמַעֲשֵׂה וַיְהִי הַכֹּל
לְזָכוֹת וְלְמִנוּחַת וְלַעֲלֹוֵי לְנִשְׁמוֹת עַמְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּבְפָרֵט לְנַפְשׁ רוּחַ וְנִשְׁמָה שֶׁל אָבִי / אִמִּי /
צַדִּיק _____ יְהִי רָצוֹן שֶׁתְּהִינָה 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



❁ GEDOLIM BE'MISASAM YOSER ❁



YAHRZEITS BEGINNING SHABBOS MIKEITZ

http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim_yahrzeits/Teves

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

❁ **30th of Kislev ~ Begins Friday Night (Dec 7th) – 6th Day of Chanuka**

❁ **Rav Tzvi Yehuda (Hashi) Friedman** (1925–2005). Born in Pressburg, Hungary, Rav Hashi was a descendant of the *Chasam Sofer*, whose youngest daughter, Rechel, married Rav Tzvi Yehuda Friedman from Topolcany. Their youngest son, Yeshaya, married Yehudis Link and had a son, Moshe, who married Malka Hochhauser. Rav Moshe had three sons, Nissan, Hashi, and Pinchas. Among Hashi's teachers were Rav Akiva Sofer (the *Da'as Sofer*), Rav Avrohom Shmuel Binyomin Sofer (the *Cheishev Sofer*) and Rav Michael Ber Weissmandl. In 1944, he was sent to Auschwitz and marched the Death March to Gleiwitz and was transported to Buchenwald. Although his entire family was murdered, he lived another sixty years. He immigrated to Montreal in 1951 and moved to Toronto in 1970. His life was filled with *Torah* and *hachnossas orchim* (hospitality), (5766/2005).

❁ **1st of Teves ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Dec 8th) – 7th Day of Chanuka**

❁ **Avrohom Ovinu** (1638 BCE) (*Bava Basra* 91a). [According to others, his *Yahrzeit* is the 1st of *Tishrei* or *Nissan* (*Mo'ed Koton* 28a)];

❁ **Rav Yo'ir Chaim Bachrach** (1638–1702), *mechaber* of *Chavos Yo'ir*. His grandmother, Chava, was a granddaughter of the *Maharal* of Prague. Her husband, Rav Shmuel, the *Rav* of Worms, was murdered during a pogrom in 1615, and she never remarried. Chava lived in Worms until her grandson Yo'ir Chaim's thirteenth birthday at which time she undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Land but was *niftar* on the way. Rav Yo'ir Chaim esteemed her to such an extent that the title of his most famous work, *Chavos Yo'ir*, is based on her name. One of his works, *Mekor Chaim*, a major commentary on the *Shulchon Aruch Orach Chaim* was ready to be printed when the commentaries of *Taz* and *Mogen Avrohom* were printed. Sadly, Rav Yo'ir Chaim withdrew his own commentary. Besides his *halachic* expertise he had complete mastery of all the sciences and music and had a deep interest in history. He also wrote poetry. He compiled a forty-six-volume encyclopedia on many topics. In 1689, the Worms community was decimated by the French. Gradually, it was rebuilt. In 1699, he was finally appointed *Rav* of Worms, where his father and grandfather had served before him. He served for only three years until his *petira*, (5463/1702);

❁ **Rav Masoud Refoel Alfasi**. Born in Fez, Morocco. Leader of the Tunisian Jewish

community. *Niftar* in Tunisia, (5535/1774);

- * **Rav Avrohom Moshe** of Peshis'cha, son of Rav Simcha Bunim, (5589/1828);
- * **Rav Yosef HaMa'aravi**, *ba'al mofes*, buried in Kfar Elchamama in Tunisia, (5300/1539);
- * **Rav Yitzchok Eizik Langner**, sixth Stretyner *Rebbe* (1906–1979). Born to Rav Moshe Langner, the fifth Stretyner *Rebbe*; his sister became the Tolner *Rebbetzin*. In 1921, his father moved the family from Galicia to Toronto. He married in 1929, but he and his wife never had children. In 1959, he succeeded his father, (5740/1979);
- * **Rav Mordechai Shlomo Berman**. Born in Russia to the *mekubol*, Rav Yehuda Leib Berman, who authored a commentary to the *Arizal's Eitz Chaim*, Rav Mordechai Shlomo and his family moved to Tel Aviv when he was still young. He attended *Yeshiva Chabad* before his *bar mitzva* and learned under Rav Dovid Povarsky. When his teacher became *Rosh Yeshiva* of Ponevezh, he took his young *talmid* with him. When the *Chazon Ish* found out about the *illui*, he had him move into his home and cared for him as a son. At Ponevezh, he became the *talmid muvhok* of the *Roshei Yeshiva*, Rav Dovid Povarsky and Rav Shmuel Rozovsky. In time, the *Chazon Ish* married him off to his niece, the daughter of the Steipler *Gaon*. He became *Rosh Mesivta* of Ponevezh at the age of twenty, and later became *Rosh Yeshiva*, (5692–5765/1931–2004).

* **2nd of Teves ~ Begins Sunday Night (Dec 9th) – 8th Day of Chanuka, Zos Chanuka**

- * **Rav Mordechai Zev Orenstein**, *Rav* of Lvov, (5547/1786);
- * **Rav Yaakov Tzvi** of Porisov, (5649/1888);
- * **Rav Yitzchok HaLevi Kroiz**, *Yerushalmi*, grandson of Rav Eliezer Yosef, Belzer *Rebbe*.

