TORAH TREATS

An Anthology of Short Divrei Torah & Stories

Compiled by Yitzchok Henry





פינחס

לעילוי נשמת



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Hamaayan -The Torah Spring ~ Edited by Shlomo Katz



וַיֹּאמֶר ה׳ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה עֲלֵה אֶל־הַר הָעֲבָרִים הַזֶּה וּרְאֵה אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְרָאִיתָה אֹתָהּ וְנֶאֱסַפְתָּ אֶל־עַמֶּיךָ. וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־ה׳ לֵאמֹר. יִפְקֹד ה׳ אֱלֹקֵי הָרוּחֹת לְכָל־בָּשָׂר אִישׁ עַל־הָעֵדָה - *"Hashem said to Moshe, 'Go up to this mountain of Avarim and see the Land that I have given to Bnei Yisrael. You shall see it and you shall be gathered to your people..' Moshe spoke to Hashem, to say. 'May Hashem, Elokim of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the assembly!'" (27:12-16)*

R' Chaim Zaichyk z"l (1906-1989; Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Bet Yosef-Novardok in Buchach, Poland/Israel) writes: What would most people do upon receiving the news that Moshe received here?

Most people would first lose their composure, then they would plead with Hashem to change the decree. What was Moshe Rabbeinu's first thought? The well-being of Bnei Yisrael! (Ohr Chadash)

"Each moment that a person refrains from speaking the forbidden, he merits a hidden light that no angel can fathom." – The Vilna Gaon quoted by the Chofetz Chaim.

יִפְקֹד ה' אֱלֹקֵי הָרוּחֹת לְכָל־בָּשָׂר אִישׁ עַל־הָעֵדָה. אֲשֶׁר־יֵצֵא לִפְנֵיהֶם וַאֲשֶׁר יָבֹא לִפְנֵיהֶם וַאֲשֶׁר יוֹצִיאֵם וַאֲשֶׁר יְבִיאֵם - ***"May Hashem, Elokim of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the assembly who will go out before them and come in before them, who will lead them out and who will bring them in . . ." (27:16-17)***

Rashi z"l comments: "Who will lead them out"–safely, through his merits. "And who will bring them in"–safely, through his merits.

R' Yerucham Levovitz z"l (mashgiach ruchani of the Mir Yeshiva; died 1936) observes: We learn from Rashi's comment that the Jewish idea of leadership is very different from the world's idea of leadership. - A Jewish leader is not someone who uses his power to command others to do his will. A Jewish leader is one who carries the entire congregation on his shoulders, who is ready to give up his own merits for the well-being of his charges. (Da'at Torah)

בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי עֲצֶרֶת תִּהְיֶה לָכֶם כָּל־מְלֶאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ - "***The eighth day shall be an atzeret / day of gathering for you*** . . ." (29:35)

R' Avraham Weinberg z"l (first Slonimer Rebbe) comments: The word "atzeret" can mean "holding back." When Sukkot is over and Shemini Atzeret comes, a Jew returns to his home.

"Hold yourself back!" the Torah proclaims. Restrain yourself from pursuing excessive pleasures which are, in the words of our verse, "for you" [even though you may have missed those pleasures while you were living in the sukkah]. (Torat Avot)

"It is more important, in my opinion, for a Jew to be 'Glatt Yosher' (straight and upright) in one's dealings with other people, than to be 'Glatt Kosher' in what he eats!" ~ R' Joseph Breuer zt"l

תְּנָה־לָּנוּ אֲחֻזָּה בְּתוֹךְ אֲחֵי אָבִינוּ - ***"Give us a possession among our father's brothers."*** (27:4)



R' Yisrael Yaakov Lubchansky z"l (Mashgiach of the Baranovitch Yeshiva) observes: Korach requested something spiritual, and he was killed. The daughters of Tzelofchad requested something physical (a share in Eretz Yisrael), and the Torah praises them. Why?

Because they acted with G-d's Honor in mind, while Korach acted selfishly.

How can one know his own motives? adds R' Lubchansky. Only through learning mussar / ethics and introspection. (Ikvei Yisrael)

יִפְקֹד ה' אֱלֹקֵי הָרוּחֹת לְכָל־בָּשָׂר אִישׁ עַל־הָעֵדָה - ***"May Hashem, G-d of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the assembly."*** *(27:16)*

In this verse, Moshe asks Hashem to appoint a successor to himself (Moshe) who would lead Bnei Yisrael into Eretz Yisrael. Why did Moshe refer to Hashem in this context specifically as the "G-d of the spirits of all flesh"?

R' Amram Zvi Gruenwald z"l (dayan and rosh yeshiva in Visheve, Romania and rabbi of the Fernwald D.P. camp) explains: Moshe not only brought the Torah down to Bnei Yisrael, but he also fed them. Our Sages teach that the mahn fell in Moshe's merit. Moshe knew that the soul cannot remain within a person if the flesh is not fed. Therefore Moshe prayed that G-d should appoint a spiritual leader who would care for his charges material needs, their flesh, also.

לָכֵן אֱמֹר הִנְנִי נֹתֵן לוֹ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי שָׁלוֹם - "*Therefore, say – Behold! I give him My covenant of Shalom.*" *(25:12)*

It is customary to write the letter "vav" of the word "shalom" shorter than the surrounding letters.

The renowned halachic authority **R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach z"l** (1910-1995) once was shown a Sefer Torah in which the vav had been written the regular size. It should have been a simple matter to take a blade and scrape off the bottom of the vav, but no sofer / scribe could be found in Yerushalayim who was willing to undertake the job. The reason was that there are authorities who hold that the word "Shalom" is a Divine Name. Although the halachah does not follow that view, these scribes were not willing to do an act which, according to some, would constitute erasing G-d's Name. [For this reason, some authorities counsel not to say "Shabbat Shalom" in a bathroom and not to write the word "Shalom" in correspondence that will be thrown away.]

A difficult predicament? Not for R' Auerbach. He advised that they bring a quill and ink and thicken the bottoms of all of the other letters of the word Shalom. Once that was done, the vav would be a short letter. - Simple, but brilliant.

"The Chofetz Chaim was once overheard making an accounting with Hashem, as it were. He said 'Dear G-d, what have You done for me, and what have I done for You? You have given me the privilege of writing the Mishneh Berurah, Chofetz Chaim, Shemiras HaLashon, Likutei Halachos, and many other sefarim. What have I done for You? Nothing! Please Hashem, give me an opportunity to do something for You.'

To the Chofetz Chaim, whatever he did was only to be expected, and was undeserving of any reward for himself."



וּבְנֵי־קֹרַח לֹא־מֵתוּ – '*And the sons of Korach did not die*.' (26:11)

The sons of Korach were (originally) in the thick of the dispute against Moshe Rabbeinu. Rashi explains that, at the very last moment, they repented. Regardless of how far one has drifted from Jewish observance, how distant he has strayed from traditional life and Torah values, he can return and be reinstated. - People think that once they have rejected the Torah way it is impossible to come back. This is categorically incorrect.

The Ponevezer Rav, zl, was about to leave on a journey to the United States. His revered Rebbe, **the Chafetz Chaim, zl**, was still alive. The Rav went to the Chafetz Chaim to bid him farewell and to solicit his blessing for a successful journey.

While they spoke, the Rav asked the Chafetz Chaim for a message to convey to American Jewry. The Chafetz Chaim instructed him to convey that it is quite simple to repent. All one has to do is to regret the past and take upon oneself to alter his lifestyle for the future, or – in today's vernacular – "Move on!" Ruminating over the past only engenders depression. It is time to make up one's mind and move on.

A parent never gives up on a child – regardless of the pain and the hurt the child has caused him. Hashem is our Heavenly Father, Who waits "up" for all of His children to return home. When they do return, it matters not how far away they have been or the pain and hurt they have caused, as long as they are home, safe and sound. That is all that matters.

The following incident, which took place about thirty-five years ago in a frum, observant yishuv, underscores this idea:

The man of the house left early for Kollel where he would spend the entire day. The mother sent off her five older children to school, while she remained home with Motke, their youngest. It was a beautiful morning, so the mother let Motke play on the balcony.

Every few moments, she would take a quick look to make sure Motke was doing well and not getting into any mischief. Suddenly, she turned around and did not see Motke. She immediately ran to the balcony, where she saw two little hands holding on to the bottom railing of the protective fence surrounding the balcony. The mother immediately ran over and placed her hands between the lattice and held on to Motke for dear life.

This is how she remained – bent over, arms outstretched, holding on to her young son. Half an hour passed – then an hour – two hours and she kept on holding. No one on the street looked up, despite her screams for help. She asked Motke to try to kick off his shoes in the hope that they would fall and alert a passerby to look up. Motke listened; the shoes fell, and a passerby kicked them to the side, as he continued on his designated course. - No one bothered to look up.

Three hours – four – five – five and a half hours passed, until one of the storekeepers looked up to close the security gates over his store. He saw a frightening scene: a young boy hanging on to his mother, his legs dangling in the air, six stories above the street.

He immediately contacted the fire department, which was able to reach the boy and bring him in. The mother had held on for five and a half hours, an almost superhuman feat.

"How did you do it?" someone asked. "What's the question? He is my son!"

A powerful lesson is to be derived from this story. Hashem loves us all, because we are His children. Regardless how long and how far – He will always be waiting there for us. He is our Father. We are His children. It is only natural.

Horav Nissim Yagen, zl, offers an inspiring analogy which illuminates the importance of reaching out to those who are lost and alienated in order to help them find their way home:

A powerful king who possessed treasuries filled with enormous wealth had one son, who was obviously very special to him. One day, while on a jungle safari, the crown prince lost his way, and no one could locate him.

Search parties were sent out, every form of tracking device was employed, all to no avail. The prince was lost. The king became more depressed with each passing day, as he began to despair of ever seeing his son alive again.

In an attempt to raise the king's spirits, one of his distinguished ministers brought the king a beautiful gold watch.- "Who cares about a gold watch when my son is lost?" the king declared.

Another minister conveyed to the king the wonderful news that he had captured ten provinces and annexed them to the country. "For my part, take all of my money and all of my provinces and give me back my son!" the king yelled. "I want nothing but my son. Without my son, nothing has any value to me!"

When a Jew sins, it gives Hashem great pain. Every sin has great significance and, undoubtedly, when we are able to convince someone to refrain from performing a specific sin, it is wonderful. If, however, we are able to turn a person around to bring him/her back to Hashem and say, "Hashem, we have found Your prince/princess," the Almighty derives much satisfaction.

Imagine a soldier who was taken captive by terrorists: if his parents were to discover that they had the winning lottery ticket, would it make an impact? Certainly they would be happy, but as long as their son suffers, no amount of money will excite them. They want their son. So, too, Hashem wants and waits for all of His lost children.

וַיִּסְמֹךְ אֶת־יָדָיו עָלָיו וַיְצַוֵּהוּ – '***He leaned his hands upon him and commanded him***.' (27:23)

Rashi notes that, when Hashem instructed Moshe Rabbeinu to transfer his authority to Yehoshua by means of semichah, "leaning of hands", the Almighty said, yadcha, "your hand" in the singular, implying one hand. Moshe, however, applied both hands, generously, like a vessel which is full and brimming over and filled him with his wisdom to become the nation's next leader.

Horav Avraham Pam, zl, explains that when we bless someone by placing both hands on his head, it is an indication that it is executed with love. It is not burdensome, an obligation which we are compelled to carry out. Two hands means the person, indeed, wishes to transmit fully the blessings which he is about to render.

If Hashem had instructed Moshe to use one hand, why did he use two hands? He was not adhering to Hashem's instructions.

Perhaps, we might suggest the following. The gematria, numerical equivalent, of ahavah is thirteen. Likewise, the numerical equivalent of echad, one, is also thirteen. Thus, when (as the Rosh Yeshivah suggests) Moshe used two hands to express his ahavah, he was actually (in a way) using one, since ahavah and echad had the same gematria: when there is love (two hands), it becomes one.

We might derive another important lesson. When a rebbe seeks to transmit his wisdom to his student seamlessly, it is best executed using the medium of "two hands" – love. Without the inherent love that (should) exist(s), the student might not receive the "complete package".

"When you help a fellow Jew, it is considered as if you helped Hashem Himself." ~ Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai.





How did Pinchas show his love for Klal Yisrael when he killed Zimri?

The answer is, if you want Hashem to love the Jewish people you have to stand up for the honor of Hashem. When you're a *kanai'i* – it means if you get angry when you see *reshaim* doing wicked things and you get up and you show your zeal and you stand up for the ideals of Hakodosh Boruch Hu – then Hashem loves the Jewish people.

You have to be a fire for the truth, a fire against the *reshaim*. Protest! Speak up! If you do that, then Hakodosh Boruch Hu loves the Jewish people more. - "My children are speaking up for Me!" He says. "I love them for that!"

But if you're quiet; if you see people trampling on the Torah and you don't say anything – it doesn't affect you; you don't care about it – so Hashem says, "That's My people?! My people must take up for Me!"

It says you have to love Hashem and hate Hashem's enemies! Dovid said, הֲלוֹא־מְשַׂנְאֶיךָ ה' אֶשְׂנָא וּבְתַקּוֹמְמֶיךָ אֶתְקוֹטָט– "*Hashem; don't I hate Your enemies?! I hate those who rebel against You.*"

Don't be like the fake liberals who say, "We love everybody." They love everybody except the decent people. Everybody they love except good people.

And therefore Hakodosh Boruch Hu says, "If you want to be beloved by Me, you have to say that you're not a friend of My enemies." And you have to mean it. - And therefore those who speak up against the enemies of Hashem, they increase His love for the Am Yisroel. - Hashem loves *kanaim.*



Do we gain the maximum benefit by staying to ourselves, separate from the goyim? Wouldn't it be beneficial for us to gain from what the nations have to offer to us?

When you see an airplane take off for Eretz Yisroel, and inside there are many people going to yeshivos to learn in Eretz Yisroel, that's an example where we are taking advantage of what the gentiles have to offer us. - R' Akiva Eiger didn't invent an airplane, and neither did the Vilna Gaon invent the airplane. The goyim invented it. So we say, absolutely; utilize all that we can from the inventions of the goyim.

Even the scientific knowledge that the goyim have discovered we use. Make use of everything; whatever we can we take it for ourselves. Now, I think that when Moshiach will come, we'll still use automobiles; we won't give up automobiles. The world will continue to run like it does today. The Gemara says that. And if there will be automobiles, so there will have to be traffic lights too. Traffic lights were invented by the goyim but there will be traffic lights too in the time of Moshiach.

On the contrary, there will be halachos, takanos chachomim: If a person passes a red light, he'll get malkos, lashes. No question about it. There will be very severe penalties. That's very important for us – for safety, piku'ach nefesh. We'll make use in Moshiach's times of all the good takanos.

I'm sure they'll use radio to let people know dinim, halachos, other important information; and people will listen to Torah on the radio. And in those days there will be a kosher TV. Kosher TV means people will sit in their homes and will look at the TV and they will see tzaddikim teaching Torah and explaining things – halachos, and middos tovos, and even halachos of Yom Tov and Shabbos on TV; and it will be much more effective than merely words or printed pages.

I'm sure all the modern inventions will be utilized in the days of Moshiach. Therefore, certainly we want to make use of the benefits the goyim bring to the world.



Should I donate money to a Kollel whose yungerleit go away to the country for the summer?

And the answer is yes. You must know that a kollel man in the summertime is accomplishing great things.

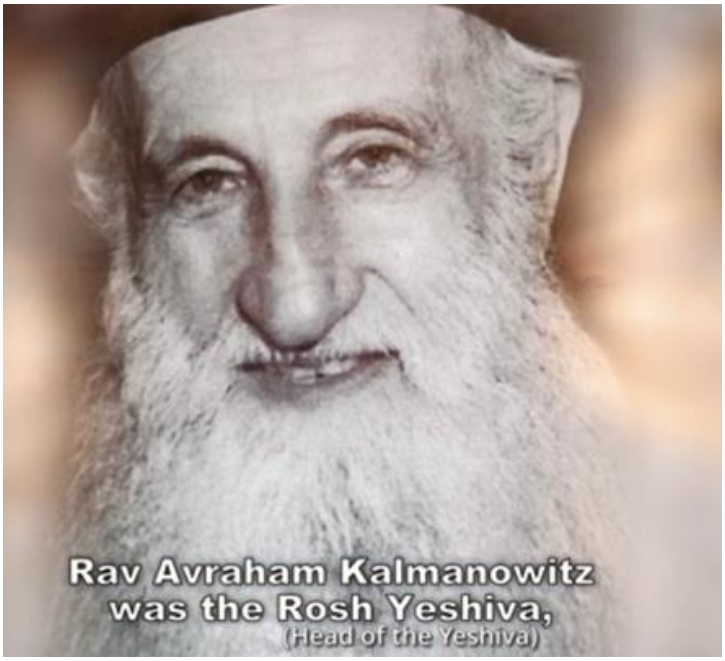
The mere fact he's raising a sizable family in the country – he has a kollel of his own in the country. He deserves it; why not? And he's not wasting time. He's studying; he's reviewing, he's learning new mesichtas.

Now if he's not a kollel man, if he just calls himself a kollel man but he wastes his days, this happens too. So, that's the responsibility of the heads of the kollel – we're not talking about that now. - But a true kollel man, even in the summer, he is carrying out his purpose.

"If a Jew strays from Yiddishkeit in Paris, it is because people are lax in their Torah studies in Kovno!" ~ R' Yisrael Salanter



My father came from Morocco in 1956. He came together with a boatload of other Moroccan boys to the Mir Yeshiva in Brooklyn New York. Morocco, especially where he lived in Essaouira on the coast has beautiful sunny hot weather virtually all the time. So when that first Brooklyn winter came, none of the boys had coats, and none of them had any money to buy a coat. - And so, there they were walking down Ocean Parkway in the bitter freezing cold in January.



Rav Avraham Kalmanowitz Zt'l was the Rosh Yeshiva. He was the one who originally went to Morocco to bring the boys back. He was really a mountain – a giant of a man. His son, **Rav Shraga Moshe Kalmanowitz** would eventually become the Rosh Yeshiva. He loved the Syrian community. He had such a strong connection with them.

He saw the Moroccan boys walking on Ocean Parkway without coats. He walked up into his father's office, and he said to Rav Avraham

Kalmanowitz, "Abba, Tatty, the Moroccan boys – they're walking in the freezing cold streets without coats on! It's snowing out there!"

Rav Avraham said, "I know, but we don't have money, we don't have money for anything. We don't have money to buy them coats."



Rav Shraga Moshe unbuttoned his own overcoat, his own heavy woolen coat, he took it off, and placed it on his father's desk! He said to his father, "I want you to know that until the Moroccan boys get coats, just know that your own son is walking in that bitter cold without a coat as well." – And he walked out.

A week or two later, they somehow managed to raise funds to be able to buy the Moroccan boys their coats.

I like this story, but there is so much that you can learn from it. – When I heard this story, this is what I imagined:

I imagined that moment when Rav Shraga Moshe himself is walking through the bitter frigid cold, and he's like just chomping down on his teeth as the ice is biting through his bones. – It's freezing and he doesn't have a coat - but he's smiling through the discomfort. And he is saying, "I'm doing this because the boys don't have coats, and I'm with then in their pain."

I can't imagine a bigger moment in his life that he felt connected to other human beings – because he was suffering with them. – That was the connection.

At our funerals, they're not going to talk about how much physical pleasure we've had on this earth. Nobody is going to get up and talk about how many hot dogs a person could eat.



But by Rav Shraga Moshe's funeral, my father said to me, "Here was a man who walked the streets in the freezing cold, without a coat – for others!"

That's how we measure you. That's how *shamayim* measures you.

Parshah Pearls

● The External and the Internal

פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל -
"Pinchas ben Elazar ... diverted My anger (heishiv es chamosi) from on the B'nei Yisrael ... " (25:11)

Citing the **G'ro, the P'ninim mi'Shulchan ha'G'ro** explains the words **הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי**, which literally means 'turned my anger round', with the adage of Chazal that Tzadikim are called 'alive', even after their death, whereas even during their lifetime, Resha'im are called dead.

What they mean, says the G'ro, is that whilst in the case of the former, it is only their bodies that have died, but their Souls remain alive, in the latter case, it is only their bodies that live; their inner souls have already died.

Take the word "chamosi", and you will find that its inner letters (denoting the Neshamah) spell 'meis', its outer letters (the body) 'chai'. What Pinchas therefore did was to turn the word "chamosi" round, from its current format (where the Neshamah is dead, and the body alive), to 'michyas', whose inner letters spell 'chai'.

● Finger in the Ear

לְאָזְנִי מִשְׁפַּחַת הָאָזְנִי - *"To Ozni, the family of Ozni"* (26:16).



In the opinion of Rashi, this is synonymous with the family of Etzbon (from the root 'Etzba', meaning 'finger').

What, one may well ask, is the connection between these two names?

The Sh'loh connects them via the Chazal, who explain that a person's fingers are shaped the way they are, long and thin, so that when he hears something that he shouldn't, he can immediately place them in his ears, to prevent him from hearing what he ought not to hear. Hence the ears and the fingers serve one and the same purpose.

● A True Leader

אֲשֶׁר־יֵצֵא לִפְנֵיהֶם וַאֲשֶׁר יָבֹא לִפְנֵיהֶם וַאֲשֶׁר יוֹצִיאֵם וַאֲשֶׁר יְבִיאֵם - *"Who goes before them and who comes before them, who takes them out and who brings them in*" (27:17).

A true leader, says the **Avnei Azel**, leads the people and is not led by them. He goes in front at all times, and does not turn round to see where they want him to go.

His task after all, is to raise the people to his level and not to lower himself to theirs. And that is how the **Chidushei ha'Rim** explains the words "who takes them out and brings them in" - he takes them out of their level of Tum'ah, and brings them in to his level of Kedushah.

Whereas a leader who allows himself to be led by the people, does exactly the opposite. He is not really a leader at all.

● A Shame and Disgrace

וְנָתַתָּה מֵהוֹדְךָ עָלָיו לְמַעַן יִשְׁמְעוּ כָּל־עֲדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל - *"And you shall place some of your majesty upon him"* (27:20).

'Some of your majesty', comments the Gemara in Bava Basra (75), 'but not all of it. Moshe's face shone like the sun, Yehoshua's like the moon. The elders of the generation said "Woe to that shame! Woe to that disgrace!" '

This implies that had Yehoshua tried a little harder, he could have been on a par with Moshe Rabeinu.

Why, asks the **G'ro**, was it only the elders who made that observation, and not the youth?

The younger generation, who only saw Moshe Rabeinu as an old man, he replies, attributed Moshe's superiority to his advanced age. Not so the older one. They remembered Moshe in his younger years, when he was the same age as Yehoshua, and they realized how much greater he was than him, even then. Hence their lament 'Woe to that shame! Woe to that disgrace'!

"I merited living a long life because I never questioned Hashem's actions. When one questions Hashem, he is brought up to Heaven and shown that in fact everything is perfect and just. Since I have never complained, there has been no reason to take me up to see that all of Hashem's deeds are just!" ~ R' Shimon of Yaroslav zt"l

"When a person feels the pangs of envy, he is causing himself to feel that pain. One is not allowed to cause himself pain!" ~ R' Eiyahu Dessler zt"l



Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages

During the Covid restrictions, **the Kosover Rebbe, zt"l, Rav Shraga Feivish Hager**, instructed his Chasidim that they were not to use the Mikvah every day, as an effort to limit spreading infection, which in many cases, was life-threatening.

One Chasid approached him and complained about this. He said, "Rebbe, I didn't miss going to the Mikvah every morning for almost my entire life. How could I stop going now?"

The Rebbe replied, "HaKadosh Baruch Hu doesn't need the Guinness Book of World Records!"

Never Despair



Rav Yitzchak Hutner, zt"l, would often give Drashos of Chizuk, and he would say over this Pasuk in Michah (7:8): "אַל־תִּשְׂמְחִי אֹיַבְתִּי לִּי כִּי נָפַלְתִּי קָמְתִּי כִּי־אֵשֵׁב בַּחֹשֶׁךְ ה' אוֹר לִי!" - This means, "Do not rejoice over me, my enemy, because I have fallen, for I have gotten back up. Even though I sit in darkness, HASHEM is a light for me!"

Rav Hutner would place a strong emphasis on the word "Hashem." - His message was clear, that no matter how dark things are for someone, Hashem is always there for us.

Rav Hutner would also constantly talk about the Pasuk in Mishlei (24:16), "כִּי שֶׁבַע יִפּוֹל צַדִּיק וָקָם!" – 'A Tzadik falls seven times, and he gets up.' - Rav Hutner would emphasize that even great people can fall many times, but what makes them great is that they keep getting up and trying again. One may never give up hope!

The Siddur Speaks



A group of government officials once came to Rimanov to find a warehouse they could use for the army's food and supplies. After scouting the city, they decide that the best place to use was the local Shul.

When the heads of the community heard this, they quickly ran to **Rav Menachem Mendel of Rimanov, zt"l**, to ask him what they should do. One person stood up and pointed out that the roof of the Shul leaks. I'm sure that once we tell the officials about this, and that all of their supplies will be ruined, they will change their minds and not use the Shul as a storehouse.

Everyone agreed that this seemed to be a good plan of action. However, Rav Menachem Mendel said that they were making a mistake. In fact, he said, it was exactly because of the leaky roof that this decree had befallen them.

He said, "If we don't actively take care of our Shul, and we degrade its honor by allowing the roof to leak, what do you expect will happen? Go fix the roof right away, and everything will be alright."

The leaders of the community listened Rav Menachem Mendel and got right to work on having the roof of the Shul fixed, and shortly after, for some reason, the government officials decided to use a different place for their storage!



CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN ZT"L

מחשבת הלב

A Caring Gadol

Hashem told Moshe to place his hand on *Yehoshua bin Nun* and *bentch* him. Moshe, though, placed both hands on Yehoshua. - Why two?

Perhaps we can say a *machshava*, prefaced with a story. *A bochur* in the *Ponovezh Yeshivah* once needed some respite and a break from his daily routine. He thought that a *Shabbos* away from the *yeshivah* would do the trick. When he asked **R' Gershon Edelstein *zt"l*** for permission to leave, his answer was, "You can rest in the *yeshivah* just as well. There's no need to leave the *yeshivah*."

That *Erev Shabbos*, R' Gershon approached the boy and asked if he would like to join him for a *seudas Shabbos*. The *bochur* was thrilled at the opportunity to bask in the *Rosh Yeshivah's* presence!

R' Gershon knew the boy needed a change but as he pushed him away with one hand, refusing his request, he pulled him closer with the other, by offering him a great opportunity.

Similarly, *Moshe Rabbeinu*, the seasoned *manhig*, was imparting a lesson to *Yehoshua bin Nun*, the next leader. You need two hands to guide: "**שמאל מרחק וימין מקרב** ". - It's a delicate balance in *chinuch* we all must utilize. *Yehi ratzon* that we enjoy much success with those we are charged with being *mechanech* and have unlimited *Yiddish nachas* from them all.



Insights Into Halachah (Abridged)

Understanding What Is Behind the Widespread Custom of *Davening Shacharis* Late on Shabbos Morning

Towards the end of this week's *parsha* we learn about the various *korbonos* that were offered in the *Beis HaMikdosh*. Regarding the *korbonos* of Shabbos the Torah writes (*Bamidbar* 28:9-10): **וביום השבת שני כבשים בני שנה תמימים ושני עשרנים סלת מנחה בלולה בשמן ונסכו. עלת שבת בשבתו על עלת התמיד ונסכה** – "On the day of Shabbos, two unblemished sheep a year old, and two tenths of fine flour as a *mincha* offering, mixed with oil, and its libation. The *korban olah* of Shabbos on Shabbos, in addition to the regular *korban tomid* and its libations."

Rav Hai Gaon Encourages Sleeping In

Rav Hai Gaon understands from these *pasukim* that one should *daven Shacharis* on Shabbos later than during the week.

The Mordechai in *Perek Kol Kisvei* (Shabbos, *siman* 298) writes:

"The widespread custom amongst *yidden* is that during the week they get up early to go to *shul* to *daven* or to learn and on Shabbos they sleep more and go to *Shacharis* later. This is because (in this

week's *parsha*) when it talks about the *tomid shel shachar* [the morning sacrifice] offered during the week it writes "in the morning, in the morning", and when it talks about the *korban tomid* offered on Shabbos it doesn't mention "morning", rather it says, "on the day of Shabbos". The expression "on the day of Shabbos" implies late in the day, as we see in *Yoma* (33b). (Therefore, it is sacrificed later in the day and as a result people wake up and *daven* later on Shabbos). This reason I heard from the Ri the son of R' Yehudah in the city of Roma, in the name of Rav Hai Gaon".

After seeing the above, we see that there is a *mekor* [source] for *davening* late on Shabbos, which has been around already from the times of the Geonim. This may well be the source for many *kehillos* [communities] who start *Shacharis* on Shabbos considerably later than they do during the week.

The *Rema* Agrees

Based on the aforementioned *Mordechai,* the *Rema* (*Orach Chaim* 281) rules: – "The custom is, that on Shabbos people come later to *shul* than they do during the week. The reason for this is, by the *korban tomid* offered up in the week it says, 'in the morning', whereas by Shabbos it says, 'on the day of Shabbos', which implies late in the day."

Conclusion

It goes without saying, that even if one does daven later, he must make sure to say *krias shema* before *soif zeman krias shema* and *shemonah esrei* before *soif zeman tefillah*.



"The essence of faith is the perception that there is truly nothing in this world besides for Hashem." ~ R' Yitzchok Hutner.



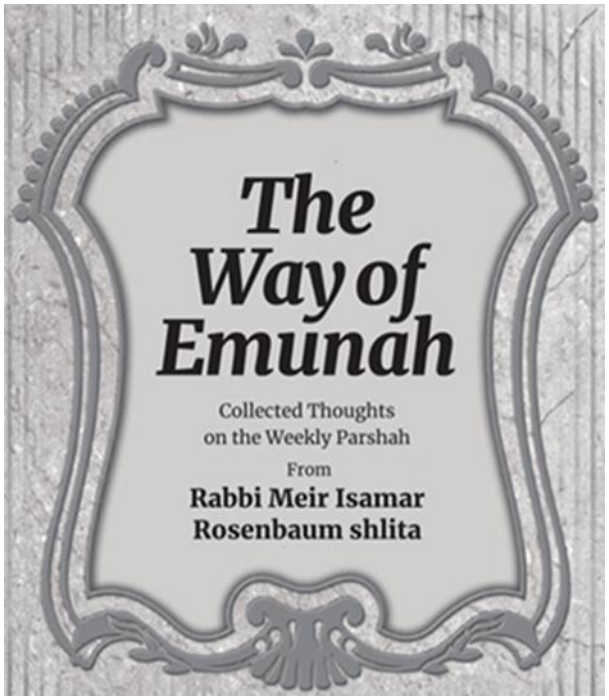
Chazal say that if a person davens and is not answered, he should daven again. **The Gra** writes that this refers to chazaras ha'shatz, meaning that he should pay attention to the shaliach tzibur's repetition. Indeed, the **Arizal** tells us that chazaras ha'shatz is like a super dose of tefilah b'tzibur that won't go unanswered. The fact that it is recited out loud signifies this. However, one must be aware of this in order to harness its power.



Rav Shimshon Pinkus likens this to one who bought a manual car and never switched it out of first gear. For years he was driving less than 20 mph, sometimes, if going downhill, he was able to go 35 mph. However if he learns to switch gears, he can go so much faster. - Similarly, if we think that everything lies in our own shemoneh esrei, we are limited by the efficacy of our own kavana, but by focusing on chazaras ha'shatz, we can gain so much more power. Now we know. Now, let's focus!

A delegation from Brisk was sent to convince the **Bais HaLevi** to become their new Rav. After making their presentation, he refused to accept the position. No argument would persuade him, until one member of the delegation said that 20,000 Jews are waiting for him in Brisk. When the Bais HaLevi heard this, he said he cannot disappoint 20,000 Jews and immediately accepted the position.

The Chofetz Chaim, upon hearing this story, burst into tears. He said if this is how a Tzaddik like the Bais HaLevi feels, certainly Moshiach would also come if 20,000 Jews were waiting for him. Apparently, there aren't that many.



פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקַנְאוֹ אֶת־קִנְאָתִי בְּתוֹכָם וְלֹא־כִלִּיתִי אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִנְאָתִי – '***Pinchos the son of Elazar the son of Aharon the Kohein turned back My anger from upon the children of Yisroel by his zealously avenging Me among them***…' (25:11)

● Zealotry Must be L'Sheim Shomayim

The Sema"k asks why the story of Pinchos's zealotry is written at the end of Parshas Balak, but the reward he received is not written until the beginning of Parshas Pinchos. Why is a separation placed between the story and its reward?

He answers that the Torah is teaching us an important lesson about kana'us. The reward for acts of zealotry is not given immediately. Rather, the person is first evaluated to determine if all of his intentions were l'sheim shomayim, with no thoughts of personal gain at all. Only after it is determined that the person acted solely for the sake of Hashem is he rewarded.

וְהָיְתָה לוֹ וּלְזַרְעוֹ אַחֲרָיו בְּרִית כְּהֻנַּת עוֹלָם תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר קִנֵּא לֵאלֹקָיו וַיְכַפֵּר עַל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל – '***And it will be for you and your offspring after you… because he was zealous for his G-d and atoned for the children of Yisroel***.' (25:13)

● The Bris Atones for Sins

Sefer Agra D'Pirka (Ois 146) quotes **Rav Shlomo of Karlin zy"a** as quoting a Medrash that says that when Hashem commanded Eliyahu Hanavi to attend every bris milah, Eliyahu said: "You know that I act with passion to sanctify Your name. If the father at the bris is a sinful person, I won't be able to stand being there!"

Hashem, therefore, promised him that the father of the baby would be forgiven of his sins and would be cleansed of all his aveiros!

Eliyahu continued, "What if the mohel is a sinful person"?

Hashem then promised that the mohel would also be forgiven for his sins.

Eliyahu persisted, "What if one of those in attendance is sinful?"

Hashem finally promised that He would forgive anyone who attends a bris of all of their sins.

The Agra D'Pirka adds that this is hinted at in the verse (ibid:13): "Because he was passionate for Hashem and atoned for bnei Yisroel." This indicates that because he was a passionate person and could not stand being in the presence of sinners, all of bnei Yisroel had to be forgiven.

יִפְקֹד ה' אֱלֹקֵי הָרוּחֹת לְכָל־בָּשָׂר אִישׁ עַל־הָעֵדָה – '***May Hashem, the G-d of spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation***.' (27:16)

● **A Leader Who is Part of the Nation**

The Kotzker Rebbe zy"a explains that this pasuk is teaching us the essence of a Jewish leader. He must be "a man over the congregation". He is not meant to be an angel who is above and apart from the people. Rather, he should be "a man" who is part of his people and lives amongst them, but he also has to be "over the congregation", in the sense that he must be of a stature that they can respect.

"A true sign of a person's love for Hashem, is the love they have for their fellow human beings." ~ Rabbi Yisroel Salanter.

● Hashem Wants to Hear Praises of His Nation

Leaders of the congregation are not the only ones who have the ability to provide benefit for the public. Rather, every Yid can help others. One can do this by speaking positively about his fellow Jews, as whenever one praises members of Klal Yisroel, Hashem is very pleased, and He accepts these words.

The Rashab of Lubavitch zy"a would say that people think that taking "pidyonos" is a hard job that only a Rebbe can do. The truth is, however, that any Jew can accomplish the same thing by genuinely speaking positively about his friend.

On Rosh Hashanah, the Heavenly angels eagerly wait for Jews to praise their friends, as they know that Hashem desires such praises of His children just as much as He desires the tefillos of tzadikim.

● One Who Has Not Sinned Cannot Repent

One of the mashpi'im of Lubavitch said: There are two ways to rectify one's past sins – either by doing full teshuva or by giving tzedakah. If one cannot fast, he should give tzedakah. If one cannot give tzedakah, he should fast. - If one can't do either of those things, he should never sin!

"Often, as time passes, we see in retrospect how a particular seemingly bad situation turned out for the very best. At other times, we never become privy to Hashem's considerations, calculations, and motivation for putting us through a certain trying and rigorous situation. Such things will remain concealed from our eyes until Moshiach comes; until then, emuna gives us the strength and peace of mind in knowing that everything Hashem does is for the very best." ~ The Garden of Emuna

He's Watching Us – Rabbi Shlomo Landau



Here is a first-hand account from a soldier who was fighting in Gaza and was given the opportunity of a short furlough from the fighting. When he walked the streets, he felt as though Hakadosh Baruch Hu was watching over him. He realized that all of a sudden that he believed in Hashem, the Almighty in a way that he had never believed before. Previously he was not religious at all. What made him feel like this? What changed his outlook in life?

He shared that he and three other soldiers entered into one of the buildings. The second they entered, suddenly they were met by automatic gunfire that was coming from a Hamas terrorist that had just emerged from a concealed tunnel.

He hit all four soldiers. One got a bullet in his bullet-proof vest. Another bullet hit the second one's gun. Another bullet hit the third soldier's night vision goggles. And he got a bullet in the helmet. – Not a single one of them walked out of that building with any injury!

What are the chances of this happening in an enclosed area? Nil. It was clearly the **יד השם**. This carried him through, and even as he walked out, it felt as though wherever he went, Hakadosh Baruch Hu was with him and watching over him.

It doesn't have to be in Gaza, or a room with a tunnel, and Boruch Hashem you don't have to be shot at, but we must work on trying to see Hakadosh Baruch Hu much more in our lives. Hashem is always watching over us. - **הִנֵּה לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל**.

A Shabbos Miracle – Rabbi Shlomo Landau



I want to relate an incredible story that was said over by the mashgiach of Chevron Yeshivah, Rabbi Chaim Yitzchok Caplan, who personally knows the people involved.

There was a young man from a very prestigious Torah family, who strayed from the path. There was a young lady from another prestigious Torah family, who also strayed from the path. Somehow, their paths met, and they decided to continue along their new journey in life together. They had become completely non-religious except for one thing – they still held on to keeping Shabbos.

However, when they heard about this incredible Nova Music Festival that would be taking place on the Yomim Tovim on Shabbos, they decided that ok, usually they kept Shabbos, but on this occasion, they would make an exception. They travelled south to be part of the music festival.

They were there when the Hamas terrorists came killing and taking captives. They began to run for their lives. Sadly, both of them were captured by four Hamas terrorists. The leader of this group who spoke Hebrew, turned to them and took out along sharp sword and said with a sinister grin, "I'm not wasting any bullets on you, I'm going to chop you to death right here and now!"

They were petrified, and looked at each other accusingly, "You see it's because we didn't keep Shabbos! Look how swiftly the retribution has come!"

The leader heard them remonstrating with each other, and said, "What did you say?"

"We said that all this has come about because we did not keep Shabbos this week, when we normally do."

He looks at them, and says to them, "I heard in Gaza from the Arabs that Jews who keep Shabbos have a special spiritual aura around them – they are holy people. We're not looking to kill people like you – Run! ---- They ran away as fast as they could, and they survived.

When Shabbos is a central part of your life, Shabbos could actually save your life.

Chabad.ORG

From our Sages

פִּינְחָס בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן – 'Pinchas the son of Elazar the son of Aaron.' *(25:11)*

Why does G-d refer to Pinchas as "the son of Elazar the son of Aaron"?

Because the tribes of Israel were mocking him, saying, "Have you seen this son of the fattener, whose mother's father (Jethro) fattened calves for idolatrous sacrifices, and now he goes and kills a prince in Israel?" Therefore, G-d traces his lineage to Aaron. (**Talmud, Sanhedrin 82b**)

● Few professions are as cruel and inhumane as the fattening of calves for slaughter. So when Pinchas slew Zimri, many said: "Look at this holy zealot! He acts as if motivated by the desire to avenge the honor of G-d and save the people, but in truth he has merely found a holy outlet for his cruel and violent nature. After all, it's in his blood—just look at his maternal grandfather . . ." So G-d

described him as "Pinchas the son of Elazar the son of Aaron" in order to attest that in character and temperament he actually took after his paternal grandfather—the compassionate and peace-loving Aaron.

The true greatness of Pinchas lay in that he acted in complete opposition to his nature, transcending his inborn instincts to bring peace between G-d and Israel. (**The Lubavitcher Rebbe**)

● When Pinchas entered Zimri's tent, thousands of members of the tribe of Simeon converged upon him to slay him, and his soul flew from his body in fright. At that moment G-d sent the souls of Nadav and Avihu (Aaron's two eldest sons, who died on the day that the Sanctuary was dedicated—see Leviticus 10) and they entered into his body; at that moment, Pinchas became worthy to become the high priest. . . . Thus the verse says of him, "Pinchas the son of Elazar the son of Aaron"—he was now both the son of Elazar as well as the son of Aaron. (**Zohar; Me'am Loez**)



Rabbi Shlomo Kluger zt"l

● **Which two sins did Pinchos rectify?**

פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקַנְאוֹ אֶת־קִנְאָתִי בְּתוֹכָם וְלֹא־כִלִּיתִי אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִנְאָתִי (25,11) "Pinchos the son of Elazar, the son of Aharon the Kohen has turned away My anger from the Children of Yisrael, when he avenged My vengeance amongst them and I did not destroy the Children of Yisrael in My vengeance. Therefore, say: I hereby give to him My covenant of peace. And it shall be for him and for his descendants after him a

covenant of eternal priesthood, because he was jealous for his G-d and atoned for the Children of Yisrael."

The explanation of these posukim is that when Yisrael sinned with the daughters of Midian they committed two sins besides the actual sin of forbidden relationships. The first was that the others did not see fit to avenge Hashem, and the second was that they did not protest against the sinners. Therefore, when Pinchos came and killed Zimri, he rectified these two sins - he took vengeance on the sinners and also rectified their sin of not protesting, because it was sufficient that there was found amongst Yisrael one man who protested.

This is what these posukim are saying, that Pinchos did these two things. First, he "turned away My anger from the Children of Yisrael when he avenged My vengeance amongst them" - he avenged My requirement to punish the wicked, and therefore "I hereby give to him My covenant of peace". And secondly "it shall be for him and his descendants after him a covenant of eternal priesthood, because he was jealous for his G-d and atoned for the Children of Yisrael" - Pinchos also rectified their sin of not being jealous for their G-d. Therefore, he deserves reward also for this.

● **Why did Moshe ask Hashem to choose a successor rather than choose one himself?**

יִפְקֹד ה' אֱלֹקֵי הָרוּחֹת לְכָל־בָּשָׂר אִישׁ עַל־הָעֵדָה (27,16) '***Let Hashem, G-d of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a person over the congregation***.'

Behold, there is an extraneity in the phrase "G-d of the spirits of all flesh", because it should have said simply "Let Hashem, G-d of the spirits, appoint" – why were the words "of all flesh" added?

But we can explain that the meaning of the verse is that if Hashem had not appointed for them a leader, they certainly could have appointed a leader and a judge themselves. But if Yisrael had

appointed a judge themselves, they would not have been able to pick somebody who was good for everyone, and there would have been some people who would not have been happy with the leader. But if Hashem appointed somebody, then he would be acceptable to everybody.

This is what the verse means: "Let Hashem, G-d of the spirits, appoint" – if You appoint him, he will be "for all flesh a man over the congregation" – he will be for all of them a man over the congregation, and he will be appointed over all of them equally, and no one will speak out against him. The verse now makes sense.



In September 1970, a TWA plane carrying Rabbi Yitzchok Hutner Zt'l, rosh yeshivah of Yeshiva Rabbi Chaim Berlin, was hijacked together with many other Yidden by members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine to the Jordanian desert, where they threatened to blow them up together with other hijacked airliners bound for New York City and one for London.

It was a very intense time, but Boruch Hashem, they all made it out alive and well. They all returned home relatively healthy.

One of the girls who was on the flight had her best friend's wedding planned for the very next day. She said to her mother, "Mammy, I'm traumatized, I'm distraught, I'm exhausted, I'm worn out, but I have to go to the wedding. I have to push myself and go."

The mother said, "You're not going to the wedding!"

She said, "But mum, I have to go to the wedding, it's my best friend. I can push myself, don't worry, I'll be fine."

Her mother said, "That's not why you're not going to the wedding – you're not going to the chasuna, because at a chasuna the focus should only be on the bride, as it is her big day. She should be the centre of attention. And if you go to the chasuna a day after being released from a major hijacking, YOU will be the focus of attention, and YOU will take all the attention away from the bride. – No, you're not going to the chasuna!"

Could you imagine such sensitivity!

Story of the Week Compiled by Aaron Leitner

Several years ago, Shea Langsman bought a very large building on the corner of 16th Avenue and 52nd Street in Boro Park, where he planned to expand his already successful fish store business. Renovations were already underway when an issue cropped up, and Shea found himself in need of a very big loan to complete the project.

It was a week before Pesach, and Shea had no idea how he could resolve his problem. Realising that he needed to do some *histadlus* in order to merit *hatzlochoh*, he put a dollar in a Rabbi Meir Baal Haness *pushka*, and then picked up the phone to call a friend. He knew that this person, probably, wasn't going to be able to help him, but he had to try. As expected, as soon as Shea described his problem, his friend said, "I wish I could help you, but I can't. I don't have the right resources or connections."

"I knew that," Shea said. "But I figured I'd do my *histadlus*."

His friend wished him well and hung up.

A few minutes later, Shea's phone rang. It was the same friend calling him back. "I just remembered that there's an *askan* in Monsey who deals with these kinds of things. He's a wonderful person who has helped dozens of people, but he's a very busy man. If you want, I can give him a call. Let me make the connection, then he maybe more willing to help you. That's the least I can do."

Shea agreed, and his friend soon came back with a message that the *askan* had asked Shea to call him at seven o'clock that evening. But it was right before Pesach – the busiest season a fish store in Boro Park could ask for – and the night slipped by in a blur of customers and telephone orders. Seven o'clock came and went, and Shea totally forgot about making the call.

The following morning, he realised what had happened and immediately dialled the man's number, hoping it wasn't too late to set things right. The *askan*, who had been expecting to hear from Shea, was sympathetic to Shea's plight. But although he was known to help people in this exact same situation, he turned Shea down. "I'm sorry," he said, "Pity you didn't call me last night, as arranged. I get calls like this from people all the time. I wish I could help."

Desperate, Shea thought if he could just find someone who was known to both himself and the *askan,* he may be able to soften his approach. "Maybe you know my father?" he asked, telling him his father's name. "Or maybe you've heard of my store. Fish to Dish in Boro Park?"

"Fish to Dish?" The *askan's* tone had now changed. "You're Shea Langsam, the owner of Fish to Dish?"

"I am." Shea said, surprised by the man's sudden interest.

"Tell me what you need," the *askan* said, "and it will be done. I'll give you what you need."

"You will?" Shea asked him. "That's wonderful! I, really, appreciate it so much. But what made you change your mind?"

"You'll understand after you hear what happened to me last night," the *askan* said. "Yesterday I had a very long and exhausting day and decided to turn in early. So I went to bed, but even though I'm usually out like a light, I couldn't fall asleep. About an hour later I climbed out of bed and noticed a book my daughter had bought a few days earlier. Even though English isn't my first language, it looked interesting, so I took it to bed and opened it. I started reading a story about a *Yid* from Boro Park named Shea Langsam who had allowed a competitor to use the premises of his fish store, Fish to Dish, so the guy wouldn't lose his business after his own fish store burned down. The book was called *Living Emunah* by Rabbi David Ashear. I never imagined I'd be talking to the protagonist the very next day! Anyone who is so selfless is definitely a *Yid* I want to help."

But this story actually has a preamble.

When Shea had originally set out to buy the building for his new store, he needed to take out a commercial loan. An appointment was made with the loan officers at his bank, who would determine whether or not he was eligible. On the day of the meeting, Shea walked into the room full of stuffy bankers, expecting the atmosphere to be dry and businesslike. To his shock, the manager of the bank immediately said to him, "Mr Langsam, this is going to be a very short meeting. The loan has been approved. All we have to do is finalise the paperwork."

"What do you mean?" Shea asked, taken aback by the financial institution's eagerness to lend him so much money.

"It's simple," the man explained. "Before we approve a loan, we always run a background check on the borrower. As soon as we entered your name, we came across the story of how you allowed your competitor to use your store after his business burned down.

A person like that is definitely honest, and we feel honoured to lend you the money you need for your next venture."

There's a reason why a *kesser shem tov* is the worthiest crown to have. With his selfless act of *chesed*, Shea set into motion a wave that extended outward to help others – which, then, incredibly, turned around and came rushing back to shore to help him!

No good deed goes unnoticed by Hashem, and we never know whom we are helping when we open our hearts to do good for another *Yid*!

Good Shabbos.

Parsha Knowledge

STORIES & INSPIRATION ON THE WEEKLY PARSHA

Hope in Dark Times

This week's Parsha is very special because it contains some of the Yomim Tovim, the festivals. However, this week's Parsha also coincides with a very sad time in Jewish history – the three weeks of mourning in which we mourn over the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash. Why would the Parsha of the joyous festivals coincide with such sad times?

I would like to share with you a beautiful idea that I heard from my father, Rav Yitzchok Fingerer shlita: **The Ruzhiner, Rav Yisrael Ruzhin** says that there is a reason why Parshas Pinchas always coincides with the three weeks and that is to give us Chizuk – to give us encouragement and hope. It's to remind us that even when we are experiencing the three weeks of mourning, the *churbon* – the destruction and desolation, we should realize that there is hope. There's going to come a time when we're going to go back to the Beis Hamikdash and celebrate all the festivals.



וּבְנֵי־קֹרַח לֹא־מֵתוּ by Rabbi Moshe Krieger

וּבְנֵי־קֹרַח לֹא־מֵתוּ (26:11) -There is an interesting verse in this week's Parsha which says that Korach's children didn't die with the rest of Korach's group. Rashi explains that even though Korach's sons were on their father's side from the beginning of the upheaval, at the very last moment, they retracted their opinions and had thoughts of Teshuva and by virtue of these thoughts, a special niche opened for them in Gehenom and they were able to find refuge there. We must understand what exactly happened during these crucial moments that was so powerful that it stimulated them to do a successful Teshuva and saved them from Gehenom.

There is a Midrash in Tehilim (614) which says that at that moment, the children of Korach wanted to sing praise to Hashem but were unable to because the very mouth of Gehenom was opened in front of them and there were flames shooting out around them. Although they couldn't sing praises at this time, they began thinking that perhaps they had deviated from the proper path, and it would be appropriate to reevaluate their position. This feeling generated in them a genuine feeling of regret for the way they may have acted and Hashem accepted their Teshuva.

This Midrash seems strange. Just because the children of Korach desired to sing praises to Hashem, they merited to having Hashem forgive them for all the strife they had caused?

R' Shach used to explain this Midrash with the verse in Tehilim (145:18). The verse says, קָרוֹב ה' לְכָל־קֹרְאָיו "*Hashem is close to all those who call him*". Meaning – since Hashem is close to us at all

times, and indeed without Him, we couldn't exist for even one moment, all a person has to do is seek Him out a little bit, and Hashem is there to accept his return immediately with open arms.

Similarly, Korach's children had a desire to praise Hashem, and this desire allowed them to become a little bit closer to their creator. This "little bit" was enough to affect a complete Teshuva.

There is a very poignant message here for all of us during the period we find ourselves in.

R' Pincus used to tell an amusing story which illustrates this point very well. There was once a policeman who pulled over a religious man who was riding on a motorcycle with his friend hoping to find something wrong with the way they were driving. When the officer had thoroughly inspected the two riders and found to his chagrin that everything was in order, he told them that he was going to have to let them go on their way. They replied that this was because Hashem is always with them. When he heard this, he became excited and remarked, "Ahah! So you are riding with three people instead of two", and he wrote them up a ticket.

Chazal are teaching us that Hashem is always close to us and even a small effort to seek Him out, can catapult a person to a level in which he can perceive the Shechina itself, so long as he is sincere!

The Midrash Yalkut (752) raises another interesting difficulty. What exactly changed in Korach's children's position that they decided to move to Moshe's side. They were proponents of their father's position because they genuinely believed that he was right. What changed in their analysis?

The Midrash relates that one day, Moshe passed in front of Korach's children while Korach was sitting with them and they weren't sure whether they should stand up out of respect for their revered teacher. On the one hand, Moshe Rabenu was the unchallenged Gadol Hador for so many years, but on the other hand, rising might

be an affront to their father's honor. They decided that it would be appropriate to stand out of respect to their Rebbe and this decision in turn, eventually generated in them the desire to repent for their wrongdoings.

Rav Chanoch Leibowitz answers that this external display of honor built within them a real sense of honor for Moshe that was able to take root, such that they realized that if they really honored him as the *gadol hador*, then they had no right to make a *machlokess* against him.

When a person performs external actions which represent the quality he wishes to acquire, those actions will eventually generate a change in his internal qualities. Similarly, the boys' decision to show honor for the Torah by standing up for Moshe, set off a chain reaction which affected their internal respect for Torah and forced them to realign their values which allowed them to become more objective about their father's mistaken position.

May Hashem help us during these trying times to truly seek Him out and to serve him both externally, and eventually internally as well!



Compassion and Consideration

Every morning Rav Yosef Leizerson, a talmid chacham who lived in Bnei Brak, would take the number 318 bus to Rechovot, where he headed a kollel. The bus driver was familiar with his distinguished passenger, whom he found waiting patiently at the bus stop every day.

One morning, Rav Leizerson was running late, and the bus pulled up at the stop before he arrived. The rav began hurrying to the bus as quickly as he could, and the driver signaled to him to take his time.

But Rav Leizerson continued moving at a rapid clip, and when he boarded the bus, slightly out of breath, the driver exclaimed, "Rabbi, why did you run? I would have waited for you!"

"I appreciate that you were willing to wait for me," the rav replied, "but what about all the other people on this bus? None of them gave their consent, and I have no right to make them late."

The bus driver was so impressed by the rav's sensitivity to others that he began to take an interest in Yiddishkeit and eventually became a baal teshuvah ("Borchi Nafshi," by Rav Yitzchok Zilberstein).

Our gedolim have taught us, through their example, that maintaining kavod habriyos, respect for other people, is of fundamental importance, regardless of whether that respect is shown to Jews or to non-Jews.

102 Stories That Changed People's Lives – Rabbi Tzvi Nakar - The Beauty of Shabbos Zemiros

Rav Shlomo Miller recounted the following story that he heard from the person who experienced it.

I had traveled to chutz l'Aretz to collect money. I intended to be there only three weeks so time was tight, and I seized every moment to accrue more pennies wherever I could and achieve my goal.

I hired a driver who had a list of addresses of potential donors, and he drove me from one to another. On Friday, at about noon, he drove me back to the place where I was staying and said, "I'll see you Motza'ei Shabbos."

"But there's still plenty of time left until Shabbos," I protested. It was summertime, and Shabbos wasn't for another seven hours. "Why should we stop now?"

And this is the story my driver told me:

I used to work late on Fridays, and then I'd run home to get ready for Shabbos. I'd be tired at the meal and could barely stay awake. We'd get through the meal quickly, I'd sing maybe one song in honor of Shabbos, and then I'd go to bed the minute the meal was over.

Then one day I had a complex sheilah, which only a gadol b'Yisrael could properly answer. I was very close to a certain gadol and flew to Eretz Yisrael to seek his counsel. He listened intently to my question and said to me, "It's very complicated. I need a few days to think it over." That night the gadol had a heart attack, and a few hours later, he passed on to the Next World. On top of the pain I felt over the passing of my rebbi, I was still left with my question.

I went to make a shivah call and, after saying the appropriate words of consolation, said to the sons, "I need an answer. I came here specially from chutz l'Aretz to seek your father's advice."

"What can we do?" they said. 'We can only daven for you.'

Next day, one of the sons called me excitedly and said that his father had come to him in a dream and told him the answer to my question. He also told me that he had asked his father if he could describe to him what had happened when he arrived in Shamayim.

"My father said to me, 'What happens in the Next World and the workings of the judgment is forbidden to describe, and impossible to describe. But one thing I can tell you: In Shamayim they love the zemiros of Shabbos. When a father sits with his family and sings with them, it is most beloved, and when there is fighting and strife at the Shabbos table, that is the worst thing in the world."

"When I heard this story from my driver," said the meshulach, "I decided then and there that from now on I would stop working on Fridays at noon, prepare properly for Shabbos, and rest a little, so I could be fresh and alert at the Shabbos table and conduct the meal with plenty of zemiros. - "Just as they like it in Shamayim."

Toras Avigdor Snippets

A sampling of previous Toras Avigdor booklets



● Greatness of Jewish Women

When it comes to the Dor Hamidbar, the Generation of the Wilderness, we imagine that we are familiar with the names of all of the great people of our nation who lived then. Moshe Rabeinu, Aharon Hakohen, Miriam, Yehoshua and Kaleiv, the Nesi'im and so on. The more someone studies the Chumash, the more he or she becomes acquainted with – and connected to – the great people of our past.

But the truth is that as much as we know, we understand that it's not a complete list; we know that there are many names, names of great people, that were never recorded. After all, don't we know that there were *shivim zkeinim*, seventy elders, who led the nation? And we don't know their names. We knowEldad and Meidad, that's all. They're mentioned because they happen to be part of a story being told. But the others we don't know; the rest of the *shivim zkeinim* were great men; at that time they all became *nevi'im* – temporarily at least – and still we don't know their names.

And the truth is that besides for them we know that there were many *tzaddikim*, many very great *talmidei chachamim*. We're talking now about the greatest generation in our nation's history. They came out of Mitzrayim! They witnessed all of the miracles of Yetzias

Mitzrayim. The Yam Suf split for them! They stood at Har Sinai and heard the voice of Hashem!

● **A Glorious Kollel Life**

And what did they do for forty years in the Midbar? They sat all day long in the *kollel* and learned the Torah that Moshe taught them. They had the best Rosh Kollel! A Rosh Kollel who came down from Har Sinai to teach them; you couldn't ask for better than that. And so they sat in the *kollel* for forty years and they learned; and they were transformed because of that.

Not only the men – the families were transformed. Even today, a *kollel* home is a different home. When a girl marries a young man who sits in the *kollel* and learns, you have to know that home is not an ordinary home anymore. It's a *kollel* home; it's influenced by the spirit of Torah. And eventually, when he'll take over the earning of the livelihood, the family will be established on a *kollel* basis. The children will already be established as *kollel* children. The children have the attitude of *kollel* life and that'll remain all their lives. It's a beautiful beginning.

But in the Midbar it was more than a beginning. It was forty years! And it wasn't one family or two or even a thousand. It was a *kollel* nation! And so once upon a time, it was "*kol haeidah kulam kedoshim*." You can believe Korach; he wasn't saying a falsehood when he said that. Don't mind what your *rebbe* told you in *cheder* about the *dor hamidbar*. כִּי כָל הָעֵדָה כֻּלָּם קְדֹשִׁים וּבְתוֹכָם הַשֵּׁם. They were all *tzadikim* and *talmidei chachomim*.

● **Honorable Mention**

And so you can be sure that in the *Dor Hamidbar* there were thousands, hundreds of thousands, of people worthy of being mentioned in the Torah. Only that it would be impossible to name everyone – *hagbah* would be very difficult on such a heavy scroll! And

so, only the most conspicuous names are mentioned. But all the rest of the great men? No, their names are not mentioned at all.

And then suddenly we're hit between the eyes with a very big surprise. Five little girls, the daughters of Tzelafchad, are named openly in the Torah (Pinchas 27:1). וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֹתָיו מַחְלָה נֹעָה וְחָגְלָה וּמִלְכָּה וְתִרְצָה, *These are the names of Tzelafchad's daughters: Machlah, Noah, and Choglah, and Milkah, and Sirtzah.*

A remarkable thing! Machlah, Noah, Choglah, Milkah, and Sirtzah. They had a certain question about the Torah laws of inheritance and so they came to Moshe and their names are recorded in black on white!

And it wasn't even necessary to mention their names. It could have said, "The daughters of Tzelafchad came and they put their case before Moshe." That would have been enough. But the Torah is not stingy here; it mentions their names! And later the Torah repeats their names again; Machlah, Sirtzah, Choglah, Milkah and Noah (Masei 36:11).

● The Funded Amendment

You know what it means to have your name recorded forever in the *Sefer Torah*? Suppose you have a *frum* Jewish millionaire, he's a *tzaddik* too, and somebody would come to him today and say, "I'm coming to you as a messenger of all the *roshei yeshiva* and all of the *gedolei Yisroel*. They made me a *shaliach* to come to you and we're making an offer to you. If you'll give fifty million dollars for the cause of building *yeshivas*, we'll add your name to the Chumash; we're going to make an exception and we're going to add your name into the Sefer Torah that's read by Jews all over the world – a permanent addition."

Immediately from all sides other people will offer more! "Fifty million dollars?! I'll give a hundred million dollars!" Absolutely. Some people would give their lives; they'd *mamesh* kill themselves to have

their name in the Torah. It's worth it! To have your name in the Chumash?! Hashem's *sefer*?! It's a *kovod* that has no equal!

And these five girls were *zocheh* to it; they merited to have their names mentioned openly in the Torah. It's a remarkable thing that five young girls should deserve such an honor.

Now, exactly what these girls did to deserve such an honor I cannot tell you. The truth is I'm not so interested right now in what exactly it was but there's no question they were *tzidkaniyos*. They were quite young, that's true, but they were brought up properly and they were righteous; they had *yiras shomayim* and good *middos*, no question about it. And so they deserved the honor, absolutely.

● The Unexpected Great Ones

But we have to know that the Torah is demonstrating something here. Because so many great ones, their names aren't recorded. So many *tzadikim*, we hear nothing about them. And yet these five girls, their names are enumerated. We have to know that there's a reason for that.

Hakodosh Boruch Hu wants us to know that it's not like we think down here below that if we have a long beard, a black hat and a long *kapote*, that's the only one who's important. "Oh no!" Hashem says. "Black hats and long coats are very good. Very good. But don't forget that even a little boy or a little girl is also important in My eyes.

As much as the public *tzadikim* are in My thoughts always, I've chosen to record the name of these five girls so that you should know who else is important in My history. If a little girl, a young woman, has good character and is devoted to Me she can be just as important as Moshe and Aharon; just as important as Yehoshua and Kaleiv."



Pinchas: A Man For All Eras And All Places

At the end of last week's Parsha, the pasuk says, "And Pinchas ben Elazar saw…" [Bamidbar 25:7]. The Medrash Rabba on those words asks, "and did not everyone else see the same thing as well?" The Medrash answers that Pinchas' uniqueness was that when he saw what was happening, he remembered a halacha: A zealot may mortally attack one who 'publicly desecrated Hashem's name immorally.'

The Medrash adds that Pinchas met resistance from the people, who did not want him to proceed with killing one of the princes of Israel, the leader of the Tribe of Shimon. Pinchas somehow overcame the resistance of the people. Then when he approached the two perpetrators, the guards to the tent asked him: "What are you doing here?" He responded with the ambiguous comment: "I too came to take care of my needs," which could mean that he too wanted to participate in the same sin with the Midianite princess. Hearing this, they allowed him to enter, for otherwise he would never have gained access. It was then that he took the spear and stabbed them both in a way that would prove to all Israel that the forbidden act of immorality had occurred.

The Medrash continues, saying that Pinchas was jealous for the Name of G-d and proceeds to enumerate 12 miracles that were done for him during this episode. (Among the miracles listed: The blade of his sword miraculously lengthened to be long enough to pierce both of their bodies at the same time; Pinchas was given exceptional strength to lift up both the bodies while the two were impaled on his spear; the handle of the spear was given miraculous strength not to break under the weight of the bodies.)

The sefer Zichron Meir asks why is it important for Chazal to emphasize the twelve miracles that happened for Pinchas, who fulfilled this (hopefully rare mitvah) of a zealot executing those engaged in the immoral crime of "haBoel Aramis"? The Zichron Meir explains that the phenomenon that was demonstrated here with Pinchas is one that is neither rare nor inapplicable to our own lives or our own religious outlook.

Many times, a person is faced with a situation where he thinks about himself and says "I am just one individual. What can I accomplish? I cannot single handedly turn the tide and accomplish anything by my individual actions." The normal attitude in such a situation is "What is the use of me even trying? It is humanly impossible to do anything about it!"

The lesson of Pinchas is that a person has to do what he is able to do and many times he will then merit miraculous s'yata d'Shmaya [Help from Heaven] that will provide him with the needed wherewithal to do what needs to be done.

Chazal mention a similar idea in connection with the daughter of Pharaoh stretching out her hand to reach the basket with the baby Moshe floating in the Nile. Our Sages say that she was standing a great distance away and that basically the act of stretching out her hand to reach the basket would have been futile, were it not for the fact that her arm became miraculously elongated so that it could reach the basket.

The point of all these teachings is that a person must make the effort to do what it is within his power to do, even though rationally that which he can accomplish by his own actions will be minimal, if not totally futile. Once that effort is made, he may merit miraculous Divine intervention.

If Pinchas would have rationalized "who am I to take it upon myself to get involved here," history would have been different. (Remember, Pinchas at this stage of his career was not only an

anonymous "John Doe" — he was even less than that. Chazal say that people used to belittle him as the grandson of Yisro who was an idolater.) Pinchas overcame the resistance of the people who did not want him to proceed; he went against the spirit of the time; it looked like it was a futile effort; but he did what he had to do.

The point of the Medrash that 12 miracles were done for him is that this is exactly what happens in life. A person does what he needs to do, and the Almighty provides the rest. One person CAN make the difference. One person CAN turn the tide. One person who acts sincerely for the Sake of Heaven can merit great s'yata d'Shmaya [Help from Heaven]. This is the story of Pinchas. It is not just the story of one man that happened thousands of years ago and will never again happen. The story of Pinchas is a story that can happen in every community in any time and in any era. Pinchas is the story of the power of one individual and what one sincere individual can accomplish.

