

The Holy Rabbi R. Avraham Yehoshua [Heschel] of Apta, of blessed memory, on a Shabbat in the month of Nisan before his passing—after completing the Musaf prayer—opened the Holy Ark and said in these exact words: "My grandfather, R. Ari' Lieb, before he passed away, opened the Ark of the Covenant and said, 'Torah, Torah, you will testify regarding me that I have fulfilled the entire Torah from alef until tav.'" Then Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heschel closed the Ark once again. He then approached the synagogue's wall and declared, "'The stones of the wall will cry out.' The grandfather, R. Aryeh Leib, before he passed away, went to the walls of the synagogue and said, 'Walls, walls, you will testify regarding me that I have fulfilled the entire Torah from alef until tav.'" He then went to the *amud* (lectern) and said, "'And the beams of the woodwork will echo it.' The grandfather, R. Aryeh Leib, before he passed away, went to the *amud* and said, 'Amud, amud, you will testify regarding me that I have fulfilled the entire Torah from alef until tav.'" (Until his passing a few days later, on the fifth day of Nisan, no one noticed any change in the Rabbi of Apta's demeanor. He remained in good health and acted as usual, in his holy manner.) During *shaleshudat* (the third meal of Shabbat) before reading the Torah, the Rabbi of Apta told the congregation, "Jews, lean over, you will now hear words that you will not hear again until the coming of the Redeemer."

On the fifth day of Nisan, in the middle of the week, which happened to be the day of our holy Rabbi's passing, he was seated in his chair with his Hasidim gathered around him, and there was no noticeable change in his demeanor. Just before his soul departed, he addressed the public, informing them that the following day they would recite (as is customary, the Torah portion of the nasi is read daily until the 13th of Nisan): 'On the sixth day, the nasi of the children of Gad, El-yasaf ben deu-el, (the holy rabbi was referring to the day of his funeral and suggested that during the eulogy, they should say as follows) will be read in this manner, "El yasaf" Gad gathered, "ben," a son, deu-el, who let know that there is a God in the world.'

Afterward, he instructed them to sing the song "Haderet V'Haemuna" in the melody of Yom Kippur. As the public sang, he joined them, singing together with the Hasidim the words, "Ha'aderet vеха'emunah lechai olamim, habinah vehabrachah lechai olamim, haga'vah vehagedulah lechai olamim, hade'ah vehadibur lechai olamim." [Glory and faithfulness belong to the One Who lives forever, Understanding and blessing belong to the One Who lives forever, Majesty and grandeur belong to the One Who lives forever, Knowledge and speech belong to the One Who lives forever]. As he finished these words, his soul departed in the presence of everyone. (This account was narrated by a trustworthy individual who heard from another witness present at the time of his passing.) May his merit protect us.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

Once, R. Ephraim Zalman Margalit of Brod, may his memory be a blessing, decided to visit the author of the book *Ohev Yisrael*. Upon entering the holy place, inside, he noticed a look of astonishment on the Rabbi's face. The Rabbi inquired of him why he wasn't afraid of "bitul Torah" (neglecting Torah study) in undertaking such a journey. R. Ephraim Zalman responded as follows: Once, while he was sitting by the window and engrossed in his studies, suddenly he noticed the entire public running in a state of panic. He became extremely frightened and promptly closed the Gemara. Hastily, he went outside and approached the people to inquire about the reason for the commotion and what should be done. They informed him that it was merely a situation where the public was chasing after a drunkard. He was deeply troubled by this incident, since as a result of this, he closed the Gemara and went outside. He resolved in his mind that if he witnessed the public running in the future, he would not join them in the street and would not let it disrupt his studies.

After some time had passed, a similar situation occurred. Once again, he sat by the window, engrossed in his studies, and observed a crowd running outside. However, this time, he did not interrupt his learning and remained undisturbed by the external commotion. Later, when his family members entered his room, he inquired about the reason for the widespread panic and commotion outside. They informed him that there was a significant fire at the house of a fellow Jew, and everyone was rushing to save and extinguish the fire. The incident troubled him deeply.

This second incident left him conflicted. He pondered what his reaction should be if he saw people running in the future. Eventually, he came to a resolution: If people were running chaotically, it was probably over something trivial, like chasing a drunkard. But if the entire community was running in one direction, it must be a significant and urgent matter, like a fire. So when he saw the whole world heading towards Apta, he assumed there must be a fire there and therefore decided to go there as well.

He was then received gracefully by the holy Rabbi of Apta.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

It is already well-known to all that Rabbi Yehoshua of Belz had summoned a grand assembly in Lviv in the year 5642, inviting all the prominent rabbis and rebbes of his time. Prior to the rabbinic conference, emissaries were sent to the other rabbis, urging them to attend the gathering. This happened subsequent to the passing of the revered rabbi of Sanz, and the well-known dispute between Sanz and Sdigora was already widely known.

In this context, the rabbi of Belz dispatched one of his associates, R. Uri of Strelisk, who was the grandson of Rabbi Uri the First, as the messenger to call upon the rabbi of Husyatin. When R. Uri arrived at the Rebbe of Hosiatin's presence and presented his mission, the Rebbe asked him directly, "Why have you come to me? You have always disliked me." In response, R. Uri said, "I will tell you the truth. If there is a celebration for you, I won't claim that the joy will be as great for us as it is for you. However, God forbid if there is sorrow for you, we feel that sorrow just as deeply as you do."

Upon returning to Belz, Rabbi Uri shared the aforementioned words with the rabbi. In reply, the rabbi said, "These words were sent to him from heaven, as an answer to the rabbi of Husyatin."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The holy Rabbi R. Shimon of Yaroslav, may his memory be a blessing, was a disciple of the revered Holy Chozeh of Lublin, may his memory be a blessing. He lived for many years and in his old age, when he was over ninety years old, he still journeyed to Belz to visit the holy Rabbi R. Sholom of Belz, may his memory be a blessing.

At that time, the Rabbi of Belz was still relatively young, and the hasidim of Yaroslav questioned their own Rabbi, asking why their teacher was traveling to another rebbe who is so young. The Rabbi of Yaroslav responded that every time he engages in a conversation with the Rabbi of Belz, they talk for about four to five hours. Yet, in all their interactions, the Rabbi of Belz never talked about himself, and he never used the word "I." Based on this fact alone, Rabbi Shimon concluded that it is truly worthwhile for him to make such a journey to visit the Rabbi of Belz.

And by the way, I'll mention a sarcastic remark I heard from a reliable source, which was recounted to me by one of the grandchildren of the revered Rabbi R. Shimon, may his memory be a blessing. In his old age, Rabbi Shimon, married a woman, and they had children together. They lived in a very small and cramped house. One day, several of the disciples of the Chozeh of Lublin, may his memory be a blessing, came to visit and sat with him in his room. Meanwhile, a little child lay crying loudly. As Rabbi Shimon briefly turned away for a few minutes, one of the rebbes asked the other, "What is the reason for the child crying so much?" The other rebbe responded, "Is it something new? It's because of the old man. Therefore, he is 'tearing up.'" (In Galicia, they refer to a kid that's crying as 'the kid is "tearing up."')

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

During the holy Shabbat meal on Parshat Haazinu, Rabbi Yisochor Dov of Belz, may his memory be a blessing, related a story about the revered Rabbi Shlomo of Lutsk, may his memory be a blessing. Once, Rabbi Shlomo went to visit the great Maggid of Mezritch, may his memory be a blessing—he served as his attendant, as is well known. However, before he became acquainted with the Maggid, there was a time when Rabbi Shlomo visited Mezritch during his travels for trade. He entered the holy place to converse with the Maggid. When their conversation concluded, Rabbi Shlomo asked for the Maggid's farewell blessing. The Maggid responded that he wanted him to stay with him for the holy Shabbat. Rabbi Shlomo asked, what would he gain if he stayed with him for the holy Shabbat. The Maggid responded that if people like Rabbi Shlomo came to him, he wouldn't need to prepare his own "Torah" (Hasidic sermon) during the "tish" (spiritual meal). They will arrange for him from Heaven what to say. However, if those on a higher spiritual level, like them, didn't come to him, he would have to arrange his own "Torah" before delivering his sermon.