* **3rd of Teves ~ Begins Monday Night (Dec 10th)**

- * **Rav Avrohom Brandwein** of Stretyn, the second of four sons of Rav Yehuda Tzvi of Stretyn, who was the foremost student of Rav Uri of Strelisk. Rav Avrohom succeeded his father as the *Rav* of Stretyn, after his father's *petira* in 1854. Rav Avrohom left four daughters, and many of the Stretyner *Chassidim* followed his son-in-law, Rav Uri Rohatyn, and Rav Uri's son, Yehuda Tzvi, after him. Other *Chassidim* of Rav Avrohom followed Rav Nachman of Burszyn, who was *niftar* in 1914, (5625/1864);
- * **Rav Yaakov HaKohen Gadisha** (1851–1909), *Rav* and *Av Bais Din* of Djerba, Tunisia, *mechaber* of *Kochav Yaakov*, *Me'il Yaakov* and *Halichos Yaakov*, (5670/1909);
- * **Rav Yechezkel Ezra Yehoshua HaLevi**, *Rav* of the Iraqi community in Yerushalayim, (5702/1941);
- * **Rav Chaim Leib Shmuelevitz**, *Rosh Yeshiva* Mir (1902–1979), born in Stutchin, Poland, where his father, Rav Alter Rephael, was *Rosh Yeshiva*. His mother, Ettel, was the daughter of Rav Yosef Yoizel Horowitz, the *Alter* of Novardok. In 1920, both of his parents suddenly passed away, and Rav Chaim was left to care for his younger brother and two younger sisters. When Rav Chaim was twenty-two, Rav Shimon Shkop, *Rosh Yeshiva* in Grodno, invited him to join his *Yeshiva*. Within three years, Chaim was appointed to a lecturing post in the *Yeshiva*. Rav Chaim continued his studies in Mir where the *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Eliezer Yehuda Finkel, chose him as a suitable match for his daughter. With the outbreak of World War II, he remained with the *Mirr* *Yeshiva* in its exile in Shanghai for five years. After the war, he lived for a short while in America. With the establishment of the *Mirr* *Yeshiva* in Yerushalayim, he immigrated to *Eretz Yisrael* and served as its *Rosh Yeshiva*. Rav Chaim authored *Sichos Mussar*, (5740/1979).

* **4th of Teves ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Dec 11th)**

- * **Rav Moshe Zev** of Bialystock, *mechaber* of *Maros HaTzovos* and *Agudas Eizov*. He was

the founder of *Gemilas Chassodim Bais Medrash*, Bialystock's most prominent *Torah* center, where Rav Meir Simcha of Dvinsk learned after his marriage. [NOTE: Rav Ze'ev Nachum of Bendin, the father of Rav Avrohom Borenstein of Sochatchov, also authored a *sefer* called *Agudas Eizov*], (5490/1729);

- * **Rav Yehoshua Eizel Charif** of Slonim (1801–1872), born in Glovanka, near Minsk. After many years of learning with the enthusiastic support of his father-in-law, Rav Yitzchok Fein, he became *Rav* of Kalavaria, then Kutno, and finally Slonim (near Grodno). He was *mechaber* many *seforim*, including *Emek Yehoshua*, *Nachlas Yehoshua*, *Noam Yerushalmi*, *Sefas HaNachal* and *Atzas Yehoshua*, (5633/1872);
- * **Rav Gershon Henoach Leiner** of Radzin (1839–1891), the *Ba'al HaTecheiles*. His grandfather was Rav Mordechai Yosef Leiner of Ishbitz, founder of Ishbitz *Chassidus*, after leading a group of *talmidim* from the court of Rav Menachem Mendel of Kotzk. He replaced his father as *Rebbe* of Ishbitz after the former's *petira* in 1878. Rav Gershon Henoach traveled from Radzin to Italy in search of the *chilozon*, the marine source from which the dye was obtained. The *chilozon* carried the dye in a special sac located in its pharynx. In the famed aquarium at Naples he saw the *chilozon* and studied the way in which the dye was removed and prepared. He discovered that it was used by artists in their paintings because it would never fade, (5652/1891);
- * **Rav Yaakov Shaul Katzin**, head of New York Aleppo community (1900–1994). Born in Yerushalayim, he learned at *Yeshiva Ohel Mo'ed* and at *Yeshiva Porat Yosef*. In the midst of World War I, Yaakov's father and sister passed away of typhoid fever. His mother passed away soon after, and Yaakov was an orphan at sixteen. At eighteen, he married Mazal, the daughter of Rav Sholom Hedaya, a noted *Mekubol* and *Talmudic* scholar, and was appointed *Rosh Yeshiva* in the then-newly erected *Yeshiva Porat Yosef* building. During the course of his life, Yaakov wrote several books on the science of *Kabbola*. In 1925, he published *Ohr HaLevona*, which consisted of three parts – *Ohr HaLevona*, *Ohr Chodosh* and *Ohr HaChaim* – a commentary with *chiddushim* from the teachings of the *Rashash*. He also wrote *Yesod Ho'Emuna*, which included arguments that dispelled doubts about the authenticity of *Kabbola*, as well as responsa. In 1931, he published *Pri Eitz HaGan*, which included biographies of prominent *Tzaddikim* and discussions of their ethical teachings, solutions to problems posed by the *Gaon* Rav Yosef Chaim of Baghdad and the order of *tefillos* for *Rosh HaShana*, along with explanations. From 1928 to the end of 1932, Rav Yaakov served as a *Dayan* in the Supreme *Bais Din* of the *Sephardi* community of Yerushalayim. In 1933, Rav Yaakov accepted an offer from *Mogen Dovid* Congregation of Brooklyn, New York, as Chief *Rav* and Chief *Dayan*. On August 10, 1933, Yaakov, Mazal and their first four children – Shaul, Shulamis (Charlotte), Avrohom, and Yitzchok – came to New York. (They had nine children who reached adulthood.) Shaul became chief *Rav* of the Brooklyn community after the *petira* of his father, (5755/1994);
- * **Rav Chaim Shaul Dveik**, *Rosh Yeshiva HaMekubolim* of Yerushalayim and *mechaber* of *Eifo Shleima*, (5694/1933);
- * **Rav Shalom Roke'ach**, *Rav* of Skohl, (5722/1961);
- * **Mr. Yitzchok Meir (Irving) Bunim** (1901–1981). Born in Volozhin, Lithuania, to Rav Moshe and Esther Mina Buminowitz, Irving moved to the Lower East Side of New York with most of his family in 1910. (His father moved in 1905.) He and his two brothers were enrolled in *Yeshiva Yaakov Yosef*, and his father joined the family of *Torah Vodaas*. As a youth, he joined the fledgling Young Israel movement and made significant inroads from within. In the 1940s, he accepted the presidency of *Yeshiva Yaakov Yosef*, a position he held