Pinchas Did Not Daven – He Engaged in Argumentation

A pasuk in Psalms says, "*Vaya'mod Pinchas vaYefalel, va'Teaztar haMageifa*" [Tehillim 106:30]. This is commonly translated "And Pinchas stood and prayed and the plague stopped." However, the Talmud questions this translation of the pasuk: "Rav Eliezer says the *pasuk* does not say '*vaYispalel*' [he prayed], but rather '*vaYefalel*'" [Sanhedrin 44a]. The nuance of this unique form of the root word, according to Rav Eliezer, teaches that Pinchas argued a case before the Almighty (translating the word *vaYefalel* from the word *pelilim*, which connotes judges and judgment [as in Shemos 21:22]). *VaYefalel* does not mean Pinchas prayed, but rather Pinchas presented a compelling case before the Master of the Universe, he contended with Him.

The Gemara presents Pinchas' argument according to Rav Eliezer: "Because of these two people (Zimri and Kozbi), twenty-four

thousand people should be killed? (And even more people were going to be killed before Pinchas 'intervened'). It is not right!"

We can add an interesting observation. **The Sefer HaIkrim from Rav Yosef Albo** discusses a very fundamental question: How and why does prayer help? If a person is sick, Heaven forbid, that means that the Almighty ruled regarding this person that he should be sick. How then is prayer supposed to help? Is our intention to change the *Ribono shel Olam's* Mind? Is the expectation that after we pray, the Almighty will say, "Do you know what? I never thought of that! I will change my decree regarding this person?" Obviously, when the Almighty does something, it is Perfect and Righteous. So what is the whole point of davening?

Rav Yosef Albo's answer to this question is that something happens to the person who prays. When a person davens, he becomes a different person. The law or the decree that the Almighty issued regarding *'Ploni* son of *Ploni'* was for a different person. Because of the person's prayers and his drawing closer to the Almighty, he changes into a different person upon whom the decree was never issued.

This explains something else, which with some understanding of a bit of the rules of Hebrew grammar, is most enlightening. The Hebrew verb for praying is *mispallel*, which is a reflexive grammatical tense (*hispa-el*). For example, it becomes similar to the expression *Ani mislabesh* – I am dressing myself – which is also a reflexive verb. However, why in conjunction with prayer is the verb reflexive (*hispa-el*)?

The answer is because the person who prays undergoes a metamorphosis of sorts. He becomes a different person. This is one of the theories of how prayer helps – it is because through your prayers and your intense communication with Hashem, **you** change! If that is the case, it is very appropriate why over here the verb form is not reflexive (*hispa-el*) but it is (*pea-el*), vaYefallel. Pinchas

did not need to change. He was a *Tzadik* . Pinchas did not engage in prayer in order to change himself. Rather, he engaged in dispute and argumentation with the Almighty, as *vaYefallel* connotes the idea of *Pelilus* [seeking justice before Judges].

Tzelafchad's Daughters - "Righteous Women"

The Medrash comments that in the Generation of the Wilderness, the women fixed that which the men ruined. The first example is that the women did not want to give their jewelry for creation of the Golden Calf; only the men were interested in donating this gold to make that idol. Similarly with the Spies – the men were the ones who believed the spies and did not want to go into the Land of Israel; the women did not fall for the slander. On the contrary, they made independent attempts to gain inheritance in the Land.

It is for this reason that the section of the daughters of Tzelafchad is recorded adjacent to the death of the generation of the Wilderness. This demonstrates that they had a different attitude than that of the generation who had just died out when it came to the Land of Israel.

The point of this Medrash is to underscore the concept of the Nashim Tzidkaniyous [righteous women]. Women have a more innate sense of faith than do men. Men may study in Kollel and become bigger Torah scholars, but it is the women who have the innate sense of what is right and wrong, and who stand up for what is right.

I recently read the following incident involving the **Brisker Rav**.

One year there was a movement in Brisk to introduce a certain "modern innovation" in the High Holiday service. On the High Holidays, they used to have a choir in the shul in Brisk. The tradition was that the members of the choir stood in immediate proximity to the Chazan, in a semi-circle around him. The proposed "modern innovation" was that the members of the choir stand on a balcony,

off to the side. The Brisker Rav felt this was an inappropriate imitation of "foreign sources" (pirtza). The Brisker Rav came into the shul and saw the choir members in the balcony and ordered them down. They dutifully came down to the main shul. The Gabaim of the shul were upset at having their innovation nullified and they ordered the choir members back to the balcony. The choir members dutifully went back to the balcony.

Seeing what happened, the Brisker Rav went right back up to the balcony and ordered them down. The Gabaim then ordered them back up. This went back and forth several times, until finally the Brisker Rav turned to the women in the Ezras Nashim and pleaded with them "Holy Jewish women, please order your husbands downstairs where they belong." The women started yelling at their husbands to listen to the Rabbi and not the Gabbaim and the men stayed downstairs next to the Chazan. They were more afraid of their wives than of the Brisker Rav.

We see, however, that when push came to shove — to whom did the Brisker Rav turn to help enforce his ruling? He turned to the Nashim Tzidkaniyus, the righteous Jewish women who intuitively have a better understanding than their male counterparts about the moral propriety and appropriateness of certain spiritual matters.

It is a well-known fact that if there were not a Bais Yaakov movement there would never have been a Kollel movement in America. Someone needs to take the responsibility to help a husband sit and learn. This is a product of the Bais Yaakov movement, which is both a by-product of and a producer of Nashim Tzidkaniyus. - Never underestimate the power of the Nashim Tzidkaniyus.

True friends aren't the ones who make your problems disappear. They are the ones who won't disappear when you are facing problems.

Making Peace — Between HaShem and His Nation

The pasuk states that HaShem rewarded Pinchas: "Behold I have given to him [Pinchas] My covenant of peace" [25:12]. This reward seems somewhat incongruous. We would expect the reward to be similar to the action. We would expect the "Peace Prize" to have been given to Aharon, who was the lover of Peace and the pursuer of Peace. Pinchas was the zealot. He caused controversy. Why does Pinchas deserve the Peace Prize? Let Pinchas receive the Zealotry Award! Yet the Medrash on this verse emphasizes that "It is only right and proper (b'din hu) that Pinchas receive this reward of peace." Why was this the proper reward for Pinchas?

It is said in the name of **Reb Chaim (Soleveitchik)** that people have a misconception about the meaning of "peace." They think that "peace" means that no matter what happens, there should be tranquility and not be any fights. However, that is not the meaning of Shalom [peace]. Shalom comes from the word shalem (perfection). Shalom really means perfection — the ultimate right. The ultimate right is when there is perfection between HaShem and His nation.

When a husband and wife are acting properly there is Shalom between them and there is Shalom between them and HaShem. That represents perfection (shleimut). If there are no arguments among the Jewish people, but there is friction and tension and division between Klal Yisroel and HaShem — that is not Shalom. Without unity and harmony between the Jews and the Master of the World, there is no Shalom. Therefore, things can be patched over and everyone can "make nice and feel good," but if there is a division and gap between the nation and their G-d, this is not Shalom.

At the end of last week's parsha (Balak), a tremendous gap developed between Israel and G-d. HaShem was not happy. There was no Shalom. If Pinchas would have approached Zimri and said

"Zimri, you know you really shouldn't be doing that, maybe you should think it over…" nothing would have been accomplished. That would not have restored the nation's harmony with HaShem. In order to restore such harmony in this case, it was necessary to go ahead and kill someone!

This is very radical. This is teaching us that sometimes making 'machlokes' (divisiveness) is the biggest and best form of making peace. However, this is a very hard task. Such zealotry can only be used gingerly, with kid gloves, and by people who know what they are doing. Sometimes it is in fact necessary to make (the commonly understood) 'shalom' and to keep quiet.

However, the case of Pinchas is the classic case of HaShem affirming that what was happening was not right and what was needed was bold action — as taken by Pinchas — to stop it and thereby restore ultimate Peace — between HaShem and His nation.

"Just One Word: Emunah" by Esther Stern ArtScroll / Mesorah Publications.

About a week before Yom Kippur, I was invited to speak in Herzliya. I had never lectured in Herzliya before, and I wasn't familiar with the area. I got off the train, headed to Sokolov Street, and looked for the shul where I was to deliver the lecture. I walked up and down the street several times but couldn't find the place. It was a quiet street with few passersby, so I had no one to ask.

Finally, a man exited a building sporting an interesting kind of ponytail divided into two braids. "Good morning," I greeted him courteously. "Do you know of any shul in the area?" Instead of answering politely, the man yelled at me. "*Get out of here! You people stick your noses everywhere!*" He went on to let me know exactly

what he thought of the *chareidim*, their rabbis, their lifestyle, and their clothing.

My instinctive reaction was to return his aggression. I was at no loss of words to let him know just what I thought of his dress and his lifestyle. But I hastily checked myself. *Yom Kippur is in a few days' time*, I thought. *I'm going to look at him as a fellow Jew who deserves to be treated with respect. Chazal tell us that even Jews who are distant from Judaism are as full of mitzvos as a pomegranate is filled with seeds* (Eruvin 19a). Feeling only love toward him, I stepped forward, gave the surprised guy a hug, and said to him, "You have no idea what a tzaddik (righteous person) you are! You are a unique individual!"

Astonished, the man stuttered and stammered, "*Look wasn't attacking you personally, you know. You're okay. I was just talking about people in general.*"

After I replied, "I have no doubt about that," he warmed up and offered, "Let's try to find the shul together." We found it on the third floor of a nearby building: Ohr L'Yisrael. I thanked him and then suggested, "How about coming in to join the lecture? You'll hear some nice things. Come on in and enjoy yourself."

My new friend with the two braids, warmed by my hug of moments before, agreed to attend a Torah lecture. He sat there for a full hour, seeming to enjoy every minute. Before parting, he said to me, "*This lecture gave me just the boost I needed. I was in a lousy mood today, and when you stopped me on the street I let it all out on you. I was actually hoping you'd insult me back so that we'd get into a good sparring match, and I'd give vent to all my annoyance. But instead, you hugged me and actually complimented me, which totally threw me off. -Why on earth did you do that?*"

I admitted to him, "To be honest, I was very upset at first, and my initial reaction was to insult you back. But then I remembered that I'd noticed you stepping out of the dentist's office, and I decided

to judge you favorably. *Poor guy*, I thought. *The dentist probably told him that he needs to have all his teeth replaced and it's going to cost him fifty thousand shekels. No wonder he's in such a bad mood.*"

The man looked at me, dumbfounded. "*You are Eliyahu HaNavi!*" he said in total awe, and with trembling hands he withdrew the dentist's bill from his pocket showing a sum total of fifty thousand shekels for tooth implants!

I said to him with a smile. "I'm not a prophet. I'm simply a son of the Almighty, just like you are, and He has instructed us in his Torah to judge everyone favorably, to love every Jew like a brother or sister, and to care for each other. Come, I highly recommend that you learn more about the Almighty's Torah." - My new friend was gladly willing to sign up for an Arachim Outreach seminar.

Todays Test

Rav Pam once said that the trial of the generation which preceded us and lived through the Holocaust was the trial of "with all your hearts and with all your souls". They had to pay the price of being a Jew with their own lives.

Our trial, the nissayon of Jews in America in the 1990s is "with all your wealth". - Give your money. Give your money to Yeshivas, give your money to the Mikveh, give your money to settle the Russian Jews, give your money. It is hard; it is mesiras nefesh; but that is what we must do. It is the trial of our generation.

"The mourning of the Three Weeks is not only over what once was, but over what could have been within us and is not yet." ~ Rav Shlomo Wolbe, Alei Shur.

Story of the Week Compiled by Aaron Leitner

The Slap

In 1948, the Lipsker family arrived in Eretz Yisroel. While the land had just been granted its independence, spiritually much of it was barren. Lod, the city in which they settled, had no sign of Jewish life. There wasn't even a shul, there.

Yet this was the land of their forefathers, where they, and many others had dreamt of living one day. They saw not a barren landscape, but endless potential for kedushah. They knew they had to act, and act quickly. Wasting no time, they acquired one of the empty houses in the area and transformed it into a shul, a small and yet vital step in bringing Yiddishkeit to this spiritually desolate place. But that was only the beginning. The Lipskers knew that a shul alone wouldn't be enough. The survival and strength of Klal Yisroel depended on the heart of Torah, the yeshivah. Without Torah learning, what future would there be for the Jewish people? They decided that one of the abandoned buildings nearby would be transformed into a yeshivah.

The Lipskers put up a sign: "*Kan tukam yeshivah – A yeshivah will be established here.*" It was more than just words on a board. It was a declaration, a promise to the Ribbono shel Olam and to future generations that Torah would once again thrive in this land.

Not everyone shared their vision, however. One day, a police officer passed by, his expression hardening as he spotted the sign. He was furious. In his mind, the new State of Israel was to be a socialist utopia, a place free of what he considered the "shackles" of religion. "This is not a place for yeshivos!" he barked. "We're building a new future here, not a relic of the past."

The officer ripped down the sign and replaced it with one of his own. The new sign read: "*Kan yukam mo'adon no'ar – A youth club will be established here.*"

The Lipskers were dismayed. It seemed as if their dream of a yeshivah was doomed before it had even begun to take root.

While others may have been paralyzed by fear, Savta Malka, the family's fearless matriarch, refused to stand idly by. She stormed out, fury blazing in her eyes. Without a word, she marched right up to the officer's sign and pulled it down with a single motion, and put the yeshivah sign back up. Her message was clear: A yeshivah will stand here, and no one – not even the state – would stand in its way.

Seething, the officer warned her. "You're making a grave mistake, old woman. You're defying the state! One more step, and I'll have you thrown into prison!"

Safta Malka's voice rang out: "We came from Russia. We weren't afraid of the Bolsheviks. We weren't afraid of Stalin. And you think I'll be afraid of you? We came here to be good Jews. A yeshivah will stand here, no matter what you do."

The officer's face turned red with anger, as he began moving towards the sign, ready to tear it down again. But before he could touch it, Safta Malka stepped forward, lifted her hand, and to the shock of all those who had gathered at the scene, slapped him squarely across the face.

Gasps echoed through the crowd. The officer stood frozen. No one – least of all the officer himself – could believe what had just happened. Yet instead of retaliating, he simply turned around and walked away, leaving the area in silence.

The Lipskers waited in dread. Assaulting a police officer was no small matter, and they braced themselves for the inevitable knock of the door, expecting Savta Malka to be dragged off to prison. Days passed. Weeks. Months. But no one came.

Four months later, there was a gentle knock on the door. Standing before them was a man with a small yarmulke perched on his head

and the beginnings of a beard growing on his face. He looked familiar, though they couldn't quite place him.

The man smiled and said, "You don't recognise me, do you? I don't blame you. I'm the police officer your Savta slapped that day."

The Lipskers stared in disbelief.

"I went home that night," he continued, "and I couldn't get the feeling of the slap out of my mind. Here I was, fighting against Jews, stopping them from practicing their religion. And for what? I realised I was standing up against my own people, against my own neshamah. That slap woke me up. It made me realise that I had to change my life."

Tears formed in Savta Malka's eyes. She had stood up not only for the yeshivah, but for the neshamah of a fellow Jew.

The Lipskers established a relationship with the officer, whose transformation was, in a word, miraculous. Soon, he was keeping mitzvos, davening and learning Torah. The yeshivah they fought for was built, and the officer's family became part of the community, celebrating together with the Lipskers at simchos.

Generations later, that officer's grandchildren are learning in yeshivos across Eretz Yisroel. And the yeshivah stands testimony not just to the power of Torah, but to the power of a Yiddishe neshamah to transform, to rise, and to return.

The story of Savta Malka's courage lives on. - *Kan tukam yeshivah. A yeshivah will be established here.* - And so, it was.

Good Shabbos, Aaron Leitner

"Love is the most reliable cure for wounds of the soul." ~ Rabbi Naftali Tzvi of Ropshitz (1760-1827)

Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages

Rav Avigdor Miller, zt"l, spoke about how the purpose of unexpected things happening is a form of letting us know that there is Somebody, Hashem, Who is in charge of everything.

He said, "Therefore, if in our lives something unexpected takes place, and you say, 'Why did this happen to me? This never happened before! Everything always functioned normally, and all of a sudden, this happened?!' It is all for the purpose of bringing to your attention that Hashem is behind the scenes and controlling everything. And that is the reason for every unusual event!"

Short Story Of The Week By Yoni Shwartz

During the tumultuous years of World War II, when the Mir Yeshiva was in Japan, the Germans put immense pressure on the Japanese to kill the entire yeshiva. However, the Japanese government didn't want to draw attention to themselves, so they devised a plan: they would tell the yeshiva that they're being relocated to another Japanese island. When they were all on the boat, they'd secretly sink the ship, make it seem like an unfortunate accident, and wipe their hands clean of any suspicion.

One of the Japanese government officials got drawn very close to the yeshiva bochurim. He was very attracted by their warm middos and politeness. When he heard of the plan, he went to the yeshiva and told them the Japanese's terrible plot.

When the yeshiva repeatedly refused the Japanese's orders to "relocate," they realized somebody had leaked the plan. They opened an internal investigation, discovered who it was, and beat that government official to death. When the bochurim heard this, their faith was shaken. "How could a non-Jew who sacrificed so much for the Jews meet such a horrible fate?" they wondered. Bewildered, they decided to ask the mashgiach, **Rav Chatzkel Levenstein, ZT"L**.

When they approached his room, they heard him weeping. Putting their ears to the door, they heard him cry, "Ribbono Shel Olam! All my life I have begged of You to allow me to die through kiddush Hashem, and You have not acquiesced to my request. This non-Jew, for one act of chesed, he merited to die through kiddush Hashem?! How is that fair?"

When the bochurim heard that, their question instantly dissipated.



Song Of The Deer - A Daily Dose of Perek Shirah by Rabbi David Sutton



וַאֲנִי אָשִׁיר עֻזֶּךָ וַאֲרַנֵּן לַבֹּקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ כִּי־הָיִיתָ מִשְׂגָּב לִי וּמָנוֹס בְּיוֹם צַר־לִי (Tehillim 59:17) 'The deer says: But I will sing of Your might, and rejoice towards morning in Your kindness, for You have been a stronghold to me and a refuge in the day of distress.'

These are the words of a man on the run. When Shaul HaMelech sent his men to pursue David, Hashem planted a strategy in Shaul's mind: The men would not break into David's house and kill him immediately; rather, they would surround his house to prevent him from escaping.

The plan was completely ineffective, for David was able to flee in the middle of the night. Furthermore, by waiting outside, Shaul's men not only gave David time to escape, but also gave him a substantial head start in his flight. David rejoices toward morning because when dawn begins to break, he sees that he has put a substantial distance between himself and his pursuers.

The deer sings this song to Hashem, says the **Chida**, because its ability to run swiftly is the survival tool Hashem endowed him with. And that ability is frequently tested, because the deer is a sought-after animal. Its hide is strong, appealing to the eye, and useful for many purposes. Its meat is tasty. In addition, people enjoy the sport of deer hunting. There are many types of traps and snares designed to catch deer. Only because Hashem saves it again and again does the species manage to survive.

In this way, the deer not only represents David HaMelech, but the entire Jewish nation.

Another aspect of the deer's speed is that it uses this gift only to defend itself. It is always the prey, never the predator. It doesn't use its speed to fight its pursuers, nor to take food from other animals. Because the deer is content with what Hashem gives it, and relies on Him for protection, Hashem treats it with extra care, for as Koheles (3:15) says, v'ha'elokim yivakesh es nirdaf, Hashem helps the pursued one. Thus, the deer teaches us to avoid unnecessary confrontation.

A final lesson comes from the letters of the Hebrew word for deer —**צבי**. These are the first letters of the pasuk from Chabakkuk (2:4) that states, **צַדִּיק בֶּאֱמוּנָתוֹ יִחְיֶה** — 'The righteous person shall live through his faith.' That describes the deer, who has no power to fight; he can only run. He trusts Hashem to carry him to salvation and sings his song of emunah to the world.

When They Were Young

MOTIVATING OTHERS

RABBI NOSSON TZVI FINKEL
הרב נתן צבי פינקל זצ"ל





When Nosson Tzvi Finkel was almost fifteen years old, he spent Pesach with his cousins in Yerushalayim (this was during the period he spent in Eretz Yisrael before finishing high school). In the days leading up to Yom Tov, all the Finkel women and older children were busy preparing for Pesach.

As often happens, the young children were getting in their way. Nosson Tzvi stepped in with an idea. He gave each child an errand to do. When they returned, he gave each one a special prize, which made them happy. This, in turn, made them interested in going on more errands. The kids were happy because they were not bored and they were getting prizes. The mothers were happy because they were able to clean and cook for Pesach without being disturbed. And Nosson Tzvi Finkel was happy because he saw how he could motivate others to do their best.

As rosh yeshivah, Reb Nosson Tzvi continued to motivate others. In 2008, three years before he died, he visited America to raise money

for his yeshivah. While he was in Baltimore, Reb Nosson Tzvi visited Yeshivas Ner Yisroel and spoke to the talmidim. After giving a shiur, he shocked the crowd with a challenge. He told them to try to learn for a few hours in a row without stopping. Anyone who took upon himself this challenge would receive a certain sum of money from Reb Nosson Tzvi. - The talmidim were excited about the idea. Many of them accepted this challenge.

Rabbi Nosson Tzvi Finkel

Born in Chicago, Illinois, Nosson Tzvi (Natie) attended local schools. When he was fourteen, he visited Eretz Yisrael along with his parents. His great-uncle, R' Leizer Yudel Finkel, the rosh yeshivah of Yeshivas Mir, convinced him to stay. He learned there for the next eight months, before returning to Chicago to finish high school. After he graduated, he returned to the Mir and never left.

In 1964, Nosson Tzvi married Leah Finkel, his second cousin. In 1991, he became one of the roshei yeshivah of Yeshivas Mir. During the period in which R' Nosson Tzvi led the yeshivah, it grew from 1,200 students to 6,000 students!

For twenty-eight years, until his passing in 2011, R' Nosson Tzvi suffered from Parkinson's disease, an illness that takes away a person's ability to control his muscles. It can also make a person's body shake, sometimes uncontrollably. Yet, he maintained his busy schedule and did not give in to the disease.

"There are those who try to ascend to the heavens to reach The Blessed One. But I know that no matter where I am, Hashem will be there as well." ~ Rabbi Shalom Shachne of Prohobitch (1769–1802)



Inspired by Time - Bein Hametzarim– Rabbi Yehoshua Frankenhauis

As we now find ourselves in the days of Bein Hametzarim, mourning the loss of the Mikdash and the spiritual devastation that followed, there is no korban more relevant to contemplate. The Mishna in Ta'anis (26a) teaches that one of the five calamities that occurred on Shiva Asar b'Tammuz was "batla ha'tamid"— the cessation of the daily korban tamid.

At first glance, this may appear to be a relatively minor event compared to the breaching of the walls or the burning of a sefer Torah. But Chazal saw in this loss something profoundly tragic: the end of our unbroken, daily kesher with the Ribbono Shel Olam.

The Medrash Rabbah (Bamidbar 21:24) explains that the korban tamid was nothing less than a bris—a covenant—between Hashem and His people. Its constancy represented a daily renewal of that bond. And when it ceased, the regular, intimate connection between Yisrael and their Father in Heaven was ruptured.

The Minchas Chinuch (Mitzva 401) emphasizes that the korban tamid was so central to the avoda that it was offered even on Shabbos and Yom Kippur, overriding all other prohibitions. This alone underscores its importance. The tamid was not an expression of momentary inspiration—it was an expression of ongoing emuna and dvekus.

The world often celebrates the dramatic—the inspirational speech, the powerful moment of teshuva, the emotional Yom Kippur, the thunderous ne'ilah. But the korban tamid teaches us a deeper truth: that more than the peaks, Hakadosh Baruch Hu treasures the steady steps, the unwavering commitment of daily avodas Hashem. - The Ba'alei Mussar discuss this idea at length.

Rav Yerucham Levovitz zt"l would say that the yetzer hara is not afraid of a moment of inspiration. What terrifies him is consistency.

Rav Yisrael Salanter zt"l explained that true growth is not forged in dramatic change, but in small, repeated effort—step by step, day by day. - Kedusha is not defined by a single moment of greatness, but by the willingness to do good again and again—even when it feels mundane.



Daily Mission, Eternal Impact

In the heart of old Yerushalayim, amid the narrow alleys and stone-paved streets, lived a tzaddik whose avoda was as quiet as it was constant. **Reb Aryeh Levin zt"l**, known simply as the tzaddik of Yerushalayim, didn't deliver drashos or write sefarim. He didn't hold any public title, nor did he seek attention. Each morning, well before most people stirred, Reb Aryeh would set out from his modest home and begin his walk. It wasn't a short walk, and certainly not an easy one for a man of his age and frailty. But his destination never changed: Sha'arei Tzedek Hospital. His mission: to visit the sick.

He had no formal role. No fanfare, But day after day, without fail, he came. Some of the patients were old and lonely. Others were children frightened by pain. And there were those who had no visitors at all—forgotten by society, with no family to care for them. But Reb Aryeh came. He sat with them. Held their hands. Spoke gently. Sometimes he simply sat in silence and whispered Tehillim. Sometimes he offered a blessing, or a soft tear. But more than anything, he offered his presence—reliable, comforting, steady as sunrise.

One nurse once said, "You could set your clock by Reb Aryeh. He never misses. Not in the rain, not in the heat, not even when he is sick himself." He did this for decades. Not once a week. Every single day.

Don't You Grow Tired? Once, someone asked him, "Rebbi, don't you grow tired? Don't you ever feel like taking a day off? Surely Hakadosh Baruch Hu knows how much you care."

Reb Aryeh looked at him with a gentle smile and said words that should be etched into every Jewish heart: "If the Beis HaMikdash were standing today, would we ever skip the korban tamid because of rain? Or because the kohen was tired? The korban tamid was brought every morning and every evening—no matter what. This is my korban tamid. I must bring it."

That line—"This is my korban tamid"—echoes with breathtaking clarity. In a world obsessed with the dramatic and the exceptional, Reb Aryeh taught us the value of constancy. Of presence. Of showing up, again and again, even when no one notices. - Especially when no one notices.

Reb Aryeh's dedication didn't stop at hospital beds. Each Shabbos, he would walk to the Central Prison in Yerushalayim to visit Jewish prisoners—many of them fighters in the underground movements under the British Mandate. These men, labelled rebels and criminals, were often tortured and awaiting execution. But to Reb Aryeh, they were neshamos. Yidden. And he came to them, too—with the same gentleness and compassion he gave the sick.

Over time, people began to realize something extraordinary: Reb Aryeh never missed a day of kindness. Not one. He was the human embodiment of the korban tamid. A living flame, steady and unswerving, that lit up the darkness around him.

Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz zt"l once remarked, "In Reb Aryeh's footsteps, we hear the echoes of the avoda in the Beis HaMikdash." His daily acts were not mere habits. They were sacred offerings.

Our Korban Tamid – The Flame That Never Dies

Today, we do not have the mizbe'ach. We no longer offer korbanos. But Chazal teach that tefila stands in their place. The Gemara in Brachos (26b) states: "Tefilos keneged temidin tiknum." Shacharis corresponds to the tamid shel shachar, and Mincha to the tamid shel bein ha'arbayim.

On Shiva Asar b'Tammuz, we mourn the cessation of the tamid. This wasn't just a procedural loss—it was the end of our daily spiritual heartbeat. But now we know: we can begin to restore it. Every morning that we rise for Shachris, every afternoon we pause for Mincha, we offer our tamid. We cry over the loss—but we also build toward its return.

Short Story by Yoni Shwartz

Many years ago, there was a student of Torah Vodaath, let's call him Dovid, who worked at a Jewish special needs home on Shabbos with other Yidden to provide the residents a Shabbos filled with Torah, zemiros, and kedusha.

One week, Shimon (not his real name), a seventy-year-old higher-functioning resident, got up and said a Dvar Torah during their seudah. It wasn't very coherent and frankly made no sense, but of course all the Jewish staff clapped and made him feel like a million dollars. Very excited at how much everybody liked it, Shimon exclaimed, "Rav Pam liked it too!"

Under the impression that he was probably imagining things, everybody brushed off Shimon's mention of **Rav Avraham Pam ZT"L**, as nothing. The next week, however, when Shimon stood up, gave another incoherent word soup, and was complimented by all on how good it was, he again exclaimed, "Rav Pam liked this one as well!"

At this point, everybody was already starting to scratch their heads, wondering, "Is he just imagining things? Or is it possible that he somehow actually knows Rav Pam?"

On the third week, when Dovid entered the home on Friday afternoon, he heard Shimon telling over another one of his incomprehensible Divrei Torah to somebody on the phone. Dovid thought, "Could that be Rav Pam? There's another line upstairs. Maybe I could listen in and see if it actually is him. Maybe, though, that's too nosy."

Dovid's curiosity nevertheless got the best of him, and he ended up running upstairs. He just caught the end of the Dvar Torah on the other line when he heard Rav Pam's voice on the other end, complimenting and encouraging him for such beautiful Torah thoughts. Dovid found out that Rav Pam, one of the busiest men in America, on the busiest day of the week, had been listening to Shimon's Divrei Torah for over thirty years!

Comment: A recurring theme in gedolim biographies is how smart and gifted they were. While this is certainly important, being gifted doesn't make a gadol. One isn't praiseworthy for having won the genetic lottery, and being a natural genius is not a character trait we can all emulate.

What I've tried to remind people is that what does make a gadol, however, is their Middos: how kindly they treated others and how hard they pushed themselves to learn Torah. As great as his mind is, a gadol's heart is even greater. As impressive as it is to complete Shas, caring about those marginalized by society and dedicating time to brightening their days in today's busy world is even more impressive.

This is what makes a true gadol, and this is something we can all learn from.

נפלאות הבורא - Hashems Amazing World -The Giraffe



Charles Darwin *shem reshaim yirkab* wrote in his Origin of the Species, that the giraffe was just a regular animal that grew a long neck to reach the higher branches. How comical! It amazes me how people buy into this stuff! Additionally, it seems our professor did not know much about giraffes! There is far more to a giraffe than merely "a long neck"!

The giraffe has the most powerful heart in the animal kingdom. This is since it has double the normal blood pressure. This high blood pressure is required to pump blood all the way up to its brain. The giraffe's blood pressure is two or three times that of a healthy man, and probably is the highest in the world. Because the giraffe has such a long neck (10-12 feet (30 in length), its heart must exert an immense force to pump blood through the carotid artery to the brain. The giraffe's heart is huge; it weighs 25 pounds, is 2 feet long, and has walls up to 3 inches thick. In contrast, the brain of any animal is a very delicate structure and is not able to stand high blood pressure.

What happens when the giraffe bends over to take a drink from a pond? Obviously, we have here a difficult situation. High pressure is needed to get blood to the brain, yet that very pressure should destroy the brain when it lowers its head to the ground. Four carefully thought-out design factors nicely solve this problem: 1)



The giraffe has in his jugular veins a series of one-way check valves. These immediately close as soon as the head is lowered! But there is still a large amount of blood in the carotid artery; too much. 2) That extra blood is immediately shunted to a special spongy tissue, located near the brain and filled with small blood vessels, which absorbs it. 3) The cerebrospinal fluid, which bathes the brain and spinal column itself, produces a counter-pressure to prevent rupture or capillary leakage. 4) The walls of the giraffe's arteries are thicker than those of any other mammal.

All of these features -- large heart, valves in the jugular vein, and wonder net of vessels -- must be in place simultaneously or the giraffe would die. They could not have evolved gradually. Obviously, the giraffe as well as all other creatures, were designed and created with great wisdom by Hakadosh Baruch Hu! *(Rabbi Eliyahu Tobal)*

Horav Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg, zl, was a gadol in Torah as well as chesed.

His *rebbetzin*, the daughter of ***Rav Yaakov Yosef Herman zl***, was witness to *chesed* at its apex. Her home was the address for anyone who was in need of kindness. When the Hermans moved to *Eretz Yisrael*, their *Shabbos* table was the place where one could find any person who just needed a "place." To them, everyone was family.

As I was perusing through a biography of *Rav* Scheinberg, I came across many stories of his extraordinary empathy for others. His acts of *chesed* were directed to anyone in need, be it: a *yeshivah* student; *kollel* fellow *and* his wife; members of the Jewish

community; or the drunk and the homeless who were laying in the gutter on a cold winter night. (He would bring them hot soup which his *rebbetzin* prepared.)

One story particularly inspires me. I preface this with the notion that *chesed* does not only involve material benevolence. Emotional support is equally important. We can find *chesed* in Torah, helping someone who is in need of a boost in his Torah learning. The greatest *chesed* is reaching out to someone who is floundering in his *Yiddishkeit*, whose religious observance is becoming more and more borderline. It is critical that one assesses the situation, find out the cause, and offer spiritual and emotional support.

One *Erev Shabbos* when *Rav* Scheinberg lived in the Lower East Side, a young married man asked him a *halachic* query (*shailah*) concerning a family purity issue. Although *Rav* Scheinberg felt that he had reason to *pasken muttar*, render a decision of permissible, to the man, he wanted to buttress his decision with a little research. He needed a certain *sefer*, volume of *halachic* responsa, which he did not own and would have to borrow. He told the young man that since it was almost *shkiah*, sunset, he would not be able to answer his *shailah* before the beginning of *Shabbos*. He did not bother telling the young man that the *sefer* was located in Williamsburg.

Soon after *Shabbos* began, *Rav* Scheinberg walked one hour across the Williamsburg Bridge and looked up the *sefer*. He confirmed that it was *muttar*. He then returned to the Lower East Side, went up to the young man's apartment, knocked on the door and, when the man answered, *Rav* Scheinberg said, "*Muttar*." He did an about face and went home to make *Kiddush*.

Two hours of walking, keeping his family waiting for him, all to answer a *shailah*. He knew that a young couple needed the answer. This was *chesed* at its zenith.

The Weekly Vort - A New Moon, A New Chance

The Maharal of Prague would often speak about the power of *Rosh Chodesh* as a time of *his'chadshus*—renewal. Once, a *talmid* approached him with great distress. He had fallen spiritually, felt he had disappointed his rebbe, and could no longer face the *beis midrash*. "I have failed too many times," the young man said. "I cannot start over again."

The Maharal looked at him and asked, "Tell me, what do you see when you look at the moon?" The student hesitated. "It waxes and wanes."

"And yet," said the Maharal softly, "every month it returns—just as radiant as before. The moon teaches us that Hashem builds renewal into the very design of creation. We do not fall to stay fallen; we diminish only to rise again brighter."

Then the Maharal added words that his *talmid* never forgot: "***When a Jew feels that he has no strength to begin again, he should look at the levanah and remember that Hashem Himself renews it. If He renews the moon, He can renew you too.***"

That night, the young man returned to his learning - and later became one of the Maharal's most distinguished *talmidim*.

Pearls of Wisdom…*A Word for the Ages*

The letters of Shabbos stand for Sheinah B'Shabbos Taanug, sleep on Shabbos is a delight. **שבת = שינה בשבת תענוג - Rav Gamliel Rabbinovitch, Shlit"a**, notes that if one keeps this in mind before he goes to sleep on Shabbos, he changes his ordinary sleep into Oneg Shabbos, the Mitzvah of enjoying Shabbos. This would follow in the way of Rashi (Vayikra 25:2), who teaches that our Shabbos rest should be L'Sheim Hashem, for the sake of Hashem!

Rabbi Yehoshua Alt - Preventive Medicine of Tefilla



We say at a Bris **ואמר לך בדמיך חיי ואמר לך בדמיך חיי** - ***in your blood you shall live***. [Yechezkel 16:6]

There are many sick people that need more blood. So, we say this Pasuk at a Bris that in the merit of this blood, the baby should have a healthy life where he doesn't need a blood transfusion. In this way, we can explain **בדמיך חיי** - that the baby should live with his own blood his entire life and not need the blood of others.

In Birchas Hamazon we say:

ונא אל תצריכנו ה' אלקינו לא לידי מתנת בשר ודם - please make us not needful, Hashem, of the gifts of human hands. This can also be understood as a gift of **בשר** meaning transplants from others, and **דם** as referring to receiving blood from others. **אם לידך כי המלאה הפתוחה הקדושה והרחבה** - only of Your hand that is full, open, holy and generous.

After we use the bathroom, we say the Bracha of **אשר יצר** while when we daven Shemoneh Esrei we recite the Bracha of **רפאנו** . What is the difference between these two?

R' Shimshon Pincus explains that the Bracha of **רפאנו** is for one to be healed after becoming sick, as is implicit from this Bracha. This is in contrast to the Bracha of **אשר יצר** which is to prevent one from becoming sick to begin with.

The author of **שו"ת מן השמים** asked if the Bracha of **אשר יצר** needs to be recited every time one uses the bathroom or is the one time it is said at Shacharis enough (This would be like Brachos such as

מלביש ערומים - Who clothes the naked, as it isn't said each time rather just once daily)?

He was answered that the Gemara [Brachos 54b] says **ארבעה צריכין להודות** - four types of people must give thanks (The four are **יורדי הים** ; seafarers, **הולכי מדברות** ; those who go through wildernesses, one who was ill and recovered and one who was incarcerated in prison and came out. The Bracha they recite is known as Birchas Hagomeil.)

A sick person is one of these four. And there is no bigger a sick person than one who needs to relieve himself.

Parsha Potpourri - Rav Ozer Alport

לְיָשׁוּב מִשְׁפַּחַת הַיָּשֻׁבִי ***L'Yashuv mishpachas ha'Yishuvi*** (26:24)

Although the name Yissochar is spelled with two "sin"s, the prevalent custom is to pronounce it as if it were written with only one. Why is this?

The Chida explains that Yissochar named one of his sons Yov (Bereishis 46:13), which was at that time – unbeknownst to Yissochar – the name of an idol. Upon learning of this, Yov complained to his father, who appeased him by changing his name to Yashuv. However, in order to add a "sin," Yissochar was forced to give up one of his, and even though it is still part of his written name, it is no longer pronounced. In fact, Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Ziditchov was accustomed to read the name Yissochar by pronouncing both "sin"s up until Parshas Pinchas, in accordance with the opinion that his name was changed only at that time.

Rav Shach — Chesed & Ahavas Yisrael

"A Jew must feel the pain of another Jew as if it were his own."

Rabbi Yehoshua Alt



The Arizal among others tells us Pinchas was a **גלגל** - reincarnation of Yitzchak. The following are allusions to this.

A) The numerical value of **פינחס** is 208, Identical to that of **יצחק.**

B) Both Yitzchak and Pinchas were Moser Nefesh: Yitzchak at the **עקידה** and Pinchas in the episode of Kozbi and Zimri.

C) We are told Pinchas is Eliyahu. Eliyahu is referred to as **אליהו מלאך הברית** and Yitzchak is the first one to have a Bris on the eighth day.

D) The Gemara says Eliyahu was answered with Tefilas Mincha. Who established Mincha? Yitzchak!

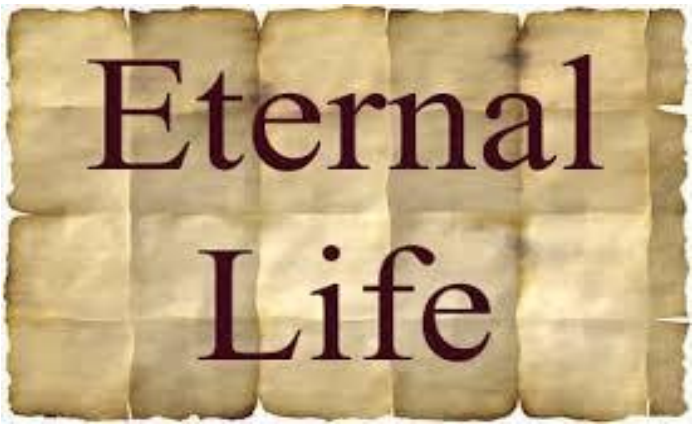
E) In reference to Eliyahu it is written **והשיב לב אבות על בנים**.. - he will turn back the hearts of fathers with their sons…. Who is the first of the Avos that is an **אב** and **בן** ? Yitzchak.

When Yitzchak became old his eyesight dimmed. Who restored his eyesight? Pinchas and Eliyahu. In fact, if we combine the sum of **פינחס** (208) and **אליהו** (52), we get a total of 260, the same amount as **עין, עין** (two eyes).

Chazon Ish — Chesed & Ahavas Yisrael

"Judging favourably is not a stringency — it is the only way to truly see another Jew." - For him, dan l'kaf zechus was the foundation of ahavat Yisrael.

Parsha Potpourri - Rav Ozer Alport - Parsha Points to Ponder



The Targum Yonason ben Uziel (25:12) writes that as reward for Pinchas's reward zealotry, Hashem promised that he would live forever and would herald the final redemption. Our Sages explain that Eliyahu HaNavi was none other than Pinchas. In what way did Pinchas's actions make him uniquely suited for this role, and in what way was this reward measure-for-measure? (*Rabbeinu Bechaye, Toras Chaim, Mishmeres Ariel*)

Rabbeinu Bechaye notes that the Torah precedes Pinchas's reward by stressing (25:11) that his actions caused Hashem's anger at the Jews to subside, and as a result, He did not destroy them in His rage. This implies that if not for Pinchas, Hashem would have obliterated the entire nation. Because Pinchas was responsible for the continued existence of the Jewish people from that moment onward, it was a fitting reward that he also merited living eternally.

Shabbos Treasures - The Precious Gift of Shabbos

The *Medrash* (*Otzar Midrashim, Va'eschanan* 5:15) describes how great is one who delights in Shabbos. Whoever delights in Shabbos will merit to sit in the *Yeshivah Shel Ma'ala*, the Heavenly Academy, and his *tefilos* will be heard by Hashem! Another reward for delighting in Shabbos (see *Rashi, Yeshayahu* 58:14) is that you will receive an unlimited *brachah* from Hashem which reaches until the end of the world, without boundaries.

Peninim on the Torah – פנינים על התורה

וּבְנֵי־קֹרַח לֹא־מֵתוּ And the sons of Korach did not die. (26:11)



The sons of Korach were (originally) in the thick of the dispute against Moshe *Rabbeinu*. *Rashi* explains that, at the very last moment, they repented. Regardless of how far one has drifted from Jewish observance, how distant he has strayed from traditional life and Torah values, he can return and be reinstated. People think that once they have rejected the Torah way it is impossible to come back. This is categorically incorrect.

The *Ponevezer Rav, zl*, was about to leave on a journey to the United States. His revered *Rebbe*, **the *Chafetz Chaim, zl***, was still alive. The *Rav* went to the *Chafetz Chaim* to bid him farewell and to solicit his blessing for a successful journey. While they spoke, the *Rav* asked the *Chafetz Chaim* for a message to convey to American Jewry. The *Chafetz Chaim* instructed him to convey that it is quite simple to repent. All one must do is to regret the past and take upon oneself to alter his lifestyle for the future, or – in today's vernacular – "Move on!" Ruminating over the past only engenders depression. It is time to make up one's mind and move on.

A parent never gives up on a child – regardless of the pain and the hurt the child has caused him. Hashem is our Heavenly Father, Who waits "up" for all of His children to return home. When they do return, it matters not how far away they have been or the pain and hurt they have caused, as long as they are home, safe and sound. That is all that matters. The following incident, which took place about thirty-five years ago in a *frum*, observant *yishuv*, underscores this idea.

The day began like any other, with the man of the house leaving early for *Kollel* where he would spend the entire day. The mother sent off her five older children to school, while she remained home with Motke, their youngest.

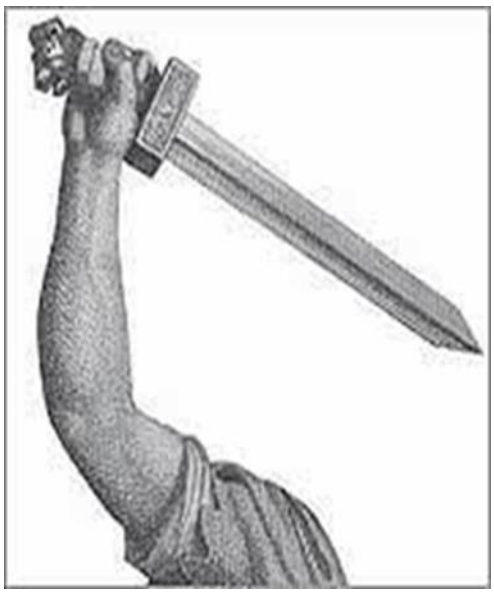
It was a beautiful morning, so the mother let Motke play on the balcony – six floors above the street. Every few moments, she would take a look to make sure Motke was doing well and not getting into any mischief. Suddenly, she turned around and did not see Motke. She immediately ran to the balcony, where she saw two little hands holding on to the bottom railing of the protective fence surrounding the balcony. The mother immediately ran over and placed her hands between the lattice and held on to Motke for dear life.

This is how she remained – bent over, arms outstretched, holding on to her young son. Half an hour passed – then an hour – two hours and she kept on holding. No one on the street looked up, despite her screams for help. She asked Motke to try to kick off his shoes in the hope that they would fall and alert a passerby to look up. Motke listened; the shoes fell, and a passerby kicked them to the side, as he continued on his designated course. No one bothered to look up.

Three hours – four – five – five and a half hours passed, until one of the storekeepers looked up to close the security gates over his store. He saw a frightening scene: a young boy hanging on to his mother, his legs dangling in the air, six stories above the street. He immediately contacted the fire department, which was able to reach the boy and bring him in. The mother had held on for five and a half hours, an almost superhuman feat. "How did you do it?" a reporter asked. "What is your question? He is my son!"

A powerful lesson is to be derived from this story. Hashem loves us all, because we are His children. Regardless how long and how far – He will always be waiting there for us. He is our Father. We are His children. It is only natural.

When a Jew sins, it gives Hashem great pain. Every sin has great significance and when we can convince someone to refrain from performing a specific sin, it is wonderful. If, however, we can turn a person around to bring him/her back to Hashem and say, "Hashem, we have found Your prince/princess," the Almighty derives much satisfaction. - Hashem wants and waits for all of His lost children.



Sedrah Selections by Zvi Akiva Fleisher

25:11 פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן

The Holy Zohar writes that when Pinchos entered the hut in which Zimri was sinning, it was surrounded by a group of fellow Shimonites who stood guard. Pinchos was so afraid of being killed that when he entered, his soul left him out of fright. Hashem then poured a transmigration of the souls of Nodov and Avihu (ibur n'shomoh) into him.

We can thus interpret these words of our verse as meaning that Pinchos is the son of both Elozor and Aharon. Numerous medroshim including **Pirkei d'Rebbi Eleizer** say that "Pinchos hu Eliyohu," that the soul of Eliyohu the Prophet is also a component of Pinchos's soul make-up.

We thus have four souls in Pinchos, that of himself, Nodov, Avihu, and Eliyohu, a total of four. **The Holy Sorof of Strelisk, Rabbi Uri**, says that this is alluded to by the cantillation on these words of our verse. They are, **קַדְמָא וְאַזְלָא, מונַח רְבִיעָי**. The names of these cantillation signs can be translated as, "It went forward and came to rest four," meaning that numerous souls came to rest in Pinchos, and their total is four.

Jersey Shore Bulletin - Treat Your Wife Like a Queen

צַו אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם אֶת־קָרְבָּנִי לַחְמִי לְאִשַּׁי רֵיחַ נִיחֹחִי תִּשְׁמְרוּ לְהַקְרִיב לִי בְּמוֹעֲדוֹ ***Command the children of Israel, and say to them: My offering, My bread for My fire offerings, for a pleasing savour to Me, you will be careful to offer to Me in its appointed season.*** (Bamidbar 28:2)



Rabbi Solomon Mutzafi was a person who was extremely careful when it came to doing mitzvos. For example, he would thoroughly check all the limbs of every chicken his wife was about to cook, for any possible signs of treifos. He had very high standards, so he felt he could not rely only on his wife's checking, for fear that she might accidentally overlook something.

Nevertheless, he was also very concerned that he should not cause his wife any ill feelings. Therefore, although he would regularly enter the kitchen at the time when she was opening the chickens, he always had an excuse for being there: He wanted to have a drink or wash his hands or help his wife with the chickens. When he saw that everything was alright, he would return to his Torah learning.

Although he felt it important to check the chickens himself, he was always sensitive to her feelings, and therefore extremely cautious in the manner he went about doing it. He did not want to risk insulting his wife in any way, so he did everything he could to avoid the possibility that his wife would think that he mistrusted her.

Rabbi Mutzafi was extremely careful to honour his wife. He realized that he could never compromise her feelings to accomplish the goals he desired. We should try to emulate his attitude and sensitivity in all our actions.

Torah Tavlin

R' Yitzchok of Neshchiz zt"l (Toldos Yitzchok) would say: **פִּינְחָס בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן** - Why is Pinchos' lineage mentioned all the way back to Aharon Hakohen?

Homiletically we may say that Pinchos did his act of zealotry with a spear - **רומח** - as mentioned in last week's parsha. The word **רומח** is comprised of **רמ"ח** - a hint to the 248 limbs of a person's body. Pinchos gave his entire being to perform this courageous act, using every last limb in his body.

The letter **וא"ו** in gematria is 13, which is equal to the value of the word **אחד** - one or unity.

Just as Aharon Hakohen spent his entire existence pursuing peace and making sure there was unity amongst the nation, and between husband and wife, so too, Pinchos unified the hearts of the people, an act worthy of his grandfather's name.

Hashgacha Pratis

A man from Eretz Yisroel arrived in the United States for the purpose of raising money to support his family and marry off his children. As many collectors and meshulachim do, they bring with them lists of names of potential donors who they feel will contribute mightily and allow them to reach their target amount in shorter time.

This particular fellow had a few names on his list, but one name stood out because it was the only one in that specific city where he was headed. The name was a Doctor Fuchs and the man, he was told, was not only a brilliant medical professional, but also a tremendous Baal Tzedaka who gave very generously to those who came to his door. The day after he arrived, the Israeli hired a taxi driver and told the man in Hebrew, that he was going to Dr. Fuchs. The driver spoke Hebrew but he was unsure exactly who the man was referring to and

he asked him to write it down on a piece of paper. The Israeli wrote down, "**דר פוקס**" and handed the paper to his driver. The driver nodded and they were off.

They drove for a while until they reached the town and the driver pulled up alongside a nice home with the name "Fox" emblazoned on the mailbox. He had read the paper and understood that he wished to go to Dr. Fox, a well-known dermatologist in the area.

The Israeli was none the wiser and walked right up to ring the bell of the erstwhile Dr. Fox. The good doctor opened the door and let the man in. He spoke to him for a few minutes and understood - although Dr. Fox didn't speak Hebrew very well - that he was collecting money. Their conversation was pleasant and friendly and as Jews usually do, they even played "Jewish Geography" and learned that they had a mutual acquaintance in Israel.



At one point, the meshulach asked what kind of doctor he was and Dr. Fox explained, to the best of his ability, that he was a dermatologist, a skin doctor, who specialized in treating people with all sorts of conditions that affect a person's skin. The Israeli became excited and said, "I, too, went to see a skin doctor recently in Israel and he told me that I have a few warts that need to be removed." The Israeli even showed Dr. Fox what his "warts" looked like, and Dr. Fox, always polite and professional, told the man he should come to his office. "Why don't you let me remove them for free and you won't have to take care of it in Israel." The Israeli was happy with the arrangement.

The next morning, the man showed up at Dr. Fox's office and although he did not have an appointment, the doctor took him right in and removed a number of growths - even more than the man had previously shown him. Thrilled beyond belief, the Israeli showered the doctor with numerous blessings and said this chessed was even greater than the money he would have collected. He continued to thank the doctor, over and over again, until he left the office.

The meshulach travelled around a bit and a few days later, he found himself in Toronto. He looked up an acquaintance he knew in Canada and asked where he could stay for a few days. He was directed to the Gestetner home, where the man from Israel was treated to a comfortable guest room and some warm Canadian hospitality.

On the second day after he arrived, the phone rang and a man calling from Arizona was on the line. It was Dr. Fox, and he was urgently looking for the Israeli fellow who had been in his office earlier in the week. Dr. Fox was on vacation out west when his office called to tell him the incredible news that the "warts" he had removed from the Israeli meshulach, were actually cancerous growths and potentially very dangerous.

Thankfully, Dr. Fox had removed even more than what he originally saw and apparently, the cancer was removed. He needed to inform the patient right away but had no forwarding address or number to call. Until he remembered the mutual friend in Israel and called him to ask about the whereabouts of his Israeli patient. After some inquiries, Dr. Fox learned that he was staying at the Gestetner home in Toronto and tracked him down! All while on vacation!

He was more than astounded when the man got on the phone and listened in shock as he was told about the danger to his life that was removed just a few days earlier. Dr. Fox was the right shaliach sent to save his life!

From The Wellsprings of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

לָכֵן אֱמֹר הִנְנִי נֹתֵן לוֹ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי שָׁלוֹם –

The Gemara (קידושין סו:) tells us that the letter vav in the word "**שלום**" is cut in half. The letter vav is known as a "connecting letter" because it often connects two ideas together. If it is a connecting letter then why is it cut in half - and why in the word **שלום**, which means peace?

The Chasam Sofer zt"l explains that the vav is divided to created two yuds. The word now can be read as "**ישלים**" - "He should make peace!"

If a person wants to have shalom, don't wait for it to happen by itself - go out and make peace!

Torah Tavlin - R' Chaim Yosef Kofman zt"l

אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי־דָן לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם לְשׁוּחָם מִשְׁפַּחַת הַשּׁוּחָמִי אֵלֶּה מִשְׁפְּחֹת דָּן לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם: 26:42



After the tragic plague which killed 24,000 Jews, Hashem commanded Moshe and Elazar Hakohen to take a new census of Klal Yisroel.

The Chofetz Chaim zt"l quotes the posuk in Mishlei - (כא״ל) **אין חכמה ואין תבונה לנגד ה׳** - from which he derives a penetrating lesson.

The shevet of Binyamin had 45,600 men, making it the fifth smallest tribe, whereas the shevet of Dan had 64,400 men, deeming it the second largest. This is quite curious as we know from Parshas

Vayigash that Binyamin was blessed with ten sons while Dan had only one son, Chushim, who was deaf. Yet, Shevet Dan was one of the largest. Not only that, Chushim, the only son of Dan, killed Esav when he tried to take away Mearas HaMachpela (see the Medrash), and through his action, he allowed his zaida, Yaakov Avinu, to finally be laid to rest with the honour and respect he truly deserved.

My machshava here is one that resonates in families everywhere. Try to imagine the family of Yaakov Avinu as they sit around the Shabbos table. Binyamin with his ten sons saying divrei Torah and singing zemiros, and Dan with his one deaf son, unable to participate. Yaakov and Leah wonder what will become of Shevet Dan. Even Dan and his wife worry about the future of their son and their entire shevet, figuring that theirs will certainly be the smallest shevet, the weakest link in the chain of mesora from Yaakov Avinu.

But Hashem had other plans, and this is not what happened. Binyamin became a smaller tribe while Dan ended up as one of the largest shevatim!

As we see from Mishlei, we can never understand the wondrous ways of Hashem! The Chofetz Chaim concludes that if it is the ratzon of Hashem, a parent can sometimes see more nachas from one son than from ten! Life is unpredictable and we never know how things will turn out! All we can do is put our trust in Hashem, do our hishtadlus and daven for siyata d'shmaya as we imbue our children with the proper hashkafos of yiddishkeit. Only then can we hope that Hashem will answer our tefillos with much yiddish nachas, menuchas hanefesh, harchovas hadaas and kol tuv!

Rav Shach — Chesed & Ahavas Yisrael

"Machlokes destroys; ahavat Yisrael builds." - He constantly warned that unity is not optional — it is survival.

Torah Tavlin - Drush V' Chiddush- Reb Dovid Gurwitz

פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן 25:11

There is a reason letters are called "**אותיות**" - they also mean signs and wonders (**אותות**). We can derive so much from the letters of the Torah. Parshas Korach begins with the letter "**ק**" which stands for "**קדושה**" (holiness).



Parshas Chukas has the kuf in the middle. Parshas Balak has the kuf at the end. Parshas Pinchos, which follows the 17th of Tammuz, and the fast which begins the tragic Three Week period leading up to the Destruction of the two Temples, has no Kuf in its name. The kedusha, the kuf, migrated from the forefront of our consciousness in Korach, to the middle in Chukas, then to the back in Balak, and finally, it disappeared, in Pinchos.

That is the essence of what caused the Temples' Destruction, both Batei Hamikdash, which literally means Houses of Holiness. Our sense of holiness gradually disappeared - as seen and learned - in the parsha flow. Targum Yonasan ben Uziel states: "Every man of Israel, by his prayer, can bring about a complete change for the people and usher in deliverance." (**דברים כח״טו**)

We must all pray to Hashem for deliverance. We must all shed a torrent of tears so He may return us to Him in perfect love, bring back the "kuf" - the kedusha - and rebuild the Mikdash and firmly establish it as in times past. This truly depends on every one of us. No one is excluded!

From The Wellsprings of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

29:39 אֵ֚לֶּה תַּעֲשׂ֣וּ לַה֔' בְּמֹעֲדֵיכֶ֑ם



There is a fascinating correlation between the period of time we have just entered and the parsha we will read this week. Parshas Pinchos, seemingly out of nowhere, speaks about the holiest days of the year, our glorious Yamim Tovim. And yet, we find ourselves in this most dismal time-period known as **בין המצרים** - the "Three Weeks" leading up to Tisha B'av.

The Apta Rav ZT"L (Ohev Yisroel) points out that there are 21 days in this time-period which are directly connected to the 21 days of rejoicing mentioned in the parsha: Shabbos, Yom Kippur and Rosh Chodesh is 3; Pesach has 7 days and Sukkos has 8; 2 days of Rosh Hashanah and one day of Shavuous. The sad days of the Three Weeks are in fact rooted in the 21 days of happy rejoicing on the Chagim.

The posuk (Tehillim 73) states as much: "**אך טוב לישראל**" - The word "**אך**" has the gematria of 21. "**אך**" means "only" - which teaches us that there is "only" goodness - "TOV" - for Klal Yisroel, no matter if it is a time of mourning or a time to rejoice. Even sadness is rooted in joy. This is why Tisha B'av, which is the zenith of the three weeks of sadness, will eventually turn into the greatest "**מואד**" - the most joyous holiday of all.

There is a tremendous message here that we must all take to heart. Often in our lives we encounter events that colour our world black. We think that these things are the cause of all our problems and without them our lives would be wonderful. We don't realize that the

root of BAD is really GOOD! Chazal tell us that that the darkest clouds contain the most rain.

R' Avigdor Miller ZT"L expounds that it is only through the darkness that we see the light, and not necessarily right away. But if we hold on tight and realize that all difficulties are opportunities and springboards for growth that would have otherwise not been possible, we will then be zoche to experience the greatest goodness of the ultimate redemption.

Torah Tavlin



R' Zushia of Anipoli ZT"L would say: "Every mitzvah that a Jew does creates a good angel, and every sin creates an evil one. I never saw a whole angel created by the transgression of a Jew. Every angel created by a sin is missing a limb.

The reason is because every Jew has an innate belief and faith in Hashem, and even if he slips and commits a sin, he immediately regrets his action, sighs, and is sorry for what he has done. These sighs have the power to maim the limbs of the resulting prosecuting angels."

From The Wellsprings of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

Parshas Pinchos is almost always read during the three weeks, the saddest period in the Jewish calendar year. Interestingly, though, it also contains the holidays which we celebrate throughout the year with great joy.

Explains **R' Tzvi Elimelech ZT"L of Dinov (Bnei Yissaschar)**, Hashem did not want us to sink into despair or depression as we contemplate the overwhelming tragic loss of our Bais HaMikdash and all the difficulties we are suffering in this long and painful golus. We are therefore reminded at this time of the joyous holidays that will lift our spirits and fill our lives with simcha.

This is a crucial lesson for all Jews at all times. We have all experienced times in our lives when we felt completely broken. We could not see a light at the end of the tunnel and did not know where to turn. However we later realized that Boruch Hashem, there still is and will be, many opportunities in life to rejoice. Life continues to move on, bringing upon us many different experiences, some that are distressing and others that fill our hearts with song.



The message is that we should never allow the times of sadness to wear us down and lead us to believe that there is no hope. The expression: "This too shall pass," should be our motto to remind us, even at our lowest moment, that days of joy will come once again. For this reason, explains **R' Twerski** , our holidays are called "Moadim L'simcha" - holidays FOR joy, rather than holidays OF joy. Our festivals are not only meant to bring us happiness when we are experiencing them; rather, they are

great days that stand FOR joy throughout the year and should lift our spirits and inspire us that happy days will come once more.

Decisions

Yair Eitan's father ran a produce distribution business in Northern Israel. When Yair was old enough, he began driving a delivery truck. One of his regular deliveries was at Yeshiva Lev V'Nefesh, whose student body was primarily comprised of baalei teshuva, those who were returning to religious observance. Yair's parents had carefully shielded him from his religion; his upbringing was strictly secular.



But the joy and excitement that Yair saw within the yeshivah walls aroused his curiosity. He allowed himself to be drawn into conversation with a few of the yeshivah students. Each time, Yair made a delivery, he made an effort to speak to the students.

On his third trip there, Yair was already sitting down for a few minutes to sample Torah study. When Yair finally told his parents what he had discovered in the yeshivah, his father became enraged. "No son of mine is going to become a backward, bearded chareidi! You are no longer to deliver to that route and you are forbidden to visit that yeshivah - or any other yeshivah - ever again!" Yair was afraid of his father's wrath, but he was also put off by his father's attitude and this gave him determination.

He continued to clandestinely visit the yeshivah and he loved each and every experience. He wanted more and he knew there was only

one way to get it. He inquired as to other available yeshivos, left a note wishing his parents well, and left without revealing his destination. His newfound freedom, however, did not last long. His father conducted a full search until he located his son in a distant yeshivah and forced him to return home. Not only that, but he also blamed the Rosh Yeshivah of Lev V'Nefesh and filed charges against him of brainwashing his 18-year-old son and engineering his flight from home.

The trial aroused great interest in the Israeli media, and the trial date found a packed courtroom eagerly awaiting to hear the proceedings. Yair's testimony did not help the prosecution at all. He insisted that he had not been coerced to attend the yeshivah; it was of his own volition. While Yair was recounting his story, the judge presiding over the case, an elderly man, seemed a bit distracted. He would intermittently take his eyes off the speaker to gaze intently at Yair's father.

When Yair left the witness stand, the judge announced, "I would like to ask Mr. Eitan to step forward." Yair's father was surprised as he stepped up to the witness stand. The judge was quiet for a few moments. Then he asked if Mr. Eitan was of Eastern European descent and if perhaps his name back in Europe was "Stark." Mr. Eitan was clearly taken aback, and he stammered that the judge was indeed correct. "And are you originally from the Polish city of Pinsk?" asked the judge amiably. Mr. Eitan nodded meekly, not understanding the relevance.

The judge's demeanour suddenly became stern. "I remember you well, Mr. Eitan. You were born into one of the finest homes in pre-war Pinsk. Your father was a deeply religious and highly respected man. Your mother was renowned for her kindness. She would cook meals for the poor and the sick regularly. I remember well how, as a teenager, you openly departed from your parents' ways. When you publicly desecrated the Shabbos for the first time, your father

aged overnight and seemed to be constantly in mourning. Your mother would shed a river of tears every Friday night when she lit Shabbos candles." The judge looked wistful.

"I often wondered what became of all her tears. I'm not the most religious person in the world, but I know that there is a G-d in Heaven who runs this world, and I could not understand how the tears of so righteous a woman could be ignored in Heaven. Today, though, my question has been answered. I see that her tears were not shed in vain. Today, almost fifty years later, her grandson has returned to the ways of his ancestors."

The courtroom was buzzing now, and Yair's father's face had taken on a pasty pallor. The judge continued speaking, "Mr. Eitan, I am sure you recall that on more than one occasion, friends of your parents pleaded with you to refrain from public transgression - at least for your parents' sake. As I recall, your response then was, 'I am eighteen and I make my own decisions. I can live my life any way I please.' And you dare to file charges because your eighteen-year-old son has returned to the ways that you abandoned?"

The judge raised his gavel and brought it down hard. "Case dismissed!"

A Great Jewish Leader

In the year 1944, as World War II raged on and world Jewry was being crushed under the weight of Nazi tyranny and oppression, the Jews of Eretz Yisroel lived in relative security, although their anguish and grief over the plight of their European brethren was always at the forefront of their thoughts and prayers. Two yeshivah students from Petach Tikvah had been visiting Bnei Brak and were returning late in the day to their yeshivah. They decided to stand on the main road and hitch a ride. After waiting for a few minutes, one

of the boys noticed a light in the distance. The two began walking towards the light but as they got closer, they stopped.

What they saw amazed them. Straight ahead, on the crest of a looming mountain laid out before them, was the aged **Ponevezher Rov, R' Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman ZT"L**, carrying a lantern and walking around and around the mountaintop as if searching for something. They quickly approached and asked concernedly, "Rebbe, can we help you? Have you lost something?"

The Ponovezher Rov looked up in surprise. He was so absorbed in his thoughts that he hadn't heard them coming. He turned to them and smiled, "I need no help, thank you. I have not lost anything." "But Rebbe," they persisted, "what are you doing with a lantern on top of an empty mountain?" R' Yosef Shlomo gazed across the slope. His eyes were wide with childish enthusiasm and anticipation. Once again, he smiled at the boys and said, "I am looking at something. Don't you see what I see?

Over there is the main yeshivah building with a thousand students toiling in intense Torah study. On that side are the dormitories with three hundred bochurim in this building, three hundred in that building. Look at the grand dining-room and the yeshivah library that we have built here. Is it not a beautiful sight to behold?" The boys followed the gaze of the Ponovezher Rov but all they could see was a barren mountain and a pitiful old man living in a world of dreams.