"And the revered Rabbi of Belz, may his memory be a blessing, said that this matter is hinted in the Torah in the verse 'Ha'azinu hashamayim va'adaberah, ve-tishma ha'aretz imrei fi' [trans. "Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth."] (Deuteronomy 32:1). He explained that the nuances in this verse are abundant, as it is well-known, regarding the connection between the future and the present tenses, and with the discourse of the holy Maggid, may his memory be a blessing, everything becomes settled and established." And he conveyed in the name of the rabbi, Rabbi Ber, "If 'shamayim' [heavenly] Jews come to me, then 'va'adaberah', I know that I will speak. On the other hand, if "ve-tishma ha'aretz" [if 'Artziut Jews' [lit. 'earthiness Jews' who are closely connected with the material aspects of life, with "artziut" derived from the word "aretz"] come to me, then "imrei-fi" [the words will come from my own mouth].” Scrutinize this, and you'll find truth.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

In the year 5684, the holy Rabbi Yisochor Dov of Belz, may his memory be a blessing, was in Marienbad. Before his departure to his home, he wanted to bid farewell to the son of the revered Rabbi from Boyan, may his memory be a blessing, who resided in Lviv. He was delayed in his visit for about three-quarters of an hour. As soon as he crossed the threshold of the house, he said to Rabbi from Boyan, "Do you know why I was delayed for so long? It was because of your wife. For she came to me with a *kvitel* (petitionary note) and every time I come across one of the descendants of the Tchernobyl dynasty, I can't hold myself back from speaking about the Rabbi of Tchernobyl. That's why I was delayed." Later, when he sat and conversed with them, he asked them what they had been engaged in before his arrival. While they waited for him, they replied that they were discussing the passing of the son of the Rabbi of Chortkov, may his memory be a blessing, who passed away in Delatin. Regarding this, the Rabbi from Belz, may his memory be a blessing, related that he was present with Rabbi Aharon of Tchernobyl when his son passed away on Erev Shabbat, just before the candle-lighting. They did not want to inform the holy Rabbi of his son's passing before Shabbat. On the holy Shabbat, during the prayers and festive meals, he conducted himself in his usual manner and did not show any change in behavior. He related the following: Chassidim would say that they noticed a difference in him, but I did not notice any change at all, and he repeated this several times. Immediately after the Shabbat, they held the funeral, and they passed the coffin by his father's window, and they placed the bier there. The holy Rabbi opened the window and recited to his son the verse, "Behold, I am sending an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared." Then he closed the window. This is what I witnessed myself. Such was recounted by the revered Rabbi of Belz, may his memory be a blessing.

Additionally, when the holy Rabbi, Rabbi Yisachar Dov of Belz was in Munkatch during the Purim nighttime feast, I heard him speak three times about Rabbi Aharon of Tchernobyl, may his memory be a blessing. He mentioned that he asked a certain person who was a refugee from Russia about his son-in-law who was also a descendant of Tchernobyl. That person praised his son-in-law to such an extent, saying that he was as great as Rabbi Aharon of Chernobyl. To this, the Rabbi from Belz responded, "Do you know who Rabbi Aharon of Tchernobyl really was? I spent several years with him, and at every *shaleshudas* (the third meal of Shabbat), he would say without exaggeration a hundred times, "Oh, how one's soul expires [=is consumed] with yearning for God, blessed be He..."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

When Rabbi Dovid¹ of Lelov, may his memory be a blessing, went for the first time to Lizhensk to visit Rabbi Elimelech, may his memory be a blessing, he traveled through Lancut and felt tired from the journey. He wanted to spend Shabbat in Lancut. When he arrived in the town, he asked the people where he could find kosher glatt food. They pointed to the house of Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchak (who was the Chozeh of Lublin and was residing in Lancut at that time). When he entered the house, the Rebbe welcomed him and asked where he was from. The revered Chozeh, may his memory be a blessing, inquired, requesting him to inform who the most despicable Jew in Lelov was, to which he responded that he didn't know. Subsequently, the blessed Chozeh conveyed that if that's the case, he wouldn't be able to dine at his place since he wasn't aware of the most despicable person in Lelov.

And the Rabbi from Lelov journeyed onwards and also came to Lizhensk for Shabbat. When Rabbi Elimelech greeted him, he posed the same question to him as well. "Who is the most despicable person?" The Rabbi from Lelov replied that he didn't know. Later, during the evening meal on Shabbat, he asked him once more to tell him who the most despicable Jew in Lelov was, and again, the response was that he didn't know. During the Shabbat day meal he repeated the question and did not receive an answer.

At the third meal, he asked him again, "Rabbi Dovid, who is the most despicable person in Lelov?" The Rabbi from Lelov replied that he himself was the most despicable person in the town. The Chassidim and students of Lizhensk asked the Rabbi from Lelov why he didn't answer the question the same way the first time and the last time. He responded that even during the first time, he knew he was the most despicable, but he wasn't entirely certain if there might be someone in Lelov who was even worse than him. And he searched and examined among the inhabitants of the town, wondering if there might be someone in Lelov worse than him. Throughout the entirety of Shabbat, he searched but could not find anyone worse than himself. Therefore, at the third meal, he reached a definite conclusion that he was undoubtedly the most despicable person.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

Rabbi Yehoshua from Belz, may his memory be a blessing, was visiting the holy Rabbi Chaim, may his memory be a blessing, in the city of Sanz for Shabbat. During the entire meal, they sat together, but there was no conversation, nor was Torah was heard from them, as was their custom. Only in the middle of the meal, Rabbi Chaim from Sanz turned to Rabbi Yehoshua from Belz and addressed him as follows: (Note: Rabbi Chaim from Tzan'z referred to the holy Rabbi of Ropshitz may his memory be a blessing, simply as "Rav," and the holy Rabbi of Ziditchov, may his memory be a blessing, as "Rebbe" in regular conversation). The Rav related, "Once there was a village Jew who said to his son, 'Come tomorrow, my dear child, and I'll teach you the *sod* (mystery) of the twelve challahs. This is the *sod* about the thirteen spies.' The son asked, 'Father, wasn't there, after all, no more than twelve spies?' The father answered him, 'One up, one down.'"... After the Rabbi of Sanz concluded this conversation, the Rabbi of Belz, may his memory be a blessing, responded as follows: "It is possible that this is the *sod* that we beseech, 'Reveal to me the taste of the twelve challahs,' and they spoke no further."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

I heard this from individuals who were there at the meal.

Rabbi Yitzchak of Stuchin, may his memory be a blessing, recounted that when he was very young, Rabbi Avraham, may his memory be a blessing, known as the Maggid (preacher) of Trisk, was in the city of Tarna. Rabbi Yitzchak's father sent him to the Maggid for Shabbbat. The Maggid of Trisk had a custom of sharing gematrias (numerical values) and different remazim (hints) from the Torah during his teachings.

On that particular Shabbat, the Maggid hinted in his teachings that the following year, the Messiah would come. After some years passed and the Messiah did not arrive, the Rabbi Yitzchak of Stuchin was once again visiting the Maggid of Trisk. In one of their conversations, Rabbi Yitzchak asked the Maggid, "Hasn't it been a number of years ago that the Maggid hinted in the Torah that the Messiah will come, and some years have passed, and still he has not come? So then, what does it mean what it is written in the Torah?" The Maggid responded, "Indeed, it is written in the Talmud and Shulchan Aruch that if a person sees their father transgressing a commandment of the Torah, they should not say to their father, 'Father, you have transgressed the words of the Torah,' but instead, they should say, 'Father, this is what is stated in the Torah.'"

So, then the Magid of Trisk concluded and said to him, "We are praying to the Almighty that the righteous Messiah will come, and we hint to the Holy One, Blessed Be He, 'Father, this is what is written in the Torah.'"