for thirty years. He threw himself into the founding of *Bais Medrash Govoha* and *Kollel* in Lakewood. He also devoted much time and energy to *Chinuch Atzmai* and *Torah U'Mesorah*. He and his wife, Blanche, raised three children, Rav Amos, Chana and Judith, (5742/1981);

- * **Rebbetzin Recha Schwab** (1908–2003). Married in 1931, she moved with Rav Schwab to the United States in 1936, and settled in Washington Heights in 1958. She left this world with one hundred and eighty descendants, all *Torah*-observant, (5764/2003).

* **5th of Teves ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Dec 12th)**

- * **Rav Mordechai Pinchas Teitz**, *Rav* of Elizabeth, New Jersey (1908–1995). Born in Latvia; arrived in USA in 1934 [*Hamodia* 2005: 4th of *Teves*], (5756/1995);
- * **Rav Shlomo Molcho** (1500–1532). Born in Lisbon, Portugal, a descendant of Portuguese Marranos. He published twenty-two essays on the topic of redemption according to the secrets of *Kabbola*, in his work, *Sefer HaMefo'ar*. He met with the Pope and asked him to stop the campaign against the *Marranos*. He also met Rav Yosef Karo in Tzefas and the *Mekubol* Rav Yosef Taitzik of Salonica, who taught Rav Molcho *Kabbola*. His speeches inspired many *Marranos* to publicly return to their faith. Arrested by the officers of the Inquisition, he recited *Shema* with great joy, as he was burned at the stake by Roman Emperor Charles V in Mantua, Italy, (5293/1532);
- * **Rav Aharon of Titiov**, grandson of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, (5589/1828);
- * **Rav Avrohom Yaakov** of Sadiger (1884–1961), named for his grandfather, the first Sadigerer *Rebbe*. When Reb Avrohom Yaakov turned eighteen, he married Bluma Raizel, the daughter of the Kapischnitzer *Rebbe*, Rav Yitzchok Meir Heschel. With the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the *Rebbe* fled to Vienna, Austria, and lived there for twenty-four years. When the Nazis entered Vienna in 1938, the *Rebbe* was seized and forced to sweep the streets clean, to the amusement of the onlooking Germans. After World War II, he lived in Tel Aviv, where he continued the Sadigerer line. He authored *Abir Yaakov*, (5722/1961);
- * **Rav Yerachmiel Tzvi Rabinowitz**, the Biala-Peshis'cha *Rebbe*. He was born in 1923, the firstborn son of the previous Biala *Rebbe*, the *Chelkas Yehoshua*. He became *Rebbe* after his father was *niftar* in 1982 and opened his *Bais Medrash* in the *Har Nof* section of Yerushalayim, (5764/2003).

* **6th of Teves ~ Begins Thursday Night (Dec 13th)**

- * **Rav Yaakov Reischer**, *mechaber* of *Minchas Yaakov*, *Chok Yaakov*, *Iyun Yaakov* (*peirush* on *Ein Yaakov*), and *Shevus Yaakov* (1661–1733). Born in Prague, he served as *Rav* in Reische, Worms, and Metz [9th of *Shevat*, according to *Yated* 2007, 2008], (5494/1733);
- * **Rav Yechezkel Shraga Halberstam**, the Shinover *Rav* (1815–1899). He was born in Rudnick, Galicia, eldest son of Rav Chaim of Sanz. He was an ardent follower of Rav Osher of Ropshitz, and a *Chassid* of Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Rymanov, Rav Shalom of Belz and Rav Meir of Premishlan. Tragically, he was married and widowed five times. His first wife was the granddaughter of the *Yismach Moshe*, Rav Moshe Teitelbaum of Muehly, Hungary. He is known as the *Divrei Yechezkel*, (5660/1899);
- * **Rav Chaim Shlomo** of Koson, (5680/1919);
- * **Rav Alter Yisrael Shimon Perlow** of Novominsk (1873–1933), *mechaber* of *Tiferes Ish*. Scion of the dynasties of Ustila, Koidanov, Lehovitch, Karlin, Apt, Czernobyl and Berditchev, Rav Alter Yisrael Shimon settled in Warsaw in 1917. He knew the whole *Mishna* by heart and to the end of his life reviewed eighteen chapters every day, (5694/1933);

- * **Rav Chaim Meidanik**, *Rav* in Chicago and *mechaber* of *Mazkeres Chaim* and *Hegyonai Chaim*, (5715/1954);
- * **Rebbetzin Beila Morgenstern** (1908–2006). First-born daughter of the *Admor* of Ozerov-Chenchen, Rav Moshe Yechiel Epstein, *mechaber* of *Aish Dos* and *Be'er Moshe*. She married Rav Tzvi Hershel Morgenstern, a descendant of the Kotzker *Rebbe*. Her husband served as a principal of the Bronx *Bais Yaakov*. She always recited the entire *Sefer Tehillim* on the *Yahrzeit* of every one of her noble forefathers and asked *Hashem* that their merit should protect all of *Klal Yisrael*. Among her grandchildren are Rav Dovid Altusky and Rav Yechiel Altusky, (5767/2006).