He had lost everything in the Holocaust - his wife, his children, everything he had built. There was no yeshivah building, no dormitories and no libraries. A thousand students? Who was he kidding?

The bochurim realized that the Ponovezher Rov was not dealing with reality and quietly, sadly, slipped away. It took a few years but eventually the dream of the Ponovezher Rov became a reality. The grand yeshivah building which rests majestically on the mountain overlooking Bnei Brak, is home to over one thousand students,

avreichim, and talmidei chachamim. The dormitories and libraries are all in existence and put to good use.



Many years later, one of the two bochurim who had spoken to the Ponevezher Rov on that late afternoon, came to Bnei Brak to speak with him on an unrelated matter. He introduced himself by saying, "Rebbe, if you will recall, I met you many years ago on top of the mountain as you held a lantern ....."

The Ponevezher Rov peered at him carefully and said excitedly, "You are one of the bochurim? Come with me." He gave him a tour of the entire campus. It was a majestic tour. He said, "I want you to teach future generations how an old, sick man was able to build an empire like this. Let me ask you: Do you think I built it by myself? Could one man really build all of this? No! What it takes is dedication, and Hakadosh Baruch Hu will help you succeed."

One man changed the face of Jewry when he could have remained a broken man, embittered by the tragedies that had befallen him and our nation. He was over sixty-five years old when he began building the greatest empire of Torah in our day. He had reason to give up and let others take over. Instead, he changed the face of Klal Yisroel for all eternity.

"If you can help, you must help — even if it seems small." ~ Rav Chaim Kanievsky.

Torah Anytime- Rabbi Eytan Feiner

וביום השבת... And on the day of Shabbat… (Bamidbar 28:9)

As a boy eagerly approached his bar mitzvah weekend, his family arranged for the davening and meal to take place in a hotel over Shabbat, followed by a celebration after Shabbat. Of course, the family invited their Rabbi, **Rav Simcha Wasserman** and his Rebbetzin to join them for the bar mitzvah. Not feeling too well, however, Rav Simcha declined and apologized for being unable to attend. Nevertheless, he wished the family much nachas and offered his warmest blessings upon the boy's upcoming milestone.



Rav Simcha, though, had one request to make. "Please make sure there is cholent in the hotel for Shabbat. You cannot have a Shabbat without cholent!" But the parents of the bar mitzvah boy tried to politely excuse themselves.

"With all due respect, we are spending Shabbat in a hotel and do not want to get involved in any halachic dilemmas that accompany making hot food on Shabbat. We already worked it out with the caterer that we will be serving cold food. Besides, the big celebration will be taking place later that night after Shabbat. Then we will provide hot culinary delights. For Shabbat, though, we will keep it plain and simple. There will be challah, fish, chicken and other dishes. There will be plenty to eat, except for cholent."

"Please," persisted Rav Simcha, "I just want to ask this one favour. I have a tradition that you need to have hot food for Shabbat. You

must make sure there is cholent." Wishing to listen to the directions of their Rav, the family made sure that cholent would be served.

Contacting the caterer and making sure hot plates would be set up, cholent was prepared and added to the menu. While the parents of the bar mitzvah boy had become religious later in life, a large number of their family still remained irreligious. Not wishing for their relatives to drive to the bar mitzvah on Shabbat, they announced that everyone was welcome to attend the celebration that would be taking place after Shabbat. If anyone in fact wished to participate in the bar mitzvah on Shabbat itself, they were more than welcome to come Friday afternoon and join the family in the festivities.

Notwithstanding the parents' request, an elderly aunt and uncle who lived near the hotel did not wish to deviate from their normal Friday night schedule. And so, after spending Friday night at home, they drove to Shul on Shabbat and entered the hotel hall as everyone else filed in. As they stepped inside, the fragrant aroma of the delicious cholent wafted through the air. Seeing where their family was situated, the aunt and uncle began making their way over to the table. But then, all of a sudden, the aunt stopped in her tracks. Turning to her husband trembling, she said, "We have to go home."

Not sure what had occurred, the uncle worried if everything was alright. "I'll tell you in the car," she said. Heading back to the car, the husband looked at his wife who was well into her seventies for an explanation. "I have never seen you like this in all the years we have been married. What happened all of a sudden?"

Turning back to her husband, the wife explained: "My last memory as a six-year-old child in the Holocaust was German soldiers taking me away on a Shabbat afternoon. I remember enjoying the aroma of the hot cholent in our house though. Cholent always represented Shabbat to me. Ever since that incident which took place when I was a child, my last fond memory and attachment to Judaism has been

the hot cholent I enjoyed so much. "I haven't smelled cholent in close to seventy years. But when I walked into the hotel just now and smelled cholent for the first time in years, right away, my memory took me back to my youth. I could almost taste that Shabbat afternoon cholent. Its smell woke me up and made me question what I am doing with my life. During those years of childhood, I felt a connection to G-d, understood the beauty of Judaism and knew what a true Shabbat meant. How could I now be missing that?"

Henceforth, this woman changed her life. From then on, she decided she would keep Shabbat for the rest of her life. And where did this tremendous journey back to her Jewish roots begin?

With Rav Simcha Wasserman who made sure that his student would serve cholent on Shabbat.

Peninim on the Torah – פנינים על התורה

ויסמך את ידיו עליו ויצוהו "He leaned his hands upon him and commanded him". (27:23)



Rashi notes **אמר לו וסמכת את ידך, והוא עשה בשתי ידיו**, that, when Hashem instructed Moshe Rabbeinu to transfer his authority to Yehoshua by means of semichah, "leaning of hands", the Almighty said, yadcha, "your hand" in the singular, implying one hand. Moshe, however, applied both

hands, generously, like a vessel which is full and brimming over, and filled him with his wisdom to become the nation's next leader.

Horav Avraham Pam, zl, explains that when we bless someone by placing both hands on his head, it is an indication that it is executed with love. It is not burdensome, an obligation which we are compelled to carry out. Two hands mean the person, indeed, wishes to transmit fully the blessings which he is about to render. If Hashem had instructed Moshe to use one hand, why did he use two hands? He was not adhering to Hashem's instructions. Perhaps, we might suggest the following. The gematria, numerical equivalent, of ahavah is thirteen. Likewise, the numerical equivalent of echad, one, is also thirteen. Thus, when Moshe used two hands to express his ahavah, he was actually (in a way) using one, since ahavah and echad had the same gematria: when there is love (two hands), it becomes one.

Reb Shmuel Donn- Remez **לָכֵן לעילוי נשמת יהושע ע״ה בן ברוך הלוי נ״י**
אֱמֹר הִנְנִי נֹתֵן לוֹ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי שָׁלֽוֹם 25:12



Pinchas was awarded with the greatest Beracha of all- peace **שָׁלֽוֹם** . The Medrash says that Pinchas is Eliyahu Hanavi. According to the Zohar, Pinchas was armed with the souls of Nadav and Avihu. Four Neshamos in one person. The Gemara says in Mesechta Berachos [ד:] that when Eliyahu Hanavi goes to carry out an assignment, he travels in 4 flights.

The Arizal explains that this has to do with the 4 different souls within him. These Neshamos are hinted to in our Pasuk in the first

two words- **לָכֵן אֱמֹר** which is the Gematria 341 and equals the Gematria **פינחס.נדב.אביהוא.אליהו**

The fact that Eliyahu performs every task with the number 4, alludes to this very essence. Pinchas, the one who merited to have the power of 4 souls. This is why 4 times the Gematria of Eliyahu : **אליהו אליהו אליהו אליהו** is Gematria of **פינחס**. (**ספר אהל תורה**)

Yesoidos M'Hasedra השיב את חמתי וכו׳



K'lal Yisroel had fallen. They had succumbed to the temptations of z'nus and idol worship. Hashem brought a terrible plague upon them, but it was to no avail. They were steeped so deeply in their lusts and temptations that their hearts could not be stirred. Then along came Pinchas. In an effort to defend Hashem's honour, not caring about what might happen to him, he took a spear and killed Zimri, the nasi of shevet Shimon, no less. Then, the Torah testifies, the plague came to an end. How could be that the fact that people were dropping like flies did not arouse the masses to do teshuva, yet the zealous act of a single individual caused people to repent and brought the entire ordeal to a halt?

HaRav Boruch Sorotzkin זצ״ל understands as follows: Sometimes the yetzer hara can be so powerful that even terrible calamities will not bring one to teshuva. The tragedies that the Ribono shel Olam brings upon us will be dismissed as coincidence and happenstance,

having nothing to do with our behaviour. Such were the sentiments of b'nei Yisroel vis-a-vis the plague that befell them.

Then came Pinchas, one man with a definite mission. He was intent on his goal regardless of the consequences. Although he risked his life, he proceeded with mesiras nefesh to defend Hashem's honour. Nothing else worked, but when the people saw how Pinchas was driven with a 'kinas ha-emes' this made an impression. Although his actions may have appeared somewhat radical, since his kavana was completely l'shem shomayim, they worked.

Sometimes normal 'mediocre' tactics don't work to stir the masses. Taking a more radical approach may be the only option, providing that our intention is purely l'shem shomayim.

Yesoidos M'Hasedra

קח לך את יהושע בן נון איש אשר רוח בו וסמכת את ידך עליו וכו' ...ויסמך את ידיו עליו

When Moshe Rabeinu asked Hakadosh Baruch Hu for someone to take over leadership of k'lal Yisroel, Hashem chose Yehoshua for the job, and instructed Moshe to place one of his hands upon him, thereby transferring leadership and imparting Yehoshua with the chochma and ruach kedusha that Moshe had used to lead the nation. Although the Torah seems to say that Moshe followed Hashem's instructions, a careful reading of the pesukim indicates that he in fact, did more than required, by place both of his hands on Yehoshua in order to effect the transfer of leadership. The fact that Moshe Rabeinu did this and that the Torah made note of it, seem to indicate that there is indeed a difference between the placing of only one versus both hands in this transfer.

As such, it behooves us to ask why then, did Hashem instruct Moshe to place only one hand, if in fact, two is better. One cannot suggest that two is inferior to one in any way, since the Torah testifies that

Moshe did as Hashem told him to do. On the other hand, if one hand is sufficient, what was Moshe Rabeinu's reason for placing both hands on Yehoshua?

The K'sav Sofer explains that **הקב"ה** deliberately instructed Moshe to place only one hand on Yehoshua, in order to "limit" the transfer of chochma and ruach kedusha. The reason for this was in order to preserve Moshe's stature in the eyes of the people, for if Yehoshua would be just as great as Moshe, people might come to forget the greatness of Moshe. Moshe Rabeinu, however, sought to maximize the potential of his talmid, and therefore utilized both hands in the transfer of leadership. Yet it seems, that Moshe's intentions were not fulfilled. Chazal (Bava Basra 75a) tell us that **פְּנֵי מֹשֶׁה כְּפְנֵי חַמָּה, וּפְנֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כְּפְנֵי לְבָנָה** - that Moshe's face can be likened to the sun, and Yehoshua's to the moon, a somewhat dimmer reflection.

HaRav Aizik Ausband zt"l explains that Hashem Yisborach in fact "limited" the transfer so that we should always realize the greatness of previous generations is such that we cannot approach their level. This should leave us wondering whether or not Moshe Rabeinu realized that the transfer would not be "complete". If he did, why did he place both of his hands on Yehoshua? Even if he did not, if seems certain that he realized the difference between transferring via one hand versus two. If Hakadosh Baruch Hu commanded him to use one hand, why did he use both?

When Hashem told Moshe to place one hand on Yehoshua, Moshe understood that Yehoshua would not be capable of achieving the same heights. Moshe furthermore understood that in this case at least, placing both hands on Yehoshua would be of no avail. Yet Moshe, understood that as Yehoshua's rebbe, he must try; the fact that it was impossible for Yehoshua to become as great as Moshe, was irrelevant; the job of a rebbe is to do everything within his power to try to make his talmid as great as he can.

Parsha Pshetel – Rabbi Yankie Shechter

לאלה תחלק הארץ – "To these shall the land be divided" 26:53
רבינו יואל– the last letters of the words לאלה תחלק הארץ –spell **הקץ**.

The Gemara in Bava Basra 122a says that unlike the division of land in this world in the times of Yehoshua, the division in the times of Moshiach, **הקץ** , will be very different.

In Olam Habah there will not be a single person who does not have land on a hill, in a valley, and in a ravine. Furthermore, in the times of Moshiach, Hakodosh Boruch Hu will Himself divide the land among them.

Reb Shmuel Donn- Remez

אֵלֶּה תַּעֲשׂוּ לַה' בְּמוֹעֲדֵיכֶם 29:39 "*These you shall offer up for Hashem on your festivals*"

The last two Perakim in the Parsha listed all of the Mussaf Korbonos of the Yomim Tovim; Rosh Chodosh, Pesach, Shavuos, Rosh Hashonah, Yom Kippur and Succos. Says the **חיים של תורה** the idea that all the Karbonos of the **מועדים** are listed in this weeks Parsha is actually hinted to in the name of the Parsha

פ- סח

י- ום כיפור

נ- שבועות (Day 50 of the Omer)

ח- ודש (Includes Rosh Hashono)

ס- וכות

"The essence of love is giving." - We don't give because we love — we love because we give. ~ Rav Dessler (Michtav Me'Eliyahu).

Stories of Gedolim



Eretz Yisroel in the early twentieth century. Poverty, hunger and disease were unfortunately the norm for many. But the Jews were physically deprived. The spiritual state of many Jewish people was very weak. Many people abandoned the ways of their fathers and left the path of Torah r"l. The Rabbis of Eretz Yisroel tried very hard to fight the tide of non-observance that permeated the holy hand. The desecration of **שבת** particularly caused much pain and Jewish businesses being opened on **שבת** hurt deeply.

Desperate to help their lost brethren the rabbis explained the beauty and sanctity of the holy day. But their pleas fell on deaf ears, and many could not resist the temptation and the risk of losing their income.

One day, late on Friday, **Reb Aryeh Levin zt"l** known as the Tzaddik of Yerushalayim, entered the store of a man who desecrated **שבת** . Inconspicuously, he sat in the store and observed many transactions between the owner and his customers. The hour was growing late and **שבת** was fast approaching, but R' Aryeh Levin made no move to leave. As sunset neared closer, the man asked the Rav why he remained in the store so close to the arrival of **שבת**. R' Levin's response was truly shocking "I wanted to better understand why you feel you have to desecrate the holy **שבת** "he replied. "Seeing how much business you have; I see why it is truly difficult and a real test for you to close your store. I am now better able to understand your struggle. But

still…the Heiligeh **שבת**"!! And with that he left to greet the **שבת** queen. The man was stunned. No lectures, no screaming. Just genuine concern for the struggle of another Jew with a hope that he will overcome the test and prevail.

And so it was. The man, inspired by the Rav's concern closed his store and with that he too prepared to usher in the **שבת** queen.

ושמרו בני ישראל את השבת לעשות את-השבת

The third Shabbos meal is properly called "shalosh seudos", which literally means "three meals". This is because by means of eating the third meal, the other two seudos are elevated to a higher level of significance.

In general, people are hungry for the meals of Leil Shabbos and Shabbos lunch. Whilst they still fulfil the mitzvah of oneg Shabbos, it is not obvious that they are being eaten for the sake of the mitzvah. The reverse is often true at shalosh seudos when people are not particularly hungry. Nevertheless, they eat a meal clearly intended for the sake of the mitzvah, thereby adding sanctity to the other two meals.

Rabbi Eliezer Parkoff Weekly Chizuk - Hashem Protects Eretz Yisroel

Remember the Gulf War when the Arabs were firing scud missiles at Eretz Yisrael? I remember when the Jerusalem evening calm was suddenly interrupted by the wail of air-raid sirens. I had been through this before during the Yom Kippur War.

The Rosh Yeshiva, **Rav Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg, zt"l**, was living next door to protect us. He assured everyone that nothing would happen to the frum neighbourhoods of Yerushalayim where they learn Torah.

Rav Chaim Kanievsky, shlita, has also reassured Bnei Brak. But my daughter was young and emotional. Ahhh! Imalah! She screeched. I calmly ushered the family into the living room which is an inside room with no outside windows. Boom! Boom! It was over. Where did they fall? To our knowledge no one was hurt. It is naturally unnerving to be in a missile attack. This is a real test of one's bitachon. As Torah Yidden we have to put our full trust in the Ribono Shel Olam that He will protect Klal Yisroel from harm.

The best laid-out plans of the generals can be turned around in one split second. 15 Tamuz is the Yahrzeit of the holy **Ohr HaChaim**. There is a little-known story how 200 years after his petirah in 1743 the Ohr HaChaim saved the entire populace of Eretz Yisroel from certain annihilation at the hands of the Nazi war machine.

First, I want to share with you an amazing prophecy that the holy Chofetz Chaim made. In 1933 when Hitler and his Nazi party came to power, he announced to the world his desire to exterminate all the Jews in the world. One of the Rabbeim of the Radin Yeshiva, Rav Moshe Landinski, asked the Chofetz Chaim what was going to be with the Jewish people.

The Chofetz Chaim prophetically answered that Hitler's plans would never be fulfilled. No one had ever succeeded in destroying the **entire** Jewish nation. This is the meaning of the possuk in Vayishlach, "If Esav comes to one camp and strikes it down, the remaining camp will escape." Rav Landinski then asked him, if that rosha succeeds, chas v'cholila, in destroying European Jewry, where will the Jews be able to escape to?

The Chofetz Chaim again answered prophetically, that this is an open possuk in Ovadia (1:17): "And on Har Zion there shall be a remnant, and it shall be holy." Rav Landinski left the Chofetz Chaim's room shaken, aware that he had just heard the fate of European Jewry. But he also knew that Eretz Yisroel would be spared. The Chofetz Chaim's amazing prophecy was fully accurate.



The Desert Fox Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was battling the British forces in Northern Africa.] in June 1942, Tobruk fell. Rommel's Panzer Corps suddenly broke through the British lines and drove on toward Cairo. "At El Alamein the Germans were about sixty miles from Alexandria, where the British Mediterranean Fleet was docked, and just fifty miles from the Suez Canal. Rommel was going thirty to forty miles a day. At that rate, he could be at the canal in forty-eight hours and after that, Palestine."

Jews realized the seriousness of the situation and felt helpless. They knew there was no army to protect them, and they had a very vivid idea of what to expect if the Germans came. "All of Palestine was in a panic because we heard about the way the Germans were behaving. This time, there seemed to be no way out."

Various proclamations were posted on the street. The Haganah (the Jewish defence force that would later become the modern-day Israeli army) tried to reassure the population that it would protect them. The more extreme Irgun was less subtle, suggesting that everyone carry a knife and "take at least one German with them." There was even a run on poison. Rabbi Besser recalls his next-door

neighbour from Germany who told him he had three servings of cyanide: one for himself, one for his wife, and one for their little dog, Fifi.

Haskel witnessed something even more upsetting. "The streets were filled with Arabs who were actually fighting among themselves over who was going to get which house. They said things like: 'I saw this house first, it is going to be mine. He went to the Husiatiner Rebbe to ask his advice. This was on a Sunday. The rebbe said he would have an answer for him in a day or two.

In the Chassidic world, the Husiatiner Rebbe is considered one of the great prophets of the twentieth century. He left Austria in 1936, two years before the Anschluss. He immigrated to Palestine and said openly that every Jew in Europe should do the same. Unlike most of the Chassidic rebbes, the Husiatiner saw it coming. There was a reason the rebbe told Beryl to wait a few days.

It is customary to visit the graves of great rabbis and sages on their yahrtzeit - the anniversary of their death. And that Tuesday was the yahrtzeit of one of the greatest rabbis in history, the holy Ohr Hachaim (the light of life). The Ohr Hachaim lived during the eighteenth century and was renowned for perhaps the most brilliant commentary on the Chumash - one that is studied to this day. He is buried in Har Hazeisim, the Mount of Olives, the famous cemetery in Jerusalem. So, with Rommel poised at Palestine's doorstep and no conceivable protection for the population, thousands of religious Jews turned to the only power they knew. They turned to G-d and fervent prayer - one that poured from the deepest recesses of their souls.

A fast day on the yahrtzeit was declared by the rebbes. Upwards of twenty thousand people went to pray at this tzaddik's grave. Beryl Ludmir accompanied the Husiatiner Rebbe to the grave, and while the rebbe prayed, Beryl noticed that he seemed to fix his eyes on the words chiseled on the gravestone. After a long while, the rebbe

turned to Beryl and said simply: "It will be good. Make the wedding." No one understood why the rebbe said this. But afterward Beryl went directly to the hotel and signed the contract for the celebration. Much later, Rabbi Besser went to the grave to try to figure out how the rebbe came to his conclusion. "I saw nothing special," the rabbi recalls. But the rebbe told Beryl that he had seen the Hebrew name of G-d written in gold letters, floating in the air, above the gravestone. And he saw it written in the correct way - with all four letters in a row. "For him, this was the sign."

On the yahrtzeit in 1942 began an amazing confluence of events that would change more than just Haskel and Liba's lives. The rebbe had not based his decision solely on what he saw over that grave. He had seen something else. While studying for that week's Torah parsha, the rebbe interpreted a commentary written hundreds of years before, that he claimed (correctly, it turns out) freed the Jews from their death sentence. The commentary was written by the Ohr Hachaim in the eighteenth century on the Torah parsha Balak.

On the possuk Bamidbar 24:17, he commented as following: In the Chumash, Yaakov is called by two names, Yaakov and Yisroel. When he is referred to as Yaakov, things do not work very well for the people of Israel. But after he wrestles with the angel and he becomes known by his new name, Yisroel, the nation prospers.

In the commentary, it says that if he is called Yaakov, he will be killed by Rommel. The name Rommel was actually spelled out in Hebrew almost two hundred years before the war. The commentary goes on to say that if Yaakov is called Yisroel, Rommel will not destroy him, and the nation will prevail.

It is more probable that the reference is to Romulus, one of the founders of Rome. But seeing the name Rommel spelled out phonetically, along with the lettering over the grave, was enough of a sign for the rebbe to declare that the Jews of Palestine would not be harmed.

At that moment, Field Marshal Erwin Rommel had advanced to the point that there were practically no British defences in front of him. Had he continued, there would be nothing to stop him from capturing Palestine and then possibly Syria, Iraq, and Iran. With the capture of Iran, the entire underbelly of the Soviet Union would have been open to attack and the Russians would have had to divert troops to protect that border. But that week, a huge sandstorm blew up out of the desert. It was impossible to go forward in those conditions. Rommel planned a tactical redeployment to a point where his tanks would be protected by hills. But Hitler had given his commanders strict orders that no German soldiers could retreat without his personal approval. Rommel sent Hitler a cable explaining his situation. Hitler cabled back saying absolutely not, no retreat. Rommel sent another telegram trying to explain that this was not a retreat, it was only a temporary redeployment because of conditions. But Hitler would not okay it.

Angry and frustrated, Rommel actually got on an airplane and flew back to Germany to see Hitler and explain the situation in person. Of course, it was not an easy trip. Rommel had to fly first to Tripoli, then to Sicily, and then on to Germany. The trip took close to twenty-four hours. When he arrived at Hitler's headquarters, he was kept waiting for another eight hours. When Hitler finally saw Rommel, he asked why he had come. Again Rommel explained his request for the redeployment of his troops.

One more time, Hitler, now agitated, said there would be no retreats. One more time Rommel tried to make his point that this was not a retreat but a redeployment to service the tanks and give them new tracks, which were badly needed. Finally, Hitler understood and he gave Rommel the green light. But the trip wasted three days and proved to be the undoing of the Germans' African campaign. When the Germans were ready for their next attack, they lost that month's full moon (attacks in the desert were made at night). So Rommel was forced to wait for the next month's full moon.

The following month the weather did not cooperate. July is normally clear, but that year it rained, and the skies were cloudy. So, the attack was put off for another month.

By this time, Churchill had placed a new commander in charge, Montgomery. It was Montgomery who stopped Rommel and his Mrika Korps in its tracks. The Germans never came any closer to Palestine. After the war, Field Marshal Keitel, the commander of the German Army, wrote that June 30, 1942, was the moment Germany reached its zenith. After that point, it was all downhill. From that day forward, the Germans continuously gave up ground until Berlin was conquered, and the Third Reich lay in ruins. June 30, 1942, coincided with the 15th of Tamuz, the Yahrzeit of the Ohr Hachaim, the same day that Beryl Ludmir stood with the Husiatiner Rebbe when he saw the name of G-d over the Ohr Hachaim's headstone.

The Jewish population settled down, life slowly went back to normal, and the Besser and Ludmir families planned their celebration.

Sukkah

A number of years ago, I met a wealthy businessman from Caracas, Venezuela who was spending Pesach with his family at a hotel in Florida. Over the course of the festival, we struck up a friendship, and I discovered he was a Holocaust survivor who had been first in the Janowska road camp and later in Auschwitz. Towards the end of the week, I summoned up the nerve to ask him if there was anything in particular that stood out in his mind as the reason he had survived. Without hesitation, he responded: "It was one mitzvah; the Sukkot I spent in Auschwitz. “I guess my face must have registered surprise because he immediately explained.

When he arrived in Auschwitz in the middle of his thirteenth winter, one of the Kapos took a liking to him, and arranged for him to be in charge of the daily rations to be given out to the prisoners at the

end of the day. It was a job that would save his life. He spent the days in a small shed attached to the large barracks, responsible for dividing up the bread and soup to be given out to each inmate at the end of the day. In addition to having access to food he was also often put into difficult situations having to respond to prisoners desperate for food....

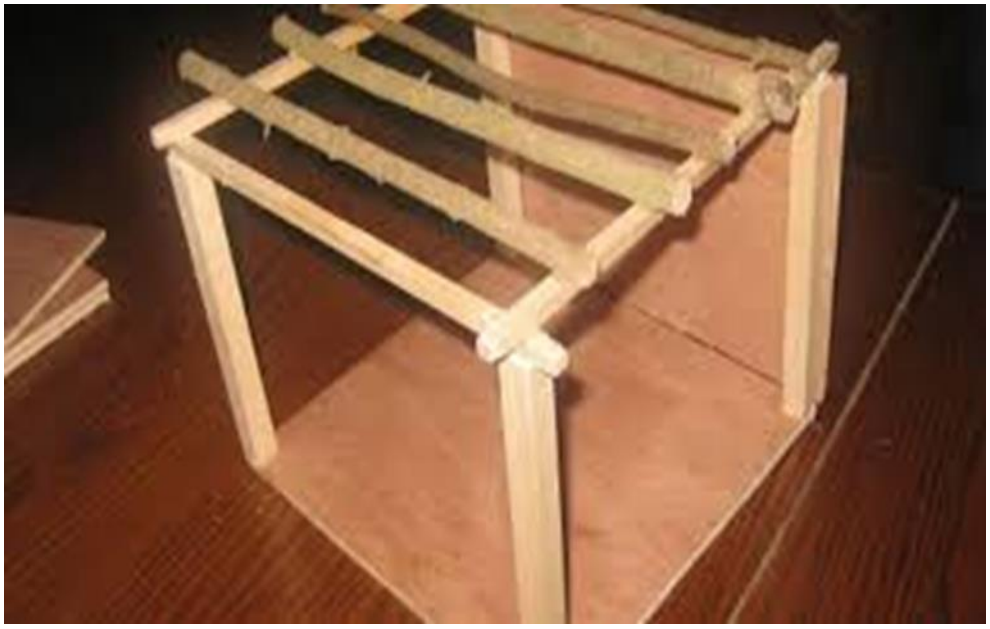
"One day, while preparing the rations in the dark winter night, he heard banging on the door of the shed, and opened it up to discover a man he knew to be a great Torah scholar and one of the eminent Rabbis of his area before the war, standing in the snow. "Before he could turn the man away (sure that he wanted scraps of bread), the man stepped into the shed, telling him that he needed a favour. "You know tonight is the first night of the festival of Sukkos, and I need two whole loaves of bread before you cut them up... so I can fulfil the special custom of making the Hamotzi blessing over two whole loaves in the sukkah."

"I was in shock", he recalled, "at the request. Not only was he asking for two whole loaves of bread, but he was even planning somehow on fulfilling the mitzvah of having a 'meal' in the Sukkah!"

"You have to understand", he explained, "a whole loaf of bread in Auschwitz was like a million dollars today. Can you imagine someone walking in off the street and asking for a million dollars? Even though he promised he would only take a bite, (the equivalent of his own ration) and then return the loaves to me, giving away those loaves would effectively mean I was risking my life." "Even more intriguing however, was how on earth this Rabbi had managed to build a sukkah in Auschwitz- Birkenau. "As it turned out, that summer and fall of 1944 the Nazis were bringing hundreds of thousands of Jews in a last-ditch effort to complete the 'final solution' before the war would end.

"In the twisted organizational logic of the lager camps world, the Nazis needed to have additional barracks to hold the new prisoners

for labour until they could be exterminated. As such, prisoners were dismantling tiers of bunks in the barracks (prisoners there literally began sleeping in piles of bodies on the floor of the barracks) while rows of bunks were being reconstructed in the central parade ground. "Seeing the rows and rows of bunks outdoors and realizing the festival of Sukkot was coming, this rabbi had managed to secure some s'chach (plant shrubbery) and place it atop some of the boards of the semi-constructed bunks beneath the open sky in such a way as to construct a minimally kosher sukkah for the festival. However, the mitzvah of living in the sukkah can only be fulfilled by either sleeping (which was out of the question) or eating in the sukkah, which was his aim.



"Seeing the hesitation on the boy's face, and desperate to fulfil this mitzvah against all the odds, the rabbi begged him for the loaves, if only for a few minutes. "I will give you these loaves", said the boy, "but only on condition you take me with you to fulfil the mitzvah of the sukkah." "The rabbi, shocked by the impetuous response, began to attempt to dissuade the boy from this condition. He would be risking his life by walking outside after curfew, and again for carrying two whole loaves of bread, and of course for attempting to sit in a sukkah. But nothing he could say would dissuade the boy, so together the two of them, an old Rabbi and a young man, risked their lives and sat, for a few brief moments, in a sukkah in Auschwitz.

The Nazi Doctor Who Saved a Jewish G.I.

Approximately 500,000 Jews served in the U.S. armed forces during World War II. Jewish G.I.s constantly faced the spectre of anti-Semitism in the army and they were forced to consider how open they should be about their religion. They had deep emotions about facing an enemy who was methodically capturing and murdering Jews. Jewish G.I.s feared the consequences if caught by the Nazis. Their last name, physical appearance, or the "H" (for Hebrew) on their dog tags could mean being shipped to a concentration camp.

Robert Levine, aged 19, from Bronx, NY, was one of the young Jewish American soldiers who landed in England prior to the Allies' D-Day invasion on June 6, 1944. After a fierce battle, the Americans succeeded in forcing the Germans off the hill but getting back down the other side was a problem. "The Germans retreated, but they set up traps," explained Levine. "We got caught at the bottom of the hill, where the Germans were waiting for us. Suddenly a grenade came over and caught me in my leg, above the knee. And I looked up and I saw this German paratrooper. He looked about 10 feet tall and pointed his submachine gun at me. The kid next to me got up and took off, and the German wheeled around and shot him. I put up my hands and surrendered."

Levine found himself a Nazi prisoner of war. Suddenly one of these 'friendly fire' shells exploded. The soldier beside Levine, who absorbed most of the blast's deadly force, died instantly. "A guy named Mike and me – we both went flying. My leg was really damaged, and Mike was killed. To this day, I believe he took the bullet for me, he died so I could live," Levine maintains. Of the dozen American POWs captured that day, he was the only survivor. With his leg injured far more seriously this time, Levine's chances of survival appeared precarious at best.

His salvation was to come in the unlikely guise of a dark-haired German doctor named Dr. Edgar Woll. Levine recalled finding himself

on the 'operating table' in a German field hospital. The military doctor looked at him and told him in accented English, "For you, the war is over."



Then the doctor noticed his dog tags and asked in German, "What is 'H'?" The H for 'Hebrew' identified me as Jewish. I had just turned 19 and I thought that was the end. At that time all GIs wore stamped metal tags on chains around their necks, containing identifying information including their religion: C for Catholic, P for Protestant or H for Hebrew. "I knew the H for 'Hebrew' identified me as Jewish," Levine said. "I had just turned 19, and I thought that was the end for me. He thought his life was over. The doctor must have suspected what the H stood for. Yet, Levine awoke from the operation. He discovered that although his leg was gone, he was still alive. Emerging from the anaesthesia, his relief at being alive was greater than the loss of his lower right leg. Dr. Woll's surgery saved the Jewish soldier's life. The compassionate doctor also removed Levine's incriminating dog tags, ensuring his Nazi captors would not kill the young GI because he was a Jew. "He took the dog tags knowing full well that I would have got in trouble somewhere down the line," recounted Levine. "I believe he saved me."

Inside his shirt pocket he found a note written by Dr. Woll in German on the reverse side of a Nazi propaganda card with quotations from Adolf Hitler. Though Levine could not read a word of German, he kept the card for months. Then he was rescued by Allied troops and a ship took him home to the United States. When Levine had the note translated, he discovered why the doctor had chosen

amputation, including details of the post-surgical treatment: "Crushed right foot. Fracture of lower leg. Foreign body in upper right leg's tissue. Opening of the ankle joint. Amputation at place of fracture. Bandage with sulpha. Vaccinated against gas gangrene."

The removal of his dog tags likely saved Levine from being sent to an infamous camp for Jewish POWs where 350 American soldiers were worked to death. Levine's wife Edith believes her husband would have died if not for Dr. Woll's exceptional act of kindness towards an injured enemy soldier. Upon his return home, Levine became a businessman and owned several fast-food restaurants. He led a full life as a husband, father and grandfather. Yet he could not forget the sympathetic German doctor who had inexplicably saved his life, though he never had the chance to thank him or see him again.

It took Robert Levin nearly 40 years to track down Doctor Woll but the mystery started to unravel during an emotional visit back to Normandy Beach in 1981. There, through a network of connections implemented by the curator of the Utah Beach Museum, Levine was able to meet Dr. Woll's family in Saarbrucken, Germany.

Although Dr. Woll had died of cancer in 1954, his widow and their three children were deeply moved that the veteran, after all these years, was willing to travel to Germany to acknowledge the doctor's humane treatment. "The family wanted to meet this American Jewish soldier. It was an amazing connection," said Levine.

Bob and Edith Levine, who have two daughters of their own, spent the weekend with the doctor's family. They presented Mrs. Woll with her late husband's old handwritten note. Levine said. "It's special. How many guys came out of the war with this kind of connection?" At a time of unspeakable brutality, the life of one young Jewish soldier had been saved by one Nazi doctor with a compassionate heart. (*www.aish.com*)

Likute Mimini Michoel

11:25 פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל



"Pinchos, the son of Elozor, the son of Aharon haKohen, has turned My anger back from Bnei Yisroel".

The word **הֵשִׁיב** is somewhat surprising. It seems that a phrase connoting neutralisation of Hashem's anger would be more appropriate than heishiv – turning back.

The Vilna Gaon explains by citing the words of Dovid HaMelech in Tehillim [106:30-31] **וַיַּעֲמֹד פִּינְחָס וַיְפַלֵּל וַתֵּעָצַר הַמַּגֵּפָה** – Pinchas arose and executed judgment and then the plague was halted, **וַתֵּחָשֶׁב לוֹ לִצְדָקָה לְדֹר וָדֹר עַד־עוֹלָם** – This was counted to him for a righteous deed (literally 'as charity') to all generations for evermore.

Why is it, askes the Gaon, that Pinchas' act is characterised as **צדקה**? He answers that according to Torah Law [Shemos 30:13] every Jew is obligated on an annual basis to give a machatzis ha'shekel which would be used to fund the korbonos tzibbur in the Mishkan and thereafter in the Temple. The word **מ ח צ י ת** contains five letters, the central one being a **צ**, which stands for **צדקה**.The two closest letters to the middle one are **ח** and **י** making the word **חי** – life. The bookend letters of the word are **מ** and **ת** making the word **מת** (the opposite of life). The construction of this word is intended to hint to us that which we are told in Mishlei [10:2], **וְצְדָקָה תַּצִּיל מִמָּוֶת** – charity saves from death, since the letters of the word **חי**

are drawn close to the central צ, whilst keeping the letters of the word מת at arm's length.

In the word חֲמָתִי - My anger, the letter configuration is the reverse. The middle letters are mem and ת spelling מת – death, whereas it is the outer letters, ח and י, that spell חי – life.

The possuk is enlightening us to the fact that it is not only צדקה in its purest form that has life-saving properties. Through his noble and selfless act of zealotry and kiddush Hashem, Pinchas heishiv – turned around or inverted the letters in the word חֲמָתִי that death was chased away and life was brought once again to the core of Bnei Yisroel's existence, expunging the rampant plague that had killed so many.

When Hashem observes the positive way in which we interact with our fellow Jews, may He be moved to act midoh ke'negged midoh with us, protecting us and our brethren throughout the world.

Parsha Potpourri - Rav Ozer Alport



Rashi explains (29:36) **התעכבו לי מעט עוד.** **ולשון חבה הוא זה**, "*Remain with Me a little longer." It expresses [His] affection [for Israel]. It is like children taking leave of their father, who says to them, "It is difficult for me to part with you; stay one more day."*

The festival of Shemini Atzeres is Hashem's way of saying that after we have spent so much time together with Him in the sukkah, it is difficult for Him to separate from us and He therefore asks us to linger one more day. How will this solve the problem of the painful separation, which will presumably only become more difficult after spending additional time together?

The **Darkei Mussar** explains that through Hashem expressing to us how difficult it is for Him when we separate and asking us to remain with Him for one additional day, we will respect His request and make efforts not to separate from Him throughout the entire year. Even if we are unable to spend the entire day with Him as on a Yom Tov, we will make sure to make time each day to study Torah and pray.

Rav Shimshon Pinkus compares this to a man who falls in love with a woman, and when the time comes for her to leave, he is distraught by the prospect, so he takes out a ring and betroths her. He is no longer saddened by the idea of separation, as he knows that they are married, and it will only be temporary.

Similarly, Hashem asks us to remain with Him for more day so that the connection will be so great that it will form a bond which will last throughout the year. However, he adds that in truth, the question is predicated on a false premise. If a person is placed in a room full of precious gems and told that he may keep all of the jewels that he gathers in 7 days and at the end of that period he is offered one more day to collect more, he would rejoice even though he knows that he still won't be able to gather all of them.

Similarly, even one additional day of closeness to Hashem is precious even if it doesn't last forever.

Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages

The Divrei Yisroel, zt"l, of Modzhitz, taught that happiness and peace of mind are signs of genuine belief in Hashem. If one wants to know whether his Bitachon in Hashem is sincere, he should measure how tranquil and calm he is. If one's Bitachon and trust in Hashem is genuine, he won't be worried or stressed!

Parsha Pshetel – Rabbi Yankie Shechter

לכן אמר, הנני נתן לו את בריתי שלום 12:25 - רבינו אפרים

The written word is **שלים** for the **ו** is cut and it is therefore a **י** -yet it is read as **שלום**. This is to teach is that Hakodosh Boruch Hu paid him his reward for the **י** -ten tests that he passed that day.

פינחס is the same Gematria as **יצחק** for Yitzchok was the tenth and final test that Avrohom Avinu passed – the Akeidas Yitzchok.

The Gematria of **פינחס** is also equal to the Gematria of **בן** four times (52x4=208), which is K'neged: **אש עפר, מים, רוח**, . When Pinchos killed Zimri, it let free three of these Yesodos, and there was only one **בן** ,left remaining, the Yesod of **אש** . That was why he was then called **אליהו** ,which is the Gematria of **בן**.

Pardas Yehuda- Rabbi Yehuda Z. Klitnick

Tha act of Pinchas was purely for the sake of Hashem **וְשֵׁם֮ אִ֣ישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵ֒ל הַמֻּכֶּ֣ה אֲשֶׁר֩ הֻכְּתָ֨ה אֶת־הַמִּדְיָנִ֜ית זִמְרִ֣י בֶן־סָ֗לּוּא נְשִׂ֤יא בֵית־אָב֙ לַשִּׁמְעֹנִֽי**:25:14. *The name of the Person who Pinchas killed was Zimri the son of Salu.*



The Question is, why the Torah relays the name of the person killed only after the whole story, and after the reward of Pinchas? The answer is: that many times when someone does an act to someone even though it might look that his intention is pure, [the same thing is by a machlokes] however there is a underlying intention to settle a score and the bottom line is revenge. However, now with this act he can mask his evil intention.

Therefore, by the act of Pinchas, the Torah witnesses that Pinchas didn't even know who the sinner was. Only later did Pinchas find out who the culprit was. Hence, Pinchas meant this act purely for the sake of Hashem.

Likute Mimini Michoel



The Gemoro [Maseches Shabbos 119b] says **חמין במוצאי שבת מלוגמא** that drinking hot water on Motza'ei Shabbos can heal you.

The Rebbe Reb Zyshe states that hot drinks are a cure for sadness. He brings a remez for this from the words of Tehillim [147:3], **הָרוֹפֵא לִשְׁבוּרֵי לֵב וּמְחַבֵּשׁ לְעַצְּבוֹתָם** - "He cures the broken-hearted and binds up their sadness".

The work **מְחַבֵּשׁ** is an acronym for :

מלוגמא - מ חמין - ח במוצאי - ב שבת - ש

meaning that the hot water of Motza'ei Shabbos is a balm for sadness.

The Orchos Chaim says that when taking a hot drink on Motza'ei Shabbos, one should say these words.

Thought of the week: You are unique in this world. Just like everyone else.

Rav Yechiel Spero writes a very touching story.



It was not unusual for those waiting to speak to the **Skverer Rebbe** to be standing in line in his home at 2 A.M. The line included a young man dressed in jeans and a very nice button-down shirt. It was not exactly the standard dress for those coming to see the Rebbe. Yoni's clothing drew more than a few glances from the others, who were mostly dressed in Shtriemlach and long coats, as they all waited patiently for their turn.

He walked into the Rebbe's inner chamber with some trepidation. Gathering his courage, he asked the Rebbe for a Brachah for a Refuah Sheleimah for Yerachmiel ben Baila. The Rebbe looked up, and then closed his eyes, and repeated with great concentration, "Yerachmiel ben Baila should have a Refuah Sheleimah!"

As Yoni was about to leave, one of the Rebbe's Gabbaim reached over and took Yoni by the arm and asked excitedly, "Where do you know the name Yerachmiel ben Baila?" Yoni explained that he worked in the summer in a camp called HASC. "All types of children, from all different backgrounds come to HASC. Yerachmiel ben Baila is my camper. I spend every day with him. I dress him in the morning, play with him, feed him, and even put him to bed at night."

The man listened carefully. As Yoni continued speaking, "Today is Yerachmiel's birthday. I wanted to buy him a birthday present, but I could not figure out what to get him. He would not be able to play with a video game or even a ball. So, I decided to come to the Skverer Rebbe, since the boy is from a Chassidishe family. I figured

that the best birthday present I could get him would be a Brachah from the Rebbe, and that's why I came here tonight."

Yoni was surprised to find that the man he was speaking with was crying. He said, "I'm sorry. Did I say something wrong?" The man responded, "No, not at all. I just want to thank you. You see, Yerachmiel ben Baila is my son!"

A Shabbos Vort- Rabbi Yisrael Bronstein

יוֹם תְּרוּעָה יִהְיֶה לָכֶם *"It shall be a day of shofar sounding for you"*. 29:1



R' Yitzchak Blaser says that when the Satan hears the Shofar sound on Rosh Hashanah, he immediately grows frightened and confused and thinks, perhaps Mashiach is coming now. The Satan hears the blowing of the Shofar year after year and Mashiach has not yet arrived- why is he still so frightened by the sound?

Every year, the Satan suspects that perhaps the Jews have repented and have become worthy of receiving Mashiach. Therefore, he worries so! One must never despair and think that so many years have passed, and I still have not merited repenting for my misdeeds. Perhaps there is no hope for me.

A person should banish this foreign thought from his heart and rouse himself to repentance with renewed vigour, year after year!

A Short Vort- Rabbi Moshe Kormornick

וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַמַּגֵּפָה וַיֹּאמֶר ה׳ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן לֵאמֹר

שְׂאוּ אֶת־רֹאשׁ כָּל־עֲדַת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל - *It was after the plague — and Hashem spoke to Moshe and to Elazar the son of Aharon HaKohen, saying, "Take a census of the entire Jewish People .* (26:1-2)



By instructing Moshe to take a census of the people right after mentioning the plague that killed so many of them, Hashem is compared to a dedicated shepherd who counts his remaining flock after they are slaughtered by a pack of wolves.

One could ask, though, there are two ways to know how many people were killed: one could count the remainder of the people — as we see from our verse; or one could simply count the number of victims. Why did Hashem tell Moshe to count the entire Jewish People in order establish that there were 24,000 victims of the plague, why not just count the victims? Surely, counting 24,000 people instead of over 600,000 would have been a far less arduous task!

Perhaps one could answer that rather on focusing on the negative actions of the Jewish People — namely their sins which brought on the plague — Hashem instead wanted to focus on their virtues — namely that the remainder of the People would merit to enter into Eretz Yisroel. Therefore, despite being a more cumbersome count, the lesson we learn is that even when it is more difficult, it is always better to focus on the good of others instead of their failings.

A Short Vort- Rabbi Moshe Kormornick

לְאָזְנִי מִשְׁפַּחַת הָאָזְנִי "To Ozni, the family of Ozni" (26:16).

In the opinion of Rashi, this is synonymous with the family of Etzbon (from the root 'Etzba', meaning 'finger'). **שזו משפחת אצבון**

What, one may well ask, is the connection between these two names? **The Sh'loh** connects them via the Chazal (see kesuvos 5a), who explain that a person's fingers are shaped the way they are, long and thin, so that when he hears something that he shouldn't, he can immediately place them in his ears, to prevent him from hearing what he ought not to hear. Hence the ears and the fingers serve one and the same purpose.

A Short Vort- Rabbi Moshe Kormornick

הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל *"Pinchas ben Elazar … diverted My anger from on the B'nei Yisrael … "* (25:11)



Citing the **G'ro**, the P'ninim mi'Shulchan ha'G'ro explains the words הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי which literally means 'turned my anger round', with the adage of Chazal that Tzadikim are called 'alive', even after their death, whereas even during their lifetime, Resha'im are called dead.

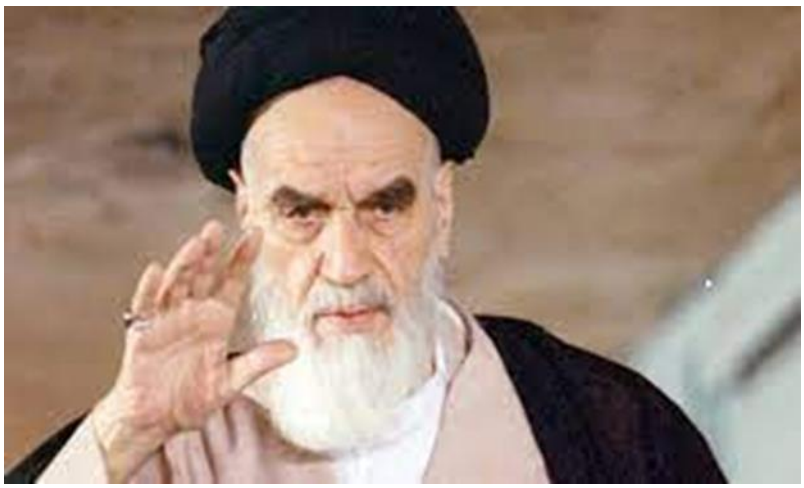
What they mean, says the G'ro, is that whilst in the case of the former, it is only their bodies that have died, but their Souls remain alive, in the latter case, it is only their bodies that live; their inner souls have already died.

Take the word חֲמָתִי, and you will find that its inner letters (the Neshamah) spell 'meis', its outer letters (the body) 'chai'.

What Pinchas therefore did was to turn the word "chamosi" round, from its current format (where the Neshamah is dead, and the body alive), to 'michyas', whose inner letters spell 'chai'.

This Amazing Story Took Place Many Years Ago In Iran

It was related by a witness, Rav Yehuda Ezrachian, one of the Rabbanim in Iran at the time. The story happened to Harav Avraham Mordechai Hirschberg, zt"l, a beloved student of **Harav Meir Shapiro, zt"l**, of Lublin, who later became the chief rabbi of Mexico.



Rav Avraham Mordechai was an erudite scholar, and he was also a man of action with expansive ties to heads of state and prominent personalities. In 1979, when the Islamic revolution broke out after the Persian Shah was deposed and replaced by the notorious Ayatollah Khomeini, ym"s, a rabid hater of Israel. Until that point, ties between Iran and the West were cordial. After the revolution, however, all those ties were cut off at once. When the revolution broke out, demonstrators who hated the West - especially America – stormed the American consulate and took everyone inside hostage. They then presented a list of demands to the American government as a condition for their release. Exhausting negotiations dragged on for a year and a half between representatives of the American government and of the Iranian regime. In the meantime, more than fifty captives were living in the consulate compound, among them Jews, under deplorable conditions. As the negotiation continued, with no end in sight, the captives were suffering.

During that time, the Americans managed to arrange for a delegation of four neutral clergymen to enter Iran, and to visit the captives in the consulate to provide them with some encouragement. Three prominent priests were chosen for the mission, along with Rav Avraham Mordechai Hirschberg, zt"l, for the Jewish captives. It was Chanukah when Rav Hirschberg arrived at the consulate. He lit the Chanukah candles with the captives, offered them effusive chizuk and spoke about the story of Chanukah - how a handful of Jews prevailed over masses of non-Jews in battle. His message infused them with hope and encouragement.

As Rav Hirschberg's visit drew to a close and he was preparing to return home with the rest of the delegation, they were surprised to discover that they were not being allowed to leave just yet. The evil Khomeini, seeking to humiliate the Americans and promote himself, demanded their public attendance at a mass Muslim event that was scheduled to take place in Teheran's central square.

The centre point of the ceremony was a high dais on which senior regime officials – including Khomeini - were seated. Alongside them were the four American representatives, Rav Hirschberg among them. When the sign was given, the masses began their prayers, in their language; throughout it, they bowed and prostrated themselves, as is their custom. When the sign was given, the religious figures on the stage bowed on their knees – including the Christian priests. After them, at once, all the millions of people also bowed. Only one man remained standing tall – Rav Hirschberg, zt"l.

The Ayatollah Khomeini sensed something, and flew into a rage. He immediately summoned Rav Avraham Mordechai to him, and through a translator, asked him why he had not bowed, while his three American friends had?

Rav Avraham Mordechai gently turned to the translator and asked him to explain to the ruler that our Torah states that one must not bow in idol worship, and because he did not understand Persian, he

did not understand to whom they were bowing. As such, he was forbidden from joining them. It is possible that the priests who did bow were familiar with the Persian language and knew to whom they were bowing. But because he did not know, he was compelled to remain standing.

His innocent words of truth took the evil ruler by surprise, and also found favour in his eyes. Instead of killing him or otherwise punishing him, he instructed the interpreter to tell the rabbi that he liked his answer. He was impressed by the fact that he was not a flatterer like the other priests in the delegation were. Khomeini was known for his burning hatred of Jews, and yet, he respected and admired the Jewish rabbi for adhering to his religion.

When Reb Avraham Mordechai understood from the translator how much of an impression his words had made on the Ayatollah, he decided to utilize the opportunity to help his Jewish brethren in Iran. He asked to set up a meeting to discuss their plight with him. The Ayatollah told him when to come, and at the appointed hour, Reb Avraham Mordechai arrived at the Ayatollah's residence. When the audience began, the Rav said with tears in his eyes: "I want to plead for my Jewish brethren who live here. I have learned that the Jewish residents are suffering terribly at the hand of their neighbours. Perhaps the ruler in his compassion can save them and help prevent this persecution."

The ruler first tried to argue that the Jews were collaborating with his enemies. But Rav Hirschberg, was able to persuade him and prove to him that they had no hatred for the ruler and the revolution at all. On the contrary, they hoped and yearned for the new government to protect them from their harassers. Surprisingly, the ruler agreed to the request and Rav Avraham Mordechai decided to make one more request relating to something he had become aware of during his conversations with members of the community: When the revolution broke out, a curfew was imposed throughout Iran, each

night, until the early morning hours. This was very difficult for many Jews, who were used to going to daven in shul at dawn so they could then go to work. Now, due to the curfew, they could not fulfil their religious practices. The Ayatollah agreed to issue an order to the Iranian police commander that from that day on, if they saw a person during the curfew carrying a tallis and tefillin case, that is a sign that he is not an enemy of the revolution, but rather a Jew performing his religious duty and rising early to pray.

This remarkable accomplishment made waves, and generated tremendous chizuk, as everyone was able to see how a Jew who fulfils the mitzvos of his religion proudly and is not afraid of scoffers and those who threaten him ultimately merited to find such special favour in the most unexpected place.

Rabbi Naftali H. Ganzweig- Divrei Torah Be'er Hei Tev

יום תרועה יהי׳ לכם (במדבר י״ט א׳)

A day of Teruah it should be for you (Bamidbor 19:1). It does not say Tekyoh, Yovel, or Shofer, as it says in other places, rather a language of Rayus – companionship. That there should be peace, love, and companionship. And through this it will be "Lohchem" (for you), for your pleasure, as it says "Lech Lecha" (Bereishis 12:1), to which Chazal explains, Lechanoschoh, Ulitovosechoh – for your pleasure and your good. • Sefer Divrei Emes (138)

See also Sefer Yalkut Zos Zikoron, on the Possuk Ohloh Elokim Bitru'oh (Tehillim 47:6) , that with the "Rayus" of which one says to his friend on the night of Rosh Hashanah "Gut Yom Tov - and Lishonoh Tovoh Tikoseiv", with this it removes the Midas Hadin (attribute of judgement) from upon the Kisei Hadin (the seat of judgement).

R' Shmuel Winzelberg- Torah U'Tefilah

פינחס בן אלעזר בן אהרן הכהן... הנני נתן לו את בריתי שלום [כה:יא-יב]

Pinchas son of Elazar son of Aharon HaKohein… Behold! I give him my covenant of peace (25:11-12)

The holy Seforim bring down an early custom kept by the Eidut HaMizrach for hundreds of years and has now been almost forgotten. When a boy is born, they would place a chair in the honour of Eliyahu HaNavi in the house of the new mother, since he comes to the house three days before the Bris. Even if a man did not have a designated chair for Kisei shel Eliyahu, he would take the nicest chair in the house, adorn it with a nice covering, and place a Sefer Tanach on it.

Some would open the Sefer to Parashas Pinchas, where we learn that Pinchas is Eliyahu (Yalkut Shimoni beginning of the Parshah). However, since it is prohibited to leave a Chumash open, they would open it to Parashas Pinchas and cover it with a cloth. In the merit of this, Eliyahu HaNavi will guard the boy, and he will be 'Shomer Briso', guardian of his covenant. (Doresh Tzion)

Zivug

A young man who was having difficulty finding his Shidduch visited **Rav Chaim Kanievsky** to seek his advice and Brachah. The man explained that he had extended much effort, but still could not find a suitable match, and asked for the Gadol's guidance. Rav Chaim asked him a few questions, and after thinking a little, responded that the young man's Zivug (marriage partner) hadn't been born yet, and wished him 'Brachah V'Hatzlachah', leaving the man in tears, despondent over the Rav's words. Two months had passed, and the young man returned to Rav Chaim Kanievsky with a smile on his face, and happily announced that he was a Choson! Those present were

somewhat surprised, wondering how he was able to accomplish this in such a short amount of time, after hearing what the Rav had said.

The Choson explained that his Kallah was a Giyoress, a Jewish convert who had converted only a month earlier. "The Rav was correct," he explained, "when he said my Zivug had not yet been born.

Chazal teach us that a Jewish convert is like a newly born person. She had in reality not yet been born, since she was not yet part of the Jewish People!"



Rav Chaim Brim zt"l

Rav Chaim the Rosh Yeshivah of Yeshivah Mishkan Yosef, was known for his great sensitivity to the feelings of others. He was once invited to speak at an event, and the speaker who preceded him used notes that he referred to as he spoke. Rav Chaim was then called up to speak, and he too referred to his notes as he spoke. When he finished speaking and left the podium, he forgot to take his notes with him.

After the event was over, someone straightened up the room and he found the notes which Rav Chaim Brim had left at the podium. To his puzzlement, he saw that the "notes" were a blank piece of paper! It became clear that Rav Chaim, in his compassion for another, feared that he would embarrass the first speaker who spoke with notes, if he would follow and speak without notes. Therefore, he decided to refer to his "notes" as he spoke as well!

The Bread Meal

A man had experienced a series of setbacks and he went to his Rav for help in understanding why Hashem had "done" this to him.



The Rav told him a story about two men who sat down to a meal. One had 3 loaves of bread with him while the other had 2. A third man joined them, and they all shared the 5 loaves equally. After the meal, the guest left 5 gold pieces with them and left. The 3-loaves owner claimed 3 gold coins as he had given of his 3 loaves. The 2-loaves owner argued that the guest had not been concerned with whose loaves he had eaten, only that they had shared with him. The money should be divided equally. They went to a **דיין** who ruled that the 3-loaves owner should receive 4 of the gold coins while the other receives only one.

The strange P'sak spread quickly, and many were outspoken in their criticism. The 2-loaves owner turned to the Ibn Ezra and wondered how such a judgement could be justified, where he received even less than the 3-loaves owner was willing to give him !

The Ibn Ezra chastised him for casting aspersions on such a simple and true P'sak, explaining: "All together you had 5 loaves, or 15 loaf-thirds. Since you all ate equally, each of you had 5 thirds. Now, you donated 2 loaves = 6 thirds. You ate 5, leaving over 1 for the guest. Your friend donated 3 loaves = 9 thirds. He ate 5, leaving over 4 thirds for the guest.

Is not the P'sak correct?" The Rav concluded, if it can be so difficult to understand a human **חשבון**, how could we possibly question Hashem's **חשבון**?

Rabbi Pesach Krohn- Project Mesorah

יִפְקֹד ה' אֱלֹקֵי הָרוּחֹת לְכָל־בָּשָׂר אִישׁ עַל־הָעֵדָה *"Let the Lord, the G-d of spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation*, 27:16

Rashi: *דעתו של כל אחד ואחד ואינן דומין זה לזה, מנה עליהם מנהיג שיהא סובל כל אחד ואחד לפי דעתו: "Master of the universe, the character of each person is revealed to you, and no two are alike. Appoint over them a leader who will tolerate each person according to his individual character."*

We know that the Beis Hamikdosh was destroyed because of Sinas Chinom.

Moshe Rabeinu asks Hashem to appoint a new leader for Klal Yisroel that recognises that every person is different.

We think that everyone must be the same with the same mindset etc. As we approach the 3 weeks and Tisha B'Av, we need to have more patience, tolerance and understanding. If we have this than there will be much less Sinas Chinom and arguments. This will lead to more Shalom, and hopefully we will be zoche to see the building of the third Beis Hamikdosh.

Loyal Leadership, by Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky

At the end of Parshas Pinchos, Hashem tell Moshe Rabbeinu about the forthcoming end of his life, and the passing of the leadership to the next generation. Moshe, concerned about the future of his people, asks a request, "Hashem should choose a leader who will go and come in front of them, (the Jewish Nation) and the congregation of Israel should not be like a flock that does not have to them a shepherd."

Seemingly, Moshe Rabbeinu uses a few extra words. Instead of saying that the Jews should not be like "a flock without a shepherd,"

he adds the words "asher ein lahem roeh" that does not have to them a shepherd." Why the extra words?

Rabbi Paysach Krohn tells the following story. At the outbreak of World War One, a young man came to the great Gaon and leader of European Jewry, **Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky** for a blessing not to be inducted into the Russian army. The hazards of war were terrifying, and the army usually kept soldiers in their ranks for decades. After conversing with the teen for a bit, the Rav asked, "Do you wear tzitzis." "No." came the reply. "Do your put on tefillin every day." "No." "Do you observe the Shabbos." The boy, looking down, embarrassed, and in a whisper, he answered again, "No. "Silence permeated the room and the boy stood in fear of what the holy tzaddik would tell him. Instead, after a few moments, Rav Grodzinksy looked up at him, and in a calming, loving voice, he said, "I bless you that the Soviet authorities should be just as disappointed in you as I am."

Only a few weeks later, the boy came back to the Rav and told him, "Rebbe, your bracha worked! I was rejected by the Soviet army!" He them lifted his shirt to show the Rav his tzitzis. Needless to say, he returned to the path of observance.

Moshe wasn't worried that the Jews would be left without someone taking charge. He knew that knew that there will be a leader. He wanted to ensure that the leader was a leader "of them." The new leader had to take into account the plight of every single Jew, each personal situation, and every individual's struggles and challenges. He wanted the leader to celebrate with them and revel with joy in their accomplishments. Therefore, he implored Hashem, "Let the Jews not be like a flock that does not have to them a leader." Moshe insisted that the leader be a leader "for them."

Moshe, the ultimate leader of the Jewish Nation, knew to instill this important trait in the future of our leaders for generations to come.

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky on Pinchos- Air Joshua

Ruach. It is a word with many meanings. It could mean air or wind. It could mean spirit or life. In Ivrit, modern Hebrew, the word matzav ruach means disposition or mood. By all means it refers to an intangible or at least odourless and colourless entity that is definable in as many ways as the wind blows.

Ruach seems to be the criterion that defines Jewish leadership. In fact, it is also a word that is used as an attribute that describes the leader of Creation and all beings, the Almighty.

In this week's parsha, Moshe, who knows his time is near, beseeches the Almighty to appoint his successor. "***Let the L-rd, the G-d of "ruchos" (plural of ruach) of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation; (A man) who will go forth before them and come before them, who will lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the Lord will not be like sheep without a shepherd***" (Numbers 27:16).

The **רִבּוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם** responds in kind: ***"The L-rd said to Moshe, "Take for yourself Joshua the son of Nun, a man with ruach within him, and you shall lay your hand upon him. And you shall present him before Elazar the kohen and before the entire congregation, and you shall command him in their presence***. (18-19)

I was curious about the word used here, "ruach." How does something that is as light and bare as air, represent the life and spirit that represents the Almighty?

The Story

One of the most beautiful moments I remember that capsulated my revered grandfather of blessed memory, **Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky**'s charm, happened when I was just married.

One of his dearest students once came to him and lamented the lack of suitable matches for his daughter.

"But what about the last young man that your daughter met, they say he is a fine scholar."

"Indeed, he is," replied the father of the girl. **"But he is flat."**

Rav Yaakov looked puzzled.

"You see, Rosh Yeshiva," continued the man, "imagine you open a seltzer bottle and leave it uncapped for a few days." The father paused. Rebbe, the young man is missing the bubbles."



Rav Yaakov smiled, walked into the kitchen and turned to his wife. "Chana? **Ich hub bubbles?** (Chana. Do I have bubbles?)"

I will never forget the smile on both their faces.

The Message

The power of Ruach is endless. It may be nothing but bubbles, but it transforms life into spirit, it charges young minds to accomplish, it drives ambition to action and it is the life force behind so many great institution.

Rashi explains that the G-d of all ruchos has the ability to comprehend, understand and act according to each individual emotion. And thus He appointed a man of Ruach to take charge.

Literally translated it may be intangible, but it is the bubbles of enthusiasm, the effervescence of interest that wind-driven passion that billows the sails of leadership. Indeed, it is the bubbles in the seltzer in that make our nation sparkle.

"Remember you're the one who can fill the world with sunshine."

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky -Daughters-and- Law

There is a fascinating sequence of events in this week's portion that is analyzed by the Medrash and expounded upon by every major Torah commentator.

At the beginning of Chapter 27, the daughters of Zelophchad appeal to Moshe. Their father died in the desert, but he was not amongst the insurgents who rebelled against Moshe during Korach's uprising. He died of his own sin and left no sons. The daughters want an inheritance in the Land of Israel.

Moshe did not remember the law and consulted with Hashem. He advised Moshe that Zelophchad's daughters had a valid argument. They were entitled to a portion of the land that had been allotted for Zelophchad.



The ensuing section of the weekly Parsha has Hashem reminding Moshe that he will not enter the Land of Israel. Immediately a conversation follows. In verses 15-18 Moshe pleads to Hashem, "the Lord of all spirits and flesh to appoint a man over the assembly who will go out before them and go in before them; so they shall not be like sheep that have no shepherd."

Rashi quotes a Medrash that links the two episodes. He explains that after Moshe saw that Zelophchad's daughters were entitled to inherit the Land, he felt that the time had come to ask for the torch of leadership to be passed to his own children. This does not come to pass. Hashem tells Moshe to bestow authority to his own disciple, Joshua, who ultimately leads the Jewish Nation into Israel.

Many Biblical commentators are puzzled by the connection of the request of Zelophchad's daughters and Moshe's request. Why did the former prompt the latter?

Second, were Moshe's sons worthy of leadership or not? It seems that only after Moshe saw that Zelophchad's daughter's inherited did he say, "the time has come that I shall ask for my needs." Why would the episode or conveyance of land to Zelophchad's kin affect Moshe's opinion of his own children's leadership abilities?



The pious and humble Tzadik, **Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan** of Radin, known as **the Chofetz Chaim**, was once riding a train to Radin. He wore a simple cap and traveled alone, and hardly anyone knew who he was. A middle-aged Jew sat down beside him and asked him where he was going. The Chofetz Chaim answered softly, "to Radin."

The man was excited. "Do you know the saintly Chofetz Chaim? I am going to Radin just to see him!"

The Chofetz Chaim was unimpressed. "M'nyeh," he shrugged. "I don't think he is so saintly."

The visitor was so appalled that he slapped the old man and left his seat shouting. "How dare you make light of the leader of our generation!" A week later the man came to the humble abode of the great Tzadik. Lo and behold, the old man from the train was sitting by the table in the dining room. The man collapsed in shock.

He could not stop apologizing for the incident on the train when the Chofetz Chaim halted him.