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The holy Rabbi Moshe Teitelbaum, may his memory be a blessing, the rabbi of Ihel and author of *Yismach Moshe*, was the rabbi of Shinova, in Galicia, during his youth, and then he still did not acquaint himself with the Rebbe, the Chozeh of Lublin, may his memory be a blessing. He also didn't have any connection with the Chassidim. But in Galicia, there were "men of great deeds" who were Chassidim, who traveled to the Rebbe of Lublin. When they recognized the holiness of their Rabbi, the Yismach Moshe, they became very eager and made efforts for the Rabbi to travel to Lublin, as they understood that if he would see and speak with the Chozeh he would surely connect with him. However, the Yismach Moshe did not listen to their advice and did not want to travel.

And when they heard that the Rebbe of Lublin was traveling through Yarislav (a town not far from Shinova), they pleaded earnestly with their Rabbi, the Yismach Moshe, to go and meet him at the crossroads. The Yismach Moshe agreed and set out to meet him. And it was in the middle of the road, the King's Road, where the two great leaders of the generation met. Together with the Yismach Moshe, all the Chassidim from the town traveled to greet the Rebbe of Lublin. When they saw that the Rebbe of Lublin invited the Yismach Moshe to his carriage, and they saw them rejoicing together as the two great rabbis joined together, all the Chassidim began to dance with immense joy, and their exuberant celebration reached the heavens. The Yismach Moshe felt their joy and asked the Rebbe of Lublin, may his memory be a blessing, if now the joy of the Chassidim is so great, how much greater will the joy be when the Messiah comes?" So the Rebbe, may his memory be a blessing, replied, "When the Messiah, our righteous one, comes, 'the heavens will rejoice, and the earth will be glad.'" And he emphasized greatly the words that came from his mouth."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

Once, they asked the Rebbe, Rabbi Yitzchak of Vorki, may his memory be a blessing, why he doesn't write his novellae and doesn't allow others to write them either. It is known that the aforementioned Rebbe used to study every day in the synagogue with people, teaching a shiur (lesson) in Midrash Rabbah and Ein Yaakov. And every day during the study session, he would say wonderful novellae, but he would not write them down, not even for remembrance. He replied to them with these words, "The 'fire' (intense passion) behind the teaching cannot be captured in writing, and as for the 'kuntz' (artful subtlety) we have no interest in writing down just the clever formulation." Here concludes his sacred words. Scrutinize them, and you'll find truth.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

Rabbi Leib Sarah's once came to a city for the Sabbath, where Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heshil of Apt, may his memory be a blessing, was also expected to arrive. A fine apartment had been prepared for Rabbi Heshil by a wealthy man. However, Rabbi Leib Sarah's specifically wished to live in the same fine apartment that had been prepared for Rabbi Heshil. So Rabbi Leib Sarah's went to the wealthy man's house, entered, and surveyed the various rooms to choose one for himself. At that time, the wealthy man was not home, and his wife, upon seeing a simple-looking man (for it was Rabbi Leib Sarah's custom to wear plain clothes, sometimes even torn ones), wandered throughout the house, she asked him what he wanted. He replied that he wanted to reside here. She informed him that there was no place for simple people here and asked him to leave. So, Rabbi Leib Sarah's departed.

On the holy Sabbath, the holy Rabbi Leib Sarah's, together with Rabbi Apt, were rejoicing together, and Rabbi Apt showed him great honor. Meanwhile, the wife of the wealthy man related to her husband the entire incident that occurred at their home before the Sabbath. A simple man had come, and she did not allow him to stay in their house. The wealthy man realized that the man was Rabbi Leib Sarah's, may his memory be blessed, and he became very angry with his wife. He went to appease him. Rabbi Leib Sarah's responded, "Behold, the Talmud refers to our forefather Abraham as "the one who welcomes guests." It seems difficult, as Lot also seemed to welcome guests. We find in the Torah that Lot went even further than Abraham, because regarding Avraham it is stated that he initially told them to first wash their feet and afterward, "take for yourselves some water." Rashi remarks [that Abraham instructed this] through a messenger. However, Lot welcomes the guests into his house with the dust of their feet, and baked unleavened bread for them. He was so willing to sacrifice himself to such an extent that he was willing to abandon his daughters for the sake of his guests. The question arises: Why doesn't the Talmud refer to Lot as "one who welcomes guests"? The simple answer is that the guests who came to Abraham were simple people, appearing as Arabs at first, and even so, he welcomed them wholeheartedly, providing them with butter, milk, a calf, and more. He did not initially know that they were angels, and he welcomed them.

Therefore, it is proper to deem Avraham as “the one who welcomes guests.” However, Lot's guests [were immediately recognized as] angels and *seraphim*. Who, when faced with heavenly beings who would like to enter one's home, would hesitate to allow them entry? Therefore, Abraham earned the title of the mitzvah of hospitality. In Lot's case, the guests were immediately recognized as angels and seraphim. Who, when faced with heavenly beings, would refuse them entry into their abode? Therefore, it is not surprising at all that Lot welcomed them.

This is what the holy Rabbi Leib Sarah's, may his memory be blessed, taught the wealthy man, and the lesson of the story is obvious.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The holy Rabbi, our teacher Rabbi Abraham of blessed memory from Sadigura, was once in the city of Kolomaya. When he was there, there was also the revered genius, the Malbim, may his memory be blessed, who was together with the author of the book *Lev HaIvri*, the son-in-law of the holy Rabbi Rabbi Hillel Lichtenstein may his memory be blessed, who was the head of the Rabbinical Court of Kolomaya. They spoke between themselves, suggesting that they will enter [the room of the] holy Rabbi of Sadigura and would test him to see if he could learn. They prepared for themselves a *midrash peliah*, When they conversed with him, they asked him, "It is stated in the Midrash on the verse in the *akedah*, 'And offer him there as a burnt offering.' Regarding this, it is said, 'Man is concerned about the loss of his money'¹ but is not concerned about the loss of his days.' The *midrash* is puzzling."

The holy Rabbi dismissed them with the saying, "This is stated in the prayer book!" They left, searched in various prayer books, even large and different ones, for two days but found nothing. They did not understand what the Sadigura Rebbe had told them. They went back a second time and said they couldn't find in the prayer book the interpretation of the *midrash*, and the holy Rabbi took a prayer book and presented them [the passage of] *mishnat eizehu mekoman shel zevachim*. "Thus! It states: The burnt offering is an offering of the most sacred order... Its blood requires two placements that are four²... The firstborn offering, the animal tithe offering, and the Paschal offering are offerings of lesser sanctity... and their blood requires one placement.³" The Sadigura Rebbe explained, "When Abraham, our forefather may he rest in peace, went with Isaac to bind him [to the altar], he was unsure how many placements he would give of his blood. From one perspective, he wanted to fulfill the obligation with one placement, as Isaac was his firstborn, and one placement was sufficient. However, the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, 'And offer him there as a burnt offering.' Therefore, he has the status of a burnt offering and requires two placements that are four. This is what the Midrash means: 'Man is concerned about the loss of his blood' – Abraham was concerned regarding the 'placement of blood' on Isaac 'but was not concerned about the loss of his days' – that his days would be lost from the world. The great rabbis were astounded by his interpretation and did not ask him further."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

¹ Note: the word in Hebrew is דמיו which can mean both [his] money and [his] blood.

² Mishna, Zevachim 5:4.

³ Mishna, Zevachim 5:8.