❁ HILLULA DE'TZADDIKA ❁

WHAT'S BEHIND YAHRZEIT MEANINGS & CUSTOMS

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

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

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



❁ GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM ❁

STORIES & ANECDOTES

Rav Avrohom Moshe Ben Simcha Bunim of Peshis'cha, 1st of Teves

Rav Avrohom Moshe's recitation of *Tehillim* was a great and lofty form of *Avodas Hashem*. Because he was a very weak individual he needed to lie in bed while saying *Tehillim*. He was so involved in saying *Tehillim* that it was described as if he was cooking and boiling and his bed would shake to and fro. The doctors

warned that this practice was endangering his health and they asked the *Chassidim* to ask his mother to command him with a parental decree for the sake of *Kibbud Av vaEim*, the obligation to honor his parents, that he stop saying *Tehillim*! Instead she allowed him to recite only one chapter! And he was also allowed to look in the *Tehillim*

and not say them aloud.

He was once visited by the Alter Vorker *Rebbe* and Rav Avrohom Moshe explained to him the meaning of the *pasuk* (*Tehillim* 85:5): *hofer kaas'cha imonu* – “annul your anger with us”. We would have expected it to read *me'imonu* – “annul your anger from us”. The Vorker was silent and waited to hear his explanation. Rav

Avrohom Moshe continued with a parable: There was once a kaiser who was perpetually angry. What did they do? They brought before him his only child, which caused his anger to depart. We too ask *Hashem*, “Annul Your anger with us; use us, *Hashem*, like that beloved only child – use us to annul Your anger and quiet Your wrath.” (*Yemos Olom* p. 141 #4)



Rav Mordechai Zev Orenstein, 2nd of Teves

Rav of Lvov

Rav Mordechai Zev Orenstein, born in Zlakovah in 5495/1735, was the son of Rav Moshe, the *parnass* of the *kehilla*. The other sons of Rav Moshe included Rav Menachem Mendel of Zlakovah and Rav Meshulam Zalman Ashkenazi, *Rav* of Pomrein. Rav Moshe was a grandson of the *Chacham Tzvi*. Rav Mordechai Zev was a *Gaon*, fluent in all facets of the *Torah*. At the young age of nineteen, he was appointed *Rav* in Kaminka; later he was *Rav* in Yompala. In 5532/1772, he was appointed *Rav* of Satnov, and this appointment led to his being named Chief *Rav* of Poland. Rav Mordechai Zev married the daughter of Rav Shaul Charif, *Rav* of Alesk. They had one son, Rav Yaakov Meshulam Orenstein, the *Yeshuos Yaakov*.

After his wife's *petira*, Rav Mordechai Zev married the daughter of the *noggid*, Rav Elyokim Getzel of Lubertov. With his *zivug sheini*, his second son, Rav Moshe Yehoshua Heschel, *Rav* of

Tarnigrad, was born, as well as several daughters. His sons-in-law were Rav Aryeh Leib Katzenellenbogen, *Rav* of Brisk; Rav Yudel Broida, the *mechaber* of *Zichron Yehuda*; Rav Yitzchok Etinga, *Rav* of Lvov; Rav Avrohom Abish Ashkenazi of Broida; and Rav Dov Berish Heilprin of Brezhan.

In 5538/1778, Rav Mordechai Zev was chosen to serve as *Rav* of Lvov in place of Rav Shlomo of Chelema, the *Mirkeves HaMishna*. Rav Mordechai Zev was pleased to be appointed *Rav* in the same city in which his grandfather, the *Chacham Tzvi*, had earlier lived, while the *kehilla* was happy to have such a famous and admired *Rav*. In Lvov, Rav Mordechai Zev founded a *Yeshiva* and headed it, teaching many *talmidim* who went on to become *Gedolei Yisrael* and *Rabbonim*. Rav Mordechai Zev served as *Rav* of Lvov until his *petira* on the 2nd of *Teves* 5547/1786, at the age of fifty-two.

Zecher Tzaddik livrocha.



Rav Yaakov Tzvi Ben Yehoshua Osher of Porisov, 2nd of Teves

Grandson of the *Yid HaKodosh*, *Mechaber* of *Atara Lerosh Tzaddik*

On *Zos Chanuka*, the Porisover *Rebbe* declared that *Chanuka* is a *segula* for having children. He explained that the reason is because *peru urevu*, the

commandment to be fruitful and multiply and have a family, is the first *mitzva* in the *Torah*, whereas *Chanuka* is the final *mitzva* enacted by *Chazal*. *Sefer Yetzira*

teaches us that we must connect the beginning to the end and the end to the beginning. There are *Keser Mitzvos* in total. *Keser* is 620 in *gematria*, which includes the 613 biblical commandments and the seven *mitzvos deRabbonon*. A

keser (“crown”) is a circle, where the end and beginning meet. Thus, the first *mitzva* and the last *mitzva* meet each other, where the beginning and end of the circle join. (*VaYakhel Shlomo BeSofo*)



Rav Yechezkel Ezra Yehoshua HaLevi, 3rd of Teves

Rav of the Iraqi community in Yerushalayim

Rav Yechezkel Ezra Yehoshua *HaLevi* was born in Baghdad, around 5612/1852. As a *bochur*, he learned in the *Bais Zilcha Bais Medrash*. In 5649/1889, Rav Yechezkel was appointed to run the organization that collected funds on behalf of the poorer *chassonim* and *kallos* in Baghdad.