"Do not worry, you taught me a great lesson," said the sage. "One may not even slander himself."

R' Mordechai of Czernobel (d.1837) explains the connection. Moshe was concerned that the very sin that prohibited him entry into the Land of Israel would also prevent his children a chance at inheriting leadership.

When Hashem told Moshe that Zelophchad's daughters shall not suffer for any past misdeeds, he reconsidered his own situation. He realized that his problem and sin had nothing to do with his children. They should not suffer from his humility and self-effacing.

We all may get down on ourselves at one time or another. But our children look up to us. We must show that we have confidence in ourselves. The qualities that they believe we possess are those that we must pass on to them.

Peninim on The Torah



Horav Henach Leibowitz, zl, says that *kavod*, honour, esteem (what others think of you), has a compelling effect on a person's actions. One will sooner endanger his life than risk the opinion others have of him. Thus, if Pinchas were to be prepared to be disgraced for Hashem's Name, this is compelling reason for accolade.

Honour means more to some than it does to others. In some cultures, respectability and virtue have overriding significance. Thus, if an individual is willing to suffer disgrace in order to save the life of another person – especially someone whom he does not know, a member of another culture, a religion alien to his own – it indicates that this person is of an exalted nature. Such a person is a hero.

To be a hero demands both risk and sacrifice. At times, heroes sacrifice their career, future, family – even their lives. According to the *Rosh Yeshivah*, to be willing to sacrifice one's reputation, to accept disgrace in order to help others, takes a very special person.

Chione Sugihara was such a person. He was a Japanese consul who risked his career and his future to save six thousand Jews at the beginning of World War II. Sugihara gave Jews entry visas, which was against the orders of the Japanese government. As a result of his actions, he lost his job and respectability in much of Japanese society. He was neither Jewish, nor was he beholden to the Jews. He was simply a good person (Heaven-sent) who was prepared to throw everything away because he felt the Jews were being mercilessly persecuted for no reason other than that they were Jewish.

One must understand Japanese/Samurai culture to appreciate his sacrifice. Sugihara was raised in the strict Japanese code of ethics which included: love for the family; living for the sake of the children; accepting duty and respectability; and *never* bringing shame upon the family. His undertaking brought terrible shame upon himself. He did not care. He was saving lives. His story is one of the great miracles of World War II. Much of the European Torah that was transplanted from the Lithuanian *yeshivos* was due to his heroic efforts.

The German invasion of Poland filled Lithuania with Jewish refugees seeking an avenue of escape. There was one problem: travel between countries was restricted unless one had a transit visa. The second problem was that very few countries were willing to issue these visas. One summer morning in late July, 1940, Consul Sugihara was overwhelmed with the multitude of Jewish refugees waiting by the door of the consulate. These men and women were acutely aware that their only hope for salvation was in the east, and the only person who could help them was Sugihara. In order to issue a visa, Sugihara

required permission from the Japanese Foreign Ministry – a permission which had been denied three times. He now confronted the major decision of his life: Does he save Jews? This choice would likely result in extreme financial hardship for him. He would probably be fired and worse – disgraced, never able to work for the Japanese government again.

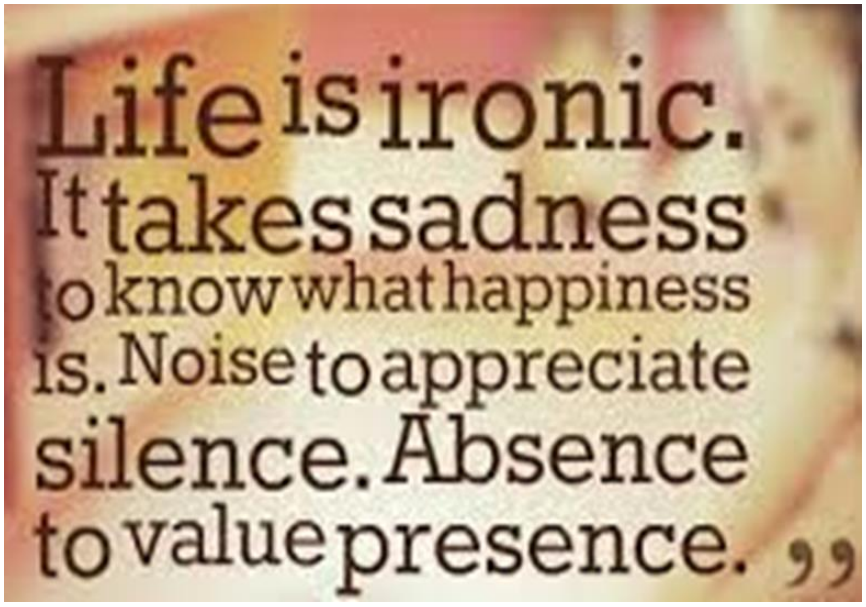
One look into the eyes of the desperate Jews who stood before him, and his decision was made. His wife helped and, together, they wrote 300 visas per day. They did not stop to eat, as long as people stood before them, day and night. The visas took the refugees through Moscow, and then by Trans-Siberian rail to Vladivostok and then on to Japan, where many remained until the end of the war.

In 1945, the Japanese government formally shut down Sugihara. He was banned from ever serving in the diplomatic service. His career and his honour were shattered in Japan. (His heroism, however, will be forever etched in the annals of Jewish history as a righteous of the gentiles who risked everything to help the Jews.) He and his family were forced to leave Lithuania, and, as punishment for his illegal actions, he spent two years imprisoned in Romania.

Upon finally returning to Japan, he was a disgraced person. He worked at odd jobs to support his family. Although he never called attention to his wartime efforts on behalf of the Jews, he took deep pride in having responded positively to the call of his conscience. He never gave up helping. Indeed, as the train took him from Lithuania to be imprisoned in Romania, he was still signing visas and throwing them out the window. Sugihara was willing to suffer a lifetime of disgrace for the opportunity to be the medium for granting a "lifetime" to 6,000 Jewish refugees.

Disgrace? He said he would rather suffer the disgrace of man than stand in disgrace before G-d.

Rabbi Yehoshua Alt - Appreciating Absence



One who was given a blank sheet of paper with one black dot on it was asked what he saw? He replied that he saw a black dot. So, although most of the sheet was white (blank), he just saw the black dot. Many of us in life do the same.

After our personal gratitude in the words **מזמור לתודה** (literally: a psalm of thanksgiving), which we recite at Shacharis, we say **הריעו לה' כל הארץ** - ***call out to Hashem, everyone on earth***. Why does everyone need to call out to thank Hashem just because you are thanking Hashem?

R' Chaim Kanievsky explained this with a story. In one of the Shuls in Bnei Brak, after Shacharis, one of the people put out cake and a L'chaim explaining that the day before he was crossing the street and was hit by a car. Yet, he was barely injured.

The next day another person in the Shul came with cake and a L'chaim. He explained that yesterday when he heard this person crossed the street and was hit by a car, he realized he crossed the same street for the last 20 years and didn't get hit by a car. As a result, he came to thank Hashem. So, the second person was aroused to give thanks when he heard what happened to the first person. This is why we say **הריעו לה' כל הארץ**, ***call out to Hashem, everyone on earth***.

Chassidim who attended their Rebbe's **סעודת הודאה** were bewildered since they didn't know of any real reason he was making it. Their answer was found when the Rebbe spoke and said "a few weeks prior

to this, I was embarrassed. This was the cause for this Seuda as I am so thankful to Hashem that He gave me this suffering since this is the easiest form of pain. There were no setbacks, health problems, financial issues, trouble with the family or the like. What could be an easier form of pain?!"

The Chidushai Harim (1799-1866) had 13 children who all died during his lifetime. When the last one died, he comforted his wife by saying "our great suffering will serve as a partial consolation for other people who may lose a child. They will comfort themselves by saying we have lost 13 children and their loss is not as tragic as ours."

We must appreciate that which doesn't happen to us. Humans are susceptible to all types of diseases and accidents. Many things can harm a person. One can walk properly and break a limb with a slip. One can choke on food. How many times have we had pain that we don't have now? This may include dental work such as a root canal, health issues, problems with bureaucracy, being in debt and so on. Do we appreciate when we don't have these issues?

Torah U'Tefilah - By Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg

וְעִנִּיתֶם אֶת נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם ***And you shall afflict yourselves (lit. your souls)*** *(29:7)*

The question is asked, why is the deprivation of eating and drinking considered 'an affliction of the soul'? Is it not an affliction of the body and really the soul is not afflicted?

A similar question can be asked regarding the complaint of the Children of Israel about the Manna 11:6– **וְעַתָּה נַפְשֵׁנוּ יְבֵשָׁה אֵין כֹּל בִּלְתִּי אֶל הַמָּן עֵינֵינוּ** - ***"But now our souls are parched, there is nothing, we have nothing before our eyes but the Manna".***

Here, too, we cannot understand why they said, 'our souls are parched', were they not referring to eating which benefits their bodies?

They answer in the name of the **Tchebiner Rav** that they only made one Brachah on the Manna – "Ha'motzi Lechem Min HaShamayim", "Who brings forth bread from Heaven", before eating it, and "Birchas HaMazon" after eating it. However the Brachos of Borei Pri Ha'etz, Borei Pri Ha'adamah, Shehakol, Borei Nefashos, and Asher Yatzar, they did not recite, thus their souls were deprived.

The same is true regarding Yom Kippur. This is the one day during the year when it is nearly impossible to recite 100 Brachos. Therefore, there is affliction of the soul.

ובני קרח לא מתו ***But the sons of Korach did not die.*** *(26:11)*

It is not as if Korach had protected his sons by excluding them from his ill-fated debacle. *Rashi* comments that they had been involved from the very beginning. At the time of the dispute, however, they were *meharher bi'teshuvah*, had thoughts of repentance in their hearts. Therefore, a place was fortified for them in *Gehinnom*, Purgatory, and they resided there. This means that the earth beneath them hardened above the spot designated for them in *Gehinnom*. Thus, they were spared due to the *teshuvah* thoughts they harboured.



This is a powerful and inspiring lesson. *Teshuvah* saves. When the ***Ponovezher Rav, zl,*** was about to travel on a fundraising trip, he visited his revered *Rebbe*, **the *Chafetz Chaim, zl,*** to receive his blessing. "Does the *Rebbe* have a message for the people in Europe?"

he asked. "Tell them that it is quite simple to do *teshuvah*, repent. All one has to do is regret and express remorse over his deviation from Hashem's Torah. He then accepts upon himself to continue upon the prescribed path. The *yetzer hora*, evil inclination, would like us to think that *teshuvah* is a difficult undertaking which usually concludes in failure. This is one of the wiles of the *yetzer hora*. *Teshuvah* is not difficult."

The Bnei Brak security guard who worked the protective unit that safeguarded Ponovezh *Yeshivah* was himself not observant. Thus, it came as a total surprise, when one day he appeared at his post sporting a *yarmulke* and wearing *tzitzis*. One of the *rabbanim* who met him asked, "My friend, what prompted you to wear *bigdei malchus*, royal garb?" The man replied, "It was the *shiur*, lecture, delivered by ***Maran Horav Shach*** (the *Rosh Yeshivah*)."

The *Rav* countered, "What did you understand from the *shiur* that inspired you?"

"I did not understand a single word," the guard replied. "When the car transporting the *Rosh Yeshivah* to the *yeshivah* pulled up, however, I saw how the students reverently lifted the aged *Rosh Yeshivah* from the car, and how they supported every step that he slowly took until he ascended to the lectern. When I saw this, I thought to myself, 'The *bais hamedrash* is filled to capacity, standing room only. What can this elderly *Rosh Yeshivah* say that is so special?'

I decided to stand by the door of the room and listen. As soon as the *Rosh Yeshivah* began the *shiur*, a complete transformation occurred. The *Rosh Yeshivah*, who was weak and unable to walk, delivered a lecture like a young, spirited eighteen-year-old. His passion and spirited delivery blew my mind! Where did he suddenly garner the strength to be so young and exuberant? I figured that it must come from the Torah. I decided then and there that, if Torah

can create such a metamorphosis in a person, I was going to change my way of life and become observant."

We have no shortage of *teshuvah* stories, because many people find their way back, often (like the *Bnei Korach*) through the vehicle of a *hirhur*, thought. (I looked up 'thought' in the thesaurus and arrived at a better word: consideration.) Many of us have fleeting thoughts, but never stop long enough to *consider* their import and impact.

"Consider" the following story, which I just read in **Rabbi Yechiel Spero**'s, "One Small Spark."

Many *yeshivos* in *Eretz Yisrael* cater to the needs – both physical and spiritual – of men who are returning to Jewish observance. One such *yeshivah,* under the leadership of ***Horav Eliyahu* Feivelson,** focuses primarily on the younger generation, men who seek to concretise their religious beliefs and their knowledge of Torah beforegoing on to build a family.

Thus, *Rav* Feivelson was surprised one day when a gentleman, regal in dress and demeanour, visited him with an unusual request: "I am a professor at the university and recently became a *baal teshuvah*. I am well on the road to becoming a fully observant member of *Am Yisrael*. My issue is with my wife. She is not yet there. In fact, she neither has interest in becoming *frum*, observant, nor in my carrying out my choice. She would much rather that I return to the 'normal' way of life that we enjoyed before I became *frum*. I came here to ask the Rabbi to please speak with my wife and attempt to convince her to accompany me on this journey."

Rav Feivelson was impressed with this man's request. It was not every day that an accomplished senior citizen showed up at his door to make such a request. "What motivated your return to Torah Judaism?" he asked the professor. This is his moving story.

"I was nine years old when my parents emigrated to *Eretz Yisrael,* following World War II. They were survivors who had lost

everything in the Holocaust. Family, money, religion – all lost. They sought a better future for their *ben yachid*, only child. We arrived in a growing city that did not yet have the type of school that my mother wanted for me. Not knowing much about schools, she contacted her brother for advice. He suggested *Batei Avos,* which was a fine school, part of a religious orphanage located in Bnei Brak. The school had been established by the *Ponovezher Rav*, as part of his legacy to rebuild the Torah that was decimated in Europe.

My mother trusted her brother. She had no reason to ask whether the school was religious. If she had known that it was, I would not have attended. Her child would not fall prey to the 'mistake' that had cost them everything. (Sadly, whenever something goes wrong, it is always G-d's fault. We cannot judge. What the survivors experienced is beyond anything that we can describe or understand.)

Ashdod to Bnei Brak was not a commonly travelled route. When my mother sent me off, we knew that it would be some time before we would see one another. I would have a room and three solid meals a day, so why should she worry?

One day, when my mother had to be in Bnei Brak for another reason, she decided to visit me in the school. How shocked and dismayed she was to discover that her precious child was attending a *frum* school. She was adamant: 'Pack your bags; we are leaving this place. My child will not attend a religious school!'

"Three days later, an elderly man wearing a long black frock, sporting a white beard, appeared at our door. He introduced himself as ***Rav* Kahaneman, the *Ponovezher* Rav**. Apparently, he had been travelling outside the country on one of his fundraising trips and was dismayed to discover upon his return that one of his students had opted to leave.

'What can I do,' he asked, "to resolve the situation? Why did you take him home? Did we do something wrong? Was it the food, or his

bed? What can we do to rectify this, so that he can return forthwith?'

"'Nothing! Absolutely nothing! After what my husband and I experienced, we want nothing to do with religion. I was unaware that your school was religious. Otherwise, he would never have stepped foot in your building.'

"The *Rosh Yeshivah* begged. He pleaded. He promised the world. My mother, however, was adamant. There was no way I was returning to *Batei Avos*. Suddenly, the *Rav's* knees began to shake, and he asked for a chair. He sat down by the table and began to cry uncontrollably. He uttered not a word; he just cried and cried. Ten minutes elapsed. He stopped, wiped his tears, rose from the chair and left our home.

"Indeed, my mother saw to it that her precious child would not grow up religious. I, however, never forgot that image before my eyes. The sight of an elderly Rosh Yeshivah weeping copiously over the loss of one young child to Judaism was forever etched in my psyche. His tears were so genuine, because his love of Torah and every Jewish neshamah was heartfelt and authentic. Many decades passed since that day, but I have finally returned. Now, I want my wife to join me, so that we can live out our twilight years as fully-observant Jews."

Rav Feivelson agreed to help. After such a story, who could demur such a request? The Rosh Yeshivah's cries never ceased. They pierced the heart of a young boy and remained with him throughout his life, until they finally had the desired effect.

Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky

"Chesed must be done with seichel — with wisdom — so that it truly helps the other person." - He stressed thoughtful kindness, not just well-intentioned action.

Rabbi Elimelech Biderman- Torah Wellsprings

Tefillah with Joy



Tefillah must be said with joy. It states (*Midrash Shochar Tov, Tehillim* 100) "Rav says, 'When you daven, have a happy heart, because you are davening to Hashem, and there is no One like Him.'" Similarly, it states (Sefer Chassidim 18), "The root of *tefillah* is a joyous heart…. Therefore, Dovid, the King of Yisrael, would play the harp when he davened. He did this so he could fill his heart with joy and with love for Hakadosh Baruch Hu. And therefore, his *tefillos* were answered."

Similarly, the **Ben Ish Chai** (*Aderes Eliyahu, Mishpatim*) writes, "It is known that *tefillah* must be said with joy, and then the *tefillos* will be answered. It is also known that the word **והיה** connotes joy. Thus, the *pasuk* (*Shemos* 22:26) says, **והיה כי יצעק אלי**, if you will be happy when you daven to Me, **ושמעתי**, I will listen to your prayers."

Reb Chaim Vital *zt'l* (introduction to *Shaar HaKavanos*) writes, "It is forbidden to daven with sadness. If one does, he won't be able to receive the divine light that comes down when he is davening. (However, when he says the viduy, then it is good to say it with a broken heart.) One must indeed show Hashem immense humility and fear. Nevertheless, he should have immense joy – as much as he can. This can be compared to a slave who is serving his master with immense joy. If the servant is sad, the service is not appreciated by his master.

The ability to attain *ruach hakadosh* is almost entirely dependent on this factor (davening and performing mitzvos with joy). Don't be lenient with this topic, because its reward is very great."

How does one daven with joy? If one believes that Hashem listens to his *tefillos* he will daven with kavanah and joy. What greater joy is there than to speak directly to Hashem, Who desires to hear our requests?

The Mesilas Yesharim (19) writes, "One must imagine that he is truly standing before the Creator and is conversing with Him – even though he can't see Him. This is the hardest imagination to acquire because we don't have anything similar to it that can help us imagine it. Nevertheless, someone who has a straight mind can establish this truth in his heart with some thought and focus; to know that he is literally speaking to Hashem… Hashem listens to him, similar to when one speaks to his friend, and the friend listens to him.

A non-religious Yid was once visiting at yeshivas Kfar Chassidim while they were davening *Minchah*. Afterward, people asked him what his impressions were. He replied, "I saw *bachurim* swaying back and forth, but there was this elderly man, standing near the front wall, and it appeared that he was truly speaking to someone." ***That man was Reb Elyah Lopian zt'l.***

Living Jewish – From Our Sages

עֹלַת תָּמִיד הָעֲשִׂיָה בְּהַר סִינַי ***It is a continual burnt offering which was offered at Sinai*** (Num. 28:6)

A continual burnt-offering hints to the "hidden love" which every Jew has. This love is continuous, it never ceases. (*Ohr HaTorah)*

Torah



Rebbe Aharon of Belz said that when a Yid learns Torah, there is no *galus*. An indication of this is that it is permissible to eat meat and drink wine at a *siyum* celebration during the Nine Days. Where there is Torah, there is no *galus*.

During the Holocaust, people were amazed to see **Rebbe Pinchas of Ustila *zy'a*** (the son-in-law of Rebbe Yissacher Dov of Belz *zy'a*) learning Torah with immense *hasmadah*. How did he have the stamina to put aside all the pain and suffering and delve into Torah study?

People asked him about this, and he replied, "People asked my father-in-law this very same question during World War I. They couldn't understand how he maintained the peace of mind to study Torah. He explained that during hard times it's even more important to study the Torah. Because the Mishnah says, 'When a person has pain… the *Shechinah* says, *'My head hurts. My arms hurt*, which means Hashem suffers together with us.

We are living in a time when Klal Yisrael is in distress, and Hashem is certainly suffering together with us. We must make Hashem happy, and nothing brings joy to Hashem like a Yid who learns Torah." May these days of mourning turn into days of happiness, with the coming of Moshiach, speedily in our days, amen.

"When I was young, I admired clever people. Now that I am old, I admire kind people."

Jewish Education Program Queens [JEP]



Sometimes We Love, Sometimes We Mourn!

וַתִּקְרַבְנָה בְּנוֹת צְלָפְחָד בֶּן־ חֵפֶר בֶּן־גִּלְעָד בֶּן־מָכִיר בֶּן־מְנַשֶּׁה לְמִשְׁפְּחֹת מְנַשֶּׁה בֶּן־יוֹסֵף

"The daughters of Tzelafchad, who was the son of Chefer, the son of Gilad, the son of Machir, the son of Menashe from the family of Menashe, son of Yosef—came forward. …". (Bamidbar 27:1)

Throughout our history, Jews have always loved and longed for *Eretz Yisroel*, the Land of Israel. Many Jews throughout our history made the perilous land and sea journey to immigrate to *Eretz Yisroel*. Rabbi Yehudah HaLevi (born in Spain in the year 1080) was one of those who made this dangerous journey. He is known for his beautiful poetry which is included in our *machzorim* and in the *kinnos* that we recite on Tisha B'Av. Many of his poems showed his intense love of and longing for *Eretz Yisroel*.

In this parsha, the Jews were counted in order to determine how to divide the Land of Israel. After hearing that *Eretz Yisroel* would only be given to the males (**Ba'al Haturim**), the daughters of Tzelafchad approached Moshe. They presented a well-thought out argument (see **Midrash**) that they should inherit the portion that their father would have received had he been alive. Moshe presented their case to Hashem. Hashem said that they were correct and can inherit a portion in the Land of Israel.

Rashi explains what motivated the daughters of Tzelafchad to protest. The pasuk (Bamidbar 27:1) tells us their genealogy. They were the daughters of Tzelafchad, the son of Chefer, who was the son of Gilad, who was the son of Machir, who was the son of Menashe.

The pasuk **adds** that they were from the family of Menashe, the son of Yosef. The Torah just said that they came from Menashe. Why does the Torah add those seemingly extra words? Rashi says that the Torah is explaining their motivation. They were not motivated by the desire for material gain but by their **passionate love for Eretz Yisroel**. They loved the land as did their ancestor, Yosef Hatzadik. The **Malbim** concurs and adds that half of the tribe of Menashe was willing to accept their inheritance on the other side of the Jordan River, outside the Land of Israel. The daughters of Tzelafchad could easily have taken their inheritance from that land. However, because of their burning love for *Eretz Yisroel*, they wanted to join the other half of the tribe of Menashe in the Land of Israel. This part of *shevet* Menashe loved *Eretz Yisroel* and only wanted an inheritance there. This is what the pasuk means. Bnos Tzelafchad were "*from the family of Menashe*", from the half of *shevet* Menashe who passionately loved Eretz Yisroel just as Yosef Hatzadik had loved Eretz Yisroel.

Nowadays, throughout our prayers we beg Hashem to restore The Land of Israel to its former glory. We ask Hashem to restore the holy city of Jerusalem, together with the third and eternal Beis HaMikdash (speedily in our days).

We mourn daily for the destruction of the first and second Beis HaMikdash. During these upcoming Three Weeks (from the 17th of Tamuz until the ninth of Av) we go into a greater state of mourning. Our mourning intensifies as we approach the 9th of Av when both Temples were destroyed.

The great French leader, Napoleon Bonaparte was once was traveling through a small Jewish town in Europe. He entered a synagogue and saw an incredible sight. Men and women were sitting on the floor on small stools, holding candles and weeping, while reading from books. Napoleon wondered what misfortune had happened to make the people so sad. A French Jewish officer explained that the

Jewish people gathered once a year to fast and pray on the day that marks the destruction of the Jewish people's two Temples. The same scene in this town is happening in all Jewish communities. Napoleon wondered how long ago the Temples were destroyed. When he heard that it was over 2,000 years, Napoleon said that a nation that cries and fasts for over 2,000 years for their land and Temple will surely be rewarded with the rebuilding of their Temple.

Those of us who sincerely mourn the destruction and limit our pleasures in the memory of the destruction are promised that we will be privileged to rejoice in the final rebuilding of the Third Beis Hamikdash. **Isaiah the prophet** (Isaiah 66:10) said, "*Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad with her, all of you who love her. Rejoice with her with <u>great</u> rejoicing, all of you who mourn for her*". Why did Isaiah the prophet add the word "great"?

Rabbi Yaakob Kranz zt"l, known as the **Dubno Maggid**, answered this question in the form of a moshol (see <u>The Maggid of Dubno and his Parables</u> by Benno Heinemann).

A man went on a long ocean voyage to a far-off land. After many months, his family heard that he had drowned when his ship sunk. The man's wife and children were devastated. His friends were deeply shocked. Even those who barely knew him were stunned. As months passed, the memory of him grew fainter. His immediate family, however, never stopped mourning for him. One day, the door to his home opened and he walked in! The news of his arrival spread through the town. Those people who had barely known him were happy for his family that he was alive. His close friends were overjoyed. His family were happy beyond words. Those who had mourned the most when they thought he had died, were the happiest now that he had returned alive.

Similarly, Jews, who love *Eretz Yisroel* and mourn the Beis HaMikdash, will rejoice when the Third Beis HaMikdash will be rebuilt. The degree of the rejoicing will depend on the degree

of their sorrow about the destruction. Those who <u>feel</u> sorrow, now, will rejoice, then. Those who mourn intensely, will indeed rejoice, "with <u>great</u> rejoicing".

Jewish Education Program Queens [JEP]

If You See Something, Say Something!

פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקַנְאוֹ אֶת־ קִנְאָתִי בְּתוֹכָם "Pinchas … has turned away My anger from the children of Israel, in that he was very jealous for My sake among them…." (Bamidbar 25:11)



According to the **Department of Homeland Security**, "…as you are going about your day, if you see something that doesn't seem quite right, say something. By being alert and reporting suspicious activity to your local law enforcement, you can protect your family, neighbours, and community".

Alexander Ciccolo was arrested by FBI agents on July 4, 2015 in Adams, Massachusetts, with a knife tucked in his belt. He was carrying a duffel bag with two handguns and two rifles that he had just picked up from a confidential human source. He was headed back to his apartment, where law enforcement would find partially constructed Molotov cocktails, two machetes, and a pressure-cooker that could be used to construct an improvised explosive device like the ones detonated two years earlier at the Boston Marathon. Ciccolo had been looking for ways to inflict the most bodily harm

with an attack. The reason no one was ever wounded by one of his explosives or struck by bullets from that cache of guns is because Ciccolo's father tipped off the FBI about his son's growing ISIS obsession. **He saw something and said something** and saved lives.

On May 5, 2010, Faisal Shahzad of Bridgeport, Conn., parked a blue Nissan Pathfinder near the Minskoff Theatre in New York's Times Square and left the vehicle running with the emergency lights blinking. Packed in the rear of the SUV were 250 pounds of fertilizer, three 20-gallon propane tanks, two 5-gallon gas cans, dozens of M-88 firecrackers, gunpowder and two alarm clocks intended to trigger the concoction. Just two minutes after the car bomb was deployed, though, alert street vendors noticed something amiss. They called the police. **They saw something and said something** and saved lives.

The Jewish People had witnessed a terrible sin of immorality between Zimri, the Prince of the tribe of Shimon, and Kozbi, a princess of Moav. Not a single Jew protested (there are various explanations as to why not). The Jewish People are like "one being" and are responsible for one another. If one sins, his fellow Jew is usually obligated to say something to him. Since not a single Jew protested, they were all somewhat culpable in the sin. Therefore, they were all guilty to be punished. A plague started killing Jews. **They saw something and said nothing and were guilty to be punished**.

At that point, Pinchas acted. To stop this public desecration of Hashem's name and to stop the plague, Pinchas killed both Zimri and Kozbi. He acted without any thought for his own personal safety. In fact, Hashem performed numerous miracles, saving the life of Pinchas and ensuring his success.

Pinchas had another thought in mind. He wanted Hashem to forgive the Jewish People for their silence. In order to accomplish that, the **Sforno** says that Pinchas made a point of killing Zimri and

Kozbi **in front of the Jewish People**. If the Jews would remain silent and not protest or try to stop him, they would attain forgiveness for their previous failure of remaining silent and not rebuking the sinners. **They saw something and said nothing and attained forgiveness.**

The Jewish People are responsible one for the other. If one sees a fellow Jew sin, in many cases he must say something in a nice and respectful way. He should explain to the sinner the beauty of Torah and mitzvos and the importance of following in Hashem's ways.

Rabbi Elimelech Biderman- Torah Wellsprings



It is brought down in the sefarim about a specific species of birds that build their nests very high up on a tree. It is impossible for snakes (their predators) to climb so high to eat the birds. So what do the snakes do? A snake waits under the tree, with its mouth wide open. The bird, high up on the branch, doesn't realize that it is safe. It also forgets that it can simply fly away. It becomes frightened and paralyzed by the sight of the snake, loses its balance and falls straight into the waiting snake's mouth.

The yetzer hara uses a similar ploy to capture people in his net. He tries to make people feel worried, frightened, and confused. When this occurs, the yetzer hara can easily capture people.

As Rebbe Moshe of Kobrin wrote in a letter, "All the treasures of the world do not compare to the moment that a Yid has a tranquil mind – **ישוב הדעת**."

How does one attain peace-of-mind? One primary way is by recognizing that everything is from Hashem.

There was a fly that was disturbing the **Chazon Ish**. His shamash tried to shoo the fly away, but it kept coming back. The Chazon Ish said, "It is a rosh hashanah fly." His intention was that on Rosh Hashanah, it was destined that a fly would come and disturb him. The Gemara (Brachos 61) compares the yetzer hara to a fly. What is the comparison? A fly doesn't bite like a mosquito or sting like a bee, it only disturbs people's peace-of-mind.

The Gemara calls the yetzer hara a fly, because the yetzer hara also confuses and disturbs people. When someone has a wound, the fly will go there first. This can often contaminate the wound and bring diseases. The yetzer hara uses this ploy as well. It finds people's faults, emphasizes them and causes brings people to despair.

Haman also used this method to overcome the Yidden, as it says **הפיל פור הוא הגורל להמם ולאבדם**, "***He cast the gorel to confuse them and to destroy them***" (Ester 9:24).

He knew that if he can cause the Yidden to be frightened, and to lose their peace-of-mind, he could destroy them. The Zohar [3:199] says that the first two letters of **בלק** and **בלעם** spell **בלבל**, confusion. The final letters spell Amalek.

When one is confused, he falls into the hands of Amaleik, which is the yetzer hara. The Zohar explains that Bilaam's advice was to confuse the Yidden, so they won't know their qualities and their greatness, and then they could overcome them.

Mourning Versus Joy



The Chasam Sofer said, whoever mourns for the Beis HaMikdash during the Three Weeks, will merit having good children. this is especially true during the Three Weeks. It is always forbidden to laugh excessively, and one certainly shouldn't do so during these days of mourning. However, we must clarify, that this doesn't mean that we are sad on these days. A Yid should always serve Hashem with happiness. How does one combine mourning with joy?

Rebbe Shmelke of Nikolsburg zy'a answers this question with the following mashal: A king had to run away far from his palace and he ended up being in a very distant land. He stayed at the home of one of his close friends who lived there. The king watched his host and saw that sometimes he cried bitterly and at other times he was extremely happy. The king asked him, "Are you happy or are you sad? If you are happy, why do you cry, and if you are sad, why do you sometimes appear so joyous?" The host replied, "I am both happy and sad. I'm sad because you needed to leave your palace and come here. And I am also happy, because I have the privilege of hosting the king in my home."

During the Three Weeks we cry because the Shechinah is in galus, but we are also happy, because the Shechinah is with us.

The sefarim explain that we can become closer to Hashem during the Three Weeks than throughout the year, because it is very hard to come close to a king when he's sitting in his palace. But when he is exiled, whoever wants to come close and speak with him can.

It says, whoever runs to find Hashem, he will be able to find Him during the Three Weeks of Bein Hametzarim." Hashem, keviyachol, is in galus, and therefore it is easier to approach Him to become close to Him. Several people are afraid to mourn, because they don't want to be sad.

Actually, the greatest joy comes in result of mourning. We will explain: Shulchan Aruch states "Whoever mourns for Yerushalayim will merit seeing its joy"

The Kedushas Levi and other sefarim explain that when one mourns for the Beis HaMikdash he immediately experiences the joy of the redemption. The Kedushas Levi (Eichah) writes, "When one thinks about holiness and mourns for Yerushalayim…. he perceives a little bit of the joy of Yerushalayim; of how it will be in the future."

At a chasunah, we do several things to remember the churban. We break a cup under the chuppah, we say the brachah **שוש תשיש**, which prays for the geulah, the chassan wears ashes on his head, etc. **The Sfas Emes** (Ki Savo 5653) explains that these customs aren't a contradiction to the happiness of the marriage; on the contrary, they complete it. Because mourning brings the light of the era of Moshiach, and this completes the joy of the chasunah.

"In our generation, when one remembers the Beis HaMikdash, he becomes attached to its light. Therefore, at every simchah, one must remember the Beis HaMikdash. At a chasunah, we say the brachah **שוש תשיש** [and we daven for the ge'ulah]… because when the Beis HaMikdash stood, the simchah was complete. Today, we merit this simchah through mourning for the Beis HaMikdash. Because of his mourning, he merits to feel the joy of Yerushalayim."

"A Jew's request is never a burden." ~ Rav Chaim Kanievsky.

Parshah Thoughts By: Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn



Although his father had earned the status of Kehunah at the dedication of the Mishkan, Pinchas only earned his status as a Kohein because of his act of zealotry when he killed Zimri and Kosbi (25:13).

Rav Shimon Sofer explains that his not being a Kohein made his act so much more significant. Had Pinchas been a Kohein and stood up for the honour of Hashem, people would pass off his action as an act of a special person who has no understanding of the desires and mindset of normal people.

Since Pinchas did not have any special status and still acted this way, his action is a lesson even to regular people that they too can stand up for that which is right and thereby make a difference.

Rabbi Y Richtman - Definitely Kosher

Before a person buys a pack of candy he checks who gives hashgacha on it. If the hashgacha is one he has investigated and found to be of high standard, he will buy it and eat it. If someone would ask him, "Do you know what any of the ingredients are? How could it be kosher it was made in Thailand?" The person will simple say "I don't know the answer to your questions, but it has a good hashgacha and that is good enough for me."

When things in our lives seem difficult, we shouldn't ask questions. Remember that all of the events in our lives have a very good and reliable hashgacha. The Hashgacha reads "under the supervision of the Creator of the World, Who is, was, and always will be."

Torah Wellsprings ~ R' Elimelech Biderman

Emunah – Everything Is From Hashem



Rebbe Moshe of Kobrin zt'l taught that if you remember that everything is from Hashem, all problems disappear.

He explains that **גולה** and **גאולה** are almost the same word. The difference is the **א**.

When you remember the **א** ,who is Hashem, the **גולה** exile/suffering) becomes **גאולה** ,redemption, and you are saved from your problems.

The Or HaChaim writes, "There isn't a moment that Hashem isn't doing something for a person…" (Shmos 22:6). There is never a moment when we are detached from Hashem, from His care and from His surveillance.

The following are the exact words of the Or HaChaim:

"אֵין לְךָ שָׁעָה וָרֶגַע שֶׁאֵין הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא עוֹשֶׂה עִם הָאָדָם, הֵן לְצָרְךָ גּוּפוֹ הֵן לְצָרְךָ צָרָכָיו."

Chazon Ish — Chesed & Ahavas Yisrael

"The greatest chesed is to give another Jew a sense of calm and security." - The Chazon Ish saw menuchas hanefesh as a gift you can give someone.

It Could Have Been YOU Written by Oizer Alport

Rashi explains that while the face of Moshe was comparable to the sun, the face of Yehoshua wasn't quite as great and was similar only to the moon. On this, the Gemora in Bava Basra (75a) adds that upon recognizing this, the elders of the generation remarked oy la l'osah busha, oy la l'osah k'limah – woe to us for this humiliation. It is difficult to understand why they only felt shamed upon noting this distinction, and why specifically Yehoshua made them feel this way and not the even greater Moshe.



Rav Itzele Volozhiner and the Chofetz Chaim compare this to a case of a rich businessman who arrives one day in a small rural village, asking if anybody would be interested in becoming his partner in a new project. The businessman offered to put up all of the necessary funds and expertise, but merely desired a hard worker to assist him with managing and running the business. Most of the residents were content with their simple lifestyles and were sceptical about the man's promises of fame and fortune, so they passed on the offer.

One simple, illiterate villager decided that he had nothing to lose, and agreed to become the man's partner. A few years later, the pair returned to visit the village, arriving in an impressive carriage and dressed in a manner which clearly revealed the success of their project. At this sight, the villagers were mortified and ran to hide. They explained that they weren't embarrassed by the wealthy entrepreneur, as they felt that his education and resources gave him

advantages that they could only dream of. They were, however, quite shamed at the sight of the success and riches which had met their former neighbour, as they remembered all too well that they had been offered the same opportunity as he, but only he was wise enough to take advantage of it. The recognition of what they had had the ability to become and their failure to do so generated powerful feelings of humiliation.

Similarly, the Jews in the wilderness never measured themselves against the levels reached by Moshe, as they viewed the pious family into which he was born and the elevated soul with which he was blessed (as he lit up the house with light upon his birth) as bestowing upon him opportunities for greatness that they could never fathom.

Rav Yehuda Zev Segal, the Manchester Rosh Yeshiva, notes that Yehoshua was neither the wisest nor the greatest of the generation. The Ramban (13:4) writes that the spies are listed in descending order of greatness, which means that Yehoshua was only 5th out of the 12 spies. **The Baal HaTurim** (13:3) writes that each of the spies was only a leader of 50 Jews, meaning that there were many greater Jews who led groups of 100 or even 1000.

Rather, Rashi explains (27:16) that Yehoshua was chosen on the basis of his devoted service of Moshe throughout the 40 years in the desert. Upon recognizing this, the Jews became aware of the levels which could be reached when a person who had been just like them used his talents to their fullest.

The Vilna Gaon writes that the most excruciatingly painful experience a person goes through after his death is when he is shown a picture of what he was capable of and destined to become had he maximized his potential, which will stand in stark contrast to what he actually accomplished, and it was this humiliation that the Jews experienced upon the inauguration of Yehoshua as Moshe's successor.

The Siddur Speaks

When returning to Eretz Yisroel one time, the **Brisker Rav's** flight had to make a stopover in Rome, Italy. It was time for Minchah, and the Brisker Rav looked around for a place where he could Daven without distractions. One of the passengers on the flight was a Jew who knew the terminal well from previous trips, and he pointed out a side room where the Brisker Rav would have the privacy he needed.

The Brisker Rav entered the room, but surprisingly, he immediately walked out and found a different place to Daven. The man who had suggested the room was curious to know what was wrong with it and he went in to examine, but he found it completely empty and perfectly suitable. He couldn't understand why the Brisker Rav had not wished to Daven there. After looking around some more, he finally found the reason.

Out of sight, hidden between two pieces of furniture, was the image of a cross. It was impossible for the Brisker Rav to have seen this from where he stood and how fast he left the room, but it was clear that his pure heart had sensed there was something wrong in the room, and that it was not a proper place to Daven.

Meanwhile, as the Brisker Rav was Davening Minchah, the time came to board the plane, but no one dared to interrupt the Brisker Rav during Davening. The captain and the crew were already in their places, and they were ready to go. The Brisker Rav's traveling companions were at a loss as to what they should do. All their luggage was in the plane's baggage compartment. How could they let the plane leave them and the Brisker Rav at the airport? The crew had no understanding of the laws of Jewish prayer and explanations did not help. It was time to take off.

At that point help arrived from an unexpected source. Among the passengers on the plane was a priest. He approached the crew and told them that the man they were waiting for was a holy man, and they should wait for him rather than disturb his prayers. The crew

could not refuse the priest's request, and the crew and passengers waited patiently while the Jewish rabbi completed Davening. Only then did the plane continue on its way!



ShortVort.com - I got YOU here!!! - Rabbi Moshe Kormornick

וְדָתָן וַאֲבִירָם הוּא־דָתָן וַאֲבִירָם קְרִיאֵי הָעֵדָה אֲשֶׁר הִצּוּ עַל־מֹשֶׁה וְעַל־אַהֲרֹן . ***And Dosson and Aviram — the same Dosson and Aviram the chosen of the assembly, who incited against Moshe and Aharon . . .*** **(26:9)**

Dosson and Aviram had a long history of troublemaking. They were the ones who told Pharaoh that Moshe had killed an Egyptian; they campaigned against Moshe when he came back to redeem the Jewish People; they did not leave Egypt with the rest of the Jewish People — only after they saw that Egypt had been defeated. They were the ones who hoarded the *mannah* and attempted to disprove Moshe who said that there would be no *mannah* found on Shabbos. In short, as the Gemara says, "they were evil from their beginning to their end.

Despite all of this, the verse calls them "chosen of the assembly"— a term of praise awarded to those who sat with Moshe and Aharon and received advice and assistance. One would have expected that these two would have been sent away a long time ago; or at the very least, not be welcome in the presence of Moshe and Aharon. Yet not only are they not being banished, but they are also receiving advice and support from them?!

Although there are circumstances when certain people *do* need to be sent away, the **Chofetz Chaim** notes that Moshe and Aharon felt that in this case, doing so would have caused greater damage. As such, Moshe and Aharon understood that their role was to help Dosson and Aviram and encourage them to mend their ways despite the personal vendetta Dosson and Aviram held against them.

In life, we often have to face difficult people or challenging circumstances. Often, we feel that the best thing for *us* is to escape the situation by ignoring the person or to hide ourselves away from the challenge we are facing. There are times when this is the right thing to do, but we learn from Moshe and Aharon to put our personal feelings aside as much as possible and look at the wider picture. Specifically, we must realize that Hashem is directing everything we experience in life, and each challenge we face is another opportunity to grow. This is most keenly felt when it comes to helping difficult people. We often feel that we are giving to them, but in truth, we are gaining so much more. This can be demonstrated using the following parable:

Reuven and Shimon met in Heaven: In life, Reuven was very needy, his observance was shaky, and he required much attention. Shimon was a dedicated and religious Jew and spent a lot of energy keeping Reuven afloat. When they met, Shimon was delighted and exclaimed, "Reuven, I'm so glad that I got you here!"

"Actually," replied Reuven, "it was me who got you here!"



R' Moshe Sofer (Schreiber) zt"l (Chasam Sofer) would say: **זִמְרִי בֶּן־סָלּוּא נְשִׂיא בֵּית־אָב לַשִּׁמְעֹנִי** - A person who doesn't have good mazel is called a '***shlumiel***.' It comes from what Chazal tell us that Zimri had 5 names. One of them was **שְׁלֻמִיאֵל בֶּן־צוּרִישַׁדָּי**.

In fact, he was a person with very little mazel from the fact that Pinchos needed 12 things to go wrong on Zimri's part in order to enter his tent and kill him. This shows his bad mazel!"

Finger in the Ear Written by Rav Eliezer Chrysler



לְאָזְנִי מִשְׁפַּחַת הָאָזְנִי "To Ozni, the family of Ozni" (26:16).

In the opinion of Rashi, this is synonymous with the family of Etzbon (from the root 'Etzba', meaning 'finger').

What, one may well ask, is the connection between these two names?

The Sh'loh connects them via the Chazal (see kesuvos 5a), who explain that a person's fingers are shaped the way they are, long and thin, so that when he hears something that he shouldn't, he can immediately place them in his ears, to prevent him from hearing what he ought not to hear. Hence the ears and the fingers serve one and the same purpose.

(*This article is provided as part of Shema Yisrael Torah Network*)

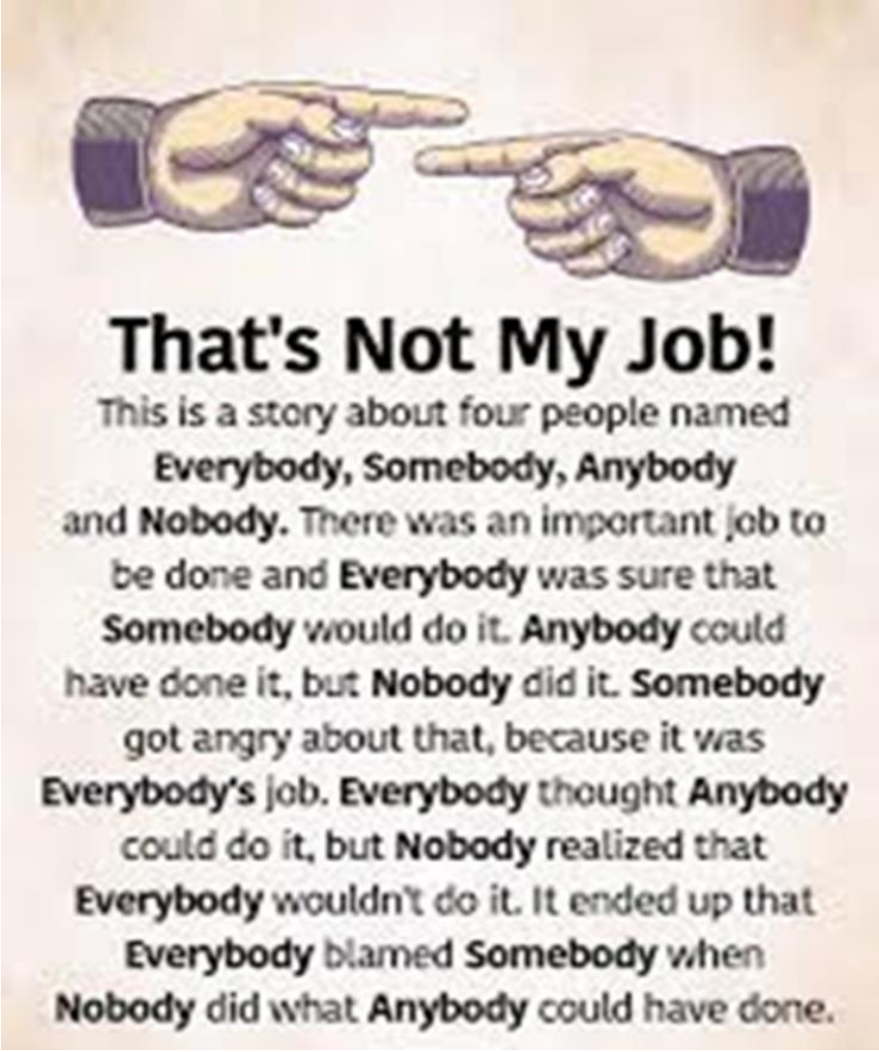
R' Aharon Kotler zt"l

A newly enrolled student at Lakewood's Beis Medresh Gevoah was overwhelmed by the Rosh Yeshiva Reb Aharon Kotler's rapid-fire delivery of highly complex material in his weekly lecture.

When he complained to his previous Rosh Yeshiva who had suggested that he go to Lakewood, the Rosh Yeshiva said, "even if you fail to understand him, it pays to go to his shiurim, if just to look at his face." ~ **The Torah Personality**

The Torah Any Times Newsletter

Rabbi Moshe Bamberger - No One But You



A poor man once knocked on my door, collecting for a particular tzedakah cause. After hearing a little bit about his need, I welcomed him inside my home. Before I knew it, my children had gathered around him and were talking away. He went on to show us pictures of his family, which eventually lead to me writing out a nice cheque to him.

Before he left, he said to me, "I want to tell you something. What you did for me was the perfect form of tzedakah. I once went to a rich fellow and asked for tzedakah, and was told, 'I don't deal with my own tzedakah. I give it to my Rav and he has full discretion to give to whomever he would like.'

After hearing this, I realized that while he was definitely performing the mitzvah of tzedakah, he was losing out on a precious opportunity to teach his children the value and importance of giving tzedakah by outsourcing it and delegating it to someone else."

There are certain things in life that bring maximum benefit when they are done by you and only you alone. To hand it off and place the

burden of responsibility on someone else may be more convenient, but it is less than ideal.

The Chofetz Chaim once hosted a guest in his home, who was hesitant to allow the Chofetz Chaim to wait on him and assist him. He preferred that he take care of himself, and the Chofetz Chaim merely provide him the bare minimum necessitates of lodging.

The next morning, right before davening, the Chofetz Chaim approached his guest and said, "Please give me your Tefillin; I'll put it on for you." The guest was taken aback. "What do you mean that you'll put it on for me? I have to do it myself!" "Well, hachnassas orchim, hosting guests, is the same way. I want to do it myself, and not assign it to you!"

There are things in life that we must do ourselves and not substitute other people in our place. As a Jew, a parent, husband, wife, child, brother, sister, friend, chavrusa, neighbour, boss, employee or member of a shul. We are to look inward to see what can be done; not outward. The answer is to be found right where we are.

Rabbi Duvi Bensoussan - More than Food

During my yeshiva years, a very close friend of mind, Yedidya, decided to visit the Kotel for a period of forty consecutive days, a practice which is known to be of auspicious nature (segulah). The most difficult time, he explained, to make it to the Kotel was Shabbat, given that he would need to walk quite a distance to be there. What most boys decided to do, including Yedidya, was daven at the Kotel Friday night, then wait around until nightfall and Shabbat had begun, and then pray some more. This way they would be davening on Shabbat too (i.e. Friday night after nightfall), and not need to make the long walk back to the Kotel on Shabbos.

Nonetheless, given the long walk back Friday night, by the time Yedidya would make it back to yeshiva, all the food from the meal

was gone. As such, Yedidya, along with his group who joined him at the Kotel, would regularly look for meals to eat in the Old City on Friday night. It was always a beautiful sight to see how countless individuals and families were invited out to stranger's homes for the Friday night meal.

Yedidya, however, was quite shy, and while all his friends often found places to eat, he was out of luck. On one occasion, just about everyone had left and Yedidya, standing off to the side, had not been noticed. Of those who remained was an elderly man with tattered clothing. Yedidya hesitated walking over to the fellow and asking if he could join his meal. He wasn't even sure if this man had enough food for himself, given the way he looked.

But even before Yedidya could make a move, the elderly man walked up to Yedidya himself and asked if he was looking for a place to eat. "Please come!" offered the man. "I don't have a lot in my house, but whatever I do have, I will give you with open arms." Yedidya happily accepted the offer and followed the man back to his house.

Yet what he thought would be a house ended up being… a hole in the wall. This man lived in an apartment that was one-and-a-half rooms, with mattresses spread out over the floor. The man had eleven children, and there was not much space for anything else. Everywhere he turned were more mattresses, spread out over the entire apartment. He walked up to the table with so many chairs around it, and just a little bit of food placed down.

Yedidya wished he could walk out, as he didn't want to take any food away from the family. He felt bad depriving them of the little they had. But it was too late. At that moment, Yedidya saw something amazing. The father said, "Children! Come to the table; it's time to eat!" Immediately, all eleven children made their way to the table and started pulling out a chair for the other child. Moments later, everyone was sitting at their designated places around the table, and the serenity felt in the room was palpable. There was silence.

The family began to sing Shalom Aleichem, then Eishes Chayil, and afterwards the father made Kiddush. This family did not have a lot, but they did have something that even people who do have a lot, often lack. Happiness.

They may not have had a lot of food, but Yedidya told me that he will never forget that meal. "That was one of the best and most memorable Shabbat tables I have ever been at. I hardly ate anything. Challah, Baba Ganoush and a little chicken drumstick was all that I had. But the children singing, giggling, sharing and showing love filled me with more than a full meal." That was a memorable display of hachnassat orchim, inviting guests, which Yedidya would always remember. That environment gave him more than any food could ever do.



Avraham Avinu was the same way. He was able to create an environment that made an indelible impression even on the angels who would never forget him for hundreds of years. Years later when Moshe Rabbeinu ascended Har Sinai to receive the Torah, the angles mistook him as Avraham Avinu. Why did they remember Avraham Avinu? Because that meal in which they were invited into his tent left an everlasting impression on them.

When it comes to hachnassat orchim, hosting guests, it is not about the food. Of course, a person is happy when they get to eat. But it is much more. It is you. Give of yourself. Give them your warmth, laugh with them and let them walk out of your home feeling great. That experience is worth more than all the food you can give.

Rabbi Meyer Bodner Opportunities, Not Problems

Our Sages teach in *Pirkei Avos*, **וֶהֱוֵי מְקַבֵּל אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם בְּסֵבֶר פָּנִים יָפוֹת** "Greet every person with a pleasant countenance" (*Avos* 1:15). With this idiom, we are instructed to conduct and carry ourselves in a pleasant and amiable way with others, showing them a smile and conveying our warmth and care. Yet, as Chazal indicate throughout the Talmud, the Hebrew word used to imply inclusion is *kol*, all or every. In this Mishnah then, there is someone else who is being obliquely referred to. Someone else is meant to receive our warmest greetings and pleasant countenance. Yet who exactly is that?



The answer is simple yet profound: ourselves! The Mishnah is telling us that we are to accept ourselves with love and care. Although this does not excuse us from misbehaving, we must never get too carried away and be too hard on ourselves. We must learn to love and embrace who we are, despite our failures and foibles. No matter what you did, how many mistakes you made, and how many times you promised you were going to change and didn't, you must still accept yourself. Tell yourself, "I am who I am, and I am very happy with that." Of course, there is always room to improve, and that must be our constant striving, but before we can appreciate and care for anyone else, we must do so for ourselves.

It all begins with understanding our own internal worth. From there, we can begin to spread and share our love with others, uplifting them and inspiring them. And when that is done, we can literally change lives.

Let me share an example with you.

For one boy, life as a child was never easy. Thrown out of his house as a youngster, no one cared to look after him. He went from one foster home to another, wandering and wallowing in his own misery and loneliness. From ages eight to fourteen, he stayed in countless foster homes, with every one of them eventually asking that he leave, due to his disruptive and troublesome behaviour. The shortest amount of time he ever stayed in one home was three days, and he was set on breaking that record.

Finally, after much moving around, he was brought to one foster home, run by an elderly man named Rodney. Upon meeting his "new father,' the boy quickly realized that this might be the one. Just maybe, this time at this foster home, he would be able to cause such disruption that he would be asked to leave before three days. His hopes only grew when he learned that Rodney had sleep apnoea. Here was the perfect situation for the young boy to cause trouble and be asked to leave on the spot. It seemed to be an attainable goal.

Three days, however, turned into three years. Rodney, about whom the boy thought would be a pushover, was the furthest thing from it. He was relentlessly caring about the boy's well-being and never once contemplated or threatened to kick him out. He recognized that the boy needed a warm and safe environment to develop and mature and provided him with just that.

At this point, the boy realized that whatever he would do to upset his foster father, he would be going nowhere else. Until he turned old enough to get his driver's license. "Finally," he thought, "I will have more freedom and be able to cause a real ruckus." And so, one day, the boy opened a checking account and wrote out ten checks at ten different stores, each $1,000 each. Of course, all the checks bounced. But that wasn't it.

Shortly thereafter, the boy sped 86 mph down a 55-mph highway and was pulled over by a police officer. The boy's license by now had been suspended, he was majorly in debt, and he had been drinking.

He had committed every offense he could think of at the moment. After investigating, the officer had no choice but to handcuff the boy and bring him to the police station. "You have one phone call to make," the police told him.

Who did he call? Rodney, his foster father. Explaining what had happened, he pleaded that Rodney come and bail him out. Without question, the boy had caused Rodney more trouble than he ever needed, and now he was calling from the police station for help. What did Rodney say? "Don't worry, I will come and help you, but in the morning."

The following morning, Rodney arrived at the police station and sorted everything out. But although the boy knew he was free from the police, he couldn't imagine what Rodney would do or say to him. How could he ever be forgiven after all the pain he caused Rodney? The boy was almost certain that he would now be asked to leave the foster home.

Yet, although leaving the foster home had been the boy's long-awaited wish, now that had changed. He realized that here stood a genuinely caring man who had put up with him for years, and in no way did he wish to leave the care and warmth he had received for so long and re-enter a world of cold loneliness.

As Rodney and the boy arrived home, the two of them sat down. The boy knew what was coming. He would certainly be told to pack his bags. But then Rodney spoke up. "Son, I don't consider you a problem; I consider you an opportunity. It is just a matter of what you want to do with your life. You have the opportunity to be someone great and someone special. I am here for you. It is up to you."

For this boy, that day and that conversation was a changing point in his life. He began changing and improving his behavior and working out his issues. And it all began because someone cared about him, believed in him and smiled at him when no one else would.

When someone is treated with dignity and care no matter what they do, there is no limit to what they can achieve. They may seem the furthest away from any change of heart, but in truth, they are closer than anyone imagined. They are an opportunity, not a problem. In our own personal lives as well, we must view our troubles and trials as opportunities for change, growth and improvement. We are all beautiful people with unlimited potential and deserve to be respected and praised for who we are.

And above all else, always remember to greet yourself with a smile and believe in your potential. Because indeed, with that little smile you give yourself, you hold the key to taking a world of problems and viewing them as a world of opportunities.

Entering through the Window

Visitors to the house of the **Brisker Rav** would see a very strange custom— the Brisker Rav always entered the house through the window!

The explanation for this peculiar behavior was that when The Brisker Rav would come into the room where his illustrious father was sitting, his father would rise from his seat, as is proper to do when a Talmid Chacham enters the room.

However, the Brisker Rav was not capable of accepting such honour from his father, and he came up with a solution. Since the Brisker Rav's father usually sat in the front room near the door, the Brisker Rav decided that he would sneak into the house through the back window, while his father was unaware that he had ever entered the house!

"Do the right thing even when no one is looking."

SHABBOS STORIES FOR PARSHAS PINCHAS

Thank You Doctor By Rabbi Menachem Salasnik



In his book, Reflections of the Maggid, **Rabbi Paysach Krohn** tells the following fabulous story:

'As Senior Resident in Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Dr. Lebowitz was in charge of its often frenzied emergency room. One afternoon as he was making his rounds, the loudspeaker blared a "Code Blue" alert, the words that indicate an emergency life-threatening situation.

A woman had suffered a severe heart attack in the cafeteria upstairs and was in cardiac arrest. Dr. Lebowitz grabbed his equipment and raced upstairs, where he found doctors already working on the woman. All patrons had been cleared from the cafeteria, as a hospital security officer stood guard at the door, not allowing anyone in except medical personnel.

Dr. Lebowitz rushed toward the huddle of people in the middle of the room. "How is she doing?" he asked one of the doctors, who was kneeling on the floor attending the stricken woman.

"I'm afraid it's too late," the doctor replied. "We've been working on her for a while already."

"Let me try," Dr. Lebowitz said, quickly moving toward the patient. He inserted an intravenous catheter directly into her heart to get her started on epinephrine, which would prevent further progression of the blood clot to her coronary arteries. He applied two large paddles known as defibrillators to her body, so that he could send an electric shock to the heart to jumpstart it back into a normal

rhythm. Dr. Lebowitz tried numerous times to get a heartbeat, but he was unsuccessful.

The other doctors began to leave the cafeteria, shaking their heads in disappointment that a patient had died right before their eyes.

However, Dr. Lebowitz would not give up … not yet. He tried a fifth and sixth time to stimulate a heartbeat, but it wasn't happening. He realized that the end was near, if it had not already come. He would try one more time. He pressed the control button on the defibrillator with added emphasis. He glanced at the cardiac monitor. The razor thin line that had been flat darted upwards! There was life!

A doctor called out in disbelief, "You've got a heartbeat!"

Infused with hope and determination, Dr. Lebowitz worked frantically to continue the heart's revival and with concerted effort, he managed to stimulate a feeble pulse. He ordered the medics to transfer the patient to the third-floor intensive care unit, where she would be treated and observed every moment. Once in the ICU, her progress was slow but steady.

Dr Lebowitz returned to the emergency room to continue his full-time duties. Periodically he would call up to the ICU unit to get the latest update on the woman's condition. Six hours later he was told the good news that she was being allowed to sit up in bed. He decided that he would visit her. As he walked to her room, he wondered how to introduce himself. When he entered the room, he didn't have to say a word.

A man sitting next to her called out, "He's the one! He's the one who saved your life! That's the one I've been telling you about."

"And who are you?" Dr. Lebowitz said, extending his hand to the gentleman.

"I'm her husband and I saw how you worked to save my wife's life."
"Where were you?" Dr. Lebowitz asked. "I was with her when it

happened, but then they whisked me out of the room and I stood watching from behind the glass wall."

The woman began crying uncontrollably. Dr. Lebowitz stood there somewhat embarrassed, waiting for her to compose herself. When she did, she spoke softly and said words Dr. Lebowitz will never forget.

"What do I say? Thank you? That's what you say to someone who holds a door open for you, not to someone who has just given you back your life. But I will tell you this. When I go home and see my children I will remember you and say, 'Thank you Dr. Lebowitz.'

"In a week from now when I take a walk with my husband I will think of you and say, 'Thank you Dr. Lebowitz.' The next time I go out with my friends I will think of you and say, 'Thank you Dr. Lebowitz.' And the next time I have a birthday, I will remember you and say, 'Thank you Dr. Lebowitz.'"

Her words were simple but heartfelt, gentle but powerful. When Dr. Lebowitz left the room, he walked out into the hospital corridor and said to no one and to anyone,



"When I go home and see my wife and family, I'm going to say, 'Thank you, Hashem,' and the next time I pray and feel connected to Hashem I will remember and say, 'Thank you Rabbi [Noach] Weinberg,' (who had been integral to his religious growth) and the next time I learn Chumash I will say, 'Thank you Rabbi Weinberg.' The next time I walk up the stairs and don't get out of breath I will say, 'Thank you Hashem.'

Dr. Lebowitz returned to the emergency room a humbled and grateful person.' We have been given the unparalleled gift of life,

where every heartbeat, every breath, every movement and sense are a miracle. How is it possible to truly say thank you for our life? How can those two words do any justice in expressing the gratitude that we should be feeling?

In every aspect of our lives, whether it is spending time with our family, enjoying ourselves on holiday, going to work, or just resting, we should be thinking : thank you Hashem for giving me the ability to experience this moment! For something that is as big as life itself, "thank you" cannot be just a casual, throwaway statement; it needs to be truly lived!

How Tznius Can Save One's Life.

Rabbi Scheinbaum writes that dressing and acting appropriately are prerequisites for Torah-oriented behaviour, and the way one dresses represents their attitude with regard to Hashem. To dress in an immodest manner is to put Hashem to shame and cause Him to turn away.

In Sefer Nitzotzos, **Rav Yitzchak Hershkowitz** relates an inspiring story, which underscores the importance of Tznius in the life of a Jew. A Kollel fellow in Yerushalayim received a letter from a young woman containing a note of deep gratitude for "what he had done for her." "In fact," she wrote, "you saved my life."

Now his curiosity was piqued. He could not remember an incident in which he had saved anyone's life - let alone the life of this woman. Not allowing this letter of gratitude to go unanswered, he checked the return address, and he was able to locate and contact the sender of the letter.

The story he heard was mind-boggling. Apparently, a few weeks earlier, he had gone to the bank where he usually conducts business. Waiting in line, he noticed that the female teller was dressed inappropriately. Under normal circumstances, he would have kept his

mouth shut or moved over to a different teller, but this time, for some reason, he was bothered. After all, since it was a public place that catered to many observant Jews, he felt that the young woman should have shown a little more respect.

Furthermore, she was herself "somewhat" observant. True, it was a warm summer day, but what is wrong is wrong. "Excuse me, ma'am," he said courteously and with complete sincerity. "Do you think it is appropriate for you to serve the customers of this bank wearing the outfit that you have on?" - Before she could reply, he added, "Tznius is very important, and it impacts the environment around you. More than that, however, what about yourself? What about your own self-respect? Is this what you think of yourself?"

Powerful words, to which the young lady countered, "Sir, if you have a problem with my outfit, you can always take your business to the next teller." End of story? No!

A few weeks later, the young lady was a guest at the wedding of a close friend. It was a warm evening, and the dancing was quite spirited. She began to perspire and felt over-heated. She decided that, if she were to continue dancing, she would remove her new, stylish jacket that she was wearing over her dress.

As she was about to remove it, she somehow reminded herself of the comment the Kollel fellow had said to her earlier in the bank: "It is not only about others; it is also about you."

She then decided that this time she would have a little more self-respect, and rather than remove the jacket, she would go outside and cool off in the evening air. In her heart, she felt that perhaps the man was right. She had no business lowering her self-esteem by dressing in an immodest fashion.

As she stood outside enjoying the cool air and reflecting over her conversation with the man, she suddenly heard the sirens of many ambulances.



She turned around and looked at the wedding hall, and she saw that the floor on which she had just been dancing on, was gone! The entire floor had collapsed! Horrified, she realized that she could have still been dancing inside at the time of the collapse, but she had gone outside to cool off — rather than remove her jacket! Tznius had saved her life!

Facebuker Shabbos Table Talk

A man died and met the welcoming angel at Heaven's gates. Realizing that the angel had access to vast knowledge, he said, "Holy Angel, I have been interested in military history for many years. Tell me: who was the greatest general of all time?"

The angel quickly responded, "Oh, that's a simple question. It is that man right over there," as he pointed nearby. The man said, "You must be mistaken. I knew that man on earth. He was just a common labourer."

"That's right, my friend," replied the angel. "But he would have been the greatest general of all time -- if only he had been a general."

Sometimes we miss the greatest opportunities simply because we doubt our abilities and never take that first step. Don't make that mistake. G-d made you to make a difference!

Trapped in a Hezbollah Mine Field from the Desk of Yerachmiel Tilles





After the passing of **HaRav Mordechai Eliyahu** in 2010, former Israeli Defense Forces General Effi Eitam came to the rabbi's home and told the mourning family this story, in which he was personally involved.