The holy Rabbi Avraham Yaakov, may his righteous memory be a blessing, from Sadigura once explained the Gemara in Berakhot (page 34b). “They said about Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa that he used to pray for the sick, and so on.”⁴ The Gemara asks, “From where do we derive these matters? Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said, As the verse says, ‘I create the speech of the lips; peace, peace to the far and to the near, says the Lord, and I will heal him.’” And this is difficult to understand. The holy Rabbi mentioned regarding this that it is written in the Torah (Numbers 12: 10,13), “Miriam was afflicted with tzara'ath, [as white] as snow... Moses cried out to the Lord, saying, Oh God, please heal her!” And Rashi addresses the term “saying”: “He said to Him, ‘Answer me if You are healing her or not.’” (Rashi found it challenging to justify the redundancy of the term “saying.”) And the difficulty is raised by the Ramban, may his memory be blessed, “Is Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa greater than our teacher Moses? Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa knew, when he prayed for the sick [whether the prayer would be effective or not], and Moses did not know?” And the Ramban, of blessed memory, explains that Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa only knew when he was praying for someone who was not a relative of his. He would have a sign: if his prayer flowed smoothly from his lips, he would know that the patient would recover—such is what he would reply when he would be asked, “How do you know.” And the truth is that he observed this from the emotion during his prayer. And if he felt no emotion at all, he would understand that the patient was unfortunately beyond recovery. This knowledge could only be known about a person who was not a relative, but regarding a familial relative, such as Moses our teacher in relation to his sister, it is impossible that he [Moses] would not have any emotion when praying for her. Therefore, Moses our teacher, was compelled to ask the Almighty, “Answer me if You are healing her or not.” And now the verse “I create the speech of the lips [through which you will feel] peace” is clear—similar to Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa, [who experienced a sense of] “peace” [during prayer with his lips] only for those that are [familially] distant (“and for the [familially] near” one should ask God [whether the sick person will be healed]). “And to the near, says the Lord, and I will heal him.”

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

⁴ <https://www.sefaria.org.il/Berakhot.34b.12?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en>

They said about Rabbi Ḥanina ben Dosa that he would pray on behalf of the sick and immediately after his prayer he would say: This one shall recover from his illness and live and this one shall die. When they said to him: From where do you know? He said to them: If my prayer is fluent in my mouth as I recite it and there are no errors, I know that my prayer is accepted. And if not, I know that my prayer is rejected.

In the capital city of Paris, in the Pavee Synagogue, someone from Warsaw told me that when he was a young boy of ten, his father took him to Gur to the Sfata Emet, of blessed memory, for Shavuot. They remained there for Shabbat Parshat Naso, and at that time, he was studying in *heder* the book of Judges. On Shabbat Naso, the Haftarah is about Samson. When he remembered the story of Samson from the *heder*, he took a Tanakh and approached his father. At that moment, his father was standing with a group of scholars, and the great Rabbi Abraham Mordechai, son of the author of the Sfata Emet, was also among them. He asked his father that in the verse following the Haftarah it is stated (14:5), "So Samson and his father and mother went down to Timnah. When he came to the vineyards of Timnah [for the first time], a full-grown lion came roaring at him." He told his father that he had a question about this. His father hinted to him to ask the question to Rabbi Abraham Mordechai. And he asked him, "Why is it written, 'Behold, the lion roars "toward him"?' Toward Samson specifically? Wasn't he with his father and mother?" He said, "It should have stated, 'toward them.' The Rabbi asked him, "Do you study the Talmud?" He replied, "Yes." The Rabbi said to him, "Did you find in the Talmud the expression, 'We say to a Nazirite, Go around, avoid coming near a vineyard?' He answered, "Yes." With this the Rabbi answered, 'Samson was a Nazirite, and they came to the Vineyards of Timnah. Samson, due to his Nazirite vow, did not enter the vineyards. Only his father and mother entered. So when the lion encountered him, he was alone. Hence, it is written, 'toward him.'"

When this man got older, he related this to Rabbi Meir Shapiro of blessed memory, the rabbi of Lublin, and he was very impressed. He told him that this is an interpretation unlike any other,⁵ and he will search through the commentaries. After three years, he saw him again and told him that he had searched, but did not find any results.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The renowned wealthy hasid, Rabbi Heschel Bauminger (may his righteous memory be a blessing) from Krakow, traveled once during the winter to the Divrei Chaim (may his righteous

⁵ Literally: like one of the ancients [i.e. ancient sages].

memory be a blessing), in the city of Sanz. He asked the close attendant of the Rebbe, whose name was R. Moshe Yehoshua, "What is the best time to enter the Rebbe's room when no one else would be with him? The attendant replied that at two in the middle of the night, no one is in the Rebbe's chamber, and at that time, the Rebbe studies. Therefore, he should see to it to enter during this time. Rabbi Heschel followed the advice, entered at that hour, and observed that the Rebbe was studying, completely unaware that anyone had entered.

Presumably, when he chanced upon a certain subject and he raised his head from the Gemara, the Rebbe noticed him and asked him, "Oy R. Herschel, what are you doing here so late at night?" Rabbi Herschel approached him with a kvittel [petitionary note] and handed it to him. Rabbi Herschel said to the Rebbe from Sanz, "I have everything, thank God. I lack nothing. However, I want to do repentance for the sins of my youth." Upon hearing this, the Rebbe began to strike his foot on the ground and said to him, "Oh, Rabbi Heschel, you've come such a long way! I wish to atone for the mistakes I made—those from yesterday, those from last night. Meanwhile, you're already dealing with the sins of your youth!" And he repeated this many times with great enthusiasm, as was always his holy style.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

In the city of Krakow lived the renowned hasid and philanthropist Rabbi Heschel Bauminger, may his memory be blessed. Once, while he was in Marienbad, he encountered the revered Rabbi Yechezkel of Shiniva, may his memory be blessed, the son of the esteemed Rabbi of Sanz, may his memory be blessed. Rabbi Yechezkel said to him, "Rabbi Heschel! I heard about you that you give two red gold coins if someone tells you a story from your ancestor, Rabbi Heschel of Vizhnitz that you have not yet heard." Rabbi Heschel responded affirmatively. Thereupon, Rabbi Yechezkel of Shiniva said to him, "I will tell you two stories from your ancestor and I will not take even one red gold coin from you." And he told him that Rabbi Heschel of Vizhnitz (near Krakow) once traveled to Apt to bask under the revered Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heschel, may his memory be blessed. And he considered spending Shabbat in Apt, but it did not work out as planned. He found himself compelled to stay in a village near Apt at the home of a Jewish villager. At night, when he wanted to make *kiddush* on the wine he brought with him from his home, he asked for a cup from the villager. However, all the cups in the villager's possession were damaged [*pagum*], and there was no cup eligible for *kiddush*. He then decided to use his own snuff box, for he had a snuff box resembling a small cask. He cleaned and polished it well, turning it into a cup for *kiddush*. The next Shabbat he was in Apt. As the Chassidim gathered around the table, including Rabbi Heschel, the Rebbe of Apt asked the people of Apt to bring him a pinch of snuff. Each one of those who were sitting nearby prepared his snuff box, and the Rebbe took a pinch from some people. However, he remarked that the snuff was not good. And when Rabbi Heschel prepared his snuff box for him and the Rebbe took a pinch from it, the Rebbe of Apt said to Rabbi Heschel that his snuff smells of *hakal tapuhin kadisiyin* [byname for the *shehina*, the Divine Presence]. And he asked him "So, Rabbi Heschel, how did you manage that?" (Rabbi Heschel of Vizhnitz was not a simple man, and he understood that the Rebbe of Apt sensed the sanctity of his *kiddush* from the previous Shabbat.) Thereupon, Rabbi Heschel recounted what had happened with his snuff box the previous Shabbat, and the Rebbe of Apt replied, "Now it makes sense..."

The revered Rabbi from Shinova, may his memory be a blessing, also told him that the custom of Rabbi Heshel of Vishnitz was to rise every night at two o'clock and drink "Sarvateke" (which is the whey left after making cheese) until dawn.

And every time, he would go to the synagogue, but he wouldn't wear his phylacteries in the morning until he saw that milk was emitted from him. This was his practice every night because he wanted to fulfill the saying of our sages that phylacteries require a clean body.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

In Krakow, there was a Chasud and very wealthy man by the name of Wolf Shonberg, who in his youth journeyed to the Rebbe Rabbi Bunim of Peshischa, may his memory be blessed. As the years passed, this man, Mr. Wolf Shonberg, distanced himself greatly from religion.

On the Rebbe Rabbi Bunim's yahrzeit, when Chassidim of Kotsk would drink a toast, he, too, sent a large amount of mead to the *shtibel*, for he was a very wealthy man, and the Chassidim questioned him, “What is this? You are a complete Apikores (heretic), and you certainly don't believe in the ways of the Hasidim. Why is it that you send drink every time on the yahrzeit of the Rebbe R' Bunim?” He told them that he, too, had visited Rabbi Bunim in his early days when he was still conducting a Hasidic lifestyle, and the Chassidim drew him near. Rabbi Bunim's custom was to tap everyone who came before him (as in his later years, Rabbi Bunim had become blind). Those Chassidim who were deemed worthy were invited into his room, while those who were not deemed worthy were not invited. And he was not allowed entry.