He moved to *Eretz Yisrael* in 5657/1897 and settled in Yerushalayim. Ten years later, in 5667/1907, he and other *Rabbonim* founded *Yeshivas Shoshanim L'Dovid* for the Iraqi *kehilla*. Rav Yechezkel traveled abroad a number of times on behalf of this *Yeshiva*, including to Egypt. He was also the president of the committee of the Iraqi community in Yerushalayim.

In 5682/1922, Rav Yechezkel

traveled on behalf of the local Iraqi community to Baghdad to solicit support for those who lived in *Eretz Yisrael* and to encourage more Iraqi Jews to move there. He was known as a spellbinding *darshan*; many flocked to his weekly *Shabbos* afternoon *deroshos* in *Bais Knesses Shoshanim L'Dovid*. Rav Yechezkel was the *mechaber* of numerous *seforim*: *Arugas HaBosem* on the *aggodos* of *Shas*; *Tehilla v'Tiferes* on *Tehillim*; *Simchas Yom Tov* on the *Haggoda shel Pesach*; *Shiros v'Tishbachos*, *piyutim* and poems; *Minchas Oni*, a *mussar* work; and others. Some of his works remain in manuscript form. Rav Yechezkel was *niftar* on the 3rd of *Teves* 5702/1941.

Zecher Tzaddik livrocha



Rav Chaim Ben Alter Shmuelevitz, 3rd of Teves

Rosh Yeshiva Mir

Rav Fisher related the following account:

In the summer of *tov-shin-lamed-alef*, I was driving my car past the *Bais Yisrael* neighborhood in Yerushalayim, when suddenly I noticed Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz standing by the bus stop, waiting. I stopped my car and offered him a ride. “Listen, you don’t know where I am traveling to and I don’t wish to take you out of your way, so I don’t want to get into your car,” the *Rosh Yeshiva* answered.

“I am traveling in the same direction as you anyway.”

“How do you know which way I am headed?” smiled the *Rosh Yeshiva* in response, and I answered him the same: “And how does the *Rosh Yeshiva* know which way I am headed?”

In the end, the *Rosh Yeshiva* admitted defeat to my coaxing and arguments, and agreed to get into my car.

As soon as he was settled, I turned to the *Rosh Yeshiva* and asked, “Where to?”

“To Chevron, to the *Kivrei Avos!*”

answered Rav Chaim.

“That’s exactly where I was going,” I bantered back. We continued on our way till we arrived not far from *Kever Rochel*. We were prevented from continuing by a large Arab demonstration taking place following the Egyptian president’s death. This violent demonstration was accompanied by rock-throwing toward our vehicle and I had no choice but to turn the car around and head back, seeing that our way was blocked and dangerous.

After a few minutes, the *Rosh Yeshiva* asked, “Why are we headed back?”

“Because,” I answered naively, “they are throwing rocks at us and it’s dangerous!”

At this, the *Rosh Yeshiva* began to cry and he declared, “No! That’s not why! That’s not the reason! We are headed back

because from *Shomayim* they aren’t giving me the opportunity – I don’t have the *zechus* to *daven* at the *Kivrei Avos*! The demonstration, the Arabs, the rocks – all these obstacles are against me, personally, to prevent me from getting to the *Avos*. Through my numerous sins I have been prevented, because I don’t have the *zechus* to *daven* at the *Kivrei Avos*.” And so he continued to cry.

This memory is something that will always be with me, explained Rav Fisher, and from that trip I learned hands-on that if ever anything in life is a failure, if ever something doesn’t work out the way I chose or decided, the fault lies solely with me. I am he who was found unworthy; I did not have the *zechus* (merit) – and I am the cause of my own failures.” (*Sefer Shemuos Tovos*)



Rav Gershon Henoach Leiner of Radzin, 4th of Teves

The *Ba'al HaTecheiles*

What is the Color of *Techeiles*?

When Rav Gershon Henoach came up with his new formula for reintroducing the *techeiles* to dye the wool of *tzitzis*, he created a huge stir. He went from *Rebbe* to *Rebbe* trying to get their approval for his method.

Among those he approached was Rav Yehoshua of Belz, who turned him down and refused to approve of his dye. “Let me explain my refusal,” Rav Yehoshua said. “If you wish to argue with me using your *Talmudic* skills and erudition, you will surely defeat me because your intellectual

prowess in *Torah* is certainly superior to mine! However, I will tell you a story why I simply cannot agree with you.

“Once, my saintly father, the *Tzaddik*, the *Sar Sholom* of Belz, woke me early at dawn and asked me to come outside with him. He pointed upward to the heavens and showed them to me, saying, ‘Do you see the color of the sky? This,’ he pointed, ‘is the color of *techeiles*.’ Now, unfortunately, the color you show me here does not match the color my father showed me.” (*Otzar Yisrael* in the name of Mordechai Hirsch p. 119)



Rav Avrohom Yaakov Ben Yisrael Friedman of Sadigur, 5th of Teves

The *Abir Yaakov*

Such a *Nusach HaTefilla*

A *bochur* once came before Rav

Avrohom Yaaakov of Sadigur, the *Abir Yaakov*, and asked the *Rebbe* for help,

because he was having difficulty concentrating during *davening* and felt that he did not *daven* properly. “How can anyone have problems concentrating during *davening*,” wondered the *Tzaddik* rhetorically, “when *Chazal* composed a unique *nusach hatefilla*? It’s practically impossible to have any extraneous and foreign thoughts when you *daven*!”