In the mid and late 1990's, he was the commanding officer of a brigade within "Utzvat HaGalil" - the Israel Defense Forces division that is responsible for the ongoing security in the western sector of the border between Israel and Lebanon.

One time, a squad of fifteen soldiers from his brigade entered Lebanon in the middle of the night on a secret mission. As they were crossing a certain low area between hills, the officer in charge suddenly signaled them urgently to halt. In a fear-filled whisper he informed them that they were within a life threatening mine field.

The mine fields in Lebanon were a clever plot by Iran's militant terrorist force, called Hezbollah, to kill and maim Israeli soldiers. They would surround an area with a large number of powerful bombs, which they painted and camouflaged to look like ordinary big stones. They would place these bombs among the natural stones of the area, and wait for IDF forces to enter the "mine field" and be encircled by the bombs.

What makes this type of mine field so especially dangerous is that it is not a matter of an individual touching or stepping upon a single

bomb and the hair trigger fuse causes it to explode immediately. Rather, all the bombs were connected together. Not by wire or anything else physical; a hidden laser "arc" surrounded the entire area, and any attempt to cross the perimeter created by the unseen arc would detonate all the bombs simultaneously.

Also, on top of the hill nearest to the 'field' was situated a lookout station of Hezbollah soldiers. If any one of the terrorist watchers noticed Israeli soldiers having entered the area, he could activate the encircling laser arc. The densely packed powerful explosives were capable of killing large numbers of soldiers at once and injuring many more.

The officer leading the mission, who had identified the mine field, having been taught about them in a course, sadly told the squad there was no way to exit the mine field without being killed. Furthermore, he said, the Hezbollah soldiers positioned on the surrounding hills could open fire at any time.

With a trembling voice he called "Pikud Hatzafon" - the northern Israel IDF command center, located in Tsfat -- and reported their dire situation. The brigade commander, Effi Eitam, was immediately informed. He grasped right away that the lives of 15 of his soldiers was hanging by a thread. But what could he do to help?

At 3:00 AM the house phone started ringing in the home of the former "Rishon L'Tzion" (Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu). He was already awake and studying Torah. He picked up the receiver and on the line was Effi Eitam. As concisely as possible he described the deadly situation of his soldiers. He concluded with "Great Rabbi, we need the power of your honour's prayers."

"Wait a few minutes, but stay on the line," was Rav Eliyahu's reply, and he turned away to immerse himself totally in prayer.

After the few minutes he returned to the phone and said in a gentle tranquil tone: "I'm holding tight…take them out now!"

Eitam, who understood only too well the lethal destructiveness of this type of bombs, of course realized the implications of giving the command to flee. On the other hand, he had complete pure faith in the power of true Torah sages, and he knew Rav Eliyahu well enough to know that he would never dare utter such a demand if he wasn't fully confident that his prayer had been accepted.

He called back the squad leader. "Go! Leave! Right now! This instant! Start running!"

One of the Military Intelligence officers at the Northern Command Center was listening in on the terrorists' communication network. He put his phone on speaker so that everyone nearby could hear the quarreling voices and the screams. The local Hezbollah commander was shouting over and over again that the terrorist on watch duty should activate the laser arc. The latter yelled back, "I'm doing it! I keep pressing the button, but it is not working." The commander roared at him that he was a traitor and 'decorated' him with numerous elaborate and eloquent Arabic curses.

Effi Eitam reported back to Rav Eliyahu that right after the last soldier had crossed the perimeter and sufficiently distanced himself, all the bombs began exploding one after the other around the four sides of the mine field. All the stones in the area were now specks and the trees had become sawdust. More importantly, all the Israeli soldiers made it back to their base, healthy and whole and unharmed.

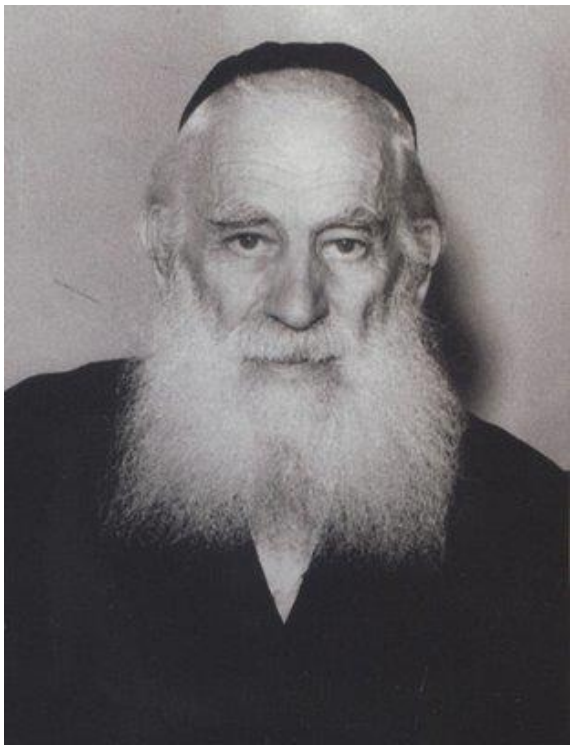


Rav Elyashiv — Chesed & Sensitivity

"Chesed done quietly is the purest form of chesed." - He valued hidden kindness over public displays.



The Messy House – Etz Chaim



A yungerman came to the **Ponevezher Rav (Rabbi Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman, zt"l)** begging him to help him give a get to his wife. He claimed their house was always a huge mess. It was a disaster, and his wife just didn't know how to keep on top of the cleaning.

The Ponevezher Rov told him, "I hear. I can help you with the details. Just please come to my house tomorrow at nine o'clock to discuss things."

The Rov came home that night and told his Rebbitzin (who was meticulous about keeping the house clean and neat), "We need to mess up our house."

They "literally" turned the house upside down! When the yungerman came the next morning there was laundry on the floor, leftovers on the table, the sinks were piled with loads of dishes and there were toys scattered in the entrance way to the house (as you could imagine).

The Ponevezher Rov turned to the yungerman and said, "Okay, let's continue our discussion."

The yungerman surveyed his surroundings. He thought to himself, "Even the Ponivicher Rov's house is like that!" He turned to the Rov and said, "It's okay, I don't need anything anymore.

Pearls of Wisdom (*Devarim Rabbah* 7:4)

HaKadosh Baruch Hu said, "If you listen to My commandments, I will listen to your tefilos."

Eyeing the Land -*Torah U'Tefilah: Rabbi Y Winzelberg*



Rav Shlomo Mordechai of Boyan visited Eretz Yisroel in 1949. When he arrived, he arranged for a driver to take him from Tel Aviv to Haifa. When the taxi came, four Chasidim escorted him along the way, hoping that they would be able to spend some time talking to their Rebbe. They hoped to hear some of his insights and Divrei Torah. Perhaps he would share with them some stories about great Tzadikim.

Instead, the Rebbe stared out the taxi window the entire time. Not a word was spoken. In addition, when he arrived in Haifa, he did not get out of the taxi to visit anybody. He just asked the driver to take him back to his apartment in Tel Aviv. And just like the way there, he did not stop looking at the scenery the entire way back.

The Chasidim were completely confused by the trip. They could not understand why the Rebbe would have taken such a pointless ride. Finally, they arrived back home, and when they did, they asked their Rebbe why he had wasted over two hours of his day going on a leisure ride. What was he hoping to see? The Rebbe smiled as he answered them. "The Pasuk says in Devarim (11:12), **תָּמִיד עֵינֵי ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ בָּהּ** - the eyes of Hashem are always on Eretz Yisroel'.

If the Ribbono Shel Olam is looking at the Land, then there must be something beautiful to see. That is why I was looking at it. I wanted to see what Hashem sees!"

Learning from a Horse



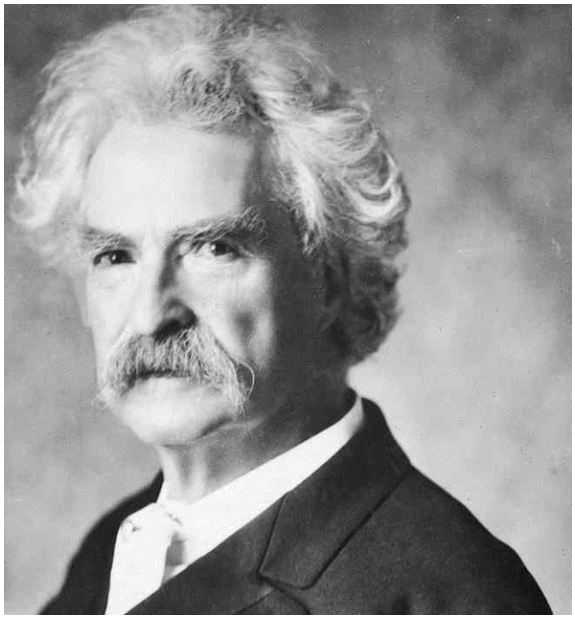
Rabbi Yissochar Frand related that a businessman once came to **Rav Meir Premishlaner** and said, "Rebbe, please help me. Someone is opening a business like mine right down the street from me! I'm going to lose all my business!"

Rav Meir told the man to calm down, and said, "Have you ever noticed that before a horse drinks from a pond or a river he always stamps on the ground first? Do you know why it does that? Because when the horse sees his reflection in the pond, he thinks there is another horse there and he tries to chase him away so he wouldn't take his water. Don't worry about this other business. There is no threat to you from it at all!"

Rabbi Frand taught that faith in Hashem has to be one of the constant themes of our homes, and it has to be discussed constantly. Members of the family should always hear that there is a Father in Shamayim Who takes care of us, and whenever there are setbacks, we should learn to say, "Hashem has helped us until now, and He will continue to help us in the future!"

Hashem must be a reality in our lives. We say every morning, Baruch Atah Hashem… She'asah Li Kol Tzorki, that Hashem has prepared for me all my needs. Rabbi Frand said, "Let us think deeply about these words. Let us realize that if Hashem has indeed given us everything we need, there is no reason to be jealous of anything or anyone! - *(Torah U'Tefilah: A Collection of Inspiring Insights compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.)*

Mark Twain – An Essay "Concerning the Jews"



"If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one quarter of one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous puff of star dust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly, the Jew ought hardly to be heard of, but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk.

'His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine and abstruse learning are also very out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvelous fight in this world in all ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him. He could be vain of himself and be excused for it. The Egyptians, the Babylonians and the Persians rose, filled the planet with sound and splendour, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greeks and Romans followed and made a vast noise, and they were gone; other people have sprung up and held their torch high for a time but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, and have vanished.

"The Jew saw them all, survived them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities, of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert but aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jews; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?"

(By Jack E. Rahmey. Originally printed in Harper's Magazine, 1899..)

Rav Aryeh Levine and The Crying Woman

A woman once came to Rav Aryeh Levine's home. She pleaded, "Please just let me sit and cry before you."

He replied kindly, "You may surely sit, and you may even cry— but not before me. Direct your tears to *Hashem*, the One Who listens to weeping and hears the cries of His people."

The woman took a seat and cried, and in between her tears she described to Rav Aryeh Levine her sad situation. Rav Aryeh asked her not to cry so much and said that *Hashem* has so much mercy and He will surely help.

But a few days later the woman returned to tell him that the person she had been *Davening* for had passed away. She now cried with new tears, and Reb Aryeh did his best to comfort her.

She said, "I will accept your calming words, but I have a question. What became of the thousands of tears that I cried over saying *Tehilim*? Was it all for nothing?"

Rav Aryeh gently answered, "After 120 years, and you come before the Heavenly Court, you will see how many severe and harsh decrees against the Jewish people were tom up, all because of those precious and holy tears that you have cried. Not one teardrop goes to waste! *Hashem* counts them like pearls and treasures them!" The woman smiled and tears of happiness flowed down her cheeks.

Sometime later she came back to visit Rav Aryeh and she said, "Dear Rabbi, please tell me those beautiful words again. What happened with all those tears?"

Rav Aryeh Levine taught her that no *Tefilah* ever goes to waste, but it is cherished by *Hashem* forever!

(Torah U'Tefilah: A Collection of Inspiring Insights compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.)

Talking to Sheldon with Love By Rabbi Tuvia Bolton

Rabbi Yankel Gluckowski was a teacher in Toronto. It was his job to teach Torah to the Jewish children in the school, but he also had a hobby: Teaching Torah to yet more Jews.

In fact, he was so good at it that he was often offered payment for these 'outside' activities. But he always refused, saying that the Lubavitcher Rebbe once told him that the wage he received for teaching also included 'a few other special projects of his own'

One day he received a telephone call from a man that he had never met in his life and who he had no idea where he got his phone number.

The fellow was frantic. He was Jewish and his son, who we will call Sheldon, somehow got involved with a cult called Hari Krishna and no one had heard from him for months. The man was going out of his mind and was about to call the police when someone gave him the Rabbi's number.

Rabbi Gluckowski expressed sympathies at the tragic news but didn't understand what it had to do with him. After all, he was a normal religious Jew with no experience with cults or such things. True he was a venturous sort of person with a tremendous love for all mankind, especially his fellow Jews, but he didn't understand anything about cults and certainly didn't have the time to go searching in India or somewhere else to find about this cult.

But the man on the other end of the phone wouldn't take no for an answer. He didn't care if the Rabbi knew about cults or not, he had heard his name from friends and was convinced that if anyone could get his son out it was him. Not only that but he had tried a lot of other things and called a lot of other people and nothing else worked.

And as far as locating his son, that was no problem. It so happened that he knew the exact location of his son, or at least where he was when he was last heard from several months ago; in an Ashram in Toronto, not far from where the Rabbi worked.

Something told Rabbi Gluckowski to do it. It was crazy! But this could be another of his 'special projects'. He took the challenge.

With no plan, strategy or inside information whatsoever he woke early the next morning, located the Ashram, said a short prayer, put on a smile and began knocking on the massive front door.

At first no one answered. They probably peeked out, saw a religious Jew and figured they should ignore him till he went away. But after he knocked for ten minutes without stopping a gruff voice from the other side of the closed door answered, "Who is it?! What do you want?!"

"Hello!" he replied brightly, "My name is Gluckowski, Rabbi Gluckowski, and I want to talk to Sheldon Greenbaum. Anyone called Sheldon Greenbaum in there? His parents are worried about him."

There were a few moments of silence and he almost considered to give them another ten-minute knocking session when a different voice came from behind the closed door. "Yes, this is the one who is called Sheldon."

"Sheldon? Sheldon Greenbaum?" yelled the Rabbi. A faint grunt signifying 'yes' was heard from the other side.

"Hey! Hi Sheldon! Your father called me and he's worried. He might just call the police." "I'm okay!" he answered.

"Listen Sheldon. Do me a favour. Your father called me and asked me to contact you because he's worried and he said he might call the police because he's worried." "So what do you want me to do?"

The Rabbi had to think fast and suddenly it came to him. "Listen, if you call him, he won't believe you. He'll think you are brainwashed. I mean, three months is a long time not to call. And if I call him, what will I say? I can't lie and say you're all right, I haven't even seen you. So I have an idea.." Rabbi Gluckowski knew he was really crossing the line here but he went through with it.

"Come to my house this Shabbat and then I can tell him I saw you for a full day and he won't worry. What do you say?"

"One minute." Was the reply.

After a few minutes of silence, the door opened and out stepped a thin fellow, shaved head except for a clump of hair on the top with some sort of ornament dangling between his eyes. He was dressed in an orange robe wearing loose sandals and was carrying some sort of shapeless leather briefcase that looked like it was made in Tibet. He declared, "I am ready."

Rabbi Gluckowski took him to his house, which was only a few streets away, showed him to a room in the basement asked him if he wanted anything to eat or drink, or wanted to take a shower. But Sheldon just gave a close-mouthed smile, sat as straight-backed as possible and shook his head serenely 'no'.

That evening, as the Rabbi expected, Sheldon declined his offer to go with him and his sons to Synagogue. When they returned an hour or so later from the prayers they all sat down, Sheldon included, to the Shabbat meal. Luckily there were enough potatoes, salad and bread to keep their vegetarian guest satisfied.

Rabbi Gluckowski had no problem talking Torah at the dinner table but he soon realized that none of it was really pertinent to spaced-out Sheldon. So he tried a joke. no reaction, a story. no reaction, something about family, life, sports, hobbies, animals. no luck; Sheldon just smiled, sat straight backed and nodded his head and finally said a few words before he retired to his basement room.

That night Rabbi Gluckowski was awaked from his sleep by a low groaning noise that filtered up into his bedroom from the basement.

He put on his slippers and night-robe and went down to have a look. The moaning became louder as he descended and realized he was witnessing some sort of ritual.

Sheldon had a picture or some sort of statue propped up on a chair before him and he was actually bowing to it while chanting some monotonous mantra.

It was too weird for the Rabbi to bear, he had never seen a Jew actually worshiping an idol - certainly not right here in his house!!

He didn't know what to do. It was out of the question to let it continue, but on the other hand he couldn't get angry or evict him... poor Sheldon thought he was doing a big mitzvah!

So Rabbi Gluckowski sat up the entire night and talked to him. Occasionally he went to get a cup of coffee to keep him up but he just kept talking. Not one word about idolatry, because he didn't know what to say, and also not too much about Judaism, because it turned Sheldon off, but about everything else under the sun; especially stories.

The next day Sheldon was so exhausted that he slept the entire day, waking only for the Shabbat meal and, needless to say, Rabbi Gluckowski was a wreck. He would have liked to also catch a few hours of sleep but Shabbat was one of his busiest days, praying, being with his family and teaching several classes.

Years later (only a few years ago) Rabbi Gluckowski passed away and his children, all of whom had already married and had children of their own, spent the seven-day mourning period in his home in Toronto. In that time hundreds, of people came to comfort the mourners and to praise the deceased. Among them was a thin, middle aged, religious fellow with sparkling eyes that no one seemed to recognize.

He sat opposite the mourners and said, "When I heard your father passed away I had to come. Remember me? I was by your house about fifteen years ago for one Shabbat. You were all younger then, so was I, but I had a shaved head and was wearing an orange robe."

He told them of how that Shabbat got him to begin to think about his Jewish soul seriously for the first time in his life until finally he went to a yeshiva a year or so later and liked it.



"You know what did it?" He concluded his story," You know what really impressed me about your father? It wasn't anything he said, in fact even the next day I didn't remember any of it, not a word. ***It was his love. I never saw such unconditional love in my life. That is what changed my mind."***

Take My Gartel!



Once, a Chasid in the **Imrei Emes's** Shul was very upset before Davening because he didn't have a Gartel. The **Imrei Emes** went over to him and said, "Here, use mine," and he began to take off his own Gartel.

The Chasid protested and said, "But Rebbe, what are you going to wear for Davening if I take your Gartel?"

The Imrei Emes answered, "Wearing a Gartel for Davening is only a Minhag. However, doing Chesed is a Mitzvah D'Oraysa, a Mitzvah from the Torah. You do the Minhag and I'll do the D'Oraysa!"

The Lubavitcher Rebbe And the Boyaner Chazan From the desk of Yerachmiel Tilles



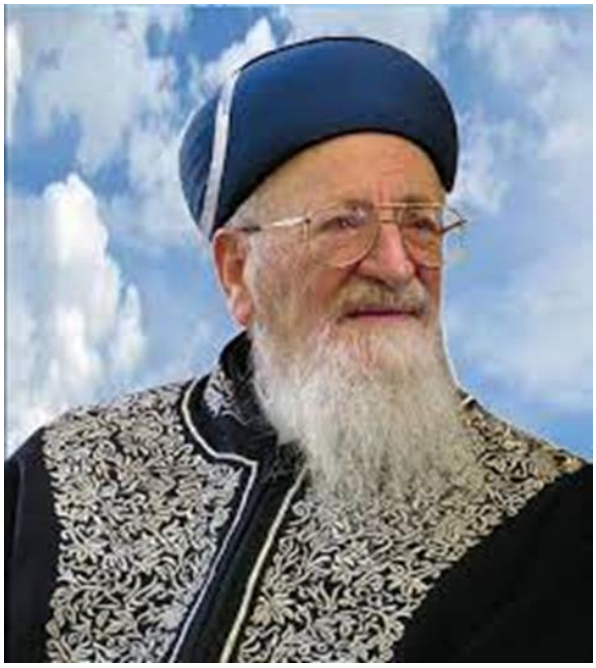
A Boyaner chasid came to Melbourne, Australia to be the *chazan* for the High Holidays of 5771 (2010). Rabbi Mottel Krasnjanski noticed that from time to time in the middle of the services he would pause and glance at a little piece of paper that he had placed on the podium with his *Machzor*

After the services were over, Rabbi Krasnjanski asked the *chazan* about the paper. The *chazan* replied that about 20 years earlier, shortly before the High Holidays, he had gone to the Lubavitcher Rebbe when the Rebbe distributed dollars. The *chazan* told the Rebbe that he was going to be a *chazan* in a certain *shul*. The Rebbe's response was, "We must remember that we are praying to Hashem."

The *chazan* appreciated the nice thought but didn't take it too seriously at the time. After the holidays however, it occurred to him that throughout the service he was so preoccupied with remembering the tunes, creating the right emotions through his voice, that he really hadn't thought much about G-d!

He realized that the Rebbe hadn't just told him a "nice thought," but rather had given him guidance and something to work on. Since then, the *chazan* concluded, "whenever I lead the prayers, I carry with me this piece of paper on which I wrote the Rebbe's message, "We must remember that we are praying to G-d and look at it from time to time during the prayers to make sure that I never forget it!"

The Visiting Rabbi and The President of France By Rabbi Tuvia Bolton



This story occurred less than ten years ago when **Rabbi Mordechi Eliyahu**, one of the Chief Rabbis of Israel received an official invitation from the President of France Jacque Chirac to visit his country.

Chirac was known as a hard line, pro-Arab leader that was constantly pushing Israel to cede territories to the Palestinians thus bringing French-Israeli relations to an all-time low.

Rabbi Eliahu, on the other hand, was a very outspoken individual with little patience for the formalities that are the essence of French culture. So, the members of the Israeli embassy there was understandably very tense and apprehensive that the Rabbi might say or do something that would make things even worse than they were.

But as soon as the Rabbi arrived, they calmed down. His outgoing and friendly demeanor put everyone at ease, and it was obvious that the meeting would be nothing other than formalities and smiles.

But they were wrong. For instance, at the first leg of the visit at the official tour of the French National Museum the Rabbi demonstrated what seemed to be a shameful ignorance and insensitivity to French heritage.

When he was shown the throne of Napoleon he asked if it was for sale, if so, for how much and how long ago did Napoleon live. Then when shown one of the rooms of King Louis the Fourteenth he asked

if this King was a moral person which caused everyone to blush and even laugh behind the Rabbi's back.

The tour guide explained that the chair of Napoleon was of great historical and national importance and was certainly not for sale and regarding King Louis; although he was not known to be a particularly moral person but nevertheless France is proud of him as part of their heritage.

Afterwards they returned to the office of Chirac for an official ceremony where, after many introductions and formalities, Rabbi Eliahu was invited to say a few words that would be simultaneously translated into French.

Rabbi Eliahu began by describing in detail his tour of the museum and his questions that caused everyone to laugh.

At this point the Rabbi's wife noticed that the translator was not paying attention to every word her husband was saying and, realizing that her husband was making some sort of point, requested that the chief Rabbi of France, who was also present, should take over the task.

Rabbi Eliahu continued, "In my visit to the Museum I learned that the chair of Napoleon was not for sale because of its historical importance and that King Louis, although not a man of pure character is nevertheless revered and honored as a French hero.

"I noticed that you expected me to honour these men also and were surprised when I did not do so although I am not French and do not even live in France.

"If so, my dear friends, I ask the same thing from you: We Jews also have our founders: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob but not of two or three hundred years ago and of questionable character like yours but of three and four thousand years ago and of impeccable integrity and selflessness.

"Is it too much to ask that just as you expect us to respect your founders and kings so you should, in turn, respect ours?

"For instance, over three thousand years ago Moses brought us to the Promised Land and some four hundred years afterwards our King David and King Solomon secured the city of Jerusalem.

"That is our history.

"Does it not make simple sense that just as you expect us to honor your heritage so you should honor ours? If the chair of Napoleon is not for sale, then how can you expect us to sell parts of Israel and Jerusalem?"

The members of the Israeli embassy were in panic: this was exactly what they were afraid of! In the moment of silence that followed they were certain that Chirac would simply storm out of the room in fury. But they were in for a big surprise. All of the French officials present, including the President himself, stood and gave the Rabbi an ovation!

In fact, Chirac warmly shook the Rabbi's hand, called one of his assistants and whispered something in his ear that caused him to leave the room and return in just seconds with a small, velvet box.

Chirac asked for silence and then announced, "This medallion is usually reserved for visiting presidents, but I have never heard words like these. They so impressed me that I am presenting this to you." And when he finished speaking the crowd applauded again.

The reason G-d created (and creates constantly) this world is for man to transform it to 'heaven on earth'. In other words, to reveal in its every detail that G-d is ONE; this is the motto and mission statement of Judaism, and it is for this we were 'chosen' by G-d.

Namely, it is our job to do as Rabbi Eliahu did to Mr. Chirac in our story, wake the world up to this fact….so that ALL mankind will join us (see Rashi on Deut. 6:4).

This serves as an inspiration and a surety to us that with NO DOUBT the good in everything can be revealed.

Let this be a lesson to us as well; when we are confronted with difficulties, disappointments and crises we must remember that they are G-d sent tasks given to us in order that we transform them by positive thought, speech and action.

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"הנני נותן לו את בריתי שלום" - "Behold! I give him My covenant of peace." (25:12)

What is the "covenant of peace"?

When Hashem asked Moshe to go to Egypt and redeem the Jewish People, Moshe pleaded "Please send the one whom you will eventually send" (*Shemot* 4:13).

The *Targum Yonatan ben Uziel* explains that Moshe was saying to Hashem, "Please send Pinchas, who is destined to be Eliyahu, and inform the Jewish People of the coming of *Mashiach*." (This is a source for the famous statement that Pinchas is Eliyahu).

The word "*shalom*" (**שלום**) has the numerical value of 376 which is the same numerical value as the words "*zehu Mashiach*" (**זהו משיח**) — "this is *Mashiach*."

The Rambam (*Melachim* 12:5) writes that in those days [of *Mashiach*] there will be no hunger, jealousy or competition.

Hence, Hashem was alluding that Pinchas will be Eliyahu who will announce the coming of *Mashiach*, and that the Jewish people will then enter an era in which they will experience the highest degree of *shalom*. **(בעל הטורים)**

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Why was Pinchas rewarded with longevity?

Hashem's way of rewarding is *midah keneged midah* — measure for measure. Thanks to Pinchas' zealous act, the plague that struck killed only 24,000, and fortunately, Hashem, "did not consume the Children of Israel in My vengeance" (25:11).

Since he brought life to *K'lal Yisrael,* he was rewarded with long life. **(רבינו בחיי)**

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"בקנאו את קנאתי בתוכם...הנני נתן לו את בריתי שלום
"When he zealously avenged My vengeance among them...Behold! I give him My covenant of peace." (25:11-12)



Superficially, both Pinchas and Korach were zealots. They both saw something that they considered wrong and took drastic action. Why was Pinchas so handsomely rewarded and Korach so severely punished?

The major difference between them was not in what they did, but how they did it. Of Pinchas the Torah attests that whatever he did

was "*betocham*" — "among them." He remained within the community and did not harm community unity in any way. About Korach the Torah writes, "*vayikach Korach*" — "Korach took" — and Onkelos translates "*ve'itpeleig Korach,*" which means that Korach *separated* himself.

Thus, for Korach's endeavours to separate himself and divisively create a following of his own, he was severely punished, though he may have been motivated by a spirit of zealousness.(**שמעתי מהרב רפאל זי"ל שטיין**)

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"בני ישכר למשפחתם ... לישוב משפחת הישובי" "The family of Yissachar according to their families ... of Yashuv the Jashubite family" (26:23-24)



Why was the appeasement necessarily with the letter **"ש"** and not any other letters from his name?

The *Beit Yosef* (*Orach Chaim* 32) writes that the reason for a **"ש"** on the head *Tefillin* is that a **"ש"** has the numerical value of 300 and according to the *alef-beit* known as **א-ת, ב-ש** (in which the **"א"** is exchanged with the **"ת"** and the **"ב"** with the **"ש"** etc.), the holy Name of Hashem **י-ה-ו-ה** numerically values 300. (The **"י"** becomes a **"מ"**, the **"ה"** becomes a **"צ"**, and the **"ו"** becomes a **"פ"**. Thus **י-ה-ו-ה** becomes **מ-צ-פ-צ**.)

The *Gemara* (*Berachot* 6a) explains the *pasuk* "All the peoples of the earth will see that the *name of G-d* is proclaimed upon you and they will fear you" as a reference to the *Tefillin* of the head. Therefore

we put a **"ש"** on the sides of the *Tefillin* of the head because of its equivalence to the Tetragrammaton.

Since Yov complained to his father for giving him a name which is name of an idol, he appeased him by giving him a **"ש"** from his name because of its equivalence to Hashem's holy name. **(פרדס יוסף החדש)**

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אשר יצא לפניהם ואשר יבא לפניהם...ולא תהיה עדת ה' כצאן אשר אין להם רעה

***"Who shall go out before them and come in before them...and let the assembly of G-d not be like sheep that have no shepherd."* (27:17)**

Why is it necessary to give the analogy of sheep *without* a shepherd? Suffice it to say, "The congregation will have a shepherd."

When a shepherd takes his sheep to pasture, the sheep run ahead, and he walks behind them with a stick. He does this to keep the herd together and so that if they are attacked, it will be easier for him to flee and save his own life. Thus, a herd of sheep in the pasture can appear to lack a shepherd.

Moshe prayed to Hashem to appoint a leader for the Jewish people, one who would not walk behind them and keep a low profile, but one who would take the initiative and give direction, a leader, in short, who would always be a trailblazer for the people to follow. **(כתב סופר)**

Become a Better Person

"If you are not a better person tomorrow than you are today, what need have you for a tomorrow?," -Rebbe Nachman of Breslov

We tend to always focus on the material things in life and overlook the conditions of the heart and of the soul. Making the small changes in our behaviour can help us become a better role model for our kids, help us treat our spouses better or honouring others before we praise ourselves. Another thing that is quite helpful is forgiving people who really hurt us because this is akin to carrying a boulder up a hill that never ends. Humans only have one shot at life, let's become better at it, while we have time. We can do this by changing our behaviours by making the decision to live a more authentic life.

Rabbi Avi Wiesenfeld *Rosh Hayeshiva Yeshivas Beis Dovid*



פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן 25:11. We all remember at the end of last week's parsha: Klal Yisrael began to do aveiros with non-Jewish women. Even Zimri – the leader of shevet Shimon, was caught doing aveiros. Aaron's grandson, Pinchos, publicly killed Zimri.

Rashi says that Kal Yisrael started to embarrass and ridicule Pinchos. They said, "how can it be that a person, whose maternal grandfather – Yisro, somebody that was *oived avoda zarah* - could murder a leader of a tribe". Therefore, in this week's parsha it says **פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן.**

לְפִי שֶׁהָיוּ הַשְּׁבָטִים מְבַזִּים אוֹתוֹ: "הַרְאִיתֶם בֶּן פּוּטִי זֶה, שֶׁפִּטֵּם אֲבִי אִמּוֹ עֲגָלִים לַעֲבוֹדָה זָרָה, וְהָרַג נְשִׂיא שֵׁבֶט מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל?!" לְפִיכָךְ בָּא הַכָּתוּב וְיִחֲסוֹ אַחַר אַהֲרֹן.

Now, there is something that doesn't make sense over here. Because, if they knew the halacha, that Pinchos was allowed to kill, then why did they insult him? But if they didn't know the halacha, then how was it beneficial in pointing out his maternal lineage. Why did that change the reality that one of his grandfathers happened to serve as a priest for idol-worship? And in their minds, this killing was carried out without justification? It doesn't make sense. What is the connection?

Says **Rav Meir Shapiro**, something incredible.

He says, ***"The value of a* mitzvah *is often measured by the degree to which its performance runs counter to a person's natural inclinations, and therefore represents a greater test to his devotion to Hashem".***

Klal Yisrael attempted to minimise the greatness of Pichos's actions. Not by saying that he was a cold-blooded killer, but by hinting that it was easy for him, as his grandfather, Yisro, cruelly killed animals as part of his avoda zarah.

The Torah comes along, and says, "no!, this act that Pinchos did, was performed with tremendous difficulty – with an internal resistance." **פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן** His paternal grandfather – Aaron HaCohen, whose entire life was ohev shalom v'rodef shalom.

Somebody once came to **Rav Yitzchok Hutner** and told him that a certain mitzva was too difficult for him to keep. Rav Hutner said, "can you imagine that someone is driving a car on the motorway, and he sees blue flashing lights of the police car behind him.

He pulls over and the policeman says to him, "excuse me sir, but why were you driving at over 100 MPH on a motorway with a speed limit of 70 MPH?"



The man says, "excuse me officer, but I did nothing wrong. The car was on cruise control! And therefore, I was not even the one driving the car." The officer said," are you crazy? Who is the one that initially set the cruise control to an illegal speed? It was you!"

Says Rav Hutner, that when a person comes to the *beis din shel maaloh* and attempts to justify what he did or didn't do, by saying that a particular mitzvah is a bit hard for me. Well, who set the cruise control?

This is what the Torah is telling us in this week's parsha. It is telling us that פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן: No no, it was a hard mitzvah. Klal Yisrael were trying to minimise it because it was easy for you. That is the connection, because he was the grandson of Aaron HaCohen, and it was very hard for him.

This week's parsha teaches us, that sometimes, we have a mitzvah, an opportunity to do something – and it is difficult and hard for us to do, or difficult not to do something that's wrong.

This week's parsha gives us the chizuk that the greater the hardship, the greater the reward.

The Riboino Shel Olam should grant us a beautiful Shabbos!

Success is not just what you accomplish, but what you inspire others to accomplish.

Torah U'Tefilah - *R' Shmuel Winzelberg*

פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן ***Pinchas the son of Elazar the son of Aharon the Kohen*** (25:11)

The name **פינחס** is spelled in the Torah with the letter **י** which is unusual, however, it is written small. The *sefer Birchas Av* writes that the *yud* is written small to tell us that the *gematria* (numerical value) of this letter is small. That is, it is counted as one and not ten as is customary (10 = 1 + 0 = 1).

The *gematria* of the word **פינחס** is then equal to 199

(ס=60,ח=8 ,נ= 50 ,י=1 ,פ= 80) = 199 which is the same *gematria* as the word **צדקה** - charity. This fulfils the *pasuk* in *Tehillim* (106:30-31):

ויעמוד פנחס ויפלל ותיעצר המגיפה, ותחשב לו לצדקה לדור ודור עד עולם

And Pinchas arose and executed judgment, and the plague was stopped. It was accounted to him as a righteous deed for all generations, forever.

As an aside, the *Mishnah* at the end of *Peiah* teaches that a man is considered poor and can take from charity funds as long as he does not have 200 *zuz* to his name. The word **צדקה** with a gematria of 199 alludes to this *mishnah*. As long as he has only 199 *zuz*, he can still take **צדקה** (*Chaim shel Torah*)

Torah U'Tefilah - *R' Shmuel Winzelberg*

וּבַחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם **On the 15th day of the 7th month should be called holy**… (29:12)

Chazal wonder why there is no mention in Parashas Pinchas of the mitzvah of dwelling in a Succah, as the mitzvah related to every other holiday is mentioned. For example, Pesach — **ימים מצות יאכל שבעת** (כח:יז), you should eat matzos for seven days; Rosh

HaShanah— **יום תרועה יהיה לכם (כט:א)** , it should be a day of blowing the Shofar; Yom Kippur—**ועניתם את נפשותיכם (כט:ז)** , and you should afflict your souls, referring to fasting.

HaGaon Rebbe Meir Simcha of Dvinsk explains in his sefer Ohr Sameach that according to Halachah, (**אורח חיים סימן תר"מ**), travellers are exempt from the mitzvah of Succah, since they are in the category of mitztaer – uncomfortable (Succah 26a). Since Parashas Pinchas discusses the Korbonos that will be brought in the Beis HaMikdash, those going up to Yerushalayim (Oleh Regel) would be exempt from Succah as mitztaer. Therefore, the mitzvah of Succah is not mentioned. However, in Parashas Emor, which does not discuss the Korbonos of the holiday, the mitzvah of Succah is mentioned.

Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages

A Chassid once asked the ***Chozeh of Lublin***, "Rebbe, the *Mishnah* in *Brachos* states that a person has to recite a *Brachah* even when something bad occurs to him, and the *Gemara* adds that not only must he recite a *Brachah*, he must rejoice and accept with joy whatever happens to him. I don't understand the *Gemara*. How is it possible to rejoice over something bad?"

The *Chozeh* answered, "You don't understand the *Gemara*, but I don't understand the *Mishnah*! How can the *Mishnah* say that one must rejoice over the bad? Is there any bad in the world?!"

When the Chofetz Chaim's classic halacha masterpiece, Mishna Berurah, was published, Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik of Brisk said of its author, "His greatness as a tzaddik obscures his even greater stature as a Torah genius."

L'Maaseh… A Tale to Remember



Rav Yehoshua Leib Diskin, *zt"l*, in his advanced age, had a sugar problem, and he was forced to consume much more sugar than usual. Due to his illness, his attendant would bring him a cup of tea with extra sugar, even during his lecture.

It once came to the attention of the students that the *Rebbetzin* of Rav Yehoshua Leib Diskin was unsettled about something. When they asked her why she was distressed, she explained that she recently noticed that salt had mistakenly been placed in the sugar container. Apparently, the attendant who was serving tea to Rav Yehoshua Leib was scooping tablespoons of salt into the tea instead of sugar! Rav Yehoshua Leib was swallowing salt, which was harmful and life-threatening for him!

However, rather than embarrassing the attendant for making an error, Rav Yehoshua Leib drank the tea as plainly as he always did, not giving any indication that he was drinking salty tea.

When Rav Yehoshua Leib was later asked why he risked his health by taking the salt, he responded, "It is preferable to throw oneself into a fiery furnace rather than shame someone in public." This is the true meaning of having sensitivity for another person.

"The physical needs of your fellow are your spiritual needs." ~ Rabbi Yisrael Salanter.

Rabbi Elimelech Biderman- Torah Wellsprings

Parnassah and Success

The *Sefer HaKanah* says that *tzaraas* exists in our generation, only it has a different appearance. In these days, *tzaraas* is poverty. In contrast, guarding one's speech is *mesugal* for *parnassah*.

The Chofetz Chaim (*Shemiras HaLashon* vol.2 ch.7) writes, "When I think about it, I am shocked: To earn *parnassah*, people seek *segulos* and they go to tzaddikim to receive *brachos*. However, all *segulos* and *brachos* won't help them if they speak *lashon hara* because speaking *lashon hara* brings curses and not blessings. As it states in the Torah (*Devarim* 27:24), **ארור מכה רעהו בסתר**, 'Cursed are those who smite their fellow man in concealment' [and this refers to speaking *lashon hara* about one's fellow man]. This curse wasn't said by just one person. It was said with the approval of the entire Jewish nation, together with the *kohanim* and the *levi'im*. And the curse prevents him from receiving Hashem's bounty.



If people would listen to me, I advise them to be very cautious with their words, and they will find blessing in their livelihood. This counsel is better than all *segulos*."

Guarding one's speech has many other benefits besides *parnassah*. It is a *segulah* for health, long life, and success. As the Chofetz Chaim (*Chovas HaShemirah* 6) writes, "The ideal *segulah* is to guard one's speech. As it states, **מי האיש החפץ חיים**, who wants to live in Olam HaBa, **אוהב ימים לראות טוב**, and he loves to live a good life in this world, the counsel is **נצור לשונך מרע**, guard your speech. This is the ultimate *segulah* for success in both worlds."

Guarding one's speech will also help him in the world to come. The Chofetz Chaim (*Kvod Shamayim* 1:10) teaches that in heaven,

Hakadosh Baruch Hu will refuse to listen to the *mekatrigim* (*malachim* who speak *lashon hara* on him) because he didn't slander and speak *lashon hara* on others.

As we see, there are many benefits gained from guarding the speech. And the greatest reward of all is that we have the privilege to give pleasure to Hashem – and there is no greater joy than that!

It states (*Shir HaShirim* 1:2), **ישיקני מנשיקות פיהו** The Yismach Moshe explains that **ישיקני** means kiss me, and **מנשיקות פיהו** is when one purses his lips tightly. Hashem says that it is like we kiss with Hashem, **מנשיקות פיהו** when we close our mouths and refrain from speaking forbidden speech.

Peninim Al HaTorah

המברך את עמו ישראל בשלום ***Who blesses His People, Yisrael, with peace.***



The *Gerrer Rebbe*, the *Imrei Emes*, was wont to say, "I came to this world in order to promote peace." He would quote the words of *Chazal* (*Shemos Rabbah* 30:17), "Nothing good and no peace will come from strife. If there is no *shalom* – there is nothing" (*Toras Kohanim, Parashas Bechokosai*).

Indeed, a letter penned by the *Rebbe* in 1929 to all *Gerrer Chassidim*, concerning the importance of peace and unity and the terrible scourge of *machlokes*, strife, hung on the walls of all *shteiblach* in Poland and continues to hang in *Gerrer Batei Medrash* throughout the world.

The *Pnei Menachem* would cite the *Baalei Mussar*, Ethicists, who say, "It is easier to be forgiven for a sin transgressed against Hashem than one transgressed against a fellow human being. Hashem will forgive His honour, but He will not forgive the honour of a fellow Jew."

He added, "*Shalom* is the source of all *brachah*. If *shalom* reigns, a person can merit every *yeshuah*. If *chalilah*, Heaven forbid, however, *sinas chinam* reigns, unwarranted hatred, how is it possible to open the gates of Heaven and be gifted with *matnas chinam*, an undeserved favour?"

He buttressed this with a frightening statement, "If there is *sinaas chinam*, even great people who have achieved great things will not succeed in neutralising a *gezeirah*, decree."

Maaseh Emunim - Tefillas Minchah That Crossed the Border

The Steipler Gaon, Harav Yaakov Yisrael Kanivesky, zt"l, author of Kehillos Yaakov, was famed during his last few decades as one of the gedolei hador. Not too many are aware of the difficult periods that he endured early in his life when he was trapped in Russia during the Bolshevik Revolution.

The Revolution coincided with his years in yeshivah, while he was making great strides in his Torah learning. When he was nineteen, he was appointed by the **Alter of Novhardok** to lead a yeshivah ketanah established in the town of Rogatchov. While there, he was taken in the middle of giving a shiur to serve as a soldier in the Red Army. He had to serve there for an entire year, during which endured a lot of suffering.

There are a number of wondrous stories about his mesiris nefesh during that time to fulfil mitzvos despite serving in the Russian army. But above all those was his virtue utilizing every spare moment

for Torah learning, even during his most difficult times. His students secretly sent him small volumes of masechtos in Shas, and he toiled over them whenever he was able.

Later, he related that an entire siman in his sefer Kehillos Yaakov was written during that trying time. After Rav Yaakov Yisrael was released from the army, in a miraculous way, he returned to his learning, as a talmid in Novhardok. The yeshivah had moved during his absence to Kiev, in Ukraine. As he invested his efforts in his Torah learning, he also strengthened his middah of bitachon, which was the guiding light of the Alter of Novhardok, zt"l, until it became an integral part of his personality.

In 5680, the Alter passed away, and his son-in-law, **Harav Avraham Yaffen, zt"l**, was appointed to lead Yeshivos Novhardok. During that time, the Bolshevik Revolution took place throughout Russia and its surrounding areas. The Yevsektsia, the emissaries of the revolutionaries, set a goal for themselves of snuffing out every religious ember that they could find.

The primary target of their harassment in Kiev was the glorious Novhardok Yeshivah, which at the time numbered six hundred erudite students. The Steipler was one of the prime students at the time. From time to time, the Yevsektsia people would burst into the yeshivah and take bochurim and rabbanim under various and sundry claims. They were imprisoned and only released after extensive lobbying and bribery on their behalf. The situation of the yeshivah students under the Bolshevik regime became too difficult to bear.

The Chofetz Chaim, who was asked about the situation, instructed that it behoved the bnei yeshivah to do everything they could to smuggle across the border to neighbouring Poland, where there was freedom of religion. Faithful to his directive, over the following year and a half, the six hundred bochurim of Novhardok made every possible effort to cross the border. They had to traverse pitch dark routes, putting their lives in danger; the middas bitachon that they

had acquired from their unforgettable rebbi, the Alter, zt"l, was their guiding light. Keeping their focus on the goal, and confident that Hashem was helping them every minute, they made their way through mountains and valleys, crawling and running, disguised as farmers. Group after group they crossed the border, until a year and a half after it began, the operation was complete. There wasn't a single Novhardoker bochur left under Bolshevik rule.

Among those who smuggled across the border was the Steipler Gaon, but like many, it was no easy feat. He tried to make the journey a few times and had to turn back. The Steipler and those in his group sealed a deal with a village gentile, a resident of one of the villages that abutted the border, who was very familiar with all the forest paths, and the breaches in the border, which they could smuggle through. They gave him a bundle of gold coins, and he began to do his work. After a number of failed efforts, the day arrived when they entered the thick forest right near the border. Towards evening, they arrived at the border, and waited for the signal they had agreed upon with the smugger that the coast was clear and that they could cross.

The Steipler, who saw that the sun was about to set, stood up to daven Minchah, as Chazal say "A person should always be careful about Tefillas Minchah." And when he began to daven, as always, he forgot everything around him. As he was standing in tefillah, the smuggler emerged from the thicket and signalled to the bochurim to cross the border immediately. They hurried towards the border, but the Gaon, immersed in his tefillah, did not even consider stopping.

When he finished davening, he found himself alone in the forest. Once again, it seemed as though he had missed the chance to cross the border. But this time, he had the words of Chazal in his mind about the virtue of davening Minchah. With the power of his tefillah, he began to march, completely immersed in lofty thoughts and strengthening his middah of bitachon. He did not even know where

he was going. For an hour he walked without stopping, until he suddenly found himself standing near a shul. When he asked a passer-by where he was, they told him that he was in the city of Slutzk, which was in Poland.

The Rav was stunned at the miracle he had experienced and did not stop there. He immediately entered the shul as his lips murmured words of thanks to the Creator for redeeming him in such a miraculous way. He took a Gemara from the shelf and sat down to satiate his hungry soul with Torah learning.

Shabbos Treasures - The Precious Gift of Shabbos

The *Shulchan Aruch* writes (185:3) that by *bentching*, it is commendable for everyone to sing *bentching* together out loud.

The *Mishnah Brurah* (185:3) teaches that it is a good idea to always *bentch* out loud because this helps one have *kavanah*. On Shabbos it is recommended even more so, because it helps one not forget to say *Ritzei* in *bentching*. The *Mishnah Brurah* (185:1) suggests, that even if one knows *bentching* by heart, it is still better to use a *bentcher*, as it can help one focus on what he is saying and have the right *kavanah* when saying the words of *bentching*.



The *Chofetz Chaim* writes (*Mishnah Brurah* 183:11) that those who are *Yir'ei Shamayim* should put on their hats and jackets for *bentching*. ***HaGaon Rav Chaim Kanievsky*** teaches this as well in *Shoneh Halachos* (183:7).

B'Rina Yiktzoru

הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל "Has turned My anger away from the children of Israel…" (25, 11)

Each person has times in his life where he gets very angry, but he can work on himself with all his might to prepare himself so that he does not fall into those hard situations. It is known that every time **Rebbi Yisrael of Salant Zt'l** got angry at his congregation, he would turn to the wall and say "Angry face, not angry heart" so that the anger would not enter his heart, Heaven forbid.

However, one time, he got really angry and for the rest of his life he mentioned this incident over and over again and showed his regret over it. In the year 1848, cholera disease broke out in Vilna and many people died from it. Rebbi Ysirael Salant told all the men who were learning Torah in the city to go and take care of the sick people and even on Shabbat he commanded them to do everything necessary for the sick (even if it meant desecrating Shabbat) themselves.



One Friday afternoon, the grandson of one of the great Torah scholars of the city became sick and he was taken to the hospital. They took care of him and saved his life. After the grandson recuperated, the grandfather came to Rebbi Yisrael Salant and said, "Rebbi, I came to thank you for the great kindness that you did for me. In your merit, my grandson was saved. However, I have a little bit of resentment in my heart. It is hard for me to understand why you allow the Torah learners to desecrate Shabbat for the sick. Why do you not let them call a non-Jew to do the work"?

Rebbi Yisrael got angry and in a loud voice replied, "I called all the Torah learners and told them to take care of the sick and I vouched for them that not one of them would get sick. Can you do such a thing? Saving a life is more important than all of the Mitzvot of the Torah and overrides them!

Immediately, the grandfather took off his shoes and began to cry. He begged Rebbi Yisrael to forgive him. His whole life Rebbi Yisrael mentioned this incident and regretted that he got angry…

Vechol Maaminim – Tzaddik Shomer Emunim



This Shabbos will mark 451 years since the passing of one of the leading Kabbalists, **Rabi Moshe Cordovero**, known as the Ramak. **The Ramak** wrote extensively in his sefarim about the greatness of answering amen.

In his siddur Tefillah L'Moshe (Shaar 4:3) he wrote: The quota of holy things that a person must say each day is alluded in the word **צדיק** – 90 amens, 4 Kedushos, 10 Kaddish and 100 brachos, to teach us that one who is strict about this quota is undoubtedly called a tzaddik.

"The greatest proof of Torah is the existence of Klal Yisrael." ~ Rabbi Elchanan Wasserman.

Essential Rabbi Nachman -Look for the Good



Hashem always takes into account the good that people do. Perhaps something not so good was mixed in, but Hashem disregards it. If this is G-d's way, we should try all the more to do the same.

Don't look for other people's bad side or search out their weak points and shortcomings. Look only for the good in others and always search for worth and merit in them. Then you will be at peace with everyone. (*Likutey Moharan II, 17*)

Circle Time - Parshah Riddle

Which three people mentioned in the parshah never died?

Riddle answer:

The parshah (26:46) mentions Serach, daughter of Asher, whom Targum Yonasan says never died. According to some midrashim (see Pirkei d'Rabi Eliezer 28), Pinchas is Eliyahu Hanavi, who also never died. Korach is also mentioned in the parshah, and he went down to Gehinnom while still alive.

Purim Kandia – 18th of Tamuz 1538



After the Sultan Suleiman widened the borders of his Ottoman Empire outside of Turkey, he decided he wanted to conquer parts of Europe as well. He fought with the Venetian fleets in the year 1538. Having no choice, the Jews of Kandia who were called Rockline were pulled into the war one this Greek Island.

In the book "Kandia's regulations", it is said that a general was sent to the city to prepare the city for war. All the people in the city were commanded to help in the preparations. On Sunday, the 17th of Tamuz, all the Jews (from the young to the old) were commanded to go to the walls around the city and begin digging holes.

Rebbi Eliyahu Kapsali Zt'l tried to push off the decree until after the fast, but the general did not back down. He feared the Turks who would be arriving soon to fight. On the fast day, the people saw Turkish spies enter the city, but they were not able to capture them. Immediately, it became public news that the Jews were helping the Turkish spies hide amongst them. The Christians took advantage of the situation. They gathered together and ran into the streets

where the Jews lived and began to look for the spies. They now had an excuse to cause harm to the Jews.

Rebbi Eliyahu saw the tumult and he told the wives to stand outside their houses and cry in a loud voice and at the same time he told them not to hold back anything from the searchers. There were loud cries heard among the Jews, the loudest cries ever in our history and the words of the prophet Yechezkel (8, 14) were fulfilled, ***"And the women…cried about Tamuz."***

Great danger was hovering above the Jews and all their money was taken. Rebbi Eliyahu went to the Venetian general and asked him to help break up the crowd. The general called in his soldiers, and they were able to chase them away with their swords.

The Rav decided to make a Halachah for all generations to come. He gathered 25 of the great people in the congregation and they took upon themselves that for all generations to come the 18th of Tamuz would be a day of happiness and they would have a feast. They also composed special prayers and songs for this day.

In the Sefer Kaf Hachaim it is written, "The day of Purim that the people of Kandia accepted upon themself on the 18th of Tamuz is a day that women should not do any work as through them miracles occurred. - We see Hashem's hand in everything that happens in the world and this is another dangerous situation that we were in and Hashem saved us.



Stepping Stones

Embrace life's ups and downs with the confidence that they are part of Hashem's plan for your ultimate purpose.- Remember, the struggles you face are not obstacles,they are stepping stones toward greatness. ~ R' Yitzchok Fingerer.



Me'Oros Hatzaddikim

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

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

His first position was as Rosh Yeshiva in Volozhin, where one of his prized talmidim was **Rav Chaim Volozhiner**. Interestingly, even after his sefer Sha'agas Aryeh was published, he found it hard to achieve a suitable position and was constantly forced to move on. But in 5526/1766 he was appointed Rav of Metz, where he served until his petira.

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

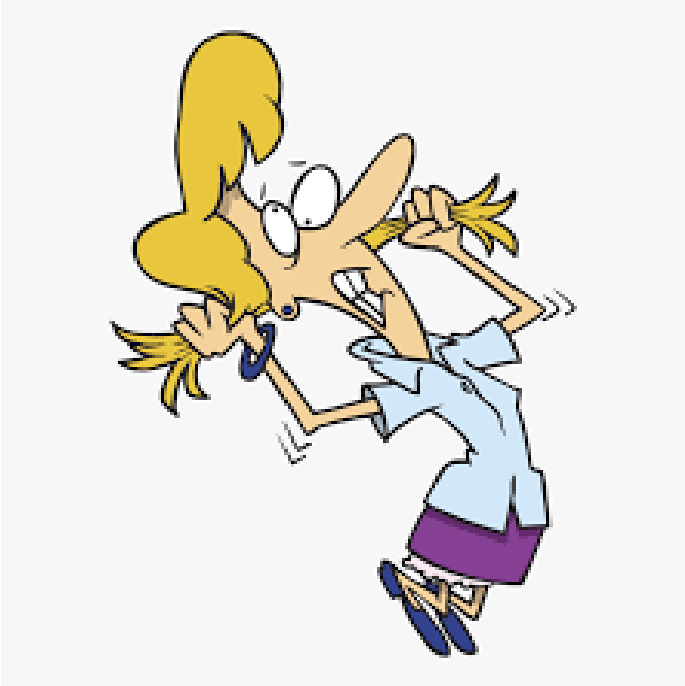
A few months before his petira, Rav Aryeh Leib invited the community to a Siyum HaShas. He was in especially high spirits at this Siyum. When he was asked the reason for his simcha, he explained that this was his thousandth Siyum on the Shas.

Rav Aryeh Leib was niftar on the 25th of Tammuz 5545/1785. (Some give the day of his petira as the 15th of Tammuz; other sources give it as the 25th of Sivan.) He wrote Sha'agas Aryeh; Gevuras Ari on Maseches Yoma; and Turei Even on Maseches Rosh HaShana. Zecher tzaddik livrachah.

When the **Shaagas Arye** was appointed Rav of Metz there was one wealthy merchant who refused to sign the document appointing the Shaagas Arye as Rav. His name was Yehuda Charif and he based his rejection on the fact that the Shaagas Arye had only served as Rav

of Volozhin, a small town, and Rosh Yeshiva of Minsk, and how could those positions compare to the great city of Metz?!

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



He sent his poor, sick, mentally ill daughter to the Shaagas Arye. She was disturbed and she would sing, dance and make a disturbance at all times of day. Her nuisance so greatly disturbed the Shaagas Arye that he could not learn Torah and so he turned to her gently and said softly and kindly, "My daughter, why are you acting so crazy? For how long will you be this way? Please go home gezunterheit," (which literally means "go home healthy") and so she did; she went home healed and healthy, sound in body and mind!

"Please, Daddy," she greeted her amazed father, "please change my tattered and ripped dress." Yehuda Charif fell before the Shaagas Arye pleading and begging the Rav's forgiveness and asked to be allowed to add his name to the certificate of appointment. From then

on, his great affection for the Shaagas Arye knew no bounds and they became great friends. He followed the Rav's pesakim and lent his hand to help the new Rav of Metz.

Etz Hachaim – R' C.T. Blau

One of the Gerer rebbe's had a **תלמיד** who needed to go out for business. This meant moving his family to the big city where it could be detrimental to their **רוחניות**. The **חסיד** turned to his Rebbe for guidance. The Rebbe listened to his story yet encouraged him to make the move with one condition; he must write him a letter every so often and update him on how things where doing.

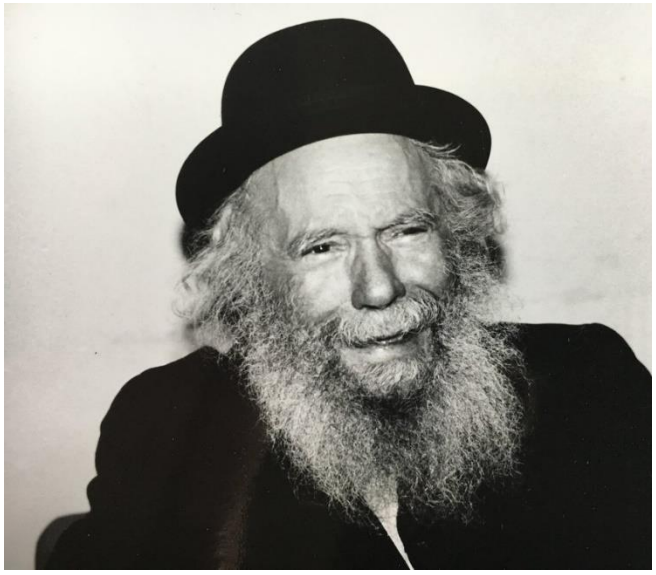
Following his Rebbe's guidance, the **חסיד** travelled with his family to the big city. In his first letter, the **חסיד** wrote to the Rebbe how the **רוחניות** situation was terrible and it disgusted and bothered him tremendously, etc. he even asked the Rebbe if he should return. The Rebbe sent back that it was okay for him to stay. The next few letters basically held the same content.

A little while passed, and this time the **חסיד** sent a letter to the Rebbe saying, **ברוך ה'** , the Rebbe doesn't have to worry, I really don't know why I was so bothered by the situation here, it is really not as bad as I thought…" This time, the Rebbe sent back a letter to the **חסיד** stating that he should pack his bags and move back to the shtetel with his family immediately…

"If I had the mind of the Shaagas Aryeh, the heart of the Yesod VeShoresh HaAvodah, and the middos of the Vilna Gaon, I would still need to work on myself."

No level of greatness replaces the daily work of becoming better. ~ R' Naftali Amsterdam zt"l.

Peninim on the Torah



Horav Chaim Chaikin, zl (*Rosh Yeshivah* Aix Les Bains, France), who was a close student of the saintly ***Chafetz Chaim***, quotes *Chazal* (*Berachos* 32b), who state that after the destruction of the *Bais Hamikdash*, the *Shaarei Tefillah*, Gates of Prayer, were sealed. The *Shaarei Dimah*, Gates of Tears, however, were not.

What should a person do (since the Gates of Prayer are sealed)? He should weep during his prayers. Thus, his prayers will find access to Heaven via the tears that accompany his prayers.

A Jew came to the *Chafetz Chaim* and said that he was in dire straits and was in need of the *tzaddik's* blessing. Would the *Chafetz Chaim* daven for him? The *Chafetz Chaim* asked the man if he had personally *davened* to Hashem. The Jew replied in the affirmative. He had prayed, but he had received no response.

The *Chafetz Chaim* asked him to bring his *sefer Tehillim* to him. The sage leafed through the pages and said, "Your *Tehillim* looks good: no stains; no worn-out pages; no indication that you wept during *Tehillim* recital. This is not appropriate *davening*. Wait a moment and let me show you how to pray."

The *Chafetz Chaim* brought a ladder, climbed up to the top of his bookcase, and retrieved an old, worn-out, pages-swollen *Tehillim*. He opened it and showed the man the tearstains throughout the *Tehillim*. He said, "This is my late mother's *Tehillim* in which she prayed constantly. Every one of her *tefillos* were accompanied by passionate weeping. This, my friend, is the meaning of *davening*."



The Power of Tefillah

We find an interesting pasuk in the parashah of Akeidas Yitzchak (*Bereishis* 22:7). **וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל־אַבְרָהָם אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֶּנִּי בְנִי וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה הָאֵשׁ וְהָעֵצִים וְאַיֵּה הַשֶּׂה לְעֹלָה *"Then Yitzchak spoke to Avraham his father and said 'Father – 'And he Avraham) said,' Here I am, my son. And he (Yitzchak) said 'Here are the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the offering.'"***

What is the significance of the introductory portion of this pasuk? Why doesn't the pasuk simply write that Yitzchak asked Avraham, here is the fire…?

The Divrei Yisrael *zt'l* answers, "When Yitzchak called out to his father **אבי** and Avraham replied **הנני בני** this made an impression in heaven, for all generations, that when a Yid cries out to his father in heaven and says **אבי**, 'Father!' from the depths of his heart, it will arouse Hashem's immense compassion and Hashem will reply **הנני בני**, 'I am here, my son, to answer all your requests.'

The Klausenberger Rebbe *zt'l* heard the following story from his father, **Reb Tzvi of Rudnik zt'l**:

There are two cemeteries in Krakow. In the older cemetery are buried many ancient scholars, such as the Bach, the Megaleh Amukos, and the Rema.

A local Krakow woman wanted to be buried in the older cemetery, but that was almost impossible. For hundreds of years, no one was

buried in the old cemetery. Even the rabbanim of Krakow were buried in the new cemetery.

But this woman didn't give up. Three times a day, by *shacharis*, *minchah*, and *maariv*, she came to the beis knesses and davened that Hashem have compassion on her, and she be buried in the old cemetery.

She was so obsessed with this desire that all children in Krakow knew to greet her, "Good morning, aunt. May you be buried in the old cemetery."

This is what she trained them to say. At the weddings of her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, she would ask the *chasan* and *kallah* to bless her that she be buried in the old cemetery.



It was really insane because why was this so important to her? Furthermore, it was almost impossible to be buried in the old cemetery. But she was stubborn with her wish.

On the day she left the world, there was a heavy snowstorm and snow piled high on the ground. The *chevrah kadisha* couldn't carry her to the new cemetery, so she was buried in the old cemetery.

Reb Tzvi of Rudnik commented about this story, "This taught me that even when one davens even for something insane, Hashem will listen to his tefillos and answer them. So great is the power of tefillah!"

Rebbe Avraham Dov of Avritch, the Bas Ayin *zt'l*, arrived in Eretz Yisrael around Elul time. His boat docked in the north of Eretz Yisrael, and he planned to stay in Tzefas until after the *yomim tovim*

and then move on to Yerushalayim. However, on Chol HaMoed Succos, he changed his mind and decided to remain in Tzfas.

This change of plans occurred when he heard a woman tell her son, "On Simchas Torah we will *bench geshem,* and I'm certain that Hashem will listen to the *tefillos.* Bring the mattresses down from the roof so they won't get ruined in the rain."

The Bas Ayin said that he chose to remain in Tzefas to be among people who believed so firmly in the power of *tefillah.*

In Your Own Words

On the topic of prayer, it is essential to mention the importance of praying *in your own words.* You can do this in the middle of *Shemonah Esrei* at the *brachah Shomei'a Tefillah.* If this will cause you to miss *kedushah*, the *Mishnah Berurah* recommends that you say your own tefillos at the end of *Shemonah Esrei.* You can actually say these tefillos, in your own words, at any time of the day.

The Gemara (*Brachos* 21.) says, **ולואי שיתפלל אדם כל היום כולו** "*Halevay* a person would daven all day long!" How does one do that?

Rebbe Bunim of Peshischa *zy'a* says that if one davens for success before everything he does, he will be davening all day long. When he goes to work, he davens for success; before performing *chesed*, he davens that his deed should have the proper impact on the recipient, and so on.

When you pray for all the trivial and significant things you do, you will be davening all day long.

Success is in Hashem's hands, so daven to Him at all opportunities.

The Chofetz Chaim *zt'l* (*Likutei Amorim* 10) teaches, "In addition to *Shemonah Esrei*, which one says three times a day, one should daven from the depths of his heart when he is alone in his house.

The daily *Shemonah Esreis* is [often] said by rote, and people don't think about what they are saying. But when a person is alone, and

thinks about his life and struggles, he will pour his heart out like water before Hashem and daven with *kavanah*. It will be a tefillah from the depths of his broken, humble heart, and such *tefillos* never go unanswered."

Rabbi Avi Wiesenfeld *Rosh Hayeshiva Yeshivas Beis Dovid*

קובע עיתים לתורה



The previous **Toldos Aharon Rebbe ZY'A (Rabbi Avrohom Yitzchok Kohn)** was once asked – How is it possible to be **קובע עיתים לתורה** (setting aside a fixed time for learning Torah)? It is such a difficult thing to do. After all, to be **קובע עיתים לתורה** is one of the most fundamental ideas of learning and Yidishkeit.

The problem is that we work. How are we meant to accomplish this?

The Rebbe said an amazing idea:

We have a concept mentioned in davening and in the gemarah Kesuvos daf 15a - **כָּל קָבוּעַ כְּמֶחֱצָה עַל מֶחֱצָה דָּמֵי** – *We Follow the Majority when in Doubt*

That means, if you have ten stores that sell meat, nine of them being not kosher, and one of them kosher, and a person goes in and buys meat, but can't remember which shop he got it from, he can safely assume that the meat is 50% kosher and 50% not kosher.

But this is obviously a 9-1 chance? So how can this be true? The answer is because anything that is set, has a din of **כְּמֶחֱצָה עַל מֶחֱצָה** – 50/50.

Therefore the Toldos Aharon Rebbe said, that if a person learns every single day, but he sets aside a specific time in that day when he learns,then even if he only learns for one hour in that whole day, it is considered as **קָבוּעַ כְּמֶחֱצָה עַל מֶחֱצָה דָּמֵי** – and it is considered as though he spent 50% of his day learning and 50% of his day working!