Consequently, it implies that he was a great rabbi who could foresee the outcome of his spiritual state. Therefore, he was indeed a Rebbe and he needed to provide *mashke* for his Yahrzeit commemoration.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Rebbe Rabbi Yitzchak of Stutchin, may his memory be blessed, related that once, he was with his father, the Rebbe Rabbi Moshe of Rozvodov, may his memory be blessed, at the grave of our master Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk, may his memory be blessed. They heard that there, in a nearby village, not far from Lizhensk, lived a blind and elderly man, one hundred and five years old, who knew Rabbi Elimelech, may his memory be blessed. They went to him and asked him to share a story about Rabbi Elimelech, may his memory be blessed.

The man was not a Chassid and casually referred to Rabbi Elimelech by the name "Meilech." He mentioned that he knew him but did not recall any stories from him. The only thing he remembered was that in his youth, he had a horse with a wagon, and from this, he supported his family. Once he rode his horse to the city, put up his horse near the inn in the village, and entered to drink some alcoholic beverage, and when he came out, he couldn't find his horse because thieves had stolen it. He was very distressed as the horse was his entire livelihood and possession. His mother-in-law suggested that he go to Rabbi Elimelech, may his memory be blessed. With no other option, he went to the rabbi, weeping before him. Rabbi Elimelech said to him, "Visit the inn where your horse was stolen and have a few drinks there. When you come out, you will find your horse."

So it was. The Rebbe from Rozvodov added, "You see, he was a holy man who saw everything. With this, the man laughed and told him, "This was no miracle. Apparently, he had a connection with the thieves, and when he cried before them, his pitiful pleas touched their hearts. He commanded the thieves to return his horse." They further asked him how many years he has been blind. He told them that he had brought the calamity upon himself. When one of his son's grandsons put on a student hat, and he saw it, he cursed himself, saying it would be better for him to be blind than to see his grandson wearing a student hat. A few days later, he indeed lost his sight.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Rebbe Rabbi Shlomo Perlow of Bolechov, may his memory be blessed (the author of *Mikdash Shlomo* and *Sidur Kehilat Shlomo*), related that once he came before the Rebbe Rabbi Yisrael of Tshortkov, may his memory be blessed, in the city of Vienna. The Rebbe, may his memory be blessed, told him a story about the Rebbe Rabbi Mottele Chernobler, may his memory be blessed. He described how, in his holy conduct, he would collect money from people. Once, Rabbi Mottele Chernobler was with servant named Chlavna in a certain city, and they collected a large sum of money. At night, when they went to sleep, he told his servant that if someone knocks on the door at night, he should open it for anyone who comes and wake him up from his sleep.

And so it was. Two women who wanted to enter the Rebbe's room knocked, but Chlavna, the servant, did not want to open the door. The Rebbe said to his servant, who was sleeping in the room before him, "Chlavna, there is knocking. Go open the door" Chlavna responded, "Rebbe, it's not worth it. Two old women are outside, and they will give you only ten kopeks. It's not worth it." The Rebbe instructed, "No, no. Go open the door."

The Rebbe stood up from his bed, put on his garments, and sat at the table. The women came before him, lamenting about their husbands who had run away from them several years ago and never returned. The Rebbe of Chernoble took his glasses, placed them on his eyes to see the women, and said, while pointing with his holy hand at one of them: "This one is ugly; the other one is not bad." That's how the story goes. When the Rebbe of Tchortkov finished telling this, he stood up from his seat, put on his *gartel* as if preparing for prayer, approached the cabinet, took a small box from it, placed it on the table, opened it, and said to the Rebbe of Bolechov, "See the glasses of the Rebbe of Tchernobel." The Rebbe of Bolechov took the glasses in his hand and saw that beneath the lenses, two stones were placed.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Rebbe, Rabbi Chaim of Tzanz, the author of *Divrei Chaim*, may his memory be blessed, related that he possessed a great faith in Hasidim. Once, they were sitting at a *melave malka* in Ropshitz on Saturday night, and during the Birkat Hamazon (Grace After Meals), one of the Hasidim mentioned "Reitzei" (satisfy) during Birkat Hamazon. He began researching Halachic codes to see whether there is any opinion that maintains that "Reitzei" should be recited on Motzei Shabbat. He was unable to find any Halakhic authority supporting such a view. Nevertheless, he concluded in his mind to say "Reitzei" because he heard from a fellow Hasid who said "Reitzei." However, before the Rabbi of Tzanz reached the blessing of "Reitzei", he heard this Hasid telling the fellow sitting beside him that he had made a mistake and said "Reitzei" during Birkat Hamazon. The Rabbi of Tzanz said that if not for this, he would have recited "Reitzei".

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Holy Divrei Chaim of Tzanz, found fault with authors of books, particularly the rabbis of a well-known country. He stated that anyone who has ink with a writing pen writes books and publishes them. However, in all the books authored by those rabbis, he found nothing good. He recounted an incident where some rabbi from the known country came before him, presenting a large and extensive book. The Rebbe remarked that he found only one thing that caught his eye, which was the verse, "Whether a nation exchanged a god although they are not gods. Yet My nation exchanged their glory for what does not avail." The author claimed that among non-Jews who have different religions, if a person wants to change his faith, like from Catholic to Protestant, he is thereafter called by the name of his new faith. However, among Jews, if one changes his religion, he is still called an apostate "Jew".

And afterwards, when he wishes to return to the Jewish faith, he does not need to undergo any conversion process, as he was not removed from the Jewish community until the day of his death. This is the interpretation of the verse "Whether a nation exchanged a god". You want to know why a non-Jew, when he changes his religion, is called by the name of his new faith? It is because "they are not gods."

"And My nation," meaning, the Jews "who exchanged their glory does not avail" —is of no use to him at all. Thus spoke the Rabbi Chaim of Tzans, may his memory be blessed."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Chozeh of Lublin, may his memory be blessed, traveled once with his disciple, the holy Yehudi of Peshuscha to Rabbi Mordechai of Neshchiz, may his memory be blessed. The Chozeh of Lublin mentioned that every day he hears in heaven the proclamation, “Give honor to Mordechai ben Gitel.” Whenever someone with a little *kvitel* comes before him, and his name is Mordechai ben Gitel, he scrutinizes him to find out if he might be the one. As time passed and he couldn't identify who was being honored with that proclamation, he decided to ask about it through a dream. He fasted for three days and received an answer in the dream that he was Rabbi Mordechai of Neshchiz. Consequently, he is traveling to meet him.

They traveled in a wagon for several days, and on Friday, just before midday, they were still some distance from Neshchiz. The holy Jew foresaw that there would be disturbances on the road during Shabbat with the Rebbe of Lublin because it was the custom of the Chozeh to close his eyes before Shabbat and not open them until after Shabbat. He couldn't see due to the sanctity of Shabbat, and he would need to guide him throughout the entire Shabbat. Therefore, he wished the Rebbe to perform some act of *kefitzat haderech*. So he said to the Rebbe, “During previous generations, when the *zadikim* traveled, they didn't travel long distances, like us, since they performed *kefitzat haderech*.” So the Chozeh replied, “True! Who can already perform *kefitzat haderech* today?!” And when he uttered these words, they stood with their wagon in the town of Neshchiz, for these words encompass the Holy Name for *kefitzat haderech*. As commentators interpret about Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, who stated, “I will go to the well today.” Today, I went out, and today I came in.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Rabbi, Menachem Mendel of Kotsk, may his memory be a blessing, once addressed the Chassidim, saying, "In the Torah (Genesis 43:34), it is stated, 'And they drank and became intoxicated with him.'" He raised the question posed by the Midrash Rabbah: Didn't Joseph's brothers expressly vow not to drink wine until they find their brothers? He clarified it with a worldly saying, "The one who offers a drink is a brother."