Learn Out Loud

When another *bochur* complained to the *Tzaddik* that he had issues learning *Torah* and was not successful, the *Rebbe* wondered aloud, “How can such a thing be? Why don’t you try and study out loud? When I was a youngster,” explained the *Abir Yaakov*, “my brother and I studied in a *Bais Medrash* approximately three houses away from my home and we studied with such loud voices that my parents could hear us from a distance, and when we came home, we could tell by looking at my father’s facial expression whether we had studied well that day or not!”



The Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh

Once, when some of his *Chassidim* came from the *kloiz* in Haifa, they told the *Rebbe* that every *Shabbos* night they study the *sefer Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh* together. However, when they reached *Parshas Vayikra* and tried to study his holy words and commentary, they ran into problems – they had difficulty understanding it. They wanted to know if instead they could switch to studying the commentary of the *Ramban*. The *Rebbe*’s answer was harsh. “Do you mean to tell me if you study *Gemora* and reach a difficult point or *sugya* that you cease learning?!” Under the *Rebbe*’s guidance the *kloiz* persisted in its custom and the weekly *Shabbos* night *shiur* in *Ohr HaChaim*

continued, as well as in the *sefer Toldos Yaakov Yosef*.



Gimmel Cheshvan – the Rizhiner’s Yahrzeit Tisch

There was once a *Chassid* whose daughter’s *chasuna* was planned for *Gimmel Cheshvan*, the same date as the *Yahrzeit* of the *heilige* Rizhiner, the forebear of the *Abir Yaakov* of Sadigur.

On that holy date, the *Abir Yaakov* conducted a festive *tisch* and always spoke highly of the importance and greatness attributed to participation on such an auspicious occasion. The *Chassid* was therefore thoroughly downcast and decided that perhaps he should leave the wedding in the middle and join the *Rebbe*’s *tisch*. When he presented this ingenious solution to the *Rebbe*, he was met with emphatic opposition; the *Rebbe* would not agree at all. Instead, the *Rebbe* told the *Chassid* the following: “I have received a tradition from my forebear, the great *Maggid* of Mezritch, that when Jews sit together and one of them thinks the proper thoughts, the entire group is considered to be at a *farbrengen* or (*Chassidish* gathering). When you sit down to the wedding meal together with everyone and concentrate your thoughts on *Gimmel Cheshvan*, your entire *chasuna seuda* will be transformed and considered to be a *Gimmel Cheshvan seuda*!” and he opposed the idea that the *Chassid* should leave the wedding.



Which is Greater?

After the *Abir Yaakov* visited Yerushalayim for the first time and was preparing to leave, the *Chassidim* requested from the *Rebbe* a coin to purchase *mashke – lechaim*. The *Rebbe* inquired whether they gathered together and sat for *Chassidish* gatherings [to relate stories of *Tzaddikim*, encourage each other

and offer *chizuk* and sing].

The *Rebbe* then told them the following story:

Once, as the *Chassidim* sat together in the *kloiz*, suddenly, my *Zeide*, the *heilige* *Rizhiner* entered and asked them, “Which is more important, traveling to the *Rebbe* or traveling to *Chassidim*?”

To the astonishment of all assembled, one of those present answered, “Traveling to *Chassidim*!”

When the *Rizhiner* asked him to explain himself, he did. “Once, the evil inclination tempted me to sin, and I had a very difficult test. I thought to myself as follows: Let’s say I fail the test and sin, how will I ever face the *Rebbe*? Surely he will recognize my failure and see the sin etched on my face. And so I decided I would travel instead to a *Rebbe* of lesser stature, someone who lacked such spiritual prowess – surely he would not have the ability to know my wrongdoings! However, immediately I realized that, even if I could exchange my *Rebbe* and find another one, where would I ever find such good friends as the *Chassidim* with whom I sit and *farbreng*? And this thought is what saved me from transgression!”



Rav Yechezkel Shraga Ben Chaim Halberstam of Shinova, 6th of Teves

The Ropshitzer’s Miracle Oil

The Shinover *Rav*, *mechaber* of *Divrei Yechezkel*, did not refrain from saying *Tachanun* on the *Yahrzeits* of various *Tzaddikim*. Similarly, he did not have the custom to visit the gravesites of *Tzaddikim*. There was one exception to both rules: the *Yahrzeit* and the *tziun* of the *heilige* *Ropshitzer Rav*, *mechaber* of *Zera Kodesh*, to whom the Shinover *Rav* felt he owed his very life. And this is the story why:

Thoughts Loftier Than Deeds

A *Chassid* once came to spend *Shabbos* with the *Rebbe*, and on *Erev Shabbos* he hurried off to immerse in the *mikve*. To his dismay, although he had rushed to be on time, when he arrived it was too late and he found the *mikve* locked. When the *Chassid* related this to the *Abir Yaakov*, he responded with a story:

One of the *talmidim* of the *Ba’al Shem Tov* had to work very, very hard to build a *mikve* in his hometown. Finally, after he had succeeded, he needed to exert tremendous efforts to build a ladder, and finally, when that was done and the *mikve* was ready, the ladder broke! When he poured out his sorrows before the *Ba’al Shem Tov*, the *Tzaddik* answered him that even though he lacked the act itself of having performed the *mitzva* corresponding to the exterior of the *mitzva*, he had at least succeeded in fulfilling the intention behind the *mitzva*, which succeeded with no ulterior motives whatsoever, because there was no act involved. And so, in a certain way, his *mitzva* of *mikve* was loftier than had he actually succeeded in performing the deed itself! (*Abir Yaakov* p. 313–315)

When Rav Yechezkel Shraga was but a seven-year-old boy, his young life was almost cut short by a terrible accident. Rav Yechezkel Shraga’s uncle, Rav Avigdor of Dukla, was in town visiting his own brother, Rav Chaim of Sanz in Rudnick, where they lived at the time. At the end of the visit, when Rav Avigdor entered his carriage to leave, he realized that he had forgotten something back in the house and sent young Yechezkel Shraga on an errand to fetch the forgotten object.

In his haste and zeal to help his uncle, the young lad dashed across the street. A passing wagon carrying a heavy load of lumber came careening down the road at high speed, hit the young boy and ran him over! The heavy wheels crushed his body; when the doctors and surgeons rushed to examine his mangled body, they shook their heads in dismay and despaired for his life, for they determined that the wheel had sliced his liver in half!

Hearing this dire diagnosis, Rav Avigdor raised his hands heavenward and cried, “*Ribbono Shel Olam* – Master of the World, if I am destined to have a son, I would gladly exchange him so that this young man’s life be spared.” And so it was that Rav Avigdor never had any sons born to him, only daughters.

His holy father, the *Divrei Chaim*, examined his broken body and in each limb he touched, the bones grew back together, knitted themselves and straightened themselves out! Even later, in his old age, all would remark – especially the physicians – what a stately, straight, tall stature the Shinover *Rav* had!

The *Divrei Chaim* feared for his young child’s life, as his internal organs had been damaged beyond natural repair! He sent word with one of the *Chassidim* to his own *Rebbe*, the great *Tzaddik*, Rav Naftoli Ropshitzer, to *daven* for his son’s life. The *Rebbe* did this and more, he sent back a flask of pure olive oil with instructions to anoint and massage the child’s body. In a short while, miraculously, the child was healed and healthy again. In his old age, the Shinover *Rav* was weak and would recount his miraculous salvation and how he was healed. He told how at the time that he was massaged and anointed with the oil he could feel how his bones repaired themselves, how his organs reformed, regrew and regenerated, his limbs straightened themselves, and his body became healed and whole. He would then sigh plaintively and remark sadly with

longing, “From where could we get such pure, holy oil today if we needed it?” (*Divrei Yechezkel* p. 2–3)



The Journey to Eretz HaKodesh

When the *Tzaddik*, the Shinover *Rav*, reached the age of sixty-four, he went into self-imposed exile. He decided to undertake the long, arduous journey to the Holy Land, and thereby to warn the *Kohanim* not to defile themselves with ritual impurity by visiting *Kivrei Tzaddikim*, a mission he saw fit for himself as a master of *Halocha*.

The *Divrei Yechezkel* spent some twelve months on his journey and set out in the summer of the year *tov-reish-kaf-tes*. Before he climbed the gangplank to enter the boat, which had docked at the port in Constantinople, he received a letter from his father, the *Divrei Chaim*. Knowing his father’s misgivings and displeasure at his journey, and fearing that the letter contained a missive that would prevent his trip outright with a command of *Kibbud Av* against his setting out, he tucked the letter away unopened to be read at some later time.

While on his voyage he received the accolades of one of the wealthy seamen, who recognized the *Tzaddik*’s holiness and stature and wrote him a letter of recommendation to give to others to help support him and his cause, since the Shinover was a stranger. However, when he felt his *tefillos* were compromised and that his thoughts bothered him and interrupted his prayers, he tossed the seaman’s letter into the sea, attributing his lack of devotion and concentration to relying upon human help instead of trusting with *bitochon* in *Hashem* alone. A similar incident occurred when one of his wealthy supporters gave him a valuable promissory note, which could be cashed against the debt owed for a hefty sum. This too was discarded and burned when the *Divrei Yechezkel* felt that

its material grossness interrupted his spiritual devotions.

Upon arrival, the *Tzaddik* traveled to our *Avos* in Chevron. While he was there, a letter arrived from Rav Elozor Mendel of Lelov. The emissary who brought the letter was astonished to see that it was written with seemingly no order, just random letters of the *alef-bais*, but the *Shinover Rav* read the letter and remarked that if a *Tzaddik* can compose such a wondrous letter, he must meet him in Yerushalayim without delay. And so the very next day he left Chevron and set out for Yerushalayim.

That year, a plague was decimating the population, but as soon as the *Shinover Rav* entered the city's holy gates, the plague ceased. The *Shinover* stayed with Rav Elozor Mendel of Lelov in his home and together they visited the great *Mekubolim* and *Tzaddikim* of Yerushalayim, especially the *Tzaddik* and *mechaber* of *Shemen Sasson* on the *Zohar*.

While he was in Chevron, he greatly wished to *daven* at *Meoras Hamachpela*, but the Muslims prevented him. In order to bypass them, the *Shinover* and the *Lelover* disguised themselves as Arab Muslims and in their costumes, attempted to blend in and evade detection. It almost worked; they entered the *Meora* unhindered, but were seized with such fear and awe that they ran away immediately.