The Vilna Gaon Zt'l said that **לשון קבוע** sounds like a person is stealing!

He says, because sometimes a person needs to steal from his time in order to learn Torah.

Have a wonderful day.

Migdal Ohr - J. Gewirtz

R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach z"l was once walking with a bochur on Shabbos and a car drove past them. The boy screamed at the driver, "Shabbos! Shabbos!"

R' Shlomo Zalman looked at him and asked, "What are you doing? He can't hear you; his windows are closed. And if he did hear you, do you think he'll suddenly stop the car, get out and say, "Oh no! I didn't realize it was a problem"?"

The boy cast his gaze downward. R' Shlomo Zalman continued gently, "You SHOULD scream "Shabbos! Shabbos!" - but inwardly, to yourself, to remind you that it's a desecration of the Kedushas Shabbos and it's not OK. But to him? That's not for you to do."

Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe

"The yetzer hara's greatest weapon is discouragement." - He writes that ye'ush is often more destructive than sin itself.

Torah Tavlin - הנני נותן לו את בריתי שלום 25:12

Rav Aharon Kotler zt"l writes that the world misunderstands the idea of "**שלום**" - peace.



In Parshas Pinchos, the posuk testifies that, contrary to popular opinion, what Pinchos did was not war, the antithesis of peace, but it was precisely an act of peace. By putting an end to wickedness, Pinchos restored peace between Israel and their Father in Heaven.

Similarly, differences between a husband and wife are often the focal point for problems in marital harmony. But the reality, says **R' Noach Orlowek shlit'a**, is that every home is a blend of differences. As the saying goes, "A great marriage is not when the 'perfect couple' comes together. It is when an imperfect couple learns to enjoy their differences."

From The Wellsprings of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקַנְאוֹ אֶת־קִנְאָתִי בְּתוֹכָם 25:11

Why was Korach considered a wicked rasha and not a "champion of worthy causes" while Pinchos was termed a zealot, a lover of Hashem, rather than an impulsive murderer?

The answer is one word. KAVANA! Intention. A person's true intention is the underlying cause for his actions. Korach had only one

intention in mind when he "championed his cause." It was himself. He was obsessed with his own honour and glory.



Pinchos, on the other hand, had one and only one motive in mind. HASHEM! Pinchos loved Hashem with his whole heart. His act of killing was 100% for the sake of Heaven. Had there been even one fraction of a percent of an ulterior motive, his act would have been considered murder and deserving of punishment.

In order to strive for zealousy and a pure act for the sake of Hashem, we must delve deeply into our hearts. We need to ask ourselves in the midst of our actions, "Why am I doing this? For my own prestige? For the sake of my children? Because of what people will say? Or to honour Hashem?"

Once we are honest with ourselves and what our true motives are, we can then channel them for the sake of Heaven. We can turn every simple act into a great mitzvah of giving kavod to Hashem! We can uplift our entire lives by taking the time to THINK and turn every single thing we do into a real Kiddush Hashem!

Short Story of The Week - Rabbi Mordechai Levin

The Ohr Sameyach, ZT"L was once learning in a Shul in Dvinsk between Mincha and Maariv. At that time there was a basic Mishnayos Shiur for working people being led by a slightly-learned man. That day, a Talmid Chochom happened to be sitting in the shul listening to the class. He interjected with a very deep question, which the lecturer was clearly unable to answer, so he became flustered and quite embarrassed.

The Ohr Sameyach understood what had just happened and jumped up to defend the honour of the lecturer. He exclaimed, "How can someone who doesn't know his right from his left ask a question in the middle of a shiur"?!



The lecturer was mollified and resumed teaching the Mishnayos. Afterwards, the learned man asked the Ohr Sameach for an explanation. After all, the question that he had asked was quite a good one.

The Ohr Sameach answered that he was salvaging the honour of the dear Jew who was giving the class in front of simple people. As for his comment regarding knowing right from left, he was referring to a Gemara (Moed Katan 5a) that explains a verse (Tehillim 50:23), וְשָׂם דֶּרֶךְ אַרְאֶנּוּ - *He who measures his words before taking action is blessed.*

The Gemara explains that visam, with a dot on the right of the letter, means to place. However, visham, with a dot on the left, means to measure. "Blessed is he who doesn't simply take rash action, but rather measures when and where to act."

The Ohr Sameyach felt that this man didn't know his "left from his right", as he had acted without thinking.

Comment: Pinchas was commended for taking action against sinners, even though Moshe and others did not do so. Pinchas did not act rashly; he carefully thought out the proper course of action and then jumped to carry it out. For that, he was complimented and rewarded.

The Siddur Speaks

Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein, as a preface to the following story, would say, "All you need to do is open your eyes, and you will see the miracles that roll up to your doorstep. We should also learn and internalize the great power of Tefilah, of every Jew that cries out from his heart to Hashem!"



Late at night at the Poleg interchange in Netanya, five Arabs angrily approached an Israeli soldier. They each had knives pointing at him. This soldier's name was Tzachi, and he was one of the worst shooters in the army. In target practice, he would always miss the shaded areas on the target, but that night, miraculously, his shooting was perfect! He shot four of the terrorists that tried to kill him, with clean, direct shots. However, he then suffered a panic attack, ran out to the highway, and took the first ride he could to get away from there, and he didn't stay around to report the incident. The fifth Arab terrorist gathered all the knives from his friends and disappeared from the scene and went back home.

The police detectives that came to the intersection were shocked at what they had found, and from what they could tell, it looked like an unprovoked attack on the Arab men. None of the knives were found, and no one was around to report what had transpired. It looked like a murderer came and shot them, and then ran away.

They were soon able to track down and catch Tzachi, as that was his post. When he explained what had happened, all his claims of being attacked were ignored. They asked, "Where are the knives that you

say they had? How can someone being attacked like you are describing successfully take down four attackers so effectively? You are not the innocent person you say you are. You are really the attacker!"

Tzachi was judged in military court and sentenced to four life sentences for murder! In jail, Tzachi tried to improve his conditions, but he was repeatedly turned down. He was considered a dangerous murderer. It reached a point where Tzachi, who was irreligious, decided to speak with the prison Rabbi, and poured his heart out to him.

He had questions of Emunah. He said, "Hashem saved me from certain death when those Arabs attacked me. Why did He throw me here into jail for the rest of my life?"

The Rabbi asked him, "How do you know Hashem saved you?" Tzachi answered, "At the moment those ruthless murderers approached me, and I stood before death, I begged Hashem to save me!" The Rabbi responded, "Where did you learn to cry out to Hashem, as you're not religious?"

Tzachi replied, "At that moment I remembered my righteous grandfather, and that he always used to tell me, 'Tzachi, Hashem helps even those who don't know and recognize Him, if that person truly cries out to Him, because it says in Tehilim that Hashem is close to ALL who call Him.'"

This was a surprising answer for the Rabbi to hear. He told Tzachi that he would get back to him soon with an answer. The Rabbi went to **Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman, zt"l**, in Bnei Brak, and repeated what the soldier said in his complaint against Hashem.

Rav Shteinman replied, "Tzachi already knows first-hand that Hashem helps those who call out to Him, so why doesn't he again ask Hashem for help with this too? He should simply just Daven to Hashem more!"

The Rabbi asked Rav Shteinman, "What can he Daven for?

When he Davened to be saved, he had a gun in his hand. But now he already has four life sentences." Rav Shteinman began to laugh. He exclaimed, "Did Tzachi even know how to shoot his gun at all? No! But he Davened with all his heart and succeeded in killing his attackers. Let him cry out again, and once more ask Hashem to save him!"

The Rabbi went back to the prison and told Tzachi what Rav Shteinman said. He gave Tzachi encouragement and told him, "Daven to Hashem with all your heart."

A few weeks later the Rabbi saw Tzachi walking out in the street and saw that he was out free. The Rabbi said to him, "What are you doing here? You had four life sentences! Did you run away from the prison?"

Tzachi responded, "Hashem heard my Tefilos and I am out free! The general security service caught the fifth Arab, and after a long interrogation, he told them what happened that night. He admitted that they attempted to murder me and that he escaped, and that he took the knives with him back to the village. The detectives investigated and found the knives, and they then set me free!"



Treats from Targum - So much more than just translation — quick insights into Targum Onkelos!

וְשֵׁם בַּת אָשֵׁר שָׂרַח - *And the name of the daughter of Asher is Serach*. (26:46)

תרגום אונקלוס גירסת הרמב"ן: "ושום בת אִיתת אשר סרח" - *And the name of the daughter of <u>Asher's wife</u> is Serach.*

According to the version of Onkelos that the Ramban had, Serach was the daughter of Asher's wife from a previous marriage, not of Asher himself!

The Ramban (and Chasam Sofer) learn halachah l'maaseh from this Targum, that an orphan raised in one's home has the halachic status of his child. • Why is Serach mentioned here in the list of the sons of the Shevatim and their families?

The Ramban writes that with this explanation of Serach being Asher's stepdaughter, Onkelos is explaining why she is listed here. This was a list of those who were inheriting Eretz Yisrael, followed by the story of Bnos Tzelafchad, who also inherited because they were daughters of a man who had no sons.

Serach, as the only daughter of her mother's first husband, fell in the same category, so she also belonged in the list of those who inherited Eretz Yisrael.

L'Maaseh

The Sefer He'emanti Ki Adaber relates a story.



A man was driving his car down the dangerous, twisting, and turning road from Tzefas to Haifa. It was late at night and in the middle of a downpour, and he was hurrying to his destination. At one of the curves, he saw a car pulled to the side of the road with its flashers on. He knew the area was surrounded by Arab villages and was unsure if he should stop, but he decided that perhaps it was a Jew who needed a little help.

He stopped on the side of the road and approached the car, and he saw an older woman sitting there, shivering from the cold. When he asked her what happened and how he could help her, she explained

that she had a flat tire, and she had been waiting for three hours for someone to help her, but no one stopped.

He then offered to change the tire for her, and he worked for about a half-hour in the cold rain. When he finished, she thanked him profusely, and took out an envelope which had $2,000 in it. She said that she told herself that if someone stops to help her, she will give him $2,000. However, the man who changed the tire, said that he had told himself that he would not accept any money for the doing this Mitzvah that Hashem presented him with.

She insisted that he take it, but he absolutely refused. She then said, "If you do not take it, then I will give the money to the first person I meet who is having financial difficulty." He told her, "That is fine, you can do what you have to do," and he continued on his way. She started to drive away too, but as she drove off, she felt she needed to stop for something to eat and to get a hot drink, after her long ordeal in the cold, so she stopped at a local restaurant.

As she was there, the manager of the restaurant came to speak with the waitress, who had just arrived, and asked her why she came to work so late? She replied that she was late because her husband was late in getting home, and she couldn't get there any earlier.

The manager started shouting at her and he told her, "You always do this to me! Why are you always late? Because of you, I lose many customers! This can't go on." And in his anger, he said, "You're fired!"

She was too overcome to respond to him, and she accepted her boss's decision. Just as a final gesture, she simply went to clear the dishes from the table where this woman was sitting and drinking her coffee. Immediately, the woman said to the waitress, "I can see that you are going through a difficult time. I want to help you. Please take this envelope. It has $2,000 in it. Surely this will help you at a time like this." The waitress became very happy, abundantly thanked the kind woman, and went home.

When she got home, she told her husband that she was fired. Her husband asked her, "If you were fired from your job, then why are you smiling? Why are you so happy about that?"

She then told him the story of the kind woman who gave her an envelope with $2,000 in it.

He was shocked and his eyes opened wide. He said, "What? She gave you the $2,000? I fixed her flat tire on the side of the road, and I refused to take this money from her! Hashem's ways are truly amazing!" When one is supposed to receive something, it chases after him until he gets it!

Parsha Potpourri - Rav Ozer Alport

פינחס בן אלעזר בן אהרן הכהן השיב את חמתי מעל בני ישראל בקנאו את קנאתי בתוכם 25:1



At the end of Parshas Balak, Moabite women enticed the Jewish people to sin, which resulted in a plague that killed 24,000 Jews. To stem the further spread of the plague, Aharon's grandson Pinchas killed Zimri, the head of the tribe of Shimon who was taking part in the iniquity. This week's parsha begins with Hashem extolling Pinchas for his actions and promising him an eternal covenant of peace and Kehuna (priesthood). Why did Hashem specifically grant Pinchas priesthood as opposed to any other reward He could have given him?

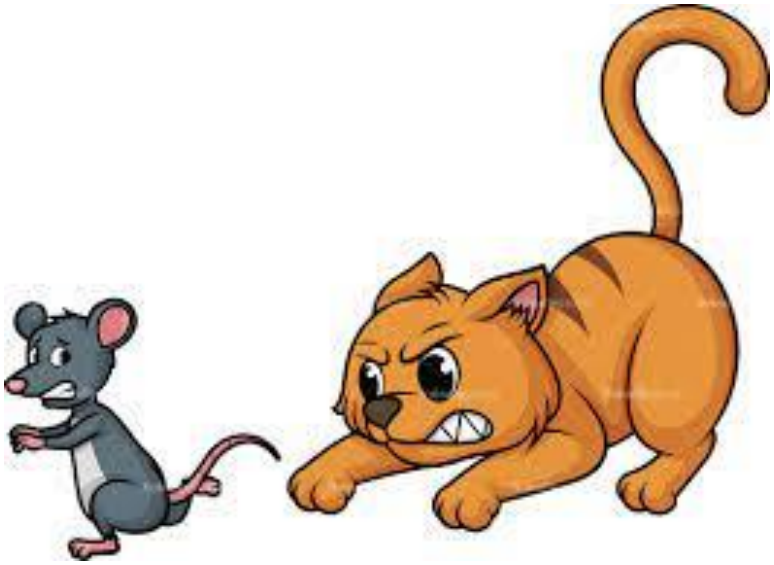
Rav Chaim Zvi Senter notes that Korach was motivated to rebel against Moshe because of his perception that he had been denied a

leadership position to which he was entitled (Rashi 16:1). Pinchas also had grounds to feel similarly deprived when he saw that his uncles, brothers, and cousins and all their male descendants would be Kohanim who could serve in the Mishkan, an exclusive privilege and honour that was not extended to him.

Although Pinchas had grounds to feel bitter about his lot, he did not join Korach's rebellion in an effort to topple the established hierarchy. Moreover, he went a step further and stood up to defend Hashem's honor by killing Zimri when the appointed leaders were standing around and not getting involved. For his bravery and his ability to cast aside any feelings of resentment, Pinchas was specifically rewarded with the position he was earlier denied. Although joining the ranks of Kohanim is no longer up for grabs, we should learn from Pinchas the importance of doing our utmost to serve Hashem with – or in spite of – the life circumstances in which we find ourselves.

"Chazu Bonai" Emunoh Digest

Q. We have been learning about **פנחס** and about the **מדה** of **קנאות** . How does one know if his **קנאות** is genuine or whether it's coming from a desire for **מחלוקת**?



A. **Rav Chaim Soloveichik זצ"ל** gives a great **משל** to answer this question. A house owner and a cat seem to have similar interests. They both seek to eradicate mice. But the house owner wishes that the mouse wasn't there in the first place. Whereas the cat wants the mouse to be there so that he can catch it and have supper.

So too, when it comes to **קנאות** , the true **קנאים** would daven and hope that no **חילול ה'** would ever happen to give cause to their **קנאות**. Trouble seekers unfortunately wish for more opportunities for **מחלוקת...**.

Rabbi Avi Wiesenfeld *Rosh Hayeshiva Yeshivas Beis Dovid*

The Noam Elimelech writes a fascinating idea:



We know that Pinchas got up and did a spontaneous act that was so courageous and brave, and that which Moshe Rabeinu and Aaron Hacohen were not able to decide what to do on the spur of the moment. And yet the Torah describes it with a very interesting *lashon* which many of the meforshim try to understand and explain in their way - **כדרכו בקודש**

The Pasuk says: **פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקַנְאוֹ אֶת־קִנְאָתִי בְּתוֹכָם** . How do we understand the word **בְּתוֹכָם**? Pichas got up ***from amongst*** them.

The Noam Elimelech says that throughout all generations, Klal Yisrael received this amazing *koach* of bravery and the ability to stand up and do what needs to be done however difficult it is.

Where did we get this koach from? Where did we inherit it from?

We got it from Pinchas in this week's parsha! **בְּתוֹכָם** means that Pinchas placed within every one of his descendants this special ability to be courageous, and to stand up and do what's right!

This is the *koach* that we have within all of us. - ***Have a wonderful Shabbos!***

Rabbi Avrum Mordche Malach



The Gemarah [Sanhedren 82] says that there were 6 miracles that happened to Pinchos that assisted him with his *kanaos when he killed Kozbi and Zimri. The medrash adds an additional 6 miracles.*

Rav Yaakov Galinsky Zt'l asks if these nissim wouldn't have occurred, then this whole episode would not have been possible. So, what was Pichos's *cheshbon*? How could he rely on miracles? **אין סומכין על הנס**

Additionally, the Pasuk says: **וַיַּ֣רְא פִּינְחָ֗ס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָ֙ר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹ֣ן הַכֹּהֵ֔ן וַיָּ֖קָם מִתּ֣וֹךְ הָעֵדָ֑ה וַיִּקַּ֥ח רֹ֙מַח֙ בְּיָדֽוֹ**

Why does the Pasuk say from ***amongst the people*- מִתּ֣וֹךְ הָעֵדָ֑ה** and not **על העדה?**

The Ponovitcher Rav Zt'l was once asked to speak at a Chanuckas Habayis for a newly built magnificent Belz shul in B'nei B'rak. He started off his drasha with the words – "Ver is doh der meshugene!"

Everyone was perplexed. What does the Rav mean, "Where is the meshugene?

The Rav explained that such a building could only have been built by a meshugene who had the foresight and drive to plough ahead through any problems to ensure that the *olam* would have such a majestic shul. [Note: Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman was himself classed as a dreamer and meshugene when he described his future vision to build the Ponovitch Yeshiva edifices.]



Rabbi Avraham Zilbiger Z'l of Manchester had a dream to build a beautiful makom Torah and shul. People dismissed him as a crazy meshugene. He went collecting donations himself, some as little as £5 or £10. He ended up realising his dream.



Rabbi Yosef Brandeiss שליט"א similarly built a magnificent Yeshiva building in Manchester.

Rabbi Shlome Zalman Hoff שליט"א similarly built a magnificent Beis Haknesses building in Manchester.

The list is endless. Are they all crazy meshugenes? No, the are people driven to do and carry out a mission for **כבוד שמים**.

Rav Shach Zt'l brings a story:

The Russian soldiers of Czar Nicolai used to kidnap Jewish children to be enrolled to fight in the Russian army. A melamed called Reb Dovid Blinder learnt Torah with the Cheder boys in a secret cellar. They were in the middle of a sugya and the sound of them learning Torah made its way above ground. When the soldiers patrolling heard this noise, he entered the cellar and straight away grabbed one of the boys to take him away. Reb Dovid didn't hesitate. He gave

the soldier a massive 'patch un ponim'. The soldier got such a shock that he dropped the child and ran out in fright.

Later on, the **Beis Halevi (Brisker Rav) Zt'l** heard the story and asked the melamed what he was thinking? Where did you get the chutzpah to do such a thing? He was endangering his own life and could have been killed on the spot.



The melamed explained that he was in the middle of explaining a Tosefos. What right did the soldier have in disturbing the shiur? What a cheek! It is not a *hefker velt*! I wasn't prepared to be disturbed, so I *frasked* him.

If you are doing something *erlich*, then don't hesitate to stand up for it. It is the right thing to do.

In Switzerland lived Reb Yitzchok and his wife Recha Sternbuch. They were both part of the Vaad Hatzola during WW2. They saved thousands of Yiddishe neshamos from the clutches of the Nazis ys.

Mrs Sternbuch received a call on evening from the Swiss police with whom she had a good relationship with. He told her that 12 Yidden had been arrested and that their lives were in jeopardy. They had been transferred to the Gestapo who were about to ship them off to Auschwitz.

She said I am leaving right away to see what can be done. She was advised against going due to her own personal safety. However, she ignored everyone and strove to carry out her holy mission without any real plan.

When she arrived, she demanded from the head of the police that he release them immediately. He said that there is no chance, as their fate has already been sealed. But she was adamant and demanded to meet the major General!

She made the same demand to him and showed him documentation that she was attached to the Swiss Police Force. He got very angry, so she said that these twelve Jews were her personal guests and that she was responsible for their welfare.

He started shouting, swearing and cursing. "Get them and go now, before I kill you all!

She was later asked what drove her to carry out this very dangerous assignment? She replied, that when there is something very urgent that needs to be carried out, don't delay, - just do it!

She saw an injustice and didn't make cheshbonos.

The Sefas Emes brings the Zohar who says that Pinchos was actually already a Cohen prior to his act. He was not a leader, but part of the regular people. He could have easily walked away. By carrying out his mission, he was jeopardising his whole future for all time as someone who kills loses his status of a Cohen. However Pinchos was prepared to do this for Kavod Shamayim. His reward was that not only was his kahuna re-instated, but it was a Kahuna Gedola for all generations.

Rav Yaakov Galinsky explains that when Pinchos did his act of *kanaous,* he was not relying on a miracle. He just did the job that needed to be done. He did not make any *chebonos*. He saw the act and he knew the halacha, so he acted right away without hesitation. He was successful in his mission and not only was he not killed because of his action, but he is alive **עד היום הזה** as part of his reward.

The reason why the Pasuk says **מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה** and not **על העדה**? Is because Pinchos was not one of the leaders, but one of the regular

people. He knew that something needed to be done, so he arose from ***amongst*** the ordinary people. **וַיַּעֲמֹד פִּינְחָס וַיְפַלֵּל**

We can learn from this that even ordinary people can stand up for what' right and are capable of great things to become the extraordinary!

Recha Sternbuch: A Wartime Story of Selflessness and Courage

The cable that arrived in the offices of the Va'ad HaHatzalah, the Rescue Committee of the American Union of Orthodox Rabbis, came from Switzerland. The sender signed their name "Sternbuch," and the message contained an electrifying line: "Secured promise to cease extermination in concentration camps."

Five days after Recha Sternbuch sent this cable, Heinrich Himmler ordered the end of the extermination of Jews at Auschwitz-Birkenau and its 51 subcamps, and the demolition of its gas chambers and crematoria.

Until recently, historians assumed that Himmler's motive in declaring that order was to destroy the evidence of Nazi Germany's horrific crimes ahead of Russian advances. But the theory has its holes. The Russians were still two months away. The Nazis could have killed the remaining prisoners, eyewitnesses to their atrocities.

Recent research suggests, instead, a phenomenal story of bravery and daring, a plot to dupe Himmler, and an incredible rescue mission powered by a young Swiss-Jewish mother.

Recha Sternbuch, the woman who sent the cable, was born in Poland and grew up in Antwerp. Nothing in her early life suggested that she would go on to the feats of courage she displayed during the war. In fact, when she married Yitzchak Sternbuch and moved with him to his hometown of St. Gallen, Switzerland, it seemed she was destined for a very quiet life.

The culture shock of the move made it hard for her to find friends at first. So when, in 1933, hordes of strangers first started showing up at the Sternbuch home, the neighbours scratched their heads. The visitors themselves often seemed to think they were staying in a small hotel — sometimes for months at a time. Mattresses lined the floors, and people surrounded tables set with food as if the Sternbuchs were hosting a perpetual function. When some non-Jewish neighbours peeked in one day to see what was going on, they stared in utter bewilderment at a group of people draped in prayer shawls, chanting as if in a synagogue. It was Yom Kippur.

Who were these people? Some of the roughly 6,000 Jews who were granted asylum in Switzerland between 1933 and 1937. Recha refused to sit idly when people needed help. During those four years, she and her husband drove themselves to do everything to help people who had been through what seemed then the worst tragedy: losing their country, their homes, and their stability.

But things got worse. By 1938, the stream of refugees turned to a trickle, and then stopped — but not because the situation in Germany improved. Switzerland now refused to accept Jewish refugees who arrived without proper permits — which were virtually impossible to obtain — and sent all those between the ages of 16 and 60 back into the grasping tentacles of the Third Reich.

In response, Recha upped the action. The reticent young woman made contact with Paul Grüninger, the police commander of St. Gallen. Together, they concocted a plan. Recha provided Austrian and German Jews with routes and instructions for getting over the border. Swathed in black, she waited for them in the shadows of the forest, ready with a smile, hot coffee, and a vehicle to take them to St. Gallen hidden under a heap of produce or hay. Grüninger then stamped their visas to show, falsely, that they'd arrived before March 1938, making them legal refugees that the government

couldn't send back. He played with the data, falsified reports, and even bought winter clothing for refugees in need.



But German authorities got wind of their prey slipping between their fingers and informed their Swiss counterparts, who dismissed Grüninger in disgrace.

Swiss police came for Recha, too. They took the young wife and mother from her family and threw her into prison. In her cell, Recha hunched over as if to protect the tiny flame of life flickering within. But the darkness that had covered the world did not leave her unscathed. Slowly, the flame flickered out. Recha had lost her unborn baby.

And yet, in the face of pain and horror so great she could barely breathe, Recha's determination and courage only grew.

"You are charged with illegally smuggling refugees into Switzerland and acquiring forged passports, among other offenses," a grim-faced interrogator accused.

Recha raised swollen red eyes. **"True," she said quietly. "I believe a Higher Authority sanctioned my actions."**

"Who helped you?"

At this, Recha's eyes flashed. "Do you really expect me to denounce the fathers of these families?" she demanded.

"We'll see what you say when the judge sentences you," the interrogator threatened. "You're in deep trouble."

The judge listened silently as the two sides presented their cases. Then, citing a lack of evidence, he dismissed all charges and summoned Recha Sternbuch to his private chambers. There, he handed her 100 francs — a contribution to her rescue efforts.

In the face of this episode, Recha only grew more determined. She smuggled people over the German and Austrian borders, arranged false documents, bought Chinese entry papers that allowed refugees to cross Switzerland and Italy and smuggle themselves into Palestine, and missed her own son's Bar Mitzvah when she took a train — on Shabbat — to rescue a group of Jews in Vichy France. The imperative of saving a life overrides almost all other laws in Judaism, and so many lives were at stake.

Recha was not concerned with legalities when it came to rescuing people. Of all the Jewish rescue groups operating in Switzerland at the time, only she took up a discreet Polish offer — access to their diplomatic pouch, which meant censors couldn't block her messages. She alerted New York contacts to the horrors of the Holocaust, leading to increased rescue efforts. She also used this channel to send secret messages and money to Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe.

But the numbers, the sheer numbers… As Recha saved thousands, the Nazis destroyed millions. What to do?

She hatched a daring plan. She had connections with ex-fascist former president of Switzerland, Jean-Marie Musy. And Musy had connections with none other than Heinrich Himmler, the architect of the Holocaust himself. She and her husband enlisted Musy's help. It was late 1944; Himmler could see Germany's end coming. He regretted nothing, but he did want to save himself. Musy whispered the lie Recha had concocted: "America is interested in an alliance. They want to join forces with you against the common enemy — Stalin."

Himmler's eyes widened. Exactly as he'd hoped! "I'm in," he said shortly.

"Excellent." Musy leaned back. "But you need to stop killing the Jews. The Americans, you know… they can't stomach it."

Himmler nodded slowly.

This stunning deception was helped along by the Vatican and US Intelligence. Was it really the reason Himmler ordered the end of the active Holocaust? Historians don't know for sure, but it is a likely theory.

When the war finally ended and the world curled up to lick its wounds, Recha soldiered on, collecting children hidden in monasteries, convents, and Gentile homes, bringing them back to their people — in place of the parents who would never come for them.

Recha Sternbuch was an unlikely hero. She herself never dreamed she'd be anything other than a wife and mother. But when the world fell to pieces, she discovered within herself a fierce, burning sense of mission, and remade herself as a warrior of uncompromising courage. - Who knows what extraordinary courage lies dormant inside each of us?

A Short Vort- Rabbi Moshe Kormornick

פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקַנְאוֹ אֶת־קִנְאָתִי בְּתוֹכָם וְלֹא־כִלִּיתִי אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִנְאָתִי 25:11

Pinchas is called a zealot, which connotes sameone who acts quickly and decisively against something that he deems wrong.

However, the characteristic of hastiness is regarded as a negative trait, as the **Kotzker Rebbe** was fond of saying, "Haste in action results from laziness in the mind".

If so, how can we praise Pinchas for his hastiness in killing Zimri and Cozbi - perhaps it came from laziness in the mind, an inability to first think his actions through?

Despite his 'hasty' action, it is clear that the Kotzker Rebbe's words do not apply to Pinchas or to any other true zealot. They relate to someone who happens upon a situation and reacts immediately without thinking.

This person's laziness in first assessing the situation leads him to make rash decisions. However, since Pinchas' whole life was dedicated to serving Hashem, it was not really a new situation that he found himself in, it was just another scenario in which to serve Hashem.

Therefore, his haste did not come from laziness of the mind; it came from a lifetime of preparation and a constantly active mind that always sought the best way to serve his Creator.

Shalom Bayis comes First

One summer night in a Tel Aviv hotel before the evening prayer, **Rabbi Noson Tzvi Finkel** gave a long lecture on ethics to a number of his former students. Before he finished, his wife interrupted him with a whisper, "They have wives." In the midst of a most enlightening talk, he stopped and said, "We must start maariv already."

One of those present said, "But our wives won't mind."

"First of all," replied Rabbi Finkel, "I'm not sure that is so, and you have no right to cause your wives to wait. Secondly, my wife is surely hungry, and I don't have permission to make her wait."

He refused to finish the lecture. Moreover, upon completion of the evening prayers, he made certain that everyone went home as soon as possible. ~ **Tnuas Hamussar**

Young Yisroel Meir



When the Chofetz Chayim was a young boy, a group of mischievous children in his neighbourhood would fill up the water-carrier's pails with water and leave them outside overnight to freeze.

When the unfortunate man awoke in the morning, he had the difficult task of removing the frozen ice from the pails. When young Yisroel Meir discovered the prank, he would go late at night to the well to empty the pails, thus saving the watercarrier much distress. ~ **R' Shmuel Pliskin in *Der Chofetz Chayim***

Parshah Riddle- הביננו והכירני

ראש של סוף – סוף התיבה

סוף של סוף – ראש התיבה

וכאשר בה נח אל התיבה

נגמרה התיבה

Riddle answer: פנחס

What's in a Name?

וְשֵׁם אֵשֶׁת עַמְרָם יוֹכֶבֶד בַּת־לֵוִי אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה אֹתָהּ לְלֵוִי 26:59

The Daas Zekeinim says that her actual name was אֹתָהּ!

כי אשתו של לוי אותה שמה.

Blink

It is known that Rav Elyashiv answered *she'eilah* after *she'eilah*, one by one, without even looking anything up in a *sefer*. Everything was literally at his fingertips.

Rav Bentzion Kook once asked the Rav, "How is it possible to remember the entire Torah? Does it depend on *chazrah*, on how many times one reviews?"

Rav Elyashiv answered, "That too." Rav Kook asked, "And what else?"

Rav Elyashiv added, "The Torah has an additional name. That name is *Uf*, which means to fly away." Rav Elyahsiv then quoted a *gemara* in *Maseches Berachos* that says, "Gloss over it with your eye and it will have disappeared."

One shouldn't take his eyes off the Torah because if he does, the Torah will fly away from him. Rav Kook then asked, "What amount of time is considered *hesech hada'as*, taking one's mind off the Torah? Rav Elyashiv blinked his eyes and said "That is already a diversion, *hesech hada'as*."

One cannot take his mind off Torah for even a minute. The way to achieve that is by valuing time, not letting a blink of an eye go by. ~ **The Gadol HaDor**

Interrupt with Zmiros

The Chofetz Chayim's son wrote that whenever the Chofetz Chayim saw that someone was beginning to speak *loshon hora* at the Shabbos table, he would announce that it was time to sing *zmiros* (Shabbos songs) so as to interrupt them. ~ **Michtevai Chofetz Chayim – Dugmah Midarkai Avi as quoted by R' Zelig Pliskin**

The Vizhnitzer Rebbe on the first night of Selichos

One year, on the Motzoei Shabbos of the first Selichos, a simple Sephardic Jew set up a small table in Bnei Brak near the Vizhnitzer bais medrash in order to sell Selichos booklets. "Selichot. Selichot," he called out, but no one even stopped to look. Everyone was arriving with their Selichos in hand, and the poor man stood there hearing empty echoes of his lonely calls. "Selichot. Selichot," he continued to shout, thinking that maybe people would stop by and purchase a booklet or two.



Finally, his faith was rewarded. **The Vizhnitzer Rebbe, the Imrei Chaim zt"l**, passed with his entourage. The rebbe saw the humble Jew with a pile of unsold Selichos booklets and grasped the situation.

The rebbe walked over and took his place behind the table.

"Selichos," the rebbe called out. "Ver vil koifen? Who wants to buy?"

Immediately, a crowd formed. Which chossid would turn down an opportunity to use a Selichos received from the rebbe's own hand? In no time, the booklets were sold out.

"Do you have more?" the rebbe asked the vendor.

"Yes, I have another case in my machsan," he said.

"Then hurry and go get it," the rebbe said, maintaining his post.

The rebbe sold out the second batch as well, handing the dumbfounded seller piles of money he no doubt put to good use.

With that done, the rebbe continued to the bais medrash to recite Selichos.

The rebbe had taught his chassidim a valuable lesson. He demonstrated the glory of helping another Jew. He showed them that the opportunities are everywhere, and those blessed with good vision take advantage of them. There was no introduction more fitting to Selichos for those looking for Heavenly mercy.

Do you want "Selichot"? Do you want Hashem to forgive your sins? Help another Jew. Look beyond your comfort zone and take note of what is going on around you. "Re'eh." Look. Really look and you will find the "Anochi nosein lifneichem hayom brochah."

Re'eh. See opportunities. See the needs of other Jews. See your own potential. Open your eyes to the reality of life. Open your eyes to the opportunities for greatness, growth, forgiveness and blessing.

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series

The parsha starts off by highly commending Pinchos for his actions of killing Kozbi and Zimri and bringing about the cessation of the plague that was killing Klal Yisrael, at the end of last week's sedrah. פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקַנְאוֹ אֶת־קִנְאָתִי בְּתוֹכָם '***Pinchas the son of Eleazar the son of Aaron the kohen has turned My anger away from the children of Israel by his zealously avenging Me among them***.' (25:11) Many ask the question – Why do we need to know who Pinchos was descended from? Why does the Torah elaborate on this? We have already been told this clearly in last week's sedra?

The Ben Ish Chai says from a Medrash that Pinchos was justified in getting his reward – the "**ברית שלום**". And the reason why the Torah goes into length about his lineage is to show us that Pichos did not come from a family of warriors, taking up weapons was not in his blood, and yet when it was required, he stepped up to the task.

The Ben Ish Chai is telling us that Pinchos was descended from Aaron HaKohen – the ultimate peace maker, the ultimate peace lover.

But **בְּקַנְאוֹ אֶת־קִנְאָתִי** he wanted to show his love for Hakadosh Baruch Hu. And that's why the Pasuk tells us who he was descended from, and what his incredible reward was.



Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series

Moshe Rabbeinu was told by the Ribboino Shel Olam to choose Yehoshua to become the next leader of Klal Yisrael. The Pasuk says - **וְנָתַתָּה מֵהוֹדְךָ עָלָיו לְמַעַן יִשְׁמְעוּ כָּל־עֲדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** '***You shall bestow some of your majesty upon him so that all the congregation of the children of Israel will take heed***.' (27:20)

Rashi says **וְלֹא כָּל הוֹדְךָ, וּמָצִינוּ לְמֵדִין פְּנֵי מֹשֶׁה כַּחַמָּה פְּנֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כַּלְּבָנָה** '*Some of your majesty: But not all of your majesty. Thus, we learn that the face of Moshe was [radiant] like the sun, whereas the face of Yehoshua was like the moon.*'

Interestingly, **Rabbi Yoinasson Eibushutz** brings the Gemarah (Bava Basra 75a) **זְקֵנִים שֶׁבְּאוֹתוֹ הַדּוֹר אָמְרוּ פְּנֵי מֹשֶׁה כִּפְנֵי חַמָּה פְּנֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כִּפְנֵי לְבָנָה** '*The elders of that generation said: The face of Moses was as bright as the face of the sun; the face of Joshua was like the face of the moon.*'

Why just the elders? Because they were enveloped by the **ענני הכבוד**, the younger people had been born inside them, and had never seen the sun or the moon, and could not compare the differences between them.(**Vilna Gaon and K'sav Sofer**)

Yehoshua's greatness was compared to the moon, which was incredibly huge. However if you compare this to the greatness of Moshe Rabbeinu, who was compared to the sun, which is many times larger than the moon, you can appreciate just how great Moshe was.[

The sun's diameter is about 400 times larger than that of the moon – and the sun is also about 400 times farther from Earth. So the sun and moon appear nearly the same size as seen from Earth.]

The Gemarah continues **אוֹי לָהּ לְאוֹתָהּ בּוּשָׁה אוֹי לָהּ לְאוֹתָהּ כְּלִימָּה** '*Woe for this embarrassment, woe for this disgrace, that we did not merit another leader of the stature of Moshe.*'

The Chidah explains that there were perhaps people who were greater than Yehoshua, however, Yehoshua was chosen to be the next leader because it was Yehoshua who was the one who always cleaned up the Beis Hamedrash after everyone had left. Others felt that this was not important. So they said, "Oi, if we had only known the importance and reward for this, we would have done this."

The Kotzker says that if we compare the greatness of various gedolim, then **אוֹי לָהּ לְאוֹתָהּ בּוּשָׁה אוֹי לָהּ לְאוֹתָהּ כְּלִימָּה** -It is not going to lead to anything good coming from it. Keep away from this.

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series



The bracha that Pinchos received was the bracha of Shalom. **The Seforno** says that the biggest *shleimos* was that he would never be niftar.

We are starting the three weeks, and during this time (of Churban Bayis Sheini) to be at peace with others is incredibly important because of the sinas chinom that there was amongst Klal Yisrael.

There is an amazing story with **Reb Chaim Volozhiner**: He was once approached by two simple villagers who had got into some monetary dispute. The dispute spiraled out of control to the degree that they were hurling insults, abuse, and accusations at each other.

At the Din Torah, Reb Chaim spent hours going through all the details in order to formulate the correct p'sak. Even though some of the arguments were petty or foolish, he spent much time to unravel the discord, in order to bring back the **אהבה ואחוה ושלום ורעות** between these two people.

His talmidim were bothered that the Rav had expended so much of his precious time on this case. They said, "Rebbe, surely dealing with petty cases goes against your honour?"

Reb Chaim replied, "We say at the end of shemona esrei - **עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בִּמְרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן** – '***He Who makes peace in His high heavens may He make peace upon us and upon all Israel***.'

This tefillah needs to be said more fervently and with more meaning than ever, in order to breed peace. Chazal tells us that when we reach the end of Shemonei Esrei, we should take 3 steps back, even if we feel that it is beneath our dignity. This is a message to us, that sometimes a person needs to step back and review the situation before continuing. – This was an opportunity to make peace between two people. If the Ribboino Shel Olam can do it – I can also do it!"

Happiness

Someone asked the **Noda b'Yehudah**, "How did you become the gadol hador and not me? We learned together in the same cheder, and I don't remember that you were so much smarter than me."

The Noda b'Yehudah asked him, "Were you ever extremely happy?"

The man replied that it happened once that he was extremely happy – when he won the lottery.

The Noda b'Yehudah responded that he has that degree of joy every time he puts on tefillin!

Fascinating INSIGHTS

No Entry

It is known that the **Vilna Gaon** yearned to move to Eretz Yisrael and indeed he already set out on his journey passing through some of the countries on his way to the Holy Land but then he turned back.



His children testified as to the reason he cancelled his trip. "When he was old, I asked him many times why he didn't travel to Eretz Yisrael but he didn't answer me. Once I pressed him very much and he answered me, 'I didn't have Heaven's permission.'

The Sefer Aliyos Eliyahu (1818-1883) explains the Vilna Gaon's words: "I heard from my Rebbe R' Eliyahu Ragoler, the Av Beis Din of Kalish (1794-1849), that it's clear that the Vilna Gaon's soul was a spark of Moshe's and that is why he didn't have Heaven's permission to enter Eretz Yisrael!"

His Special Jacket

R' Simcha Zissel Ziv of Kelm developed a strategy to never lose his temper. He had a special jacket that he had set aside to wear when he was angry. He said, "When I feel anger coming on, I know that I have to get my special jacket. But, by the time I do, I am no longer angry."



Bein HaMetzarim

The Gemara (Shabbos 31) says that when a person is niftar, one of the first questions that heaven will ask him is **צפית לישועה**, "Did you hope for Moshiach?"

Reb Yaakov Emden zt'l writes, "If our only sin were that we don't mourn over Yerushalayim, it would be sufficient to prolong our *galus*. In my opinion, this is the primary cause of all the terrible destructions – beyond comprehension – that befall us in *galus*. We are pursued, and we don't have peace… All because the mourning has left our hearts."

Reb Yosef Chaim Zonnenfeld zt'l related how the simple people in Pressburg waited for Moshiach. "I once heard two women speaking. One asked the other, "What did you prepare for lunch today."

She replied that she had prepared beans.

"And what will you make tomorrow?"

The woman replied, "Sha! Sha! **אל תפתח פה לשטן** . Don't even consider it. But if chas v'shalom Moshiach doesn't come, I will cook potatoes!"

A businessman came to the **Apter Rav zt'l** to ask for business advice. The Rebbe gave him wise counsel, and then the rebbe emitted a deep moan and said with a broken heart, "A great tragedy happened today."

"What happened?" the man asked.

"We didn't bring the *korban tamid* today…" and then the Apter Rav cried copiously.

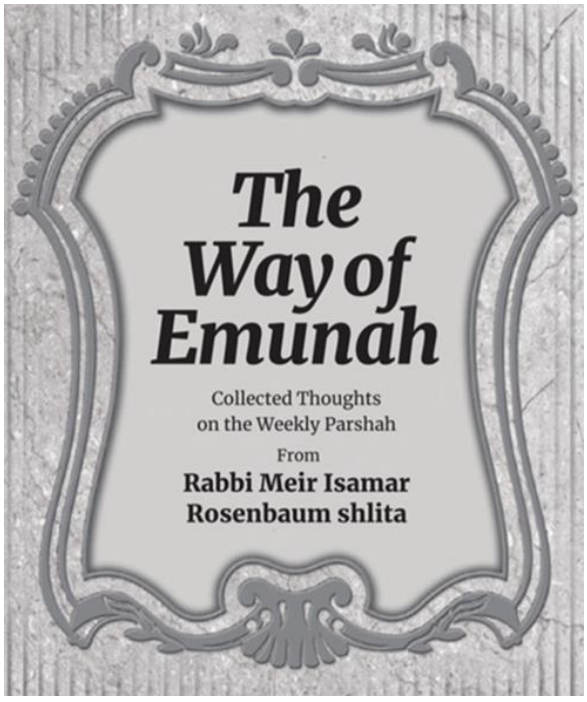
The Chasam Sofer said, whoever mourns over the Beis HaMikdash during the Three Weeks, will merit good children.

During the Three Weeks, a certain tzaddik visited the **Sfas Emes of Gur zt'l**. "What brings you here?" the Sfas Emes asked. "You live very far from here!"

"My family's tradition is to travel during the Three Weeks," the tzaddik explained. "Hashem is, *kivayachol*, in *galus*, so it is our custom to go into *galus* too, during this period."

"The main thing is to remember that we aren't home," the Sfas Emes replied.

The Sfas Emes rarely travelled, but he frequently reminded himself that he wasn't *home*. We aren't where we ought to be. This realization should never leave our consciousness.



The Different Levels of Giving Tzedakah

בְּנֵי גָדּ לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם לְצְפוֹן מִשְׁפַּחַת הַצְּפוֹנִי לְחַגִּי מִשְׁפַּחַת הַחַגִּי לְשׁוּנִי מִשְׁפַּחַת הַשּׁוּנִי

'***The descendants of Gad according to their families: the family of the Tzfoni from Tzfon, the family of the Chagi from Chagi…***' (26:15)

Sefer M'Ohr Vashemesh writes that the names contain hints to deep lessons. This is also seen from the **Ohr Hachaim**, who also learns lessons from the names. The M'Ohr Vashemesh says that these names contain hints about how to properly distribute tzedakah.

The name "Gad" can be an acronym for "gomel dalim", helping the poor. The highest level of charity is discreetly helping poor people

by giving them money in private, in a way that doesn't cause them any embarrassment.

This ideal is seen from the Gemara (Chagigah 5A) that says that when Rav Yanai saw someone giving charity in public, he told him that it would be preferable if he didn't give at all. It is best to give tzedakah in private, with no one else knowing about it.

A second important aspect of giving tzedakah is to give it with joy, as the pasuk tells us (Devarim 15:10) that one should not feel bad in his heart while distributing charity.

The M'Ohr Vashemesh goes on to quote **Rav Menachem Mendel of Rimanov zy"a** as asking why we do not make a bracha on tzedakah, like we do for other mitzvos. He says that he saw the following answer in a Sefer Kadmon: Tzedakah must be given with joy. Most people find it difficult to be happy while giving away money and, therefore, cannot fully fulfill the mitzvah. Therefore, no bracha is recited on giving tzedakah.

Another aspect of giving tzedakah is to give over and over again, as Chazal (Sifri Pesikta 107) learn from the pasuk (ibid): "Nasan titen lo" (you shall give and give to him) that one should give money to a poor man "even 100 times".

"I gave already" is not an excuse not to give again. Thus, with the name "Gad", the Torah is hinting to the mitzvah of tzedakah. The name "Tzfon" hints to giving charity in secret, as the word "tzfon" can mean "hidden".

The name "Chagi" hints to giving tzedakah with joy, as it can be translated to mean "chag" (a happy occasion). The name "Shuni" hints to giving tzedakah a second time ("sheini") and to keep giving over and over again. Thus, all of the high levels of giving charity are hinted to in these names.



Kiruv Rechokim Through Delicacies

'בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי עֲצֶרֶת תִּהְיֶה לָכֶם' And on the eighth day it shall be a gathering for you…' (29:35)

The Medrash Tanchuma (Siman 17) states: "Why does the number of korbanos decrease each day of Sukkos? This is meant to teach us derech eretz. If a person hosts someone in his home, on the first day he should feed him a lot and give him fowl. On the second day, he should give him fish. On the third day, he should give him cheese. On the fourth day, he should give him vegetables. In this way, he should give him less each day until he is feeding him very little."

Rav Menachem Mendel of Vorka zy"a (quoted in Sefer B'eis Yitzchok) asks: Is this derech eretz? Is it appropriate to give a guest less food every day?

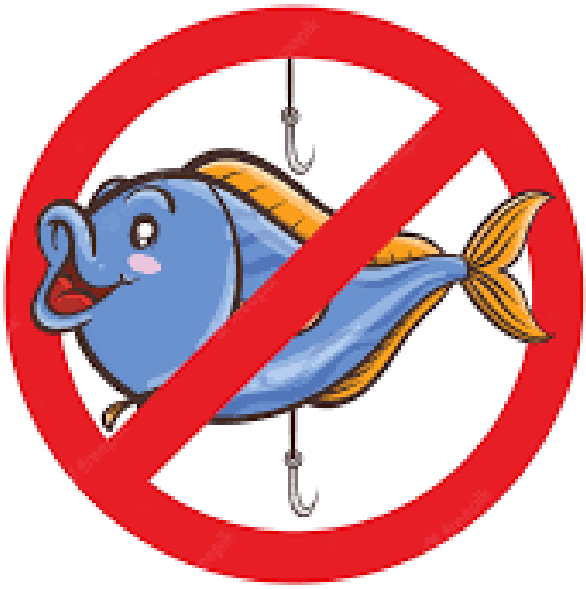
He explains that the Medrash is really saying that if a person wants to acquire a friend, he must start off by giving him fine foods because delicacies are mekarev rechokim (Sanhedrin 103B). Once two people are already friends, however, it is sufficient to feed him vegetables. Two friends can sit together and enjoy each other's company even with just a small amount of food.

Removing Bad Middos and Instilling Good Middos

***'וַאֲשֶׁר יוֹצִיאֵם וַאֲשֶׁר יְבִיאֵם וְלֹא תִהְיֶה עֲדַת ה' כַּצֹּאן אֲשֶׁר אֵין לָהֶם רֹעֶה' Who will lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of Hashem will not be like sheep without a shepherd.'* (27:17)

The Chidushei Harim zy"a says that this pasuk is teaching us how a true leader takes care of those who come to him seeking spiritual guidance and yeshuos. Such a leader: "leads them out", i.e., he removes the bad middos from within them, and he "brings them in" by instilling them with good middos.

Don't Think!



The **יסוד ושרש העבודה** teaches that the main Yetzer Hara is to get one to despair after the sin. In fact, the word **עבירה** is rooted in **עבר**, past, since after one sins, the evil inclination gets one to think of his past sins causing him to despair.

In this light we can grasp **הרהורי עבירה קשו מעבירה**, thoughts of sin are worse than the sin itself, as thinking about one's sin can bring him to despair.

R' Yitzchak Isaac Sher (1875-1952) would repeatedly say that one shouldn't think about his sins. Hashem created us with a Yetzer Hara. It's natural. Everyone has a Yetzer Hara. The only issue is how to cope with that which is something we must learn.

There is a saying, "***Hashem buries our sins in the depths of the sea and then puts up a sign that reads: No fishing***!"

Zealotry in Honour of Hashem When Answering Amen

Pinchas serves as the eternal symbol of kana'us, zealotry for Kavod Shamayim. But it's important to know that in order to merit to be among those who perpetuate Pinchas' path in zealotry for Kavod Shamayim, we do not have to do specifically his heroic act.

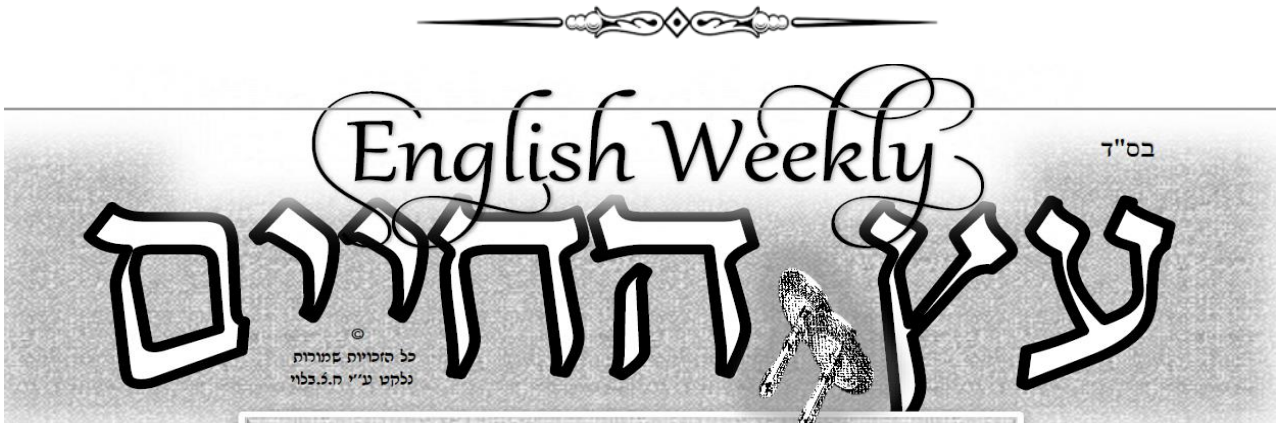
From the words of Rabbeinu Bechayei, it is evident that any effort and action to strengthen the answering of amen is considered kana'us lichvod Shamayim.

One will notice that the words of the passuk (Devarim 32:3) "Havu godel l'Elokeinu," from which we learn about the obligation to answer

amen, indicate that the meaning of answering amen is Kiddush Shem Shamayim. Each person can have the zechus of kana'us lichvod Hashem by strengthening his answering of amen. But one should know that this kana'us should be done with pleasantness and respect, in keeping with "Bekan'o es kinasi besocham" (Bamidbar 20:11).

Just as Pinchas merited such a dignified status, and such tremendous reward for his zealotry l'Shem Hashem, the same is true for one who answers amen with all his strength. Chazal say (Shabbos 119b) that he merits the tremendous reward of having the gates of Gan Eden opened for him.

It is possible that this is what is referred to in seforim, which say that the acronym of פנחס בן אהרן בן אלעזר הכהן is numerically equivalent to 91- which is the same as amen. If we go to shul each morning and honour the Name of Hashem by answering amen after Birchos Hashachar, and we urge others to do the same, then surely we will see the fulfilment of the promise "Ki mechabdai achabed." [Yaakov Dov Marmurstein]



There was an Israeli Jew who became a successful doctor in a Non-Jewish medical centre in England. He slowly gained a high reputation and was very trusted. One day he decided that the time had come for him to open his own office. "Why work under someone else?" he thought.

As soon as the centre found out about his plans, a major uproar occurred. They told him there was no way that they were going to

allow him to do that. Major court cases were being scheduled and it was a very sticky situation.

It turned out, that for some reason each party was afraid of the other. During this whole situation, the Israeli doctor met up with a friend of his from Eretz Yisroel, and after revealing the current events to his friend, he told him the following; "I suggest that you travel to Eretz Yisroel and seek advice from **Maran Harav Aron Leib Shtienman Zt'l**.

The doctor thought about it, and in the end agreed to heed the advice. He booked a ticket to Eretz Yisroel and arranged a slot to speak with the Gadol Hador.

Upon revealing the whole story to Harav Shtienman, the Gadol Hador gave him one word of advice "**לבטל**". Basically, Rav Shtienman told him not to open his own place.



The fellow went back to England and told the gentiles, "It's over, you can cancel all the court cases, I'm refraining from opening my own place." The group was quite relieved but were very suspicious on the abrupt about-face. Immediately, they hired a private detective team to find out truly what was up this Jew's sleeve. When they found out that he had taken the advice from a great Rabbi in Israel, they wondered what the plan of the Rabbi and the doctor was.

The CEO travelled to Israel and tried to track down Rav Shtienman. First, he went to some Israeli ambassador and asked him if he ever heard of Rav Shtienman. The ambassador indeed knew about Rav Shtienman and told him that he was the Rabbi of the Jewish people, and he lived in a small apartment in the city of Bnei Brak.

The CEO travelled to Rav Shtienman's home, and asked Rav Shtienman if it was true that Rav Shtienman had given the fellow the advice not to open his own place. Rav Shtienman confirmed that the information was correct.

The CEO then asked what the reason for his advice was. Rav Shtienman simply said that it was not proper for the doctor to break off and open his own office.

The CEO asked if he as well could receive advice on this sensitive matter. Rav Shtienman asked the fellow, "Do you own a medical centre in Manchester yet?" "No," he replied. "Ok, so I advise you to let him open an office in Manchester in a partnership with you".

He really appreciated Rav Shtienman's advice. Before he left, the CEO asked Rav Shtienman how much Rav Shtienman charged for giving advice. Rav Shtienman apologized and said, "I'm sorry but I don't charge for giving advice, I will not accept any money."

The man said "If I would have gone to any professional for advice, I would have had to pay a big sum. Since I got advice from the great Rav it is obligatory that I pay for the advice." He tried sneaking the money, but to no avail.

Rav Shtienman explained as follows, "If I would take money for giving advice, I would be unable to give advice anymore, since I would be giving advice based on money. However, I don't give advice based on anything other than our holy Torah.

"The root of giving is that a person comes to recognize that nothing is truly his. Everything he possesses is only entrusted to him in order to fulfill the will of his Creator. Therefore when he gives, he is not losing — he is returning. The illusion of ownership is the foundation of taking; the recognition of trust is the foundation of giving." ~ Michtav Me'Eliyahu.



Some Thoughts and Sayings of Rav Yitzchok Feigelstock zt"l by Rabbi Yair Hoffman

Rav Feigelstock zt"l was the Rosh Yeshiva of the Mesivta of Long Beach, New York, where he had taught thousands of Talmidim over the years.

Harav Feigelstock was a close student of **Rav Aaron Kotler zt"l**, and was also a member of the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah. He was also a great-great grandson of the **Chasam Sofer**.

Rav Yitchak escaped Europe and eventually made his way to North America, where he became a talmid at Yeshiva Torah Vodaas. He developed a close relationship with **Harav Gedalia Schorr, zt"l**, who urged him to go to Lakewood and learn under Rav Schorr's own rebbi, Harav Aaaron Kotler zt"l.

Rav Feigelstock became one of Rav Aharon's closest talmidim, the Rosh Yeshiva zt"l often discussed serious issues with Rav Feigelstock, and referred to him as his, "pele yoeitz, his incredible advisor."

Below are thirteen thoughts and sayings of Rav Feigelstock zt"l.

1. We have a duty to take into account every Jew and to feel a sense of responsibility for the entire Klal Yisroel.
2. Serving Hashem without a sense of joy is not considered serving Hashem at all.
3. Torah brings a person to an unparalleled sense of joy.
4. We have an obligation of hakaras hatov that we have merited to be from those who study Torah.
5. The main Dveikus Bashem is through emulating Him.

6. The fundaments of Emunah lie in the proper observance of Shabbos and in the study of the halachos related to Shabbos. (When we keep and study Shabbos – we further emulate Him as well, by refraining from partaking in creative acts on Shabbos as He did.)
7. If one is tolerant of the faults and insults from others (as Hashem is tolerant), then one is capable of turning Hashem's Midas HaDin into Midas HaRachamim.
8. Improving one's midos is an obligation. It also has side benefits too. One gets along with others better, things go his or her way, life is smoother, and life is healthier.
9. Contemplating on the fact that we are a tzelem elokim that we were created in Hashem's image (in that we have free choice – bechira) – helps us realize that we are also spiritual entities – not just physical ones – this idea keeps us on the straight path.
10. If one does not recognize his own qualities and abilities, at the end of the day, he will have nothing in hand.
11. If one toils in the study of Torah in the proper manner – he will receive a syata dishmaya to be able to learn the Torah in its entirety.
12. The schar that one receives in Olam Habah is not result-dependent it is effort-dependent.
13. The ultimate purpose of everything that transpires in the world is so to enable Klal Yisroel to occupy themselves in the intricacies of Torah study.

"A small act done with full heart outweighs many acts done without heart." ~ Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz.

Parshah Pearls (*Adapted from the Ma'ayanah shel Torah*)

Why Moshe Didn't Live Forever

Because Moshe did not exert himself to kill Zimri, says the Medrash, no one knows where he is buried.

What on earth has the one to do with the other, asks the Birchas ha'Shir?

And citing Rebbi Yehonoson, he gives the following answer:

The true reason that Moshe's burial-place is not known is in answer to the Apikorsim, who claim that it is impossible to believe the stories of Moshe's greatness. If Moshe really ascended to the Heaven to receive the Torah and spoke face to face with the Shechinah, then how come he died?

Why did he not depart from this world alive, like Chanoch and Eliyahu ha'Navi. We must therefore conclude that Moshe made it up and wrote it in the Torah in G-d's Name.

This argument is laughable. Had Moshe wanted to make up stories, then what was to stop him from writing that he ascended to Heaven and did not really die at all? The only possible objection to that would be that he was buried, and that his grave serves as eternal testimony to the falsehood of such a claim.

That's why the Torah testifies that his grave is unknown, so, he really could have falsified the facts had he so wished and written about his fictitious ascent to Heaven. This is irrefutable proof that everything he wrote about himself was true. - But what will we then do with the Apikorsim's question? If Moshe really was so great, why did he not live forever?

The answer is, because he did not exert himself to kill Zimri. Had he done so, he and not Pinchas (alias Eliyahu) would have been the one to earn G-d's covenant and peace; he would have been the one who ascended to Heaven in a fiery chariot. In any case, he did not exert

himself. That is why he had to die, and that is why it was necessary to hide his burial-place, as the Medrash explains.

Pinchos's Legacy "בְּקַנְאוֹ אֶת־קִנְאָתִי בְּתוֹכָם" (25:11).

This might be translated to mean 'when he implanted My zealousy inside them', the **Kotzker Rebbe** and the **S'fas Emes** explain.

If today, Yidden cannot tolerate the actions of sinners, it is because they inherited this trait from Pinchas.

The Deeds of Aharon

לָכֵן אֱמֹר הִנְנִי נֹתֵן לוֹ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי שָׁלוֹם "Therefore say, behold I will give him a covenant of peace" (25:12).

It is lawful (ba'Din) for Pinchas to receive his reward (Medrash).

Rashi explains that the tribes were deriding him, because he was a descendant of Yisro. That is why the Torah saw fit to stress his ancestry from Aharon.

What is the point of doing that, ask the commentaries? Will it change the fact that he was a descendant of Yisro?

The Binyan Ariel cites a Gemara in Yuma (71), where the Kohen Gadol said to Sh'mayah and Avtalyon (the two Gedolei ha'Dor, who were also converts) 'Let the sons of Goyim come in peace'!

To which they replied 'Let the sons of Goyim, who behave like Aharon, come in peace, but don't let the sons of Aharon come in peace, who don't behave like Aharon'.

This Gemara teaches us that it is not the Yichus that counts, but what one does with it. It is not the descendants of Aharon who earn the life and the peace that was promised to Aharon, but rather those who behave like Aharon.

It may well be that Pinchas was a descendant of Yisro (the idolater). Be that as it may, but when he deflected G-d's anger away from Yisrael, it was the Midos of Aharon that he was displaying, and so, at that moment, he was justly described as a descendant of Aharon, as that is what he truly was in the fullest sense.

That is why the Pasuk concludes "Therefore ... I will give him a covenant of peace". That is why the Medrash says that it is lawful (ba'Din) for Pinchas to receive his reward.

Ladies First - "חֲנוֹךְ מִשְׁפַּחַת הַחֲנֹכִי..." (26:5).

The Pasuk attaches G-d's Name on each and every family, a 'Yud' at the end, and a 'Hey' at the beginning.

Chazal have said that the Shechinah dwells among husband and wife when they lead a pure and holy family life. That is why '**איש**' contains a 'Yud', and '**אשה**', a 'Hey'.

The women of that generation were on a higher level of Tz'niyus than the men, the **K'li Yakar** points out. That explains, why, in the above hint, the 'Hey' precedes the 'Yud'.

Pray for Good Health

The Gemara states **לעולם יבקש אדם רחמים שלא יחלה** '*A man should Always pray to Hashem that he shouldn't become sick.*'

In the best of health, one should pray to Hashem to remain well. I really should charge you, because if I ever told you anything that was worthwhile, this is it: pray to Hashem for good health while you have it. ~ **R' Avigdor Miller zt"l**

Saying Of The Week With Rabbi Menachem Lomner

*"**When doing Mitzvos, give it your best**".*

When discussing the *Korban Tamid*, the Pasuk (Bamidbar 28:7) says הַסֵּךְ נֶסֶךְ שֵׁכָר to bring wine to pour on the Mizbeach called *nesech sheichar*. Rashi (ibid.) says יַיִן הַמְשַׁכֵּר, פְּרָט לְיַיִן מִגִּתּוֹ - this means bring good old wine.

The Ramban explains that it means do not bring any diluted wine. Either way, it is obvious that when you are doing this Mitzvah you should not bring something that is considered second class.

So too, by all Mitzvos, including interpersonal ones between man and his fellow, we should give it our best and leave the second-class stuff for ourselves.



The Three Weeks

We are now entering the Three Weeks and we're mourning over churban Beis Hamikdash. This brings up a question. What exactly are we mourning about, and what do we lack?

A lot of people don't have a clear grasp on this issue. Everyone knows it is very sad that we don't have Beis Hamikdash anymore, and we wish we did, but what exactly is the point?

Our father Rav Shimshon zt"l saw it as two points.

1. We lack the opportunity for closeness to Hashem that Beis Hamikdash afforded us.

2. We are pained by the loss of kevod Shamayim and the chillul Hashem entailed by the churban.

When we had Beis Hamikdash, and a person would do an aveirah, which distanced him from Hashem, he would come and offer a korban and that would atone for him, and he could draw close to Hashem again.

In addition to the avodas hakorbanos itself, he would attain yiras Shamayim. Whereas now in galus, Hashem is hidden and this distances us from Him. (And this distancing from Hashem is actually the source of all the physical troubles and disasters that have plagued us all these years.)

The second point we mourn over is that the Shechinah is in galus. Hashem's honour in the world is sorely lacking. And the Shechinah itself is suffering more than we can even imagine.

The Gemara says that the rest of the year, only a great person may display mourning over galus Hashechinah. But during the Three Weeks, we all are on the level of a gavra rabba, a great person, so it is fitting for us to mourn over tzaar Hashechinah.

The rest of the year, we don't focus so much on these matters, but on these days we have a special opportunity to devote some thought to it and wake ourselves up to the profound significance and meaning of Yerushalayim and Beis Hamikdash.

The laws of aveilus during these days help us feel the pain of churban and galus.

May Hashem bless us to have true feeling for these matters and to mourn over the beautiful Beis Hamikdash we lost. Whoever mourns for Yerushalayim will be zocheh to see its joy.

Wishing you all the best, with all my heart - Harav Yosef Dov Pincus.

Three Times Peace - River, Bird and Kettle





הִנְנִי אֶמֶר הֵנְנִי נֹתֵן לוֹ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי שָׁלוֹם 'Behold, I am giving him My covenant of peace.' (25:12)

כְּאָדָם הַמַּחֲזִיק טוֹבָה וְחַנּוֹת לְמִי שֶׁעוֹשֶׂה עִמּוֹ טוֹבָה, אַף כָּאן פֵּרֵשׁ לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא שְׁלוֹמוֹתָיו. *Just as a man owes gratitude and favour to someone who did him a favour, so here Hashem expressed to him His feelings of peace.* (*Rashi*)

Chazal say there are three types of *shalom*. There are three [dreams that foretell] peace: a river, a bird and a kettle. [Someone who sees one of these in a dream can expect peace.] - These three dreams represent three different types of peace.