He further sat and commented on the matter of silence: "The most impactful cry concerning the world is silence."

Once again, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotsk, may his memory be a blessing, explained to address the question raised by the Midrash and Rashi: Why did God appoint Balaam as a prophet, so that he would not provide an excuse for the nations of the world? If God had appointed prophets for them, we would have returned to the good. Therefore, He appointed prophets for them. Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotsk challenged, "The question still remains. For Israel, God appointed Moses, our teacher, the finest among creatures, yet for them, God appointed Balaam, unclean and abominable from all the abominations in the world. Therefore, they still have an excuse, if God had appointed a prophet like Moses for them, we would have returned to the good." Hence, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotsk responded with the following: "If you put up sour milk, the cream will rise to the top." Understand and discern.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The holy Rabbi Isaac, may his memory be a blessing, from Ziditshov was resentful if one of his Hasidim traveled to another Rebbe. In Skhidnytsia, near Drohobych, the great and wealthy Hasid, Rabbi Shmuel Leib Bakenroth, of blessed memory, who was a Hasid of Ziditshov —when the Holy Rebbe from Tshortkiv, may his memory be a blessing, resided in Zolotyj Potik, Rabbi Shmuel Leib would travel to him. When the Holy Rebbe from Ziditshov was made aware of this, he was resentful regarding this. So he traveled to Ziditshov to reconcile with him. This is because when the Rebbe from Ziditshov heard that Rabbi Shmuel Leib traveled to Potik, he said to his people, "I will turn Skhidnytsia into Potik." (Potik means, a river). Since in Skhidnytsia there were wells of oil, most of which were owned by the aforementioned Rabbi Shmuel Leib, the matter arose that as soon as the Rebbe from Ziditshov mentioned these words, that he will make the Skhidnytsia into a Potik, the wells of oil in Skhidnytsia were washed away with water, and they called prominent engineers from Vienna and Bilgoraj, and they could not do anything. Therefore, Rabbi Shmuel Leib traveled to appease the Rebbe of Ziditchov, and the custom was that whenever he came to the Rebbe, he used to be seated among the first at the table. However, on this occasion, the Rebbe's close gabbai placed him at the end. And when the Rebbe came to the table, he noticed that Rabbi Shmuel Leib was not in his usual place. He remarked, "Nu, Shmuel Leib, why are not on your usual seat?" and he returned to his original place. During the meal, when Rabbi Shmuel Leib raised a l'chaim to the Rebbe, he cried very much, and tears fell into the cup. The Rebbe asked him, "Shmuel Leib, why are you crying?" He replied, "Rebbi, why should I not cry? I am taking care of my children, and the Rebbe turned Skhidnytsia into Potik. How will I earn a living for the children?" The Rebbe replied, "I didn't mean your children, but you." And so it was that throughout Rabbi Shmuel Leib's life, there was never oil in Skhidnytsia. When he passed away, all the oil springs were opened, and his sons inherited great wealth, cradles of gold, literally.

The humble R. Eliezer of Lviv

As I heard, after the reconciliation, Rabbi Shmuel Leib returned to the Rebbe from Tshortkov, of blessed memory.

The holy Rabbi Levi Yitzchak, may his memory be a blessing, of Berditchev, known as the "Kedushat Levi," once delayed the Musaf prayer of Rosh Hashanah until approximately an hour before Mincha. And it was a sublime wonder. At night, following all the prayers, the holy Rabbi sat and recounted to his people why he delayed the Musaf prayers to such an extent. For he saw a *masakh hamavdil* [dividing curtain] between the Jewish people from their Heavenly Father, and waited until the curtain was removed. He told the reason for removing the curtain was that: (It is known that under the rule of the Czar in the Russian Empire, Jews served in the army for many years. It was a law in the government of the Czar to permit his soldiers to pray according to their faith, as the kingdom held various religious beliefs, and they always feared any revolution in their government; therefore, they specifically desired that everyone would pray like them. They could not tolerate the progressives.)

And so, the Rebbe recounted: "In the faraway Steppes, Jewish soldiers assembled today for prayer. Before the Musaf prayer a soldier approached the table and tapped on it to signal silence. He would like to speak prior to Musaf. And he said, 'Master of the world, what do we ask from you? What are we afraid of you? Will you make us soldiers of the Panyen (officers)? You have already made us soldiers - will you, God forbid, give us non-kosher food? We already eat non-kosher food - will you take away our wives and children? You have taken them away from us. Lord of the world, what do we ask of you? What are we afraid of you? - That we will die this year? If only! If only! Lord of the world, you see that we have nothing to ask from you,⁶ nevertheless we still say *yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'mei raba.*'" And on this, the Holy Rebbe concluded, "As soon as the army officer finished speaking, the dividing curtain was removed, and then we prayed the Musaf."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

⁶ The meaning is a bit unclear.

The holy Rabbi, Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heschel of Apta, and said in his sermon on Shavuot that it is written in the Book of Ruth: "Is it not true that I seek rest [Manoah] for you, which will be good for you." He explained these words, that it is stated in tractate Bava Batra, page 91a, "Ibzan is Boaz; and Boaz made for his sons one hundred and twenty feasts, as it is stated, and he had thirty sons, and he had daughters, and in each one he made two feasts, one in his father's house, and one in his father-in-law's house, and in all of them he did not invite Manoah. 'He's like a barren mule; how can I expect repayment from him?' (Rashi explains, 'how can I expect repayment from him' —she has no sons to invite me to her meal). The Tanna taught that they all died during his lifetime because he did not invite Manoah to their meals." In the Midrash Ruth, it is also stated that Ruth did not want to marry Boaz. She said, "He is sterile (buries his sons). I do not want." Naomi replied to her, "'Is it not true that I seek rest [Manoah] for you?' I will invite Manoah to the feast. Therefore it 'will be good for you', and you will have living and enduring sons."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

In the village of Safrin, near Baryslav in Galicia, lived Rabbi Isaac, the father of five holy individuals. They were Rabbi Zvi Hersh from Zidichov, Rabbi Moshe from Sambor, Rabbi Berish from Zidichov, Rabbi Sender from Kamarna, and Rabbi Lipa. It is known that their mother, before her passing, said, "b'Mesilah Na'aleh [in a chariot we will ascend]", the initials of the names of her sons forming the phrase "b'Mesilah". Rabbi Isaac, the father, would regularly travel to visit the holy Seer of Lublin, and his holy sons, when they were young, studied with a teacher in Sakhodnitsa, near the village of Safrin. There lived a wealthy man, Rabbi Shlomo Leib, who also travel to the Rebbe of Lublin. Rabbi Shlomo Leib hired the teacher for the sake of his sons and for the sons of Rabbi Isaac. These youngsters studied together.

Always, Rabbi Shlomo Leib would ask Rabbi Isaac, "Why can't my sons study, and your sons excel in their studies? I pay the teacher for all the children. He is provided with complimentary meals at my home, and I supply all the necessities, and, in the end, your sons remember what they learned, and my sons don't remember anything at all." Rabbi Isaac responded, "You ask fairly, but I have no answer for you. When we will be in Lublin, we will immediately ask the Rebbe this question." When they were in Lublin and they submitted their petitionary notes, Rabbi Shlomo Leib forgot to ask this question. Rabbi Isaac reminded him when they were at the Rebbe's door, nearing the Chozeh. And they posed the question to the Rebbe. The Chozeh replied, ""Maybe you don't pay him properly, and maybe he doesn't have a separate room and the necessary accommodations." Rabbi Shlomo Leib answered that the teacher has everything he needs at his place, and he pays him well. So, the HOly Chozeh Replied, "Now, let's say a pure divine insight. While you are examining your kids at the Shabbat table, the teacher is present behind the door and listening whether the children know the material. However, every time he is fearful that if they will not know the material, you will dismiss him from serving as a teacher. Therefore, you are preventing him from enjoying the Shabbat. As a result, your children do not know their material."