From Yerushalayim, the *Shinover* made his way to Tzefas where the *Tzaddik* and *Chassid*, Rav Shmuel Heller, a descendant of the *Tosafos Yom Tov*, served as chief *Rav*. The *Shinover* slept near Teverya and continued on his way toward Tzefas. All the city came out to greet him, but waited very long hours in disappointment until later that evening before sunset, when they finally arrived. When asked what had held them up, the caravan drivers told how the *Shinover Rav* stopped by one of the tall hills and went to *daven* there. He was in such a state of

dveikus that he remained there, enraptured with his Maker in prayer for many hours. Rav Shmuel Heller then revealed and explained what attraction that hill had had for the *Shinover Rav*:

On that hill, tradition has it that the *efer pora* – the ashes of the red heifer used to ritually purify the *Kohanim* for *Avodas HaMikdosh* – is hidden. They tell how once an Arab dug there in the earth and discovered a golden pot filled with ashes. He coveted the treasure and took it home. That night a magnificent vision appeared in his dream, as a tall, fearsome-looking Jew ordered him to return the vessel to its proper place. “This golden pot is full of the holy ashes of the *pora aduma*. You must rebury it,” he commanded. The Arab took no heed even after the dream recurred several times. Finally, the Jew warned that the Arab's children would die one by one as long as the pot remained in his possession. Again, the Arab paid no heed until the last of his children mysteriously died. Then the Arab himself fell sick and with his last ounces of strength, he reburied the ashes and tried to keep the gold pot. Only when he felt he would die did he reinter the golden pot with the ashes of the *pora aduma* there on that hill. And that is where the *Tzaddik* was drawn; he felt its vibrations and this is where he *davened*!

Another tradition has it that while in Tzefas, the *Shinover* encountered one of the thirty-six hidden *Tzaddikim*. When he was in the *mikve* on *Erev Shabbos*, he noticed that this person had a unique manner of immersing himself. He tried to follow him, but the Jew was quick and soon he was out of sight. Even when the *Shinover* enquired after his address, he discovered that the *lamed-vovnik* had escaped! He had packed up his family and possessions that very day and moved to nearby Biriya. Even when the *Divrei Yechezkel* attempted to follow him there on *Motzo'ei Shabbos*, when he arrived he was too late – the hidden *Tzaddik* had run away

and the Shinover never found him or discovered who he was!

Once in *Eretz Yisrael*, the Shinover opened the letter from his father and discovered that he had commanded him to not visit Meron (which was *hashgocha protis* since a band of highwaymen and robbers lay in waiting to capture and ransom him on his way from Tzefas to Meron on *Lag BaOmer*). In the summer of *tov-reish-lamed* he traveled again to Yerushalayim and stayed there until the date of the *Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh's Yahrzeit*, in order to *daven* at his *tziun*. Afterward, he returned to Tzefas, whereupon he was told from *Shomayim* to return, and so he went to the port at Yaffo to board a ship home.

Upon his return, he found a group of *Chassidim* sitting in discussion. When asked what they were talking about, they admitted to discussing how and why the Shinover worked so hard to have the *sefer Ohr HaChama* printed. This *sefer*, which the Shinover had discovered in a handwritten manuscript while in Yerushalayim, was written by the *Mekubol Rav Avrohom Azulai*, chief *Rav* of Chevron and one of the forebears of the *Chida*. "Yes," remarked the *Tzaddik*, "printing that *sefer* was one achievement of mine during that journey, but my real reasons for going...well, let's just say that they will be revealed only with the arrival of *Moshiach*." (*Divrei Yechezkel* p. 10-12)



The *Kedushas Levi* says that women have a tremendous ability to gain from the lights of *Chanukah*. He states that each night of *Chanukah* is *mesugal* for different things for women to *daven* for.

- ❖ **1st night** – Not to be lonely or depressed;
- ❖ **2nd night** – *Shidduchim* and *Shalom Bayis*;
- ❖ **3rd night** – Healthy, happy and good children. (The *Chasam Sofer* says when you cry in front of the candles - you can be sure your *teffilos* will be answered);
- ❖ **4th night** – (Four *Imahos*) To be a conventional woman within her own space who is true to her essence;
- ❖ **5th night** – (*Chamisha Chumshei Torah*) *Daven* your husband and children should be a *talmidei chachamim*. (By the 5th night, more of the *menorah* is lit up. You can *daven* for more revelation and light in your life);
- ❖ **6th night** – *Simcha*. (You can have everything and still be sad, so this is an opportunity to *daven* for *simcha*);
- ❖ **7th night** – Blissful *Shabbos Kodesh* infused with *zmiros*, *divrei torah* by your *seuda*. *Shabbos* is source of all *bracha*;
- ❖ **8th (Zos) night** – *Mesugal* for barren women. (The number eight is above nature. According to *Kabbalah*: because the world was created in seven days so the number eight is considered beyond creation). Very powerful day to *daven* for yourself and others who weren't yet *zocheh* to children.

The *Kedushas Levi* says if you are planning to start something new, if you start on *Chanukah* it will surely be blessed.

A Freilichen Chanukah.



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"ה לפ"ק
תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה
ותקים לתחיה לקץ הימין מהרה
ת'נצ'ב'ה'

I heard this wonderful word from **Reb Yisroel Meir Zaks** from Eretz Yisroel
When we encounter pressure in our lives we have to remember the following:

Pressure in Hebrew is לחץ – (צלח)

If we remember to surround ourselves with Hashem – ה' and we truly believe in Hashem's salvation, then when you add ה' (Hashem – ה') in front and in the end of לחץ – then you turn the pressure into הצלחה, Hatzlacha (Success)

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