The *Vilna Gaon* explains: The first type of peace is described as a "river." When a person ploughs a field, someone might come along and claim that the path he is using to plough is causing damage to the public domain. This is not peace.

A river, too, is a public domain, and anyone can traverse the river, but there is always peace; one person doesn't bother the other. The path of this person in the river doesn't damage the path of that person because once the boat passes by, the "furrow" it made in the water immediately disappears. The water returns to its place as it was before. So, when the next person's boat comes along, he finds a fresh, undamaged section of water to travel through.

This is peace on a low level. It doesn't entail people working together. It is just "live and let live." People might say hello to each other, but

no more than that.The second type of peace is that of a kettle, a pot. Water and fire are two opposites, and the kettle makes "peace" between them, so to speak. The metal of the kettle separates between the fire and the water, and they thereby work together. The fire provides heat, and the water heats up.

This is a new kind of peace that is created by means of a partition. Sometimes people are able to work together but only because a partition separates between them.

The third type of peace is that of a bird. Birds were created not from earth alone and not from water alone but from רקק, marshy land, which is a mixture of earth and water. A bird can't live only in the air; it needs to rest on the ground from time to time. On the other hand, a bird can't stay on the ground all the time. It also needs to fly in the air. This is a wonderful combination of two contrasting qualities in one creature. This is the loftiest type of peace.

These are the three types of peace.

Accordingly, we can say that there are three different levels to a Jew's connection with *Hashem*. Sometimes the relationship is like a river. Each attends to his own business. The person keeps *mitzvos,* but it is lacking in relationship with *Hashem*. Then there is a connection to *Hashem* that is like a kettle. There is relationship, but there is also division. And then there is connection like a bird. This represents a perfect relationship without barriers and divisions.

These three types of connection to *Hashem* are attained by *mitzvah* observance, *Tefilah*, and Torah learning. *Mitzvah* observance is like a river. *Tefilah* is like a kettle, and Torah learning is like a bird.

The three levels of connection to *Hashem* are attained in the following ways. *Mitzvah* observance, which means living like a Jew. *Tefilah,* which means to talking to *Hashem*. And Torah learning, which means understanding things the Torah way.

Working on our Middos



Rav Yehuda Zev Segal, zt"l, the Manchester Rosh Yeshivah, would pay great attention to details when it came to helping other people, and he would do anything to help someone who was suffering.

One time, while Rav Yehuda Zev was staying in Stamford Hill, London, an elderly man came to see him, recalled Mr. Shimshon Mozes, who was a close Talmid. He asked if the Rosh Yeshivah could possibly come by to see his son, a young father, who was very ill.

Rav Yehuda Zev was leaving for Bournemouth for some rest the next day. On the way, he had an appointment to see Dr. Shloime Adler in the Golders Green area, and he told the man that Bli Neder, he would visit the sick son, who lived nearby.

Mr. Mozes said, "When we arrived, the young man, who was suffering from a terminal illness, was in a bed downstairs, and the Rosh Yeshivah spent an hour talking with him and giving him Chizuk, encouragement. Above the bed was a picture of three young children, and a Siddur. The Rosh Yeshivah looked inside the Siddur and saw that it had a label, as it had been given to one of this man's sons as a prize."

Rav Yehuda Zev asked the father, "What is this?" The father proudly replied, "It's a prize given to my older son. He was the top of the class in Kriah."

Rav Yehuda Zev remarked, "Top of the class! How many boys are in the class?"

The man answered that there were 16 boys in that class.

"Wonderful! You must be so proud!" the Rosh Yeshivah said. Then he turned to Mr. Mozes and said, "Shimshon, do you hear this? His son was the top reader in a class of 16 children!"

The father beamed. Then the Rosh Yeshivah pointed at the picture and said, "Please, give me the picture." Mr. Mozes passed it to him. "Such sweet children! Would you mind if I could see them and give them a Brachah before I leave?"

After taking his leave of the patient, Rav Yehuda Zev spoke to his wife outside the room, offering her Chizuk. Then he Bentched each child warmly, and individually. They then left.

Mr. Mozes commented, "This was the Rosh Yeshivah's way, to do everything possible that he could to help someone!"

Novardokers Were Taught to Have True Respect & Esteem for ALL Humanity

R' Gershon Liebman Zatzal was once at the house of a well-to-do Yid. He was asking for money for his Yeshiva. The man started screaming that he has no interest in "idle" Yeshiva boys; he only gives money for promoting professional people like doctors and lawyers. He threw R' Gershon out while screaming at him.

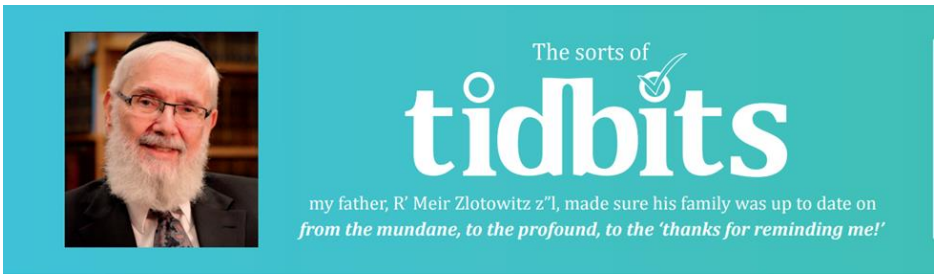
R' Gershon asked if he could just enter his house once, to tell him a story. During WWII, he was walking around the streets, with the Talmidim he had, from the unbelievable Yeshiva that he established smack in middle of the ghetto and under the Nazis. They noticed an elderly gentleman who was starving to death and begging a person for some food. Although this person was holding a double portion in his hands, he refused to give some to the old man. He said: "Each person has to take care of himself!"

Right there, the old man died of starvation, and R' Gershon with his Bachurim did what they could to give him a Ba'kavod'ike Kevura.

R' Gershon said: "In Yeshiva, we produce people who have basic human decency!!!"

The rich man started screaming: "Guess who that wicked man was. It was me!"

He was deeply ashamed, and he decided to give money to R' Gershon.



For the Shabbos Table

וּבְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת שְׁנֵי־כְבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה תְּמִימִם "***And on the Shabbos Day [you shall bring] two male lambs at one year old, unblemished***" (28:9)

The Midrash says that the two lambs brought for the korbanos mussaf of Shabbos must be identical in appearance.



Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l explains that the two lambs correspond to the two mitzvos of Shabbos, Zachor and Shamor.

The mitzvah of Zachor, to commemorate, is to honour the Shabbos and partake in oneg Shabbos, a mitzvah which is easily accepted and enjoyable to a person. The mitzvah of Shamor, however, is to guard and abide by the Shabbos prohibitions from performing melachah. Such prohibitions may feel restrictive, and at times one may think he is losing out financially or in some other way. But in fact, this is not the case. Shabbos is the source of all blessing, and all success and berachah attained during the work week is derived from Shabbos.

The Torah equates Zachor and Shamor to convey that just as one relishes in the delights of oneg Shabbos, one should equally delight in the performance of Shamor, and know that keeping Shabbos in the fullest way will secure much blessing and benefits in the week to come.

Hatred

One window of a Rebbe's home had a view of the local church. Each day he would pass the window, see the church, and express his contempt for it and its occupants.

One day he asked his Shamash to cover the window with heavy curtains so that the sight should not bother him anymore. Surprised, the assistant readily agreed to do so but asked, "Rebbe, it has been visible for so many years. Why now does it bother you all of a sudden?"

The Rebbe replied with a sad smile, "I used to see that church each day and my blood would boil. I would be beside myself with hatred for the falsehood and evil perpetrated under the guise of religion and holiness and I would spit to show my feelings.

Lately, however, I have found that after seeing it for so many years, day after day, it no longer bothered me so much… and THAT bothers me to no end!"

"Bitachon is not the assurance that everything will turn out as one desires. Bitachon is the clarity that nothing happens by chance, and that every event — pleasant or painful — is guided with precise wisdom for a purpose beyond human grasp." ~ Chazon Ish.

Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair - Inflammable

At 450 degrees Fahrenheit, paper ignites spontaneously. So wrote Ray Bradbury in his futuristic novel, Fahrenheit 451. The novel's main character is a fireman called Montag. But unlike the firemen we're used to, Montag's job is not to put out fires or stop them. Montag's job is to burn books.



A hallmark of all repressive regimes is book burning. In May 1933, the Nazi Party decreed that any book which acts subversively on their future or strikes at the roots of German thought, the German home and the driving forces of their people, was to be burned. One of the books that the Nazis burned was written by Heinrich Heine a hundred years before the Nazis burned his books. Heiner wrote, "Where one burns books, one will in the end burn people." The nature of evil is to want to turn the light of knowledge into the dark heat of unbridled passion.

Heat is the characteristic of the summer month of Tammuz. One of the five disasters that we mourn by fasting on the 17th of Tammuz was another book burning: the burning of our Holy Torah. The historian Flavius Josephus records that sixteen years before the Jewish revolt against the Romans, robbers attacked and plundered a procession of a Roman official called Stefanas, or Apostamus, on the Royal Road near Beit Choron. Kumanus, the proconsul at the time, sent troops to arrest the local villagers. He held them responsible for not intervening. Now, during the arrest of the villagers, one of the Roman soldiers saw the scroll of the Holy Torah, tore it into pieces and set it ablaze. The fury of the Jews knew no bounds.

The 17th of Tammuz marks the first recorded book burning in Jewish history. But it certainly wasn't the last.

In the year 1242 under Louis IX of France, ten thousand copies of the Talmud carried in twenty-four wagonloads were burned at the stake before the eyes of grieving Parisian Jews. It's difficult for us to conceive the immensity of this loss. There was no printing in those days. Every one of those Talmudic tractates was handwritten. Those fires consumed almost all of Jewish knowledge in Europe. Jewish communities all over the world mourned.

During the Mussaf service of Yom Kippur. there's a section that describes the death of the ten martyrs at the hands of the Romans. One of those was Rabbi Chanina Ben Teradyon. The Midrash teaches that he was executed on the charge of teaching Torah publicly, a capital offense under the Romans. The Romans wrapped him in the Torah scroll that he always kept with him, and they set him and the scroll on fire. To prolong his agony, they packed the space between his chest and the Torah scroll with wool soaked in water. Rabbi Chanina said, "The parchment is consumed, but the letters fly up in the air. The Torah is fire, and fire cannot consume fire."

The body of a Jew is like the parchment on which the Torah of his soul is written. When the parchment is burned, the letters fly up to return to their source.

One of the other five tragedies that we commemorate on the 17th of Tammuz also involves the letters of the Torah flying into the air. When Moshe Rabbeinu came down from Har Sinai with the First set of Luchot, he saw the Jewish people dancing around the Golden Calf. As a result of that sin, the Jewish people were no longer worthy to receive the Tablets. The letters took leave of the stone and flew up into the sky. Without the words of the Torah engraved on those Tablets, they became too heavy for Moshe to carry. They fell from his hands and smashed to the ground.



פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הֵשִׁיב אֶת־חֲמָתִי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקַנְאוֹ אֶת־קִנְאָתִי בְּתוֹכָם- *Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned my wrath away from the Children of Israel, in that he was jealous with my jealousy among them*. (25:11)

The Ohr Hachaim asks why the possuk found it necessary to inform us who Pinchas' father and grandfather were. Klal Yisroel had been carrying a complaint against Aaron Hacohen for forty years. Aaron Hacohen caused Klal Yisroel to suffer a terrible loss through his making of the Egel.

The possuk writes- Hashem plagued the people for having made the calf that Aharon had made. Their brothers were killed, and Aaron was partially responsible. **וַיִּגֹּף ה' אֶת־הָעָם עַל אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ אֶת־הָעֵגֶל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אַהֲרֹן** . Pinchas was the son of the son of Aaron, and he redeemed Klal Yisroel from their latest plague. Now he had repaid his grandfather's debt. The possuk continues **וְלֹא־כִלִּיתִי אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִנְאָתִי** –'*So that I did not destroy the children of Israel because of My jealousy*.'

Klal Yisroel would have been completely destroyed if not for Pinchas' actions. He saved them with his zealous act and now they lived, as opposed to the death that the Egel caused. The Medrash tells us that Aaron spent his years attempting to repair that which he had destroyed with the Egel. He would teach Torah to Yidden and persuade them to perform Mitzvos. Pinchas completed the repair by saving Klal Yisroel from destruction, and Hashem repaid him with the Middah of Shalom.

THE $100,000 LUNCH

R' Nosson Einfeld, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Beer Sheva, once met a traveler searching for a kosher place to eat and warmly escorted him to the yeshiva dining room, personally serving him lunch. Unaware of his host's identity, the visitor offered $5 for what he assumed was a cafeteria meal, then $20 when it was refused. - R' Einfeld gently declined, saying, "Our father Avrohom lived in Beer Sheva and welcomed wayfarers to his inn—you have come to such an inn. It is our pleasure to serve you."

As they spoke, the guest revealed he was a wealthy man who had come to Israel intending to donate significantly to a yeshiva. "I have found that yeshiva," he said, later explaining that it was R' Einfeld's sincere, unconditional kindness that inspired his generosity.

After returning home he kept in touch, and eight months later a telegram informed R' Einfeld that the man had passed away; in his will he bequeathed $100,000 to Yeshivas Beer Sheva—all because of one genuine act of selfless *chessed*. (More Shabbos Stories)

The Birthday Party That Didn't Fail by Daniel Agalar

Rabbi Avrohom Abba Freedman, who passed away in 2002, was one of the great mechanchim of his generation. When he came to Detroit in 1944, there were fewer than one hundred Shomer Shabbos families in the entire city. Through decades of mesirus nefesh — knocking on doors, offering scholarships he couldn't afford, chasing after boys no one else wanted — he helped turn a spiritual midbar into a makom Torah. - If there was a Jewish child in trouble, Rabbi Freedman felt personally responsible.

One day he received a call from a woman in Ohio. She was completely secular. Her teenage son was a juvenile delinquent — expelled from schools, involved with the law, impossible to manage. In truth, he had no background and no business being in a yeshiva environment. It was

clear she was trying to "hand him off" to someone else. She asked Rabbi Freedman if he would take him.

He didn't hesitate. The boy came to Detroit and boarded there. It wasn't easy. He didn't fit in naturally. There were problems. But slowly — very slowly — there were signs of progress. A crack in the shell.

Then the boy went home to visit his parents. And he never came back. No dramatic scene. No confrontation. Just gone. Rabbi Freedman tried calling. Tried reaching out. No clarity.

By all appearances, the experiment was over. Then Rabbi Freedman realized something. The boy's birthday was coming up. Most people would have said: We tried. Rabbi Freedman rented a bus. He filled it with talmidim from the yeshiva. Balloons. Cake. Singing. And they drove over an hour to Toledo. They knocked on the door of a completely secular home. And suddenly — a bus full of bnei Torah singing and dancing for a teenager who had already walked away.

They made a real birthday party. Warmth. Simcha. Kedusha. At the end of the night, Rabbi Freedman asked gently: "So nu… tomorrow we'll see you back in yeshiva?" The boy said yes. But he never returned.

By normal standards, it failed. A bus ride. A cake. Two hours on the road. For nothing. Or so it seemed.

Fifteen years later, Rabbi Freedman was in Lakewood, in Bais Medrash Govoha. A man approached him. "Rabbi Freedman… do you remember Toledo?"

The Rabbi searched his memory.

The man continued: "I lived next door to that boy. My family was completely secular. But I went to that birthday party. It was the first time in my life I saw bnei Torah up close. I saw their simcha. Their warmth. Their sincerity. That night changed something inside me. - I told my parents I wanted to go to yeshiva.

One thing led to another. And today I live here in Lakewood."

That man was Yankel Mueller. And today it is a known fact that the Mueller family is a family of children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren who are bnei Torah — talmidei chachamim, mechanchim, builders of Klal Yisroel.

The birthday party did not fail. It just wasn't for the one Rabbi Freedman thought it was for. One bus ride. One cake. One act of stubborn mesirus nefesh. And generations were born from it.

Our job is not to control the results. Our job is to show up and do the effort. Rabbi Freedman did his hishtadlus. The Ribbono Shel Olam decided where it would bloom. And sometimes — if we are fortunate — we get to see it.



He Couldn't Say It Sitting by Rabbi Shlomo Landau

Last night I was at a wedding out of town. I sat down at a random table. A fellow comes over and says is this seat next to you available. I said sure.

He sits down next to me. Turns out he's a ייד from ארץ ישראל and he shared with me an incredible story. His grandfather is a Holocaust survivor. When his grandfather was an old man, one time he comes into his grandfather's house pretty late at night and his grandfather is sitting there at the kitchen table.

He has his head down on the kitchen table and he's dozing. And he says to him, זיידי, come, let me help you get to bed. And זיידי said I

can't go to bed yet. He said why not? He says because I didn't **דאוון מעריב** yet.

He says it's okay **זיידי**, I'll bring you a **סידור**, you could **דאוון** over here. And he brings him a **סידור** and at that point in life his grandfather was very weak, he was quite old. His grandfather says to him, but when it comes to **שמונה עשרה**, you're going to need to help me stand because I have no **כח** to stand. So he says to his grandfather, if you don't have **כח** to stand, you don't have the strength to stand by **שמונה עשרה**, so sit, you're allowed to.

He says no, I need to push myself. And he waits until he gets up to **שמונה עשרה** and he helps his grandfather stand, he supports him throughout **שמונה עשרה** and then his grandfather sits back down and eventually goes back to sleep.

The next morning his grandfather didn't get up, and they quickly called **הצלה** and he was actually in a medical crisis and **ברוך השם** they were able to save him, and he lived seven additional years.

Why was his grandfather so dedicated to standing for **שמונה עשרה**? - Here is the mind-boggling piece.

His grandfather shared with him that when he was in the concentration camp, every morning when the sun rose, he didn't think he'd be alive when the sun set. And when the sun set, he didn't know if he'd be alive when the sun rose. So he would **דאוון** every single day **שמונה עשרה** and he would say **מודים אנחנו לך**, thank you **השם, החיינו המוסרים בידיך** and our lives that are literally in Your hands. I appreciate that You gave me another morning and that You gave me another night.

By the grace of G-d he survived and he built a family, but his commitment to saying **מודים**, to thanking **הקדוש ברוך הוא**, never dwindled. So much so that even when he had no physical strength, he couldn't say **מודים** sitting, he had to say **מודים** standing and who

knows if that **מסירות נפש**, that dedication, is what gave him a lease on seven more years of his life.

ברוך השם, we didn't have to go through the trials and travails that these holy **יידן** went through, but in our own lives, that when we say **מודים** we say **השם** I'm not taking the fact that I woke up this morning for granted. And we say **מודים** at night, I'm not taking the fact that I made it through another day for granted.

It's a guarantee that **הקדוש ברוך הוא** will continue investing in you if you take the time to be grateful to Him.

מעשה אבות .... סימן לבנים

In the back of the *Meah Shearim Shtieblach*, there is a small *shul* known as the *Yeshuos Yaakov Shul*. Every morning, about 10 or fifteen older men would gather for the daily *gemara shiur*. Among the steady attendees, was an old Russian Jew who had emigrated many years before from his native country. This Jew would take it upon himself to come early each morning to prepare the *gemaros* that would be needed and would remain later than everyone else to put them back in their places. No one could remember a day that this old *yid* missed the *shiur* and his presence was taken for granted by the steady *shiur*-goers.

It happened that a number of days passed and the old Russian Jew was not in attendance. The *maggid shiur* inquired as to his whereabouts but nobody seemed to know where he was or even where he lived. It took quite a bit of investigative perseverance before the rabbi was able to locate his house. He decided to visit the old Jew and was shocked to find that he lived alone in a dilapidated hovel. The old Russian *yid* was quite ill and didn't have much time left on this world.

"We haven't seen you by the *shiur* for a few days now," said the *maggid shiur*, in an attempt to make conversation. "You've

missed a few interesting *sugyos*." The elderly *yid* turned to his guest and began to speak.

"I have a confession to make," he began. "I have been coming to this *shiur* day in and day out, for some twenty years now. In all that time, I have never really understood what the *gemara* was saying or the *sugya* that was being discussed. My mind was never able to comprehend these things." He smiled at the surprised expression on the *maggid shiur's* face.

"So, why did I come? I grew up in the cold, harsh reality of the Czar's Russia. There was no *yiddishkeit* for me. I never went to *Yeshiva*. Quite the contrary, I attended a Russian school where the most important piece of knowledge that everyone was required to know, was the names of the Czar's family: Nicholas, Alexandria, Maria, etc. I knew them all, as did everyone else in Russia. These names are engraved in my brain and I can still recite them all one by one."

The old man sighed. "But this is what worried me. After 120 years, when I go before the Heavenly tribunal, what will I be able to tell them? The names of the Czar's family? That's all I would have. I decided to come to the daily *gemara shiur*: that way, when I stand before *Hashem*, at least I will be able to say over the names of the *Tanaim* and *Amoraim*. Names such as *Rava*, *Abaye*, *Ravina*, *Rav Ashi*. I didn't understand what they were saying, but just knowing their names was enough for me!"

R' Yisroel Meir HaKohen Kagan ZT"L (Chofetz Chaim) would say:

"A poor person should be provided with the same hospitality as one would give his own household. Do not overburden yourself; whatever you provide for your family will be fine for your guests, so one need not hesitate to invite guests."

Never Give Up By Rabbi Shlomo Farhi

Rabbi Shlomo Farhi shared a powerful lesson about perseverance, effort, and the greatness of a person who refuses to stop trying. The lesson began with a story about one of the greatest poskim of the generation, **Harav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv zt"l**.

A close friend and mentor of Rabbi Farhi once had the privilege of davening near Rav Elyashiv. By that time, Rav Elyashiv was already very old. His body was weak. His strength was limited. Even simple movements required effort.

During Chazaras HaShatz, the repetition of the Amidah, the observer noticed that Rav Elyashiv was sitting. In many communities, people stand during Chazaras HaShatz. In other communities, people may sit. But this man noticed that even though Rav Elyashiv remained seated, something unusual was happening. At the end of every brachah, Rav Elyashiv would begin trying to stand up. He would gather his strength. He would push himself upward. He would attempt to rise. And then, after realizing that he did not have enough strength, he would sit back down.

A few moments later, the next brachah would end. Again, Rav Elyashiv tried to stand. Again, he began to lift himself. Again, he found that he could not do it. And again, he sat back down.

This repeated itself again and again. At the end of every brachah. Every single time. The man watching was amazed. He wondered if perhaps there was some halachic source he had never heard of. Maybe one was supposed to stand at the end of each brachah during Chazaras HaShatz. Maybe Rav Elyashiv was following a practice that was known only to great talmidei chachamim.

After davening, he respectfully approached Rav Elyashiv and asked: "Rebbe, I noticed that at the end of every brachah, the rav tried to stand up." "Is there an obligation to stand at that moment?"

Rav Elyashiv answered simply: "No." "There is no such obligation."

The man was confused. "Then why did the rav try to stand after every brachah?"

Rav Elyashiv replied with words that revealed his greatness. "I am an old man. I am very weak. I am unable to stand. Therefore, I am exempt. But when the chazzan finished the brachah, I wanted to check. Maybe now I have strength. So I tried. When I saw that I did not have the strength, I sat back down. Then the next brachah ended. And I thought again, maybe now I have strength. So I tried again. And when I saw that I still could not stand, I sat down again. And then I tried again. And again. And again."

Rav Elyashiv was not obligated to stand. He was not pretending that his body was stronger than it was. He was not ignoring his weakness. But he also did not allow yesterday's limitation to decide today's effort. He did not say: "I already tried." "I already failed." "I already know I can't." Instead, every new brachah became a new opportunity. Maybe now. Maybe this time. Maybe Hashem will give me strength for this moment.

That itself was the lesson. Greatness is not always measured by whether a person succeeds. Sometimes greatness is measured by whether he tries again. And again. And again.

A person may have tried to improve his davening and failed. Try again. A person may have tried to learn Gemara and struggled. Try again. A person may have tried to make shalom and was rejected. Try again. A person may have tried to overcome a middah and stumbled. Try again. A person may have tried to grow, to change, to become better, and felt that nothing happened. Try again.

Because every attempt matters. Every effort counts. Every brachah is a new moment. Every day is a new opportunity.

Rav Elyashiv showed this with his own body. He did not have strength. He was exempt. No one expected him to stand. No one would have questioned him for remaining seated. But still, at the end

of every brachah, he asked himself: "Maybe now?" "Maybe this time?" "Maybe I can do a little more?"

That is greatness. Not because he stood. But because he tried. Because in the eyes of Hashem, the effort itself is precious.

The Clever Wagon Driver

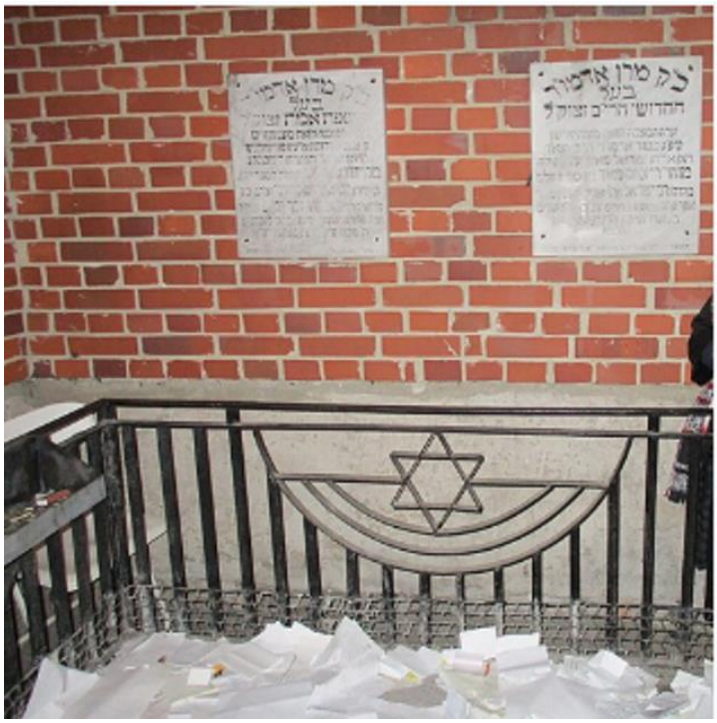
The heilige tzaddik **Rabbi Simcha Bunim of Pashischa**, author of the Kol Simcha, was a disciple of the Yehudi Hakadosh, Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchak. In his later years, he became blind. However, this did not prevent him from seeing what he needed to see. He continued to lead and read kvitelach as usual and answered everything.

In Warsaw, there was a group of young men who mocked the tzaddik, saying that such a thing is impossible and that people were just telling "old wives' tales" about Pashischa!

The heilige Chiddushei HaRim of Ger was a disciple of the heilige Pashischa. He lived in Warsaw at the time and used to travel to him. Since the father of one of these young men was a wagon driver, his friends asked him, "When the Gerer Rebbe travels to Pashischa, ask your father if you can drive the Rebbe instead of him. That way, you will be able to see for yourself if the stories they tell about Pashischa are just myths or the truth!"

And so, it was. When he came to request a trip to Pashischa, the young man acted as the coachman instead of his father. The Rebbe got into the wagon with his disciples, and they traveled to the Rebbe in Pashischa. In Pashischa, the young man asked the Gerer Rebbe if he could go inside with them to greet the Pashischa Rebbe, and the Rebbe agreed.

They stood in line to greet him. The young man, the coachman, had red hair. When he extended his hand to greet him, the Pashischa Rebbe asked the Chiddushei HaRim: "Who is this red-headed young man who came with you?"



The Gerer Rebbe replied that he was their wagon driver who lived in Warsaw! The young man nearly fainted, because he realized that what his friends had been saying was untrue, for the Rebbe could see even though he was blind! The young man regretted his words against the tzaddik and stayed for the entire Shabbos. He soaked himself in holiness and experienced a powerful spiritual awakening from both the prayers and the tish.

Motzei Shabbos, he confessed to the Rebbe what he had previously thought about him. The Rebbe forgave him and offered words of encouragement for him and his friends back in Warsaw.

Meanwhile, the Gerer Rebbe requested to drive around the fields to catch some fresh air before they headed back home. After driving around, the Gerer Rebbe said they could now head back to Warsaw. The young man stopped the wagon, laid down directly under the wheels, and said: "I am not driving any further until the Gerer Rebbe gives me a blessing!"

The chassidim thought he wanted more money and said, "Fine, we will give you a bonus for the trip." But the young man said, "I don't want money, I want a blessing from the Rebbe, and if not, we are staying right here!"

The Gerer Rebbe saw that he was serious and told the young man he would grant him a blessing. The young man approached, and the Rebbe blessed him with long life and that he should never lack money! The young man was overjoyed with such a blessing, sat back at the driver's wheel, and drove them home.

Back in Warsaw, the young man turned his friends around too, and they also repented. In time, the young man married and became a glazier. The blessing of the Rebbe was fulfilled, he became very successful and built a fine home with his wife, who helped him. They married off their children, provided dowries for everyone.

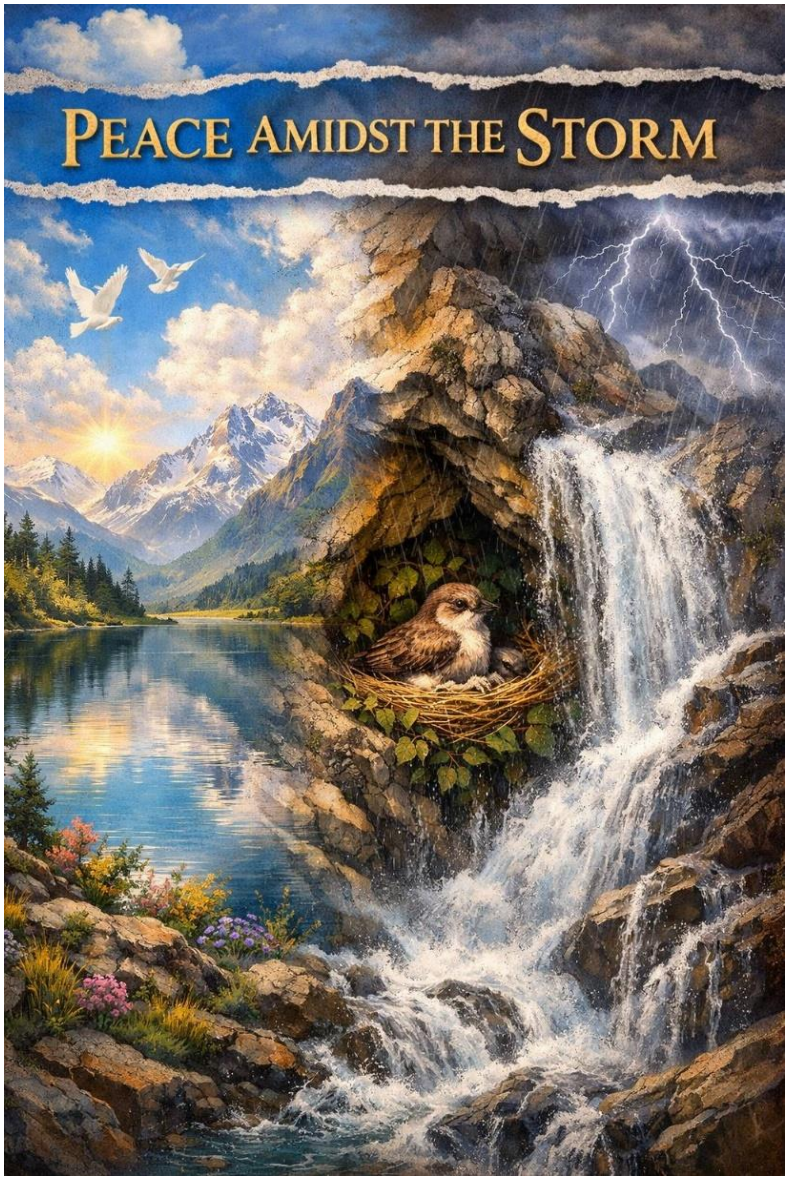
When he grew a bit older, he did not want to abandon his trade as a glazier. He set aside 1000 guilden to buy materials, but was afraid to carry it on himself because he had to go to work among the gentiles. So, he sewed a pouch, fitted it for his wife, and she wore it around her neck.

They were very hospitable people. Once, a guest came and asked to stay with them. This guest found out about the pouch of money the woman wore around her neck and wanted to take it, but he was afraid to steal it. One day, however, the woman did not feel well and fainted. The guest revived her, but first, he took the one thousand guilden from the pouch and fled.

When the woman felt better and her husband came home asking for some money to buy glass, she discovered the money was gone! She realized the guest had stolen it, but what could they do now? Go look for him!

The Yid went to the heilige Rabbi Yaakov of Radzymin, and told him the story. Reb Yankel was confident in the blessing of the Rebbe, assured him that he would never lack money. The Yid traveled back home, and a general was waiting for him, needing glass for his fortress. The general gave him an advance payment.

The man did a wonderful job and earned 800 guilden for his work. Meanwhile, that same guest suddenly fell ill. He sent for the glazier and returned the 1000 guilden to him. The glazier immediately forgave him, and afterward, the guest recovered. The glazier and his wife lived long lives, just as the Rebbe had blessed them.



A king once offered a prize to the artist who would paint the best picture of peace. Many artists tried but the judging came down to two final entries. One picture was of a calm lake, a perfect mirror for peaceful towering mountains all around it. Overhead was a blue sky with fluffy white clouds. All who saw this painting thought it was a perfect picture of peace.

The other submission had mountains, too. But they were rugged and bare. Above was an angry sky, from which rain fell, and in which lightning played. Down the mountain tumbled a foaming waterfall.

It did not look peaceful at all. However, when the king looked closely, he saw, behind the waterfall, a tiny bush growing in a crack in the rock. In the bush, a mother bird had built her nest. There, amidst of the rush of angry water, sat the bird on her nest - in perfect peace.

The king chose the second picture; "Because," he explained, "peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart. That is the true meaning of peace."

Chizuk - Inspiration

Yossele Rosenblatt

It was the winter of 1918. In Chicago, a crowd had packed the auditorium to hear Yossele Rosenblatt — the most celebrated Chazzan (cantor) of his generation, and perhaps of all time. He had come to raise money for Jewish victims of World War I in Europe, but the hall had become more than full; hundreds were left outside, unable to get in. And seated in a box that night was a man who knew greatness when he heard it: Cleofonte Campanini, General Director of the Chicago Opera Association, the impresario who had discovered many opera stars.



When the concert ended, Campanini did not wait. He asked to be introduced to Yossele and came straight to the point. He had heard a voice that belonged on the grandest stage, and he offered Yossele the role of Eleazar in Halévy's "La Juive" — for $1,000 a performance. In today's money, that is roughly $23,600 for a single night.

Yossele was shaken. Before him stood fortune, fame, thunderous applause, and an entirely new world waiting to be conquered. For one brief moment, the offer seemed irresistible. But then another voice rose inside him: "Yossele, don't do it. Do not trade the Amud (prayer lecturn) for the opera stage. Your voice was given to serve Hashem, not to become a spectacle." And with that, he heard again the words

his father had spoken twenty-five years earlier, when a Viennese professor wanted to train the young Yossele for opera: "He was born for the Amud, and at the Amud he will remain!"

Campanini pressed on, removing objection after objection. Yossele could remain a frum Jew. He could keep his beard. He would be cast only in roles suited to his appearance. His fellow singers would be Jewish. Hotels would arrange kosher food. His contract would state clearly that he would never appear on Shabbos or Yom Tov. Then Campanini raised the stakes: a guarantee of at least seventeen performances a year with every expense paid. Whatever Yossele needed, he would have.

Now there was no practical barrier left. The door to another life stood open before him. Yet Yossele could not walk through it. He listened until Campanini finished, and then, with quiet dignity, he answered that while the offer was acceptable, his contract as Chazzan for his community synagogue still had two years remaining. He was not a man who would break his word.

His son later revealed that the contract was only an excuse — a gracious fiction meant to spare Campanini the sting of an outright refusal. In truth, Yossele's congregation would likely have wanted to see its Chazzan recognized by the greatest musical authorities in the world. But Yossele needed no time to decide. From the first instant, he knew he could not accept.

He turned away from a fortune not because anyone had forbidden it, and not because he could point to a rule that required him to refuse. He turned it down because he knew who he was. He knew what his voice had been given for. A voice entrusted with leading Yidden (Jews) in prayer, with lifting hearts toward Hashem, could not be surrendered to the stage for entertainment purposes. Yossele turned down the offer. To remain true to himself, he really had no other choice.

Rabbi Aryeh Kerzner - Your Shoe, Your Size



Rav Zusha of Anipoli once asked his students a question that is of daily relevance.

The Gemara (*Berachos* 60b) tells us that the morning blessing of *She'asah Li Kol Tzarki*, "Who has provided me with all my needs," was instituted as an expression of gratitude for Hashem granting us shoes and is to be recited when we put on our shoes. What is the connection between shoes and the idea that Hashem provides all of our needs?

Rav Zusha explained that shoes embody a lesson about life.

If a person owns a garment—a shirt, a coat, or a robe—and someone else wishes to wear it, the garment can often be altered. A tailor can adjust it, resize it, and make it suitable for another individual. Most clothing can be modified to fit a different person.

Shoes, however, are different. They are designed for a specific size and are not easily transformed from one size into another. They are created to fit a particular foot, and that size remains their defining characteristic. A shoe that fits one person perfectly may be entirely unsuitable for someone else.

That, said Rav Zusha, is the message behind *She'asah Li Kol Tzarki*. Hashem indeed provides each person with everything he needs, but not according to someone else's needs, circumstances or mission. He provides precisely what is necessary for your life, your purpose, your challenges, and your potential.

One person may possess a larger home, whereas another may enjoy greater financial success. A third may have more wealth, influence,

or opportunity. Yet that has nothing to do with what Hashem has determined that you require in order to fulfill your unique task in this world.

The lesson is found in the shoes. - Just as shoes are crafted for a particular size, so too the blessings, opportunities, and even limitations that Hashem gives each person are tailored specifically for him. They are measured according to his mission and designed for his growth.

Happiness and fulfillment become possible only when we internalize this perspective. When we understand that whatever הקב"ה has granted us is exactly what we need to become the person we are meant to be, comparison loses its grip and gratitude takes its place. And if, at a given moment, we do not even have enough money to buy a pair of shoes, that too is included within *kol tzarki*. For just as a shoe fits the foot for which it was made, every circumstance in life has been fashioned by Hashem with perfect precision.

It is this mindset which enables a person to walk through life with serenity, confident that whatever Hashem has given us fits us perfectly.



The Torah says that Pinchos was rewarded with "בריתי שלום". True peace is not merely the absence of conflict. Peace exists when everything is aligned with the רצון ה׳. Sometimes preserving peace requires compromise, and sometimes it requires standing firmly for the truth. Pinchos acted solely לשם שמים, without any personal agenda, and therefore his seemingly forceful act ultimately brought the deepest peace to כלל ישראל. Genuine שלום is achieved only when truth and the will of ה׳ are upheld. ~ Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler



The Chumash in the Dumpster



Rabbi Avigdor Miller *zt"l* once recounted how his journey into Torah learning began. As a young boy, he was walking down the street when he came across a Chumash. It was not in a *beis midrash*, though, nor was it on a bookshelf. It was not even lying on the sidewalk. He found it discarded in a garbage dump.

Curious, he picked it up and noticed the Hebrew letters. He opened it and saw a simple inscription inside: "Fred."

He brought the Chumash to his mother and asked, "Ma, what is this?" She looked at it and replied, "This is the Torah."

At that moment, she encouraged him to acquire a Hebrew-English dictionary. She purchased one for him, and from there an extraordinary journey began. With that Chumash and that dictionary, he slowly unlocked the world of Torah. One step led to another, one discovery led to the next, until that young boy grew into Rabbi Avigdor Miller, one of the great *talmidei chachamim*, thinkers, educators, and *ba'alei hashkafah* of our recent generation.

Consider what emerged from that seemingly insignificant moment. His breadth of Torah knowledge, the clarity of his thought, the depth of his wisdom, his refined character, and the countless lives he influenced, all can be traced back to a single encounter with a discarded Chumash and a mother's encouragement.

Of course, it was not the dictionary that made Rabbi Miller great, nor was it merely the Chumash itself. Ultimately, it was the Ribbono

Shel Olam who guided his path. Yet the catalyst was found in no place other than a dumpster. And from there, it traveled to the home. And there, a mother recognized a spark of curiosity and nurtured it. She pointed her son toward Torah, and from that small act emerged greatness.

That is often how greatness begins. With a timely opportunity, a word of encouragement, a book placed into a child's hands, and a home that values Torah. And sometimes too, with the help of a dumpster. All planned by Hashem.

From such moments, worlds are built.



The Masks of Kindness Story by Rabbi Joey Haber

Rabbi Joey Haber shared a moving story that took place at Torah Academy for Girls (TAG) in Far Rockaway. Just two weeks before graduation, one of the senior girls received devastating news. She had been diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma, a serious form of cancer.

The doctors told her she would need to begin chemotherapy immediately. They also warned her that because her immune system would be severely weakened, she could not be around large crowds.

The young woman was heartbroken. "My graduation is in two weeks," she told the doctor. "I've been waiting for this day for years."

The doctor understood how important the occasion was to her and said, "There is one way you can attend. You must wear a protective mask."

For an eighteen-year-old girl, that felt overwhelming. Graduation is a day of celebration, pictures, memories, and joy. She didn't want to be the only one standing out. But she had no choice.

The day of graduation arrived. She walked into the auditorium wearing her mask, wondering how everyone would react.



There were 101 graduates in her class. Every single one of them was wearing a mask. Not because they had to. Not because anyone required it. Not because of a school policy. They had quietly decided among themselves: "If our friend has to wear a mask, then we're all wearing masks." No one wanted her to feel different. No one wanted her to feel alone.

Together, all 101 girls celebrated their graduation wearing masks. There is even a photograph of that graduation—a sea of graduates, every one of them wearing the same mask, all so that one young woman would never feel singled out.

The Jewish people are constantly engaged in an inner battle. Sometimes our ego wins. Sometimes temptation wins. We all struggle. But so often, we win. So often, we choose kindness over comfort. We choose sensitivity over convenience. We choose another person's feelings over our own preferences.

When we look at other people, we should never rush to judge them—whether positively or negatively. Every person is fighting battles that we cannot see. Instead, we should strive to understand them. To relate to them. To remember that every person we meet is engaged in the same lifelong struggle between body and soul.

As long as a person is alive, that battle continues. And that is not a reason to label someone as perfect or flawed. It is a reason to recognize what we have always been: a nation of human beings striving every day to become better.

Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages

The Chazon Ish writes that one can Daven to Hashem in any language he is comfortable with, and he should Daven to Hashem "as one speaks to his friend." One can talk to Hashem in any language, and without any formal preparations. Whatever one is doing, the time can be used to have a conversation with Hashem.

Rebbetzin Shoshana Aliza Zilberstein, the daughter of **Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, zt"l, and the wife of Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein**, was once at home when a neighbor came to ask her a question. The neighbor was about to knock on the door when she heard the Rebbetzin speaking to someone. - Not wanting to disturb, the neighbor left. Fifteen minutes later the neighbor returned, and again she heard the Rebbetzin talking to someone. The neighbor waited a few more minutes until the conversation stopped. - Finally, she knocked.

Rebbetzin Zilberstein opened the door, and the neighbor was surprised to see that the Rebbetzin was alone.

The friend said, "I thought I heard you talking to someone, but perhaps you were having a conversation on the phone."

The Rebbetzin explained that she wasn't on the phone, but she had just finished Davening.

It turned out that when the Rebbetzin Davened, she spoke to Hashem with ease, simplicity, and directness, as one would speak when talking with a friend!



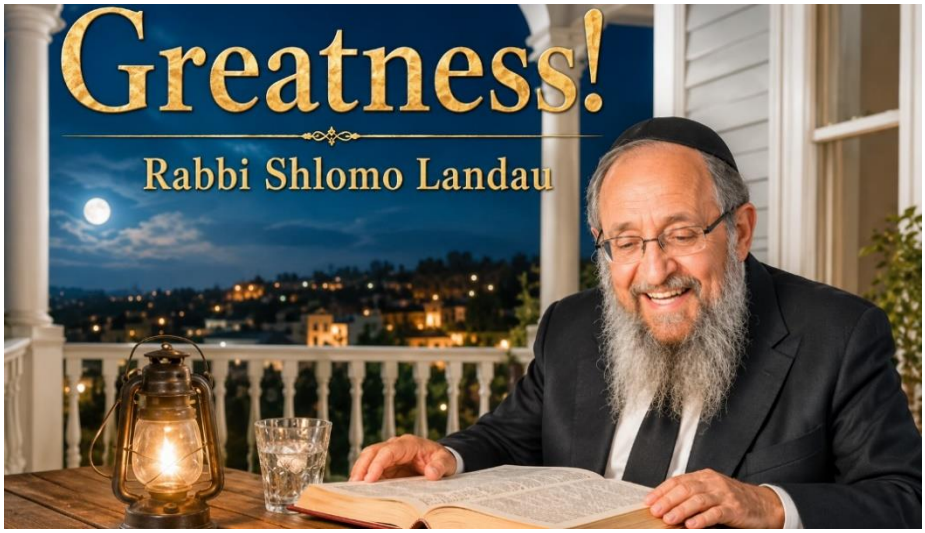
Harav Moshe Burstein זצ"ל learnt in Novardok Yeshiva where he was considered an illui. It was there that he discovered Breslov and became a Breslover Chassid. He later moved to **ארץ ישראל** and became one of the leaders of Breslov Chassidim. (For Breslov Chassidim it is considered one of the greatest advancements in their chassidus to daven at the **קבר** of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, who is buried in Uman, Russia.)

Once, someone asked Reb Moshe, as you live your life with **מסירת נפש**, why don't you take the risk to travel to the **קבר** of your Rebbi in Uman [this was during the time that communists ruled in Russia]?

Reb Moshe replied, "If I travel illegally to Uman, I might be caught and taken to prison, where I might have to miss a day of putting on **תפילין**. And believe me, the whole 'aliyah' of Uman isn't worth missing one opportunity of putting on **תפילין**.



Progress isn't about keeping up with others – your pace doesn't have to match anyone else's. Compare yourself only to who you were yesterday, not to who someone else is today. Trust your journey, stay in your lane, and run your own race. ~ Inspired by the teachings of Reb Zusha of Anipoli (1718-1800).



A bunch of years ago, it was a sweltering hot night in Philadelphia. During the day, the temperatures had reached close to 100 degrees, and even when the sun set, the temperature barely dropped, it was still in the 90s.

The issue was that the air conditioning in the Philadelphia *Yeshiva* dormitory was broken, and inside the brick building, it was like a furnace. The *bachurim* couldn't sleep. Some of them stayed in the *Beis Medrash*. One particular *bachur* tried to sleep, he tossed, he turned, he was sweating.

At one point, he gave up and he decided to take a walk to clear his mind. As he passes the ***Rosh Yeshiva Rav Shmuel Kamenetsky***, he should be *gezunt*'s home, he sees something mind-boggling. *Rav Shmuel Kamenetsky* is sitting in front of his house and he's learning. He cannot understand what's happening.

Why would the *Rosh Yeshiva* be outside where it's so hot, when he could be inside where there's air conditioning?

So he builds up the courage and he goes over to the *Rosh Yeshiva*, says, "*Rosh Yeshiva*, why are you outside? Why aren't you inside where it's cool?"

The *Rosh Yeshiva* smiled and the *Rosh Yeshiva* said, "My *bachurim* are sweltering, they're hot, they're suffering, and I should be inside enjoying the cool air-conditioned home? I can't do that." And he continued learning.

If this isn't greatness, then I don't know what greatness is.

Torah Wellsprings ~ R' Elimelech Biderman

It states in Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 219:1) **אַרְבָּעָה צְרִיכִים לְהוֹדוֹת, יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם... וְהוֹלְכֵי מִדְבָּרוֹת... וּמִי שֶׁהָיָה חוֹלֶה וְנִתְרַפֵּא... וּמִי שֶׁהָיָה חָבוּשׁ בְּבֵית הָאֲסוּרִים, וְיָצָא**. "Four [categories of people] must praise Hashem: those who travelled by sea, those who traversed a desert, those who were ill and became well, and those freed from jail." **אַרְבָּעָה צְרִיכִים לְהוֹדוֹת**, "Four must praise Hashem" is an unusual expression. The word **צְרִיכִים**, 'must', isn't common in Shulchan Aruch and in halachah. A more common expression would be **אַרְבָּעָה חַיָּבִין לְהוֹדוֹת**, "Four are obligated to praise Hashem."

Shev Yaakov answers that Shulchan Aruch is telling us that praising Hashem for the salvations is so important, we must do so, even if it wouldn't be an obligation. This is because Chazal tell us that when a miracle happens to a person, he loses some of his merits. His mitzvos become like currency, spent in exchange for the miracle that occurred. However, when he praises Hashem for the miracles that happened to him, he doesn't have to pay for the miracle with his mitzvos.

Therefore, if a miracle happens to a person, **צְרִיכִים לְהוֹדוֹת**, **he must praise Hashem**. He must do so, even if it weren't an obligation. It is for his own good so that he won't lose his mitzvos.

The Greatest Song

The angels praise Hashem. The souls of the tzaddikim praise Hashem. Yet the highest praise comes from the Jew who finds Hashem and sings to Him while living in this world. ~ Based on the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh, whose yahrtzeit the 15th of Tammuz.

The Conversation That Changed His Life by Rabbi Yitzchok Posen



Rabbi Reuven Elbaz

Rabbi Yitzchok Posen shared a remarkable story that happened to him about thirty years ago while he was living in the Old City of Yerushalayim.

One Shabbos morning, after davening at the Kosel, someone approached him with an unusual request. "There is a soldier working in a restaurant nearby," the man said. "He just finished his army service, and on Sunday night he's planning to fly to Thailand, just like many of his friends do after the army. Please speak to him. You have the ability to connect with people. Maybe you'll be able to influence him."

Rabbi Posen agreed. He went into the restaurant and introduced himself to the young soldier. "I don't know who you are," he said, "and you don't know who I am. But I heard that you're planning to leave for Thailand." He then spent the next four hours speaking with him.

Rabbi Posen did not lecture him or criticize him. Instead, he spoke from the heart. "You may think you're simply going on vacation," he said. "You'll travel from place to place, enjoy yourself, meet people, and do whatever you want. No one will tell you when to wake up, when to go to sleep, or how to live your life. "But never forget one thing. "You are a Jew. Every Jew carries a tzelem Elokim. No matter where you go, you remain a child of Hashem."

Rabbi Posen told him that he understood exactly what he had been through. "I know what it was like before the army. I know what the army can do to a person. I understand why you want freedom. Chazal teach that an eved naturally desires hefker—a life where no one tells him what to do. I understand why Thailand is attractive."

Then, just before leaving, Rabbi Posen said something the young soldier would never forget. "If you decide to stay there... if you build a life there... if you marry someone who isn't Jewish... if years pass and you become older... Never forget that there is one person in the world who understands you. That person is Yitzchok. I understand you. I feel your struggle."

Rabbi Posen embraced him warmly, wished him a heartfelt Shabbat Shalom, and went home. As far as he knew, that was the end of the story.

Two or three years later, Rabbi Posen was volunteering at Hadassah Hospital on Har HaTzofim, helping care for patients and their families over Shabbos. Together with his wife, they provided meals, bedding, towels, zemiros, divrei Torah, and anything needed to help people feel at home.

One Friday night, after delivering a dvar Torah to a crowded dining room, a young man wearing a hat and jacket quietly waited until everyone had left. Then he approached Rabbi Posen with tears streaming down his face. "You don't know who I am," he said, "but I know exactly who you are."

Rabbi Posen looked at him, puzzled. "I am the soldier you spoke to in that restaurant before I left for Thailand."

He continued: "You filled me with so much warmth, so much emunah, and so much love. I went to Thailand. I traveled everywhere. I did everything people go there to do. I went here and there. I stayed up through the nights. I partied. I tried to enjoy myself. But every single day, one sentence kept echoing in my mind: 'Yitzchok

understands me.' I couldn't stop thinking about it. I asked myself, 'What am I doing here? I don't belong here. At the end of the day, I'm still a Jew.'

Eventually, he could no longer ignore those feelings. He searched until he found the shul of Rabbi Elbaz in Thailand. There, people helped guide him back to Torah and mitzvos.

Soon afterward, he left Thailand completely and returned to Eretz Yisrael. He began learning in Yeshivas Or Hachaim under Rabbi Elbaz. In time, he married and built a Torah home.

Rabbi Posen asked him, "So why are you here tonight?"

The young man smiled. "My wife just gave birth to our first son."

He looked at Rabbi Posen and said: "You may not remember me. But I will never forget you."

Rabbi Posen concluded with a powerful lesson. A person never knows the impact of one act of kindness. One conversation. One smile. One warm embrace. One encouraging word. A person may smile at someone in the bank, greet someone warmly on the street, or show genuine understanding to another Jew—and never know how that small act changes the course of an entire life.

Sometimes, the greatest gift we can give another person is simply letting them know: "I understand you."

"When a person is faithful to his every utterance and righteously lives up to his word, he merits that Hashem will 'do all that he expressed verbally.' Thus, every person has the ability to fulfill the words of Chazal: 'The tzaddik decrees, and the Holy One fulfills it.'" ~ R' Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev ZT"L.

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Authentic Hashkofa from Gedolei Yisroel

Maran Posek Hador Rav Moshe Sternbuch on Parshas Pinchos and Rav Amrom Blau

"Pinchas the son of Elazar the son of Aharon the Kohein has turned My anger away from the B'nei Yisroel by his zealously avenging Me among them, so that I did not destroy the B'nei Yisroel because of My zeal" (25:11)

This *pasuk* implies that were it not for Pinchas's act, the nation would have been destroyed. This teaches us the immense power of one individual's *mesirus nefesh* and that even a small act has the power to assuage Hashem's anger against the entire nation. Moreover, even a simple individual possesses this ability, because Pinchas was considered an ordinary Jew who did not hold any position: he arose from amongst the ordinary ranks of the nation.

Hashem intended to destroy the entire nation, because they did not oppose the *aveirah* with sufficient *mesirus nefesh*, even though they did not commit the *aveirah* themselves. Since all Jews are responsible for each other, if some members of the nation do not protest the sinful activities of other members, the former are considered to have sinned themselves. Hence, without Pinchas's *kano'us*, the whole nation would have been punishable by death.

The Seforno notes that the Torah emphasizes "*among them*" to teach us that Pinchas zealously avenged Hashem in public, and not in private, so that the public would be silent and not protest his actions. They would thereby receive atonement for having been silent and not having protested Zimri's actions in the first place.

There are two types of people who do not participate in struggles against the wicked. Some are inactive in principle, in the belief that it is better to let the wicked do what they want and not interfere in

their lives. Others are inactive because they believe themselves to be incapable of protesting.

The litmus test for determining which of these two groups a person belongs to lies in seeing his reaction to zealots who do protest the actions of the wicked. If he protests and shouts at them to stop their actions, he has proved that he believes it to be wrong in principle to protest the actions of the wicked, and not that he is incapable of protesting, because otherwise he would not be protesting the actions of these zealots either. If, on the other hand, he remains silent upon witnessing the zealots' actions that means that he is happy that they are acting this way, and the only reason he is not participating in their actions is because he believes that he is not up to it.

That is the depth behind the Seforno's explanation. When the nation remained silent at Pinchas's act of zealotry they demonstrated that the reason they had not protested Zimri's actions was not because they thought it to be wrong in principle to protest the actions of the wicked, but only because they believed themselves to be incapable of protesting at all. Through their consistent behavior they obtained atonement for their initial inaction.

Rav Amram Blau was a famous *kano'i* who sat in prison on numerous occasions for his protests against *chillul Shabbos*. Rav Sternbuch recalls seeing him several times protesting ticket sales on Shabbos. Even when he was beaten mercilessly this did not deter him from his protests.

Once Rav Amram complained to the **Brisker Rav** that only a small group of people participated in his demonstrations, and that if more would participate more could be achieved. The Brisker Rav replied: "Just be glad that people aren't protesting against you and your protest actions" and he showed him this Seforno that the very

fact that others do not protest the actions of zealots who are protesting provides atonement for those who do not protest.

Nowadays small groups dedicate themselves to protests for the sake of Heaven, and some people not only do not participate in these actions, but are upset about them and try to prevent them. If they would only realize the importance of such protests that would atone for their failure to participate in them themselves.

קנאות



An act of **קנאות** was done by Pinchos. One of the great rabbanim once famously said that the difference between real **קנאות** for Hashem and just hot headedness can be compared to a cat and a housewife.

If there is a mouse in the house, they both want to catch it. However, the difference is that the housewife wishes she wouldn't have the mouse in the first place, whereas the cat wants the mouse to come so he could catch it.

So too, the **קנאי** who is a **קנאי** for Hashem's sake and honor wishes he would never have what to be a **קנאי** about. However, the **קנאי** who is not **לשם שמים** (just hot headed), loves the action and waits for the moment that he can burn another garbage can.

R' Gedaliah Meir ZT"L would say: "Don't be so humble - you are not that great!"

Parsha Burst: Pinchas - Moshe Rabbeinu's Test Case – Rabbi Jeremy Golker

Let me share with you an amazing idea on **פרשת פנחס**.

משה רבנו is told the devastating news that he is not going to go into **ארץ ישראל**. It's a crushing blow. The **פסוק** says **ויאמר ה׳ אל משה עלה אל הר העברים הזה וראה את הארץ אשר נתתי לבני ישראל** - Go up the mountain and see the land, but you can only see it because you're not going to go into **ארץ ישראל**.

משה רבנו must have been devastated. Yet his response, his initial response is **וידבר משה אל ה׳ לאמר יפקד ה׳ אלהי הרוחת לכל בשר איש על העדה**. Who's going to look after **כלל ישראל**? Who's going to be my successor? Says **רש״י להודיע שבחן של צדיקים שכשנפטרים מן העולם מניחים צרכן ועוסקים בצרכי צבור** - To teach you the praise of **צדיקים**, when they take leave of this world, they put aside their own considerations and they focus on the **צבור**.

משה רבנו, he's devastated with his personal grief that he's not going to go into **ארץ ישראל**, something he desperately longed for. And yet he puts that aside and he focuses on **כלל ישראל**. What's going to be with **כלל ישראל**? Please **הקדוש ברוך הוא** appoint somebody to lead them. They need a successor.

Fine. The next **רש״י**, says an astonishing thing.

כיון ששמע משה שאמר לו המקום תן נחלת צלפחד לבנותיו, as soon as **משה רבנו** heard previously the episode of the daughters of **צלפחד** wanting a portion in the land and they succeeded, **משה רבנו** thinks maybe my time has come, **הגיע שעה שאטבע צרכי שיירשו בני את גדולתי**, that my sons will inherit my leadership.

אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא לא כך עלתה מחשבה לפני משה רבנו כדאי הוא יהושע ליטול שכר שמושו שלא מש מתוך האהל. That's not the plan,

That **יהושע** is going to be the next leader. That is his reward for being a very loyal **תלמיד** to you, **משה רבנו, לא ימיש מתוך האהל**. It

seems to be a blatant contradiction in **רש"י**. The first **רש"י** seems to say what an amazing response of **משה רבנו, להודיע שבחן של צדיקים**, they put aside their own concerns and focus on the **כלל ישראל**.

And then in the next **פסוק** Rashi seems to be telling us that **משה רבנו** is acting in a way which smacks of nepotism, that he's focusing on his own sons and maybe they can get a position. It just seems a very strange contrast of conduct of **משה רבנו**.

How do we address this?

The **רבנו הלל** on the **ספרי** addresses it in the following way and says you've got to always focus on the initial response, the instinctive response. Since the instinctive response of **משה רבנו** is what's going to be with **כלל ישראל**, that tells you who the person really is.

That's very indicative. Then later he says what about my sons inheriting my position?

Okay, that's one answer. But I once heard the most amazing answer. There's something in the legal world called a test case, that you bring a case, but you want to set a certain precedent, a legal precedent.

That is exactly what **משה רבנו** is doing over here. He knew the answer was no. He knew that his sons were not worthy of being successors and that **יהושע** was the correct successor. But he wanted to put it on record, to establish a precedent that any leadership of the Jewish people has to come because you deserve it out of your own merit and not just because your father was in that position.

And therefore, if you think about it, there were two demonstrations of **משה רבנו**'s unbelievable selflessness. The first was as soon as he's told that he's not going to enter **ארץ ישראל מניחים צרכן ועוסקים בצרכי צבור**, he puts aside his own consideration and indeed focuses on **כלל ישראל**. And then he does it again by saying I want to put on record to bring this test case to set establish a precedent that for

all time that leaders of **כלל ישראל** have to earn it through their own merit and not just because their father was in that position.

So it's another example of **משה רבנו**'s care for **כלל ישראל** and that answers our question.



Torah Wellsprings ~ R' Elimelech Biderman

Trust In Hashem

The Divrei Shmuel related a story from the time when the **Or HaChaim HaKadosh** lived in Morocco, in the city of Fez. The Or HaChaim gathered together all the merchants and all the laborers and presented them with an idea, together with the *talmidim of Rav Meir*.

What was special about these talmidim? They lived with a little involvement in business and a great involvement in Torah.

The Or HaChaim offered everyone a proposal: They should work only three days a week, and the other three days—Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday—should be devoted entirely to Torah. He promised them that they would not lose a single thing compared to what they earned before. Their income would remain exactly the same.

They accepted the proposal. And once they accepted it, everyone who had business dealings with them understood that Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday were off-limits—no business discussions on those days.

And indeed, they saw that they lacked nothing. In just three days of work, they earned exactly the same as before.

The *Divrei Shmuel* said that this system worked perfectly the entire time the Or HaChaim lived in Morocco. But when he eventually left Morocco and traveled to Eretz Yisrael, people slowly forgot the

commitment and the practice. Their income began to weaken. They started thinking, "Maybe if we work a few more days… we can earn a few more dollars, a few more coins."

So they went back to working the entire week. But they saw that they didn't earn even one dollar more. Nothing increased.

The *Divrei Shmuel* concluded: Emunah is the highest thing. What is destined for each person will come to him. Of course, one must make hishtadlus, but the Or HaChaim taught that the hishtadlus can be done with serenity. Can be calm, peaceful, and without anxiety.



The Door Is Always Open - Stories that Inspire Greatness by Rabbi Binyomin Pruzansky

Every morning, the very first words a person utters are "**מודה אני לפניך**." We start our day by thanking Hashem for returning our souls and giving us life. But the word "**מודה**" has a double meaning: It means "I thank," but it also means "I admit." By saying these words, we are admitting our indebtedness to Hashem for the gift of another day. When you recognize that Hashem is the One giving you life each morning, you realize that He truly loves you, and that love is an incredible source of strength that empowers you to keep going, no matter how difficult life becomes. Even if we fall, we can get back up because Hashem is rooting for us. He is calling out to each of us: "Come back to Me, no matter how far you've wandered."

R' Meilech Biderman shared an incredible story about a man named Yaakov. While traveling through Poland to visit kivrei tzaddikim,

Yaakov arrived at the grave of the **Bnei Yissaschar** and witnessed a scene that shook him to his core.

He saw a young man standing there holding a Tehillim, davening with such sweetness and intense love that Yaakov couldn't look away. As he got closer, he recognized him. It was Baruch, a young man from his own neighborhood back home. Yaakov remembered that Baruch had struggled as a teenager and had eventually left his parents' home, walking away from the path of Torah and mitzvos.

For ten long years, his parents hadn't seen or heard from him. They had prayed and hoped for his return every single day, but nothing had happened. Now, here was Baruch, dressed like a yeshivah bachur once again, pouring his heart out to Hashem.

Yaakov approached him and, in the course of their conversation, asked with wonder, "I see you davening so beautifully — it's clear you aren't the same person I knew years ago. I have to ask: What was the catalyst? What brought you back?"

Baruch looked at him and shared the story that changed his life:

"For 10 years, I was as far away from a life of Torah as a person could be. I wanted nothing to do with my past. But one day, I ran into someone who knew my family. He told me something I never knew. He said, 'Baruch, do you know that for the last 10 years, your father and mother have never locked their front door at night?'

"I asked him why, and he told me, 'Because they are waiting for you. Even when they go to sleep, they leave the door open, hoping that tonight might be the night you finally walk back into their lives. They are terrified that if you finally decide to come home and find the door locked, you'll turn around and never come back.'

"When I heard that my parents still believed in me after all those years — that they were literally leaving the door open for me every single night — my heart opened up. I said to myself, 'That's it. I'm going home.'

"I traveled back to my house and reached the front door late at night. Just as I had been told, it was unlocked. I knocked and walked inside, and my parents came running into the hallway, crying out, 'Baruch is home! Baruch is home!' They embraced me with a love that washed away all those years of pain.

"In that moment, I realized that the love of my parents — and the love of Hashem — is stronger than any mistake a person can make.

There are so many young men and women today who feel far removed from a life of Torah, carrying around hurtful experiences or heavy feelings. If they could only realize that our Father in Heaven is always waiting for them, and that His door is never locked, they would find their way back, too.

Hashem's door is never locked. Every morning is a new invitation to come home to Him and start fresh, regardless of the past. Living with the knowledge of His unconditional love is the ultimate source of inner peace and joy.

R' Moshe Sofer ZT"L (Chasam Sofer) would say: "The power of tefillah is so great, that if a person were to daven one single prayer with perfect concentration and the purest intent, that single prayer has the power to gather together all the other tefillos that one may have cast away and davened without proper thought throughout the year, and bring them all up to be accepted in front of the Heavenly throne!"