This incident led Rabbi Shlomo Leib to instruct his sons and grandsons (they are a large family in Akenrata, in Galicia) not to test the children on Shabbat, as is customary.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The revered Rabbi Avraham of Sochatchov, may his memory be a blessing (the distinguished Gaon known as the Avnei Nezer), received a grievance from one of his followers concerning a certain apostate, may God have mercy. During their discussion, the man exclaimed, "May his name be erased" (following the common custom). The Rebbe of Sochatchov responded to him, saying, "You should know that by uttering these words, 'May his name be erased', you transgress the words of the Torah. In Jewish law, a rebellious apostate who dies childless—his wife does not become widowed without a formal release (chalitzah), and she requires a levirate marriage (yibum) with his brother. The law of yibum in the Torah is for the reason that his name will not be erased from Israel, as the Torah commands. Therefore, when you say, 'may his name be erased,' you violate what is written in the Torah."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Holy Rabbi Asher, the Rabbi of Narol, was a son-in-law (in his second marriage) of the Maharam of Tiktin (the father of the holy Rabbi Zvi of Tchoortkov, and the grandfather of the holy brothers, Rabbi Shemelka of Nikolsburg and the Hafla'ah). A daughter was born to them, and when her time came, Rabbi Asher, traveled to the yeshiva of Rabbi Shemelka in Shinova (as Rabbi Shemelka was previously a rabbi in the community of Shinova) to choose a groom for his daughter. In Rabbi Shemelka's yeshiva, there were two outstanding young scholars in Torah study, both named David. One was sharp-minded, and the other was knowledgeable. The knowledgeable one was called big David, and the sharp-minded one was called small David. Rabbi Asher chose small David. When he came to his house and told his wife that he had chosen small David as his bridegroom, she cried a lot and was indignant, claiming that she would not agree to this match. She told her husband that when she was in Shinova visiting her nephew, Rabbi Shemelka, she heard and saw Rabbi Shemelka sitting and sleeping with his head on his hand by the table. When he lifted his head from his hand, he said, "David! 'I have made you small among the nations.'" Therefore, she cannot agree to the match. However, Rabbi Asher paid no attention to this and went ahead with the wedding. After some time, Rabbi Asher died, and his son-in-law David wanted to be accepted as a rabbi in Narol. However, the residents of the town opposed this, so he went elsewhere and was accepted as a rabbi in the city of Krasnebrad. But as soon as he took on the role of a rabbi, he began drinking alcoholic beverages and became a drunkard to the extent that the townspeople removed him from the rabbinate. He then traveled to the capital city, Warsaw. There, he became an apostate, may God have mercy, and continued to drink heavily. While still in Krasnebrad, his wife gave birth to a son. When her husband left for Warsaw, she returned with the child to her mother's house in Narol. The entire town and its surroundings were abuzz with this story, for they heard of his behavior in Warsaw. In Narol, a simple man, a valiant hero, approached the distressed rabbi's wife and urged her to have her unfortunate daughter accompany him to Warsaw. He also suggested she bring three hundred rubles, and he would try to persuade the apostate to grant her a *get* (religious divorce document). And so it was. The young woman traveled with him to Warsaw, and after some days, the man from Narol found the apostate and engaged him in a conversation to convince him to divorce his wife.

He agreed to this on the condition that they provide him with one thousand shein and a written commitment from his wife that, after their child grew up, she would give him the child. The simple man negotiated for a few days, reaching an agreement that the apostate would receive three hundred rubles along with a letter regarding the child. The young woman was reluctant to give her money for the *get*, and certainly not a pledge regarding the child, but the heroic man begged her and promised her that immediately after the divorce she would have the money back and the letter.

They came to an agreement that the woman would give the money and the document to the rabbi whose task it was to arrange the *get* for them. The woman did so and after a few days, the apostate divorced her and went to the rabbi to give him the three hundred shein. The rabbi could not prevent it and gave it to him. But the simple man fulfilled his promise and went with the apostate to the tavern. He gave him so much to drink the point that he became intoxicated and did not know between good and evil. At that point, the man stole from him the three hundred shein along with the document and returned them to the distressed woman and they immediately travelled traveled back to Narol. After some time, the child died, and the poor woman married a certain tailor, and a son was born to them. All the holy people testified about him that he was holy from his mother's womb. He became the Rabbi, the holy Rabbi Asher Yeshayahu, of blessed memory—who was the son-in-law of the Holy Rabbi Naphtali of Ropshitz, of blessed memory—whose name was given in honor of his maternal grandfather, of blessed memory.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The esteemed Rabbi Leibush Poyzner, of blessed memory, after assuming the role of rabbi in Warsaw following the passing of the revered Gaon, the Chemdat Shelomo, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Lipszyc, the Chidushei HaRim opened his room's window and declared, "Woe to you, woe to you, city of Warsaw! You have lost a fine rabbi, and you have lost a fine householder (*baal habayis*)!"

The reason for this was that the rabbi, the author of *Chemdas Shlomo*, was famous as a Gaon and a great man, while Rabbi Leibush Pozner—in his capacity as a *baal habayis*—was very fine and important, but not fit to be the rabbi in the place of the author of *Chemdas Shlomo*. Therefore, the Chidushei HaRim lamented the aforementioned words.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The revered Rabbi, the Chidushei HaRim, may his memory be a blessing, used to frequently recount a saying he heard from the esteemed Ohev Yisrael at the Wedding of Ostilla. He was there as a messenger by his mentor, the Holy Bunam of Peshischa. The content of the saying is what we recite in the Shacharit (morning) prayer on Shabbat in the blessing of Yotzer Or, which begins with "To God who rested from all his works." In the middle of the composition, it continues with "Therefore let all his creatures glorify and bless God." So what does the word "therefore" signify? The author of the composition says earlier, "When the Sabbath day itself offered praise and said, "A Psalm, a song of the Sabbath day, It is good to give thanks to the Lord. What relevance does it have to say afterward "Therefore let all his creatures glorify." The Holy Rabbi from Apt explained the true and correct interpretation that just as all creatures praise the Almighty, so does the Shabbat itself praise the Holy One, blessed be He. This is the reason for the word "therefore," for the poet enumerates the greatness of the Shabbat and states later that the seventh day (itself) praises and says to the Holy One, blessed be He. Therefore, it is appropriate to say afterward, "Therefore let all his creatures glorify and bless God."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Holy Rabbi Bunam of Peshischa, a disciple of the Holy Jew, followed a different approach than his teacher. The Chassidim of Lublin and Kozhnitz disagreed, and foremost among them was the Holy Rabbi Shimon Daitsh of Aderberg. He was a disciple of the Holy Maggid of Kozhnitz and the Rebbe of Lublin. In the year 5586, the famous wedding took place between the holy grandchildren; the holy Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heschel of Apta, with the Holy Rabbi Yosef, son of the Holy Rabbi Mordechai of Nishchiza. The wedding took place in the city of Ostila, the residence of the late Rabbi Yosef. All the Rebbes and Chassidim from Poland were present at the wedding, and I heard that there were eighty rebbes with silk *bekitches* (Hasidic frocks) present. Rabbi Bunam also wanted to attend the wedding, as he said that in the presence of all the rebbes, there was no need to justify his different approach from theirs. He expressed fear only for the Holy Elder (referring to the Gaon and saint, the Ohev Israel).

Therefore, when they learned that all the rebbes would be at the wedding, and behind the scenes, they heard that these rebbes want to decide there that the method of Rabbi Bunim is not proper in their eyes, and that they also want to forbid marriage with the Hasidim of Peshuscha—as a result of this, Rabbi Bunim wanted to travel there to show that his conduct is also derived from approach of Baal Shem Tov, may his memory be a blessing. However, the Holy Rabbi Mendel of Kotsk, his disciple, did not let him travel. And they argued much over this. Rabbi Bunim said he would travel, and the Rabbi of Kotsk begged of him that he should not travel. Finally, when the Rabbi of Kotsk saw that Rabbi Bunim was not paying attention to his words, he told him that when he sits on the carriage to travel to Ostila, he will lie down on the ground in front of the horses and not let them move. It would be better for him if the horses trampled his body, because Rabbi Bunim would go to the wedding. When Rabbi Bunim heard this, he refrained from traveling. However, he told his disciple, Rabbi of Kotsk, “I tell you that in the presence of the Holy Elder, I need to justify our approach, for of him I fear.” Therefore, they decided that they will send 3 Peshischa chasidim to the wedding. One will be a scholar, and they chose the Holy Rabbi Yitzchak Meir of Warsaw, may his memory be a blessing (he was the eminent Gaon, author of Chiddushei HaRim). The second will be a Hasid, and they chose the Hasid Rabbi

Eliezer Hirsh Grabovitzer. The third will be a business owner, and they chose Rabbi Yisachar from Polotsk, the son-in-law of the famous Berkis of Warsaw.