"Imagine you could open your eyes to see only the good in every person the positive in every circumstance, and the opportunity in every challenge" ~ Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson.

Fighting with Shabbos





Reb Shlomke of Zvhil and the Chazon Ish

Here is a story related by Rav Menachem Weissfish, one of the leading *rabbanim* who compiled the *sefer Ishei Yisrael*. He shared this account about Reb Shlomke of Zvhil on the day of the Rebbe's *yahrtzeit*, having heard it directly from the the person to whom it happened.

The story illustrates the immense importance of appreciating *Shabbos* and fulfilling the *halacha* — or at least the *ruach* of the *halacha* — of being *me'acharim* the *Shabbos* (lingering and keeping it past the designated *zman*).

At the time, there was a child in *Yerushalayim* who was dangerously ill. His family went to doctors and ran numerous tests, but nothing helped and no one could diagnose the issue. The child simply grew weaker and sicker.

Desperate for help, the father, a man named Eisenbach, traveled from his home in *Yerushalayim* to speak with the *Chazon Ish* in *Bnei Brak* on behalf of his son. However, the *Chazon Ish* told him, "You are coming all the way to me when Reb Shlomke of Zvhil is right there in *Yerushalayim*? Go back and speak to him."

Eisenbach pressed him, saying, "I traveled all this distance to hear from the Rav, and the Rav won't tell me anything?!"

But the *Chazon Ish* refused to give him a different answer.

With no other choice, Eisenbach traveled back and went to see Reb Shlomke. Reb Shlomke listened to the heartbreaking story, closed his eyes, and thought for a moment. Eventually, Reb Shlomke looked up and said to him in Yiddish, "*Du shepst zich an mit'n Shabbos*" (You are starting up with *Shabbos*). He explained that Eisenbach was *miskatet* (clashing) with the holy day.

Hearing this unexpected, out-of-context observation, Eisenbach realized what it meant. He admitted that every *Motzei Shabbos*, he purposely rushed to daven in the very first *minyan* so he could quickly smoke a cigarette before *Havdalah*.

Reb Shlomke instructed him to stop doing this immediately. He told him to pray in a later *minyan*, show patience as Shabbos departed, and make *Havdalah* before smoking. Eisenbach accepted the advice, and his child completely recovered.

A Drashah During The Three Weeks That Made A Lasting Impression



Rav Moshe Katz the Av Beis Din of Nitra related how on the year that **Rav Yoel Teitelbaum** (the Satmar Rebbe) was appointed the Rav of Újhel during the month of Tammuz he delivered his first *drasha* - opening sermon during which he told his new congregants the following with fiery enthusiasm:

My brothers do not believe the rumors that I am only strict and that I never rule leniently, in fact I do not only have stringencies and *chumros* regarding our holy laws of the Torah, in fact this year I am also *meikel* to rule

leniently and I will now permit for you three things that our sages, Chazal expressly forbade.

These are the three *kulos* and leniencies:

From Rosh Chodesh Av through Tisha B'Av Chazal forbade three things: they forbade the consumption of meat, they forbade the wearing of new clothes and they forbade us to get haircuts. I am now permitting these under the following circumstances:

For those of my brethren who cannot afford or are unable to purchase *Cholov Yisroel* products I hereby permit you to eat kosher meat instead, for it is certainly preferable to eat kosher meat even during the three weeks as opposed to *Cholov akum* and butter or cheese made by gentiles that are completely forbidden *issur gamur*!

Second, regarding the wearing of new clothes that our sages forbade, I hereby permit all the women who own immodest clothes and short skirts to go shopping and purchase a new wardrobe of long skirts and modest clothes. It is better that they wear these new clothes during the three weeks as opposed to transgressing against the Torah by wearing forbidden immodest, short or tight fitting clothes!

Finally, my third *kulah* and leniency to permit shaving and haircuts, I hereby permit all those women who leave their hair uncovered to get proper haircuts and shave, even during the three weeks, so that they can cover their hair properly according to *Das Moshe veYisroel*!

Needless to say his powerful words made a lasting impression.

An Honest Soldier once said:

"What is courage? - Courage is fear that has said its prayers."

Rav Betzalel Rakow Gateshead Rov, Birchas Yom Tov *(Yahrzeit Tammuz 20, 5763 / 2003 - 23rd)*



Rav Betzalel Rakow was born in 5687/1927 in Frankfurt. His father was Rav Yom Tov Lipman, who descended from the *Tosfos Yom Tov*.

Even as a child he was graced with noble character and outstanding *middos*. His father, Rav Yom Tov Lipman, studied in Volozhin under Rav Isser Zalman of Slutsk.

His father, Rav Yom Tov, was *Rosh Yeshiva* in Frankfurt. After Kristallnacht he managed to flee Germany with his family via Antwerp to England. Arriving in London threadbare and penniless, Rav Yom Tov went to the *Bais Medrash* before he had even arranged a place to sleep.

Years later, Rav Betzalel would recall that during the war he was too frightened to be able to fall asleep at night, but as he tossed and turned in bed he would review his learning from that day.

In London, he attended the *Yeshiva Toras Emes* of Rav Moshe Schneider, along with Rav Moshe Sternbuch and Rav Tuvia Weiss. He totally immersed himself in Torah study and accumulated a wealth of knowledge. By the age of eighteen, he knew *Sidrei Noshim* and *Nezikin* by heart.

He became close to Rav Elya Lopian and Rav Yechezkel Abramski.

At that point he went on to the Gateshead *Kollel* where he learned under Rav Eliyohu Dessler, becoming his *talmid muvhok*.

Rav Betzalel married the daughter of the Rav of Gateshead, Rav Naftali Shakovitzky. After his marriage he continued his studies, focusing mainly on *Seder Kodshim*. Later, Rav Betzalel was asked to serve as Rosh Yeshiva of Etz Chaim in Montreux, Switzerland, where he had a great influence on the *talmidim*. He developed a close relationship with Rav Yechiel Weinberg and the Brisker Rov.

With the *petira* of his father-in-law, Rav Rakow was asked to take over as Rav of Gateshead, a post he held for the next four decades. As head of one of the Diaspora's most famous and illustrious Torah *Kehillos,* his influence spread through Europe and halachic questions reached him from around the world.

Rav Betzalel was the Gateshead community's central figure and his authority extended to every aspect of life in both *ruchniyus* and in *gashmiyus*. His door was always open, and many approached with their *she'eilos* and for advice.

Rav Betzalel agreed to be head of the European Agudas Yisrael in order to increase *achdus* among England's *chareidi* communities. Every year he would appear at the Agudah convention in Bournemouth, delivering *shiurei* Torah and *mussar* talks to the delegates, and transmitting his great *Ahavas Hashem* and *Ahavas Yisrael*.

He is the brother of Rav Bentzion Rakow, Rosh Yeshivas Chayei Olom.

Rav Betzalel was *niftar* on the 20th of *Tammuz* 5763/2003. He was seventy-six. After huge *levayos* in both Gateshead and London, his *mitta* was flown to Eretz Yisrael, where he was buried on Har HaMenuchos, near Rav Chaim Kreiswirth, *zt"l*, the late Rav of Antwerp.

Rav Betzalel is the *mechaber* of *Birkas Yom Tov*. *Zecher tzaddik livrachah.*

הואהית אמר

R' Schneur Zalman of Liadi ZT"L (Baal Hatanya) would say: "What you are needed for should be of greater concern to you than what you yourself need."

R' Zvi Elimelech of Dinov ZT"L would say: "The style and writing of a Sefer Torah is very beautiful. But the contents are absolutely phenomenal!"

R' Yisroel Meir Hakohen Kagan ZT"L (Chofetz Chaim) would say: "Some things expire after a passage of time and require renewal. So it is with Emunah - faith. Unless it is frequently renewed, it may deteriorate without our being aware of it."

R' Yonah of Amsterdam ZT"L would say:

"In theory, there is no difference between theory and practice. But, in practice, there is!"

R' Yisroel Salanter ZT"L would say:

"When a Jew recites Shema with the purpose pf proclaiming the reign of Hashem over the four corners of the Earth, he must not forget to allow Hashem to also reign over his own person!"

R' Nachman of Breslov ZT"L would say:

"Tears open up the gates of Heaven; song breaks down its walls!"



R' Ari Neuwirth - Greatest Investment In Life

I heard this story from ***Rav Gamliel Rabinowitz***, from *Yerushalayim*. There was a *Yerushalmi* who learned in *Kollel* his whole life, had eleven children, happy life, blissful life. But now the real demand came. He needed to make a *chasana* for his first child and he had no funds.

Therefore he needed to go to America to collect the necessary money. He came to a certain city, and he went from *shul* to *shul*, house to house and he got the ordinary dollars here, five dollars there, but nothing sufficient to be able to pay for his *chasana*. It was already a couple of days being away from home. He was wondering how many more days do I need to spend here to be able to raise the necessary funds for the *chasana*.

He felt defeated, he felt deflated. He said there's only one hope, just open up a *Tehillim* and cry to the *Ribono Shel Olam* and *Hashem* will give me what I need. He went to the back of the *shul*, he opened up that *siddur* and he cried his heart out.

There was someone there who noticed him. He approached him and he says what's the matter? Why are you crying like that?

And the *Yerushalmi* told him his story. The guy told him listen, a few blocks away from here is a very, very wealthy businessman. But there's a caveat, he's unpredictable. He could give you the money you need and he could give you zero.

The *Yerushalmi* says I have nothing to lose, what's his address and what's his name? The *Yerushalmi* went to the guy's house, knocked on the door and fortunately he was there. He invited him in and the businessman says so tell me your story, why are you here?

He told him I'm a *Yerushalmi* and from *Eretz Yisrael*, I learned in *Kollel* my whole life, I have eleven children and I'm now marrying off my first child and I need money to cover the expenses of the *chasana*. He says how many children do you have? Says eleven. Eleven! He went ballistic.

You have eleven children? Where do you have the audacity to have eleven children, take no responsibility, come to America and expect us to support you?

The *Yerushalmi* kept cool, didn't respond. He says let me ask you one question, and how many children do you have? He says one.

One child? He says yeah I have one child and I took care of my child, I gave him the best education, I sent him to the best *yeshivas*, I built a business empire, my son now is self-sufficient, he's able to support himself for life.

The *Yerushalmi* says I'm a better businessman than you were.

The wealthy man asked him what are you talking about? You're the one wearing the tattered clothing, you're the one who's collecting money, and you are the better businessman than me? How do you figure?

The *Yerushalmi* responded *Chazal* say there are three *shutfim*, there are three partners in the world: mother, father and the *Ribono Shel Olam*. I partnered with *Hashem*, the master of all businesses, the master of dispensing all money, not once but eleven times. *Hashem* was my partner eleven times and you only partnered with him one time. Who's a better businessman? Me or you?

The wealthy man had nothing to say.

The *Yerushalmi* says, 'you depend on your money, you depend on your assets, I depend on the *Ribono Shel Olam*.'

And whereupon the businessman said you know I'll partner with you, how much do you need? And he wrote him the check. He says do me

a favor, when it comes time to marrying off your other children, come to me, I want to be your partner.

Now this *Yerushalmi* did not attack the businessman, he attacked his ideology. His ideology was false, his ideology was filled with... *sheker*. And all he was telling him straight in the eyeball that it was wrong. And now the businessman saw *emes*, saw truth.



רב שך when he was in his almost in his late 90s, he was sitting next to his grandson **רב ברגמן** who was taking care of him and he started to cry and **רב ברגמן**, his grandson who is **ראש ישיבה** today actually in **פוניבז**, said **זייד**ע, why are you crying? He said, because I can't read the **רש״י** s anymore.

רב שך's eyesight was very bad, if you look at his glasses they were very thick. He got old he couldn't see, couldn't read even with the reading glasses. He said, I can't see the **רש״י**s anymore.

So he said, but **זייד**ע **רב ברגמן,** said to him, **זייד**ע, you know the **רש״י**s by heart. So what? You can read them, and **זייד**ע, I'll read them to you. I'll also read them to you. And **רב שך** continued to cry.

And he says, why are you crying? He says, **רב שך** said, because it **שטייט**, it says **והיו עיניך רואות את מוריך**. Your eyes should be able to see the face of your **רבי** when you learn **תורה**.

When **רב שך** would learn a **רש״י**, he envisioned in himself that he was literally sitting in front of his **רבי** and learning directly from him. And he needed to see the face of his **רבי**, the words of his **רבי** as if he's looking at the **רבי**'s face teaching him.

That is called **עמלות בתורה**. That is called being an **עמל בתורה**. That is called what it means to live **תורה**. That is called it means is that **תורה** is my essence and it's not just **תורה** but it's **תורת חיים**.

That it's alive. It's alive for you. You should sit in front of a **גמרא** and a **חומש** and actually feel that the **תנאים, אמוראים**, the **אבות** are talking to you directly. When you read, open a **גמרא**, you open up a **ספר** and it says **רבי יוחנן, ריש לקיש**, whoever it is, he's **ממש** in front of you.

You have to feel as if they're in front of you, talking to you.

One Word – Reb Dovid Eisenberg

Rav Avraham Kalmanowitz, who was the *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Mir*, came around in America at the time it was possible during the Holocaust to give Mussolini and the Italians a certain amount of money, and with that you could buy off Jews. So it was $100 a head, and he said for that money we can buy real-life *Yidden*, we have to go and we have to collect.

And so he went to *Shul* on the Upper West Side. He wanted to go collecting there, and he came inside and he went over to the *Gabbai*, the person in charge over there, and he said to him, "Listen, I'd like to make an appeal over here in *Shul* for the lives of Jews in Europe."

He said, "Very sorry, Rabbi, in our *Shul*, we don't do appeals on *Shabbos*."

He said, "Please, I'm desperate, this is not just an appeal for somebody making a *Chasunah*, these are for lives of our brethren in Europe."

He goes, "Rabbi, no appeals here. You can come during the week and go around collecting, but no appeals on *Shabbos*." - So it went back and forth and finally the Rabbi said to him, he said, "Listen, how

about this? I will say one word and one word only and if you can let me give that speech, that's it, that's all I ask of you."

He says, "Rabbi, have your word that it's one word only?"

He goes, "Yes, you have my word, one word and that's it."

He goes, "Okay, one word is one word, we'll let you do that."

After *Davening*, the *Gabbai* gets up with a bit of a snicker and he looks at the congregation, he says, "We have over here a very famous Rabbi from Europe who's going to be giving us a one-word *Drasha*. Rabbi Kalmanowitz, come on up and give us the one-word *Drasha*. Remember, one word only."

He says, "Yes, one word only." And Rabbi Kalmanowitz stands in front of the *Aron Kodesh* and he screams with all his might, "HELP!" and he fainted.

And they finally revive him, "Help? What's help? What happened?"



He goes, "Jews are being killed in Europe."

They said, "What? What was happening?"

And he spent the next twenty minutes explaining to them what's happening, and he walked away from that *Shul* with a lot of money.

Now you might have thought to yourself, I love my fellow Jews, but they said no, how am I going to help them? But Rabbi Kalmanowitz said there must be a way. I love them so much I must find a way to help them because that's *V'ahavta l'reiacha kamocha*. If it was me,

I would find a way to help myself, so now when it's somebody else, I'll have to find a way to do it. And he found this way, but just look, one word, just that word help was enough for him to be able to influence the entire community to get them to give that money.

When we want to find a way to be good with other people, we will find a way. *V'ahavta l'reiacha kamocha*, you love yourself and you find ways to explain away your own behavior, love other people the same way and explain their behavior away the same way you do. Find a way, I'm sure you can.

9 Facts About the Jews of Sweden By Yehuda Altein

Sweden is home to a significant Jewish community with a relatively recent history. Famous for its rescue efforts during the Holocaust, the country today faces rising antisemitism and religious harassment. Read on for 9 facts about the Jews of this Scandinavian country.

1. Aaron Isaac Was a Jewish Pioneer

Aaron Isaac, one of the first Jews given permission to settle in Sweden without having to renounce his faith. (Public domain)

For much of Sweden's history, the Lutheran denomination of Christianity was the only religion permitted in the country, and all newcomers who wished to settle there were required to be baptized. The first Jew to be granted an exception was Aaron Isaac, a skilled seal engraver from Germany whose talents were in demand. In 1774, special permission was granted to Isaac and several fellow Jews to settle in Sweden without renouncing their faith.

2. King Gustav Issued "Jewish Regulations"

In 1782, King Gustav III issued the Judereglementet, a set of regulations governing Jewish settlement. Influenced by the spirit of the Enlightenment, the new rules opened the door for Jews to settle

in Sweden—but with significant limitations. Only well-to-do Jews were permitted entry, and they were restricted to three cities and certain professions, among other conditions. These regulations remained in place for over 50 years, until most restrictions were lifted in 1838.

3. The Winds of Change Brought Spiritual Danger

While the 1838 reforms were welcomed by the Jewish community, they also posed a spiritual challenge. As in neighboring Germany, many Jews assimilated into broader society, and synagogues began incorporating reforms into their prayers and services. The trajectory of Swedish Jewry shifted in the late 1800s, when increased persecution in Eastern Europe brought a wave of immigrants to Sweden. These new arrivals maintained their traditional Jewish lifestyle and established Orthodox synagogues—such as Adat Jisrael in Stockholm, founded in 1870.

4. It Was Part of the Sixth Rebbe's Escape Route



On March 7, 1940, the Sixth Rebbe boarded the "S.S. Drottningholm" at the port of Gothenburg, bound for the United States.

When Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, the Sixth Rebbe, was in Otwock, a suburb of Warsaw. In a daring and treacherous operation, the Rebbe was rescued from the flames of war-torn Europe. He first traveled by train to Riga, Latvia, along a roundabout route that passed through—of all places—Berlin. From Riga, he flew to

Stockholm, Sweden (the only time he ever traveled by plane). Next, he went by train to Gothenburg where he boarded the S.S. Drottningholm, arriving safely in New York on 9 Adar, 5700 (March 19, 1940).

Fun fact: During the Rebbe's short stay in Gothenburg, he expressed his wish that a mikvah be built in the city—a wish that has since been fulfilled.

5. The Country Saved the Jews of Denmark from Annihilation

One of the most extraordinary rescue efforts of the Holocaust unfolded in Denmark in October 1943. When word spread that the Gestapo was planning to deport the country's Jews, ordinary Danish citizens opened their homes to their Jewish neighbors, shielding them from the Nazis. Working together with the Swedish government, some 7,500 Jews were then evacuated by boat to nearby Sweden, which had remained neutral during the war. Thanks to these remarkable efforts, an astounding 99% of Danish Jewry survived the Holocaust.

6. Raoul Wallenberg Saved Thousands of Lives



In July 1944, a young Swedish diplomat named Raoul Wallenberg arrived in Budapest with an audacious mission: to do whatever he could to save what remained of Hungarian Jewry. Over the next six months, Wallenberg courageously rescued tens of thousands of Jewish lives through bold and ingenious methods. He issued some 15,000 special Swedish passports—called Schutzpasses—that granted their holders immunity from deportation, and he rented 32 "safe houses" throughout Budapest where 35,000 Jews lived under Swedish protection. After the war, he was captured by the Soviets and vanished, his fate a mystery to this day.

7. Chabad Chassidim Served as Rabbis

In 1932, the Previous Rebbe sent Rabbi Yaakov Yisroel Zuber to lead the Jewish community in Stockholm. Over the next sixteen years, Rabbi Zuber worked energetically to strengthen Jewish life in the city. Among his many efforts, he fought to preserve traditional slaughtering methods when the Swedish government decreed that animals must be stunned before slaughter.1 After World War II, he worked to find halachic solutions to allow Holocaust survivors who did not have confirmation of their spouses' death (agunot) to remarry. When he left in 1948, he was succeeded by another Chabad rabbi, Rabbi Meir Chaim Chaikin, who served there devotedly until 1951.

8. Yiddish Is an Official Language

Unlike many other European countries, the Jewish population of Sweden actually grew after World War II, as many refugees chose to settle there. Later waves of immigrants arrived from Communist countries, fleeing religious persecution. Thanks to the significant number of Yiddish speakers who made Sweden their home, Yiddish is recognized as one of Sweden's five official minority languages. In fact, some government agencies even offer a Yiddish option on their websites!

9. Chabad Brings Light to the Darkness

In 1991, the Rebbe sent Rabbi Alexander and Mrs. Leah Namdar to Gothenburg to strengthen Jewish life in the city and across the country. Since then, other emissaries have joined them, serving Jewish communities in Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö. It isn't always easy—antisemitism is on the rise, and even basic rights like providing a Jewish education can be a struggle. But Chabad has risen to the challenge, and Jewish life continues to flourish in this Scandinavian country.



Inspired by Time - Live Hookup! – Rabbi Yehoshua Frankenhauis

One of the greatest tragedies of modern society is not sports itself, but what sports has come to represent. What should simply be a healthy pastime—a source of exercise, enjoyment, and recreation—has been elevated into an ideology where entire societies revolve around games.

Millions invest their emotions, their time, and their identities in the outcome of sporting events. In many ways, this echoes the culture of the ancient Greeks, who worshipped physical beauty, strength, and athletic achievement, elevating the body above the soul. Yet, if we look closer, there is a profound lesson to be learned from the very phenomenon the world has come to idolize.

Watching a Chess Game

Consider a simple game of chess. Two players sit opposite one another, the board between them. The pieces are arranged, the clock begins to tick, and the battle of minds is underway, where every move is calculated and every decision deliberate. A passerby notices the game and stops to watch. Another joins him, then another, and before long, a small crowd has gathered around the board. Each person is completely absorbed, trying to predict the next move. The excitement grows, but the reality remains the same: only two people can actually play. Everyone else must simply watch.

What happens, then, when the audience is no longer a handful of spectators? What if thousands want to witness the game? What if millions do? To accommodate them, you create a live broadcast.

This is exactly how the world of sports functions today. The actual event is remarkably small—a few dozen athletes gathering on a single field, court, or track in one corner of the world. Yet the

audience is enormous. Stadiums built to hold tens of thousands are hopelessly inadequate, so cameras capture every movement and giant screens relay the action. Every second is transmitted across cities, countries, and continents, allowing hundreds of millions of people to witness the exact same event as it unfolds.

The contest itself takes place in one isolated location; the rest of the world is simply connected to it through a live hookup.

This simple observation opens the door to understanding one of the deepest lessons of Shivah Asar B'Tammuz and the three weeks.

The Three Weeks



Shivah Asar B'Tammuz marks the day the walls of Yerushalayim were breached, yet the Churban itself would not take place for another three weeks. Why, then, do we begin mourning from the breach of the walls rather than from the destruction itself?

It is because Shivah Asar B'Tammuz was not simply the beginning of the tragedy—it was Heaven's warning that the tragedy could still be prevented.

On a physical level, a crack in a city's wall is hardly catastrophic; walls can be repaired, and stones can be replaced. By itself, the breach was relatively insignificant. But, as Reb Eliya Weintraub explained, the breach in the wall was never the real event. It was merely the live hookup. The real battle was taking place in Shamayim. It was there that the fate of Yerushalayim was being decided, and

Heavenly judgment had begun. But as the passuk states, **הַשָּׁמַיִם שָׁמַיִם לַה' וְהָאָרֶץ נָתַן לִבְנֵי אָדָם**— the heavens belong to Hashem, but the earth He gave to man. - We cannot see what is taking place Above, nor can we witness the Heavenly courtroom or the spiritual forces that shape the destiny of our world. How, then, does Hashem allow us to know what is happening? How does He give us the opportunity to change before it is too late?

He gives us a live hookup. He allows physical events in this world to mirror what is already unfolding in Heaven.

The crack in the wall was Hashem's broadcast to His people, His way of saying: "Look carefully. Something far more significant is taking place than what your eyes can see. The decree has begun—but there is still time. Return to Me. Do teshuvah. Daven. Change your ways, and the destruction need never come."

The breach in the walls was not the beginning of the Churban; it was Hashem's loving invitation to prevent it.

This wasn't true only in the generation of the Churban; it remains true in every generation. The Three Weeks are not merely days during which we mourn a tragedy that occurred nearly two thousand years ago. They are days during which Hashem once again grants us that live hookup, allowing us to glimpse the direction in which the world is heading while there is still time to change its course.

The message isn't, "Look what happened," but rather, "Look what is happening." The Churban of our generation is not inevitable; whether history repeats itself depends, to a remarkable degree, on us.

We are living in a generation that also witnesses painful and unsettling events. We see war, hatred, suffering, uncertainty, and upheaval. We can choose to view these events as isolated headlines, or we can emulate Pinchas. Like him, we must ask ourselves:

What is Hashem telling us? What is He asking of us? What message is being conveyed through the events unfolding before our eyes?

That is the core lesson of Shivah Asar B'Tammuz. The breach in the walls was not merely a crack in stone; it was Heaven's announcement that judgment had begun, a call to return before it was too late.

Every generation receives its own "cracks in the wall." The question is whether we merely notice them, or whether, like Pinchas, we truly hear the message they are broadcasting.

May we be among those who recognize Hashem's call, respond with teshuva, tefillah, and a renewed commitment to Torah, and thereby merit to see the walls of Yerushalayim rebuilt with the coming of Mashiach, speedily in our days.

FACEBUKER SHABBOS TABLE TALK

Continuing the Legacy of Rabbi Dovid Winiarz of blessed memory

Parshas Pinchas begins with Hashem telling Moshe the reward Pinchas has earned by defending Hashem's honor. The sinful act performed by a Jew in public was mentioned last week, but this week, the perpetrator's name is revealed.

One reason is to show how selfless Pinchas was. The fellow he killed was a well-connected person of high social status. Nevertheless, Pinchas did not allow that to deter him.

The Ohr HaChaim, Rabbeinu Chaim ibn Attar, (Born: Morocco, 1696 – Died: Jerusalem, 1743) whose Yahrtzeit was this week, 15 Tammuz, teaches us another reason the name was mentioned this week, after his death.

He says that while Zimri chose to do a wicked act, the Torah didn't call him out at the time. Only after his death, when his sin was atoned for, was he named. This is to teach us that the holy soul of a Jew is never severed from its connection to Hashem. It may be distanced, but it remains holy and once the sin is removed, it is in its

unsullied state. This is quite heartening for us all. No matter how far we've strayed, or how long we've been absent, we are still the holy, beloved children of Hashem, and He calls us by name.

If Parshas Pinchas sounds familiar, it's because it is the most-frequently read Parsha in the Torah. Some portion of it is read on Rosh Chodesh, festivals, plus for its own week, so over forty times per year!



The most-frequently read part is also part of the daily korbanos, as it recounts the Korban Tamid, the twice-daily offering of a single sheep, morning and evening.

While a list of various offerings for holidays is given, it is preceded by the daily korban.

Perhaps the lesson is that as wonderful as the special holidays are, with all their pomp and circumstance and unique customs and practices, the most pleasing thing to Hashem is that we connect with Him, even just a bit, every single day.

Pinchos wasn't seeking greatness; he was seeking to do what was right. Ironically, that is precisely how true greatness is achieved. Those who chase honour rarely attain it, while those who ignore their own honour in pursuit of Hashem's honour are elevated by Heaven itself. The Torah immortalizes Pinchos because he forgot about himself entirely. ~ Rabbi Nosson Tzvi Finkel.

Story of the Week Compiled by Aaron Leitner

The Barber Who Kept His Cool

Rafael Barayev is a frum barber who works in Ben's Haircuts on Nostrand Avenue in Brooklyn, USA. Day after day he stands behind his chair cutting and listening to people talk.



One afternoon, a young man walked into the shop. He looked frum, with a beard, but something about him unsettled Rafael. The patron introduced himself as Yanky and sat down in the chair.

"I want you to shave off my beard," he said. "With a razor."

Rafael was shocked. A razor shave is *assur d'Oraisa,* expressly forbidden by the Torah.

"I know what the Torah says," Yanky continued before Rafael could say anything. "But I want my beard gone. And if you won't do it, I'll go across the street to a non-Jewish barber and get it done there."

Rafael thought fast. There were no great options here. If he refused, Yanky would just go somewhere else and violate the *issur* anyway. But there was no way he could use a razor on a fellow Jew. There had to be a way to do something to prevent an *aveirah* without pushing Yanky further away.

"Okay," Rafael said slowly. "But first I need to trim the beard and use a regular shaver to clean things up."

Yanky shrugged. "As long as you give me a razor shave afterwards."

Rafael got to work. He trimmed the beard down, then shaved Yanky's face with a regular electric shaver. The beard was gone.

"Now the razor," Yanky reminded him.

Rafael nodded. He lathered shaving cream across Yanky's cheeks. Then, holding the razor just out of Yanky's line of sight, he slipped the blade out. He went through the motions of a razor shave. It felt and sounded just like the real thing, but there was no blade. He simply wiped off the shaving cream with the empty plastic handle.

When Rafael was finished, Yanky ran his hands over his smooth face and smiled. "Now, that's a great shave," he said. "Thank you."

This became a routine. For the next year and a half. Yanky came back regularly, asking for a razor shave each time. And each time, Rafael obliged, 'cleaning up' the stubble with an electric shaver, then finishing off the process with a bladeless razor. Yanky would leave satisfied, and Rafael would close the door behind him, davening for him to find his way back to his roots.

Then, one day, something was different. Yanky walked in looking calmer and less angry. He sat down and said almost casually, "Rafi, I don't want you to give me a razor shave anymore. I'm turning things around…I started doing *teshuvah*. Things are so much better in my life. I'm getting engaged soon, *Im yirzei Hashem*, and now that I'll be getting married, I decided to grow my beard again."

Rafael was delighted. This was the moment he had been waiting for. "I want you to know that I never gave you a razor shave at all," he said, and he explained everything.

Yanky listened quietly with relief. "I felt so guilty," he said. "I thought I was breaking *halachah* this whole time!" He stood up and gave Rafael a hug and invited him to the wedding.

Months later, Rafael stood at the wedding and watched Yanky dance, his beard grown in, his eyes shining. Then, they danced together, and Rafael was overcome with joy.

Afterwards, Yanky's father approached him, and asked, "How do you know my son?" Rafael explained, and the father grabbed him for a dance too. After which, they stepped to the side together to speak.

"As *chasidim,* we believe strongly in growing a beard," Yanky's father said. "Many reasons are brought down in the *sefarim;* brachah comes down from *shamayim* through the corners of the man's face, where it is *assur* to shave with a razor.

If Yanky had gotten a razor shave, it might have stopped the *brachah* from descending from Heaven. You came up with a way to give him what he wanted and still preserve that *brachah.* - "In my opinion, you saved my son's life. I can never thank you enough."

Rafael left the wedding with the realisation that there is no job in which a person cannot change someone's life in some way, and without compromising *halachah,* too. Whatever we do, whether it is cutting hair, teaching, programming or plumbing, we will one day cross paths with someone who needs us. And that is our *avodah.*

Any of us can rise to the challenge, not through grand gestures or heroics but just by noticing and caring. The most life-changing acts of chesed can happen in the most ordinary places, when a regular person simply refuses to give up on a fellow Jew.

Good Shabbos Aaron Leitner

The princes of the tribes were present, Moshe Rabbeinu was present, and the Sanhedrin was present. Nevertheless, the opportunity to sanctify Hashem's Name belonged to Pinchos because he did not wait for someone else. A person should never underestimate the opportunities that Hashem places before him. One decisive act performed at the right moment can define an entire lifetime and influence generations. ~ Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz.

102 Stories That Changed People's Lives – Rabbi Tzvi Nakar - He Earned Olam Haba in One Moment

My friend, Rabbi Goel Elkarif, a darshan, told me the following: During the Holocaust, there was a chareidi youth in one of the camps. One day, the Nazis took him into a room, and directed him to undress and get into the shower. The boy noticed a small opening in the wall, and a moment before removing his clothing, he decided to take the chance and attempt to escape through that opening.

Due to living conditions in the camp, he was a living skeleton, and so he decided to use the disadvantage to his advantage. He squeezed his thin body through the small opening and escaped. By a miracle, he managed to get away and reach the forest. Afterward, he joined a group of partisans, and thus survived the war.

At the end of the war, he joined a boat of illegal immigrants heading for Eretz Yisrael. The boat docked in Haifa, where they were greeted by aliyah activists, who informed them that very soon a bus would come to take them to a Hashomer Hatza'ir kibbutz. Having never heard of Hashomer Hatza'ir, he had no idea what impact that was liable to have on his spiritual future.

It's a pity to waste time, he thought. *I'll go to some shul in the area to daven and learn until the bus comes.*

"There isn't much time," he was told. "The bus is supposed to come soon. If you go, you're liable to miss it."

He did not back down and went to a nearby shul. After not having learned Gemara for so long, strong emotions welled up in him. He walked over to the *sefarim* shelves and removed a volume of Gemara. He opened it and instantly dove into the *sugya*. He felt an incredible sweetness and couldn't pull himself away from the *sefer*.

When he finished learning, he returned to the place where the group of immigrants had gathered, but he was too late; the bus had come a long time ago, whisking the entire group away.

Having nowhere else to go, he returned to the shul, where he met a *chareidi* man. He told him that he'd missed the bus to the kibbutz, mentioning the name of the kibbutz.

When the man heard the name, he said, "You should know that you were saved by Heaven! That's a Hashomer Hatza'ir kibbutz. Had you gone there, you would have left *Yiddishkeit* very quickly." He added, "Come with me. I'll find you an appropriate place."

The man took him to Yerushalayim and got him into Yeshivas Chevron. The young Holocaust survivor became a *yeshivah bachur*. He grew in Torah and became an *av beis din*.

But a hairsbreadth separated between two paths in life that were polar opposites. What brought him to grow in Torah and become an *av beis din* instead of a secular kibbutznik? A few minutes of learning. He didn't want to waste time until the bus came. He used the time for learning, and it was Divinely arranged that that learning be his entrance ticket to the world of Torah in Eretz Yisrael.

One can lose his *Olam Haba* in one moment, but one can earn it in one moment too.

102 Stories That Changed People's Lives – Rabbi Tzvi Nakar - Hashem Will Hear His Prayers

This moving story was heard firsthand from Yossel Kahan, who grew up in a rabbinic family in Poland. He went through the horrors of the Holocaust and managed to escape to the United States. He looked for work, but whoever didn't want to work on Shabbos was fired immediately. He would find a job, but when Friday came and he told his employer that he didn't want to work on Shabbos, he was immediately paid and let go.

He wandered from one job to another, but in the end, he broke and succumbed to his yetzer hara. He began working in a bakery. The

owner told him that he had to work on Shabbos. A fierce inner battle ensued, but in the end, he decided that it was pikuach nefesh.

Initially, he figured that he'd only perform light transgressions, but in the end, he did even serious ones. Then, he thought to himself, I desecrate Shabbos, so I won't put on tefillin. Once he didn't put on tefillin, he didn't go to shul either. He changed his name to Joseph and married a Jewish woman. After learning the secrets of the trade, he quit his job and opened his own bakery. He ended up with a chain of bakeries, and he became fabulously wealthy.

Joseph had a son named Robert. One day, Robert told his father that his school (a Jewish one) was offering them a trip to Israel to see what life was like there.

Having never told his son anything about Yiddishkeit, Yossel was afraid to let him go on the trip. He tried to dissuade him from going, but Robert really wanted to go. His father said to him, "If you want to go to the Holy Land, I have no problem if you go to Tel Aviv. I have no problem if you go anywhere, just don't go to places where 'not-good' Jews will talk to you. I'm asking you not to go to the Western Wall."

His son didn't go to the Kosel, as per his father's wishes, but he did go to Meron. It was Lag B'Omer, and he was very moved by the joyous atmosphere, the dancing children, and the sense of unity. The music played and everyone was singing V'amartem koh l'chai, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai.

Robert went to the kever and saw a young bachur crying bitterly while holding a book. He wondered how it was possible that in such a happy environment, a boy was crying from the depths of his heart. Robert was fascinated and walked over to him. He asked him what book he was holding in his hand and why he was crying.

The boy, whose name was Avraham Gross, replied, "This book is called a Book of Psalms. It was written by King David, who underwent

much suffering and distress. He said that whoever prays from this book, G-d will hear his prayers. G-d will answer their requests, and someone who wants to speak to G-d should do so through this book."

"How much does this book cost?" Robert asked.

"I'll give it to you for free," the bachur said.

Robert took the Tehillim, put it in his bag, and two days later, he went back to America.

Robert forgot about the Tehillim he received from that bachur, and he went on to college. One day, he came home very excited. He told his father that his (gentile) professor really liked him and wanted him as a son-in-law. He saw it as an opportunity for incredible success and growth.

Yossel was horrified. "I belong to the Kahan family, a rabbinic family," he said. "Will my son marry a gentile? Under no circumstances do I agree!" He said to his wife, "Tell him that he shouldn't dare marry a gentile."

With tears in her eyes, his wife said, "In what way are we Jews? After all, you don't keep Shabbos."

"I'm willing to keep Shabbos," Yossel said. "The main thing is that our son doesn't marry a gentile."

He tried to convince Robert, but Robert rebuffed him. "Dad, don't talk nonsense."

"I'm starting to keep Shabbos," his father said. "I'm closing all my bakeries on Shabbos."

Robert left the house, but he returned a few hours later and said, "You should know, Dad, I'll tell you the truth. I was out and decided that I wasn't going to listen to you. Suddenly, I started to hear in my mind the Bar Yochai tune, the one I heard in Meron. And then, I remembered that I have a book. I came back home and opened the book, but I don't know how to read it. Tell me, what is this book?"

Robert brought his father the sefer Tehillim. Yossel began saying Tehillim, his wife began saying Tehillim, and they said to Robert, "Do us a favor. Don't marry her."

"But the professor won't just let me go," Robert said. "He'll chase after me."

"If that's the case, we'll move," his parents said.

They moved to Brooklyn, to an area with a lot of Jews. Yossel began keeping Shabbos, he went to shul, and the entire family became ba'alei teshuvah.

One day, Yossel was sitting in his bakery when he noticed a man come in, looking very troubled. Yossel asked his name, and the man replied that his name is Avraham Gross. When he asked him why he looked so troubled, Avraham replied, "I'm a bookkeeper by profession, an expert, but I don't have a job — I was fired. That's why I'm troubled."

"I need a bookkeeper," Yossel said. "Come be my bookkeeper."

It turned out that Avraham Gross was the bachur who had been davening in Meron some years earlier. He was the one who gave his son the Tehillim, and because of the Tehillim, Robert didn't marry a goy, and the entire family became ba'alei teshuvah.

This incredible story appeared in Hamodia and shows us the wondrous workings of hashgachah pratis. Yossel and his family merited the siyata d'Shmaya that his son went to Eretz Yisrael and to Meron, where he was exposed to a sefer Tehillim for the first time in his life. That ended up preventing him from marrying a goy, and his entire family merited to become ba'alei teshuvah.

"A Chassid must be like a child: Crying and joyous all at once!" ~ The Chozeh of Lublin.

Parsha Potpourri - Rav Ozer Alport

Hero And Leader

As the end of Moshe's life began to approach, HKB'H commanded him to appoint his pupil Yehoshua to succeed him. Why wasn't **Pinchas**, the righteous "hero" of this week's parsha, selected to take over the leadership after Moshe's death? In risking his life for the sake of the nation, didn't he display the extent of his dedication and commitment to them and to his beliefs, valuable traits for a successful leader to possess?

The following story will help us answer these questions. The Talmud (Shabbos 33b) records that because of disparaging comments he had made, the non-Jewish government decreed that Rebbi Shimon bar Yochai should be executed. He fled with his son, Rebbi Elazar, to hide in a cave. For 12 years, HKB'H miraculously provided them with food and drink, and they spent the entire day engrossed in the study of Torah.

After 12 years, HKB'H sent Elijah the Prophet to announce at the opening of the cave that the person who made the decree had died, and Rebbi Shimon's life was safe. Rebbi Shimon and his son emerged to see the light of day for the first time in more than a decade. While they spent this time climbing to great spiritual heights, the rest of the world continued in its more mundane fashion.

When Rebbi Shimon and Rebbi Elazar saw men "wasting" their time on what they viewed as frivolous non-spiritual pursuits like plowing and planting, the rabbis looked at them with such anger and disdain that the farmers were immediately burned by a mystical fire. A Divine voice called out, "Have you left the cave to destroy My world?" Rebbi Shimon and his son returned to study Torah in the cave for another year.

At the end of the year, they left the cave. The results were similar, but with one crucial difference. When Rebbi Elazar saw people

engaging in earthly matters, he again burned them with his wrath. This time, Rebbi Shimon looked at them and healed them, explaining to his son, "It's enough for the world that you and I exist." One Friday afternoon, they saw a man carrying two bundles of sweet-smelling myrtle in honor of Shabbos. Recognizing the devotion of Jews to mitzvot, Rebbi Shimon and Rebbi Elazar were pacified.

This episode is difficult to understand. If the initial 12 years in the cave placed such a divide between Rebbi Shimon and the rest of the world, how did an additional year in the cave solve the problem when it should have only exacerbated it? The commentators explain that the additional year brought Rebbi Shimon to true greatness: the ability to understand and relate to those who aren't on his level and to appreciate them for their good qualities, such as their dedication to honoring Shabbos.

In light of this explanation, we can appreciate the answer given by the **Kotzker Rebbe** to our original question. The very fervor and passion demonstrated by Pinchas, while appropriate at that time, rendered him ineligible to serve as the national leader. Rashi writes (27:16) that Moshe requested a successor who would be able to understand that every person has his own individual foibles and needs, and who would be able to patiently bear the burden of interacting with each person and his idiosyncrasies. Pinchas' passionate devotion to truth and righteousness served him well, but would have made him an ineffective leader who was unable to understand and interact with each person on his own unique level.

A Baal Mussar would say:

"Improving oneself does not mean that he has to be one hundred percent better in one specific thing. It means that he has to be one percent better in one hundred things!"

The Greatest Nachas To Hashem

The Ohr HaChaim writes that there are various levels of what Hashem desires from His creations. One is the praise He receives from the Heavenly legions (the angels and the celestial bodies), and above that is the praise He receives from the souls of the righteous.

But what He desires most of all is the song and praise of those living in this world. That is exalted and desired before the Creator above all, as explained in the Zohar. (**אור החיים - במדבר טז כב**)

Yahrzeit Reflections

The Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh, Rav Chaim Ben-Attar, Tuesday 30 June 15 Tammuz (1696-1743)

Tuesday 30 June, 15 Tammuz (1696-1743) was the passing of the famed Torah scholar and mystic Rabbi Chaim ben Attar (1696-1743), author of the Ohr HaChaim commentary on the Torah.

Born in Morocco, he also lived and taught in Algiers, Italy, Acco and Yerushayim, where he settled a year before his passing. Many stories are told of his holiness and greatness, and of the repeated unsuccessful attempts by Rav Yisrael Baal Shem Tov to reach Eretz Yisrael (The Holy Land) and meet with him in the belief that together they could bring the Moshiach and the final redemption.

Rabbi Chaim ben Attar (1696–1743), universally known as the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh was a towering Moroccan Kabbalist and Talmudist. His masterpiece, the Ohr HaChaim on the Torah, is one of the most revered and studied commentators in Jewish history.

His classical Torah commentary is celebrated for its deep mystical insights, passion for spirituality, and love for the Jewish people. He weaves deep Halacha (law) and Kabbalah (mysticism) into profound moral lessons.

The Wonderous Segula of the Ohr HaChaim Hakadosh!

The Mahari"l Diskin would ask a shaliach to go specifically to the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh, and there, specifically there, to daven for the yeshua. Historically it's told that even on Shabbos Kodesh, a day when one does not daven for an ill person, the Mahari"l Diskin would send someone to daven at the kever of the Ohr HaChaim since Tefillah at the kever of the Ohr HaChaim can save from death - opening the Heavenly gates of abundance, happiness, nachas, and yeshua.



The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh

Rav David Yosef Shlita Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel (Rishon LeZion)

This week, **פרשת פנחס** is the yahrtzeit of **רבינו האור החיים הקדוש**. We call him **הקדוש** – the holy, a term not applied to many **גדולי ישראל**. He was called **הקדוש**, because of the following factors: on the one hand, he was a great **מקובל**, on the other hand, he was a great **פוסק** learning **ש״ס** and **פוסקים** on a very deep level.

He wrote many **ספרים**, the most famous of which is **אור החיים** on the **תורה**. He also wrote **פרי תואר**, a commentary on **הלכות איסור והיתר** in **יורה דעה**; this **ספר** is very deep and complicated. Another work he wrote was **ראשון לציון** on **ש״ס**, with questions, answers and explanations of the **גמרא, תוספות** and the **פוסקים**. He also wrote **חפץ ה׳** on the **תנ״ך**.

He passed away at a young age, at the time of his passing he was only forty-seven years old. He left many **ספרים** and much **קדושה**.

As mentioned, **אור החיים על התורה** is his most famous work. He goes through [almost] every word of the **תורה** , asking why a **פסוק** is phrased one way or another. He brings many explanations on the **פסוקים** and at the same time, he also teaches **הלכות** in order of the

פסוקים. ברוך ה' , it is a perfect **ספר** , which everyone, including simple people, enjoy greatly when they learn it. For this reason, it is very important to gather people together in every place to learn the **אור החיים** on the **פרשה** on a weekly basis.

My father, **Rav Ovadia Yosef זצ"ל**, told me a **סגולה**. If someone has a problem with his eyes, pain or inability to see well, he must learn **אור החיים**. Learning **אור החיים** will not only bring **קדושה** to his eyes, but a cure to his eyes. My father told me about himself that around fifty years ago, he had great pain in his eyes. He learnt the **אור החיים** on the **פרשה** and **עזרת ה'** he recovered.



The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh - Rabbi Y.Y. Rubinstein

It is an old debate whether a man is shaped by his times or a man shapes the times he lives in. But it is only relevant to those few individuals whose impact on their era leaves an indelible historical mark.

In 1732 a British citizen was born in Virginia whose life would certainly change the course of history. His name was George Washington. The American Revolution in which he played a leading role would shake the entire world of the 18th century. It would set the stage for the French Revolution 13 years later. It would be a century in which many revolutions would occur.

For Klal Yisrael, the 1700s would see other leaders, lehavdil, who would bring about change and leave their mark, not on battlefields or in parliaments but in the world of ruchniyus.

Far away in Europe, the **Baal Shem Tov** was born. His revolution would be more profound and far-reaching than one could ever imagine.

Around the same time, on yet another continent, Africa, another Torah leader was born whose impact on the Jewish world would be enormous. His influence would reach beyond the city and country of his birth, would touch every part of Klal Yisrael, and would reverberate to this very day.

In 5456/1696 in the town of Salé on Morocco's Atlantic coast, **Rabbi Chaim Ibn Attar, the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh**, was born. The name Salé in Arabic means "the place the sun sets." Its full title is al-Mamlakah al-Maghribiyyah — the Kingdom of the West.

Morocco had first become unified under the Alaouite Dynasty (which rules to this day) in 1666. Salé was the center of the infamous Barbary pirates who attacked European ships and sold their passengers and crews into slavery.

The Attar family (The name Ben Attar means spices or spice seller) lived in perilous times and in a dangerous place. They had arrived in Morocco after the expulsion from Spain. The Ohr Hachaim's grandfather, also called Chaim, was one of the leading chachamim of Salé and its Rosh Yeshivah. His son, Moshe, followed in his father's footsteps; his grandson and namesake was destined to climb his grandfather's path too, and reach even greater heights than those who preceded him.

Danger soon engulfed the Attar family. The local vizier persecuted and oppressed the city's Jews, and young Chaim, who had already shown prodigious ability in Torah by the age of 9, was forced to flee with his family to nearby Meknes, finding refuge with relatives.

Later a shidduch was arranged between the Ohr Hachaim and his cousin Fatzonia. The marriage was not blessed with children and Fatzonia encouraged her husband to marry a second wife, Esther.

In 5485/1725, shortly after the passing of his father-in-law, the Ohr Hachaim felt it was safe to return to Salé.

The story of an event that occurred there has an intriguing connection to one of his most famous insights in his commentary on Chumash, one that subsequently intrigued baalei hashkafah and filled pages of their sefarim:

The commentary is regarding the story of Reuven stopping his brothers from killing Yosef for crimes they believed merited execution. Reuven "saved him from their hands" and persuaded them instead to throw him into a pit.

The passuk says the pit was "empty, containing no water." Rashi comments that it was empty only of water, but was full of scorpions and snakes.

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh explains Reuven's actions: "Human beings have freedom of choice and are able to kill someone who is not in fact chayav misah (does not deserve the death penalty)." In other words, if they had killed Yosef that would not be proof that he deserved to die. But this is not the case if a wild animal kills a man, since an animal has no bechirah. - When Reuven "saved him from their hands," it means he saved Yosef from their bechirah.

Now the story: The governor of Salé was marrying off his daughter. His entire family bought expensive clothing and sent them to the Ohr Hachaim, who was a goldsmith. He was ordered to weave gold threads into the material. The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh demurred, explaining that "every month I work just enough to earn my livelihood, and the rest of the time I devote to Torah study. This month I have already earned enough money."

When the governor learned of Rav Chaim's refusal to perform the work, he took steps to avenge what he saw as a personal insult. He ordered that the lions he kept in his palace be starved. He then dispatched soldiers to take Rav Chaim from his home and throw him

into the lion's den. The Ohr Hachaim sat down among the lions and recited Tehillim. The hungry animals sat around him, ignoring their hunger pangs and the governor's "suggestion" of what would remove them.

As the Ohr Hachaim had written, a wild animal kills a man only if the victim is sentenced to die by Heaven's decree. No such decree had been issued.

Facing ongoing danger and persecution, the Ohr Hachaim decided to move to Eretz Hakodesh. In 5499/1739, at age 43, he set out with his family and two talmidim. They traveled from the Kingdom of the West across North Africa to Algeria. From there they sailed to Livorno in Italy.

The Ohr Hachaim's arrival in Italy was met with great enthusiasm, and he was persuaded to spend two years there teaching Torah. Though he had arrived penniless, he was able to earn enough for his family and talmidim to undertake the next stage of the their journey.

Benefactors also provided for the publication of his great commentary on Chumash in Venice. From the date of its publication in 1742, it has been studied and found universal acceptance and admiration. That admiration was particularly intense among the followers of the spiritual revolution that was occurring at that time throughout Europe.

The Rebbe Reb Pinchas of Koretz said, "Sefer Ohr Hachaim protects the home, and learning it has the same effect on the neshamah as learning the Zohar." Those words were echoed by the **Yesod Haavodah** of Slonim and the **Admor Harav Yisrael of Ruzhin**.

The Ohr Hachaim's arrival and entry to Yerushalayim was delayed due to an epidemic in the city. Settling instead in Akko, he set up his yeshivah, teaching Gemara in the derech of the Rambam.

On 15 Elul 5502/1742 Rav Chaim ben Attar entered Yerushalayim at last but sadly, was niftar less than a year later.

It is related that during Shalosh Seudas, the Baal Shem Tov sensed that Rav Chaim Ben Attar had passed away, and before it was possible for anyone in Europe to know of this tragic news, the Besh"t exclaimed, "The light from the West has been extinguished!"

On the passuk "And Moshe the servant of Hashem died there in the Land of Moav by the word of Hashem," the Ohr HaChaim writes:

"He died there, but only there. He lives on in another holy and sublime place by the word of Hashem."

The Ohr HaChaim lives on through his powerful and penetrating peirush, studied and quoted throughout the world in shuls, yeshivos, schools and homes. It appears in the Mikra'os Gedolos, where his words are printed below the words of Hashem.

The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh - Rav Daniel Glatstein Shlita

The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh says in Parshas Ki Savo: **שאם היו בני אדם מרגישין** – if Bnei Adam would be margish **במתיקות ועריבות טוב התורה** - if Bnei Adam would feel the Mesikus HaTorah, he says **היו משתגעים ומתלהטים אחריה** , they would pursue it with great fervour almost insanely , **ולא יחשב בעיניהם מלא עולם כסף וזהב למאומה** - that no money would have any value to them.

Now, many times in the writings of the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh he brings that Ruach HaKodesh **מופיע בבית מדרשינו** - that Ruach HaKodesh was evident in his Beis HaMedrash.

The Chida writes astounding things about his Rebbi, The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh. The Chida says, " **ועינינו ראו גדולת תורתו** "- "My eyes saw the wonders of his Torah.

The Gemara talks about the **אמוראים** who were able to be **עוקר הרים**. But the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh, Chida says, was **עוקר הרי ההרים**. His **קדושה** was **הפלה ופלא**, says the Chida.

היה הלב מבעית בתלמוד- "His heart was staggeringly frightening. He was frightening in his **ידיעת הש"ס והיה כמעיין המתגבר וקדושתו היתה הפלה ופלא** - His kedusha was wonderous, **דומה למלאך ה'**".

In fact, The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh says that when he came to Yerushalayim on Yom Kippur, by Kol Nidrei he did **פתיחה** on the **ארון**, it was **ממש** like the gates of Gan Eden were opening.

The Ohr HaChaim HaKodosh - Rav Dovid Ashear Shlita

A man by the name of Yoel Glanz told a personal story which took place about twelve years ago. At that time he was in the moving business and shortly before Pesach, which was a very busy time for him, most of his workers walked out. That meant he was not going to be able to do the jobs he had already booked properly.

At that time, although he prayed three times a day and was shomer Torah and mitzvot, in his words, he had very little connection to Hashem. He hadn't learned Torah in seven years. When he went to shul that Shabbat, he saw a pamphlet of stories of people who had big salvations in the merit of learning the Ohr HaChaim Hakadosh.

He told his wife he needed a yeshua and asked her what she thought. She told him he should accept upon himself to learn it every day for 40 days.

His wife was due to give birth right after Shavuot.

Two days before Shavuot she had some complications and went to see the doctor. He said, "everything looks fine but once you are here, I suggest you stay." Even though she was technically not at risk, they put her in a high-risk category and put a very large IV line into her.

On Shavuot morning at 5:30 am, a bunch of doctors came into her room and said something didn't look right.

While they were speaking to her, she began vomiting. She didn't look good. When her husband asked her if she was okay, she couldn't reply, she just shook her head no. Then she vomited again. Then, the machine started beeping and they were all showing flat lines. The doctors quickly unplugged the machines and wheeled her into the next room. Every second counted and b'siyata d'Shamaya, they were next door to an operating room.

All of the alarms in the hospital were going off and they were announcing the word "Code" on the loudspeaker. It was chaos. They worked on her for seven and a half hours.

Yoel was sitting in the hallway the entire time, calling out to Hashem for help. He remembered at one point that he hadn't done his Ohr HaChaim yet, so he took it out and started reading. He didn't realise then, but that was the 40th day of his kabbalah.

Finally, after nine hours, his wife was admitted to the ICU and Yoel was able to see her. He didn't recognise her as she was blown up with medications that were trying to keep her alive artificially. Baruch Hashem, she survived and ten days later she was ready to be discharged.

On the day of the discharge, while Yoel was waiting outside her room, a doctor came over to him with a big smile and started hugging him. He introduced himself as the doctor on call when his wife went out ten days earlier.

He said three things saved her life. Number one, they were able to tell from the baby's heart rate dropping that something was very wrong with her. Number two, he saw the colouring of her face turned blue very quickly and because she had a light complexion, it was easy to discern. And number three, a towel.

He explained, his job that day was to try and save the baby. After the operation, he counted his tools and saw he was missing a towel. Because of that, he ordered her to be opened up again. When they did that, they saw she was not clotting and that's when they realised the problem. She had AFE, the amniotic fluid leaked into her bloodstream. When that happens, there is a 0% chance of survival as they only find out about that condition after death, lo alenu. But due to this worry that a towel was inside of her, they opened her up and found it when they could still save her. They began pumping blood into that big IV line that they had already set up. On the books, she was clinically dead for 35 minutes. There were 50 doctors involved in that case.

Yoel asked the doctor what ended up happening with the towel. He said they found it afterward on the other side of her room. That had never happened in all of his 30 years practicing as a doctor. He said, "I have no doubt that an angel came and moved the towel just so that I would think it is missing and open her up."

They named their baby boy that was born that day Chaim, after the Ohr HaChaim. The gentile doctor recognised the hand of Hashem and said, there is no other explanation for his wife being alive.

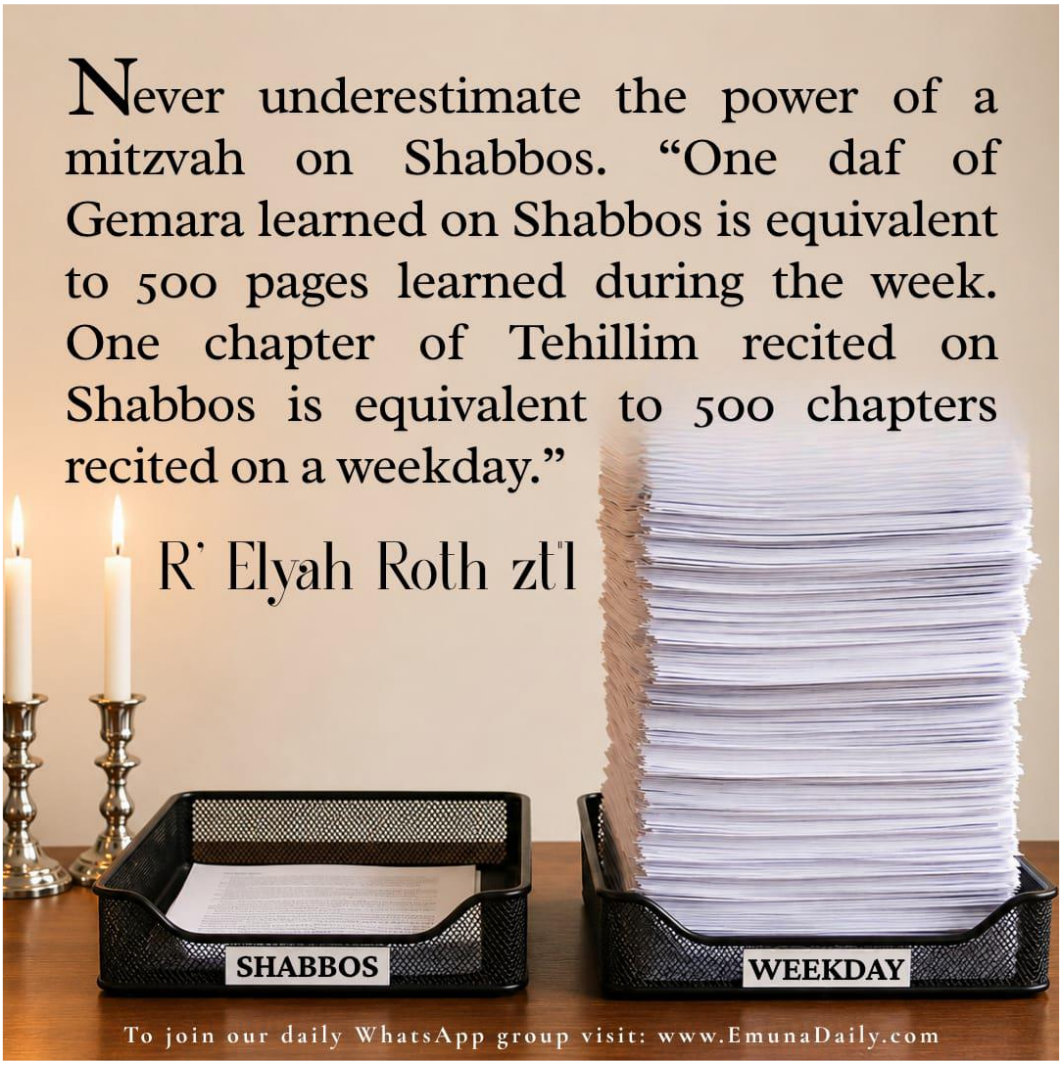
Yoel is so thankful. Both that Hashem woke him up to come back to learning Torah and as well for saving his wife's life. He now completes the entire Ohr HaChaim every single year on Simchat Torah.



"Hashem created the evil inclination, but He also created the Torah as its cure. - The principal purpose of Torah study is to recover the sparks of holiness that have fallen into captivity." ~ The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh (Rabbi Chaim ibn Attar).




The angels praise Hashem.
The souls of the tzaddikim praise Hashem.
Yet the highest praise comes from the Jew who finds Hashem and sings to Him while living in this world.
Based on the
Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh


Never underestimate the power of a mitzvah on Shabbos. "One daf of Gemara learned on Shabbos is equivalent to 500 pages learned during the week. One chapter of Tehillim recited on Shabbos is equivalent to 500 chapters recited on a weekday."
R' Elyah Roth zt"l
SHABBOS
WEEKDAY
To join our daily WhatsApp group visit: www.EmunaDaily.com

The Photo Perfect Rebbe!



A Chasid was discussing Parnasah with his Rebbe, **the Chernobler Rav**, and was saying how difficult a time he was having in making a living. The Rebbe asked the Chasid what his profession was, and the Chasid said that he was a professional photographer. However, there was little demand for his type of work in the Chareidi community.

The Chernobler thought quietly for a moment, and the Rebbe's response to his Chasid demonstrated his righteousness. The Rebbe told him, "Take my picture. Maybe you can sell it and it will help you make a living."





The Chasid was surprised and awed by his Rebbe's selflessness,

because he knew that the Chernobler Rav, who is known, like other Admorim are known, to refuse having his picture taken.



When he saw how earnest and caring the Rebbe was, he thanked the Rav very much, but explained to him that a proper picture is taken in a studio with the appropriate lighting and background, and since to the Rebbe, whose every minute is so precious, he simply could not take so much of his Rebbe's time.

The Rebbe, who was a leader who was willing to change his habit of not posing for any picture, was willing to forgo his standards, in order to help the livelihood of his Chasid. He told his Chasid that he will join him at a studio for an hour and allow his picture to be taken, so the Chasid can sell it and make some money. This is the love the Chernobler Rebbe has for his fellow Yidden!

Every generation requires people who care deeply about the honour of Heaven. Yet the Torah emphasizes that Pinchos was rewarded with peace because his zeal was entirely free of ego. Whenever personal honour enters the picture, zeal becomes destructive. Only when a person seeks nothing for himself can he truly become an instrument for increasing Hashem's honour in the world. ~ Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe.

Medrash U'Maaseh - Rabbi Fyvel Shuster

Welcome back to **מדרש ומעשה**, sharing a story for this week's **פרשה, פרשת פינחס**. The story we're going to tell today was brought down by **רב בן ציון אבא שאול זצ"ל**, and he saw it in a **ספר** from a **רב** named **רב בן ציון לופס זצ"ל**.

It's important to get a little background about the Lopez family. The Lopez family was a family, a dynasty of **רבנים** from generations back in Aleppo, **ארם צובא**, or **חלב** as it was known, in Syria. **רבנים** from the family ended up serving communities in places as far as Brazil, and certainly came here to **ארץ ישראל**.

רב שלום לופס, who was the **רב** of **עכו** and the father-in-law of **רב בקשי דורון זצ"ל**, the Chief Rabbi, was very well known. Anyway, the Lopez **רבנים**, due to the community that they were in, a community of businessmen, knew many wealthy and influential individuals.

רב בן ציון לופס told a story about one of them.

The man was the manager of a bank, and he was a traditional Jew, but after some time of introspection decided that he really wanted to live day-to-day according to **הלכה**. The day he made that decision, he got up, and he **דאוונד שחרית**. When he ate breakfast, he made **ברכות** before, and he made **ברכות** after, and then he went off to start his day in the bank.

Now, banks in those days didn't have as many security dividers as we have nowadays. The bank manager sat in the middle of the bank at a big desk on a big chair, so that he could see everything that was going on and everyone could see him.

When he sat down at his desk, one of the employees did as he did every day, brought him a cup of coffee and some cake. He was now in a dilemma, because he wanted to keep **הלכה**, but he was not wearing a **כיפה**, and he didn't want to make the **ברכה** without wearing a **כיפה**, but he felt that he just couldn't put on a **כיפה**. He was afraid of the reaction of the employees, of the customers.

Look who's declaring himself now to be some big rabbi, to be some big **צדיק**. Who are you? What are you? And he was torn about what to do.

As he's thinking about this, a very important customer came in, a wealthy man. Now, it's important to know how deposits were made in those days. We barely see paper currency anymore, but in those days, a large deposit would be made in the form of gold coins, sometimes they were called Gold Napoleons, and this man brought in a bag with many gold coins in it.

As he was approaching the desk of the official who was supposed to take care of this, the bag burst, and gold coins went rolling all over the floor of the bank. He immediately told an employee to lock the doors of the bank, and then everybody got on their hands and knees and were running around on the floor trying to chase the coins, find the little nooks and crannies and corners where they came.

The wealthy man himself, despite the fact that he was wearing very beautiful, expensive clothes, was down in the dust on his hands and knees, simultaneously trying to pick up coins and to keep his eyes open to make sure that nobody else was pocketing one of his coins.

Eventually, the coins were gathered and the deposit was made. "But now," said **רב לופס**, "the man had his answer." He realized that when something is valuable to you, when something is that important, suddenly the shame that you're afraid of isn't something that bothers you anymore. He put on a **כיפה** and made a **ברכה**.

There was some amazement among the employees for a while. He said, in a couple days it became matter-of-fact and nobody mentioned anything about it.

In our **פרשה**, **פרשת פינחס**, there are many deep things in the act that he did and in the fact that **חז״ל** say that **היו השבטים מבזים אותו**. He was a victim of shaming. They even brought up the fact that he

descended from **יתרו**, who originally was an **עובד עבודה זרה**, an idolater.

If a person is facing the dilemma of doing what's right and having to suffer shame, or if a person is, unfortunately, a victim of shaming for doing what's right, what you have to do, said **רב בן ציון**, is to remember the value, the gold that you're working with, and then the fear of shame disappears and you're able to have a sense of pride and joy.

Wishing us the ability to be strong for what's right and to be able to bring admiration to those around us, so that they won't be guilty of shaming either. May **הקדוש ברוך הוא** provide us with a peaceful **שבת**, us and all of **עם ישראל**. Wishing you a very good **שבת** and a good week. **כל טוב**.