And when all of the rebbes were assembled and were sitting together, contemplating what to do about Peshuscha, suddenly the Hasid, Rabbi Eliezer Hirsh Grabovitzer, leaped onto the table at the place of the Rebbe of Apt, opened his clothes, tore his shirt, exposed his heart, and said to the Rebbe of Apt: "'Rebbe of Apt, by examining this heart, you can discern that there hasn't been a sinful thought in forty years. This exemplifies a Peschischa Chassid." Turning to all those gathering, the Rebbe of Apt responded, "Take this brazen man from the table." Immediately, the Chassidim grabbed him over the table and wanted to strike him, but he escaped outside, and they chased him until he crossed the river that flows through the city of Ostila, escaping them along this route. (It is said about this Chassid that after this incident, he did not live through the year.) Later, the Rebbe of Apt said that on every hair of his heart, every hair and strand is filled with brazenness. (The Chiddushei Harim was very angry with the Chassid mentioned above because he did not speak with him earlier and did not tell him the details of what he would do). After the gathering, the Rebbe of Apt (Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heshel of Apt) summoned the Rebbe Rabbi Yerachmiel, the son of the Holy Jew from Pshischa to his room and asked him how Rabbi Bunim behaved in the presence of his father, the Holy Jew of Pshischa. Rabbi Yerachmiel replied to him: "What are you asking? In the company of my father, he embodied the essence of his heart." When the Rebbe of Apt heard this, he went to the assembly of the righteous and said that after the words of the holy Rebbe from Pshischa, we have nothing more to consult about regarding the approach of Rabbi Bunim. He then closed the meeting, and they did not speak further on this matter.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The story with the aforementioned text is accurate, as I heard from my father-in-law, a student of the Chidushei HaRim, may his memory be a blessing. The student heard the story from his teacher and recounted it to his son-in-law.

The esteemed righteous woman, Mrs. Temerl Bergess, of blessed memory, from the city of Warsaw was renowned for her righteousness. She supported financially all the Rebbes and Chassidim in Poland. It is known that Rabbi Bunim, may his memory be a blessing, served as a manager of her assets in the forests she owned. Rabbi Leibush Poyzner also served as her manager before ascending to the rabbinical seat in Warsaw. Temerl's husband, R. Berke, was renowned for his extraordinary charity. During the Revolution in Poland, when the Cossacks, may their names be blotted out, murdered many Jews—R. Berke, being close to the authorities, had governmental protection from any personal harm. He arranged large barrels filled with silver rubles in his courtyard, telling the Cossacks that for each living Jew they brought to him, he would give two silver rubles, and for each deceased Jew, he would give one ruble (as he wanted the deceased to be properly buried in Jewish tradition). In this way, he saved many lives from death, may Heaven have mercy. Once, the students and Hasidim of Kozhnitz saw that the Magid laughed during the Silent Prayer. After the prayer he turned to his followers with a grin on his face and said to them, “Berke died, and I have now seen how he was immediately taken to Heaven with his shirt and boots in his pants,” and he laughed heartily.

And the Maggid said about him that, due to the charity he practiced all his life, he was not required to undergo accountability before the divine judgment, and he was led straight to Heaven, even though he was a simple man. The respected woman mentioned earlier once arranged a wedding, not for her own son, and invited many rebbes to the wedding. Even the Rebbe Moshe Eliakim Beriah, son of the Holy Maggid of Kozhnitz, traveled to the wedding. The Chidushei Harim became aware that his teacher, R. Moshe of Kozhnitz, would be there, and he feared that Rabbi Leibush Poyzner, then a rabbi in Warsaw, might unsettle him with Torah discussions incorporating in-depth analyses, because Rabbi Moshe, the son of the Maggid and author of Be'er Moshe, concealed his mastery in Torah study throughout his life and was a remarkable scholar. Only the mitnagdim did not understand this and thought that he did not know how to learn. Therefore, the holy Rebbe, the Chidushei Harim, desired

to attend the wedding so as not to allow Rabbi Leibush Poyzner, to agitate his holy teacher, Rabbi Moshe. There were many obstacles and significant delays until he arrived at the wedding. Upon his arrival, the Chidushei Harim told his teacher that he would serve him and act as his assistant during the wedding. Whilst at the wedding, during the festivities, when the holy Rebbe, Rabbi Moshe, washed his hands, Rabbi Leibush posed a halakhic question related to the Laws of Washing one's Hands (and the Chidushei Harim was beside him, for he stood behind him and did not move from him, as is expected of an assistant). Upon this, the [Chidushei] Harim commented to Rabbi Leibush that it was unfitting for the Rabbi from Warsaw to pose such an inquiry, as it hardly qualifies as a question. The previously mentioned [reply] was provided later in the course of the meal. He asked additional halakhic questions, and each time, the Chidushei Harim responded, and refuted his questions and statements.

After the wedding, Rabbi Moshe kissed the Chidushei Harim on the head and uttered the words, "You have given me life." The Holy Rim, of blessed memory, already frequented Peshischa, and the ill-feelings Rabbi Moshe had towards the Rim is known, when his sons died, may Heaven have mercy. Nevertheless, out of respect for Rabbi Moshe, he traveled to the wedding and masked himself as a beadle.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Holy Rebbe Zvi Hirsch, may his memory be a blessing, from Ziditshov, was once in Lviv with the Ketzot HaChoshen. They engaged in extensive debates with him on the Talmud and its commentaries. The Gaon, the Ketzot HaChoshen, was greatly amazed by the learning of the Rebbe from Ziditshov, from his sharpness and erudition. Before parting ways, the Ketzot Hachoshen inquired why Hasidism commenced during the times of the Baal Shem Tov. After all, the Besht conducted himself entirely like the Ari, of blessed memory. Why didn't Hasidism begin in the days of the Ari? The Rebbe from Ziditshov responded by citing a Midrash on the Torah given through our teacher Moses, may he rest in peace. The Midrash states, "It would have been appropriate for the Torah to be given in the days of our forefather Abraham, may he rest in peace, but the Holy One, blessed be He, arranged everything beautifully in its time. He gave the Torah through our teacher Moses, may he rest in peace." Examine these words.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The holy Rebbe, Rabbi Feivish, of blessed memory, from Hivnev, was a disciple of the Rebbe of Lublin, of blessed memory. He was also the designated prayer leader during the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur for the Chozeh (the Seer). He would always pray with intense devotion and with great enthusiasm to the extent that many times, during his prayer, he would faint during his prayers. Once, during the High Holidays, he led morning prayer service. As he began to sing "Hamelech" (the King), he escaped through the window, outside. The Chozeh sensed this but did not respond, and all the worshippers stood and gazed outside, wondering what he would say about it, after a few moments the holy Rabbi Feivish returned to the lectern again, continuing to sing "Yoshev Al Kisei Ram V'nisa" (He who sits on a high and lofty throne). After the prayer, the Rebbe, of blessed memory, asked him why he fled from the lectern. Rabbi Feivush, of blessed memory, replied that when he began to sing "Hamelech," he remembered a passage from the Talmud (Tractate Gittin 56a) - "If I am a king, why have you not come until now?"

Once, on the Holy Sabbath, when saying "Nishmat kol chai" (the soul of every living being) at the lectern, he fainted, and they could no longer awaken him. This was the manner of his death.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The holy Rebbe, Rabbi Yisachar Dov, of blessed memory, from Belz, related that Rabbi Motl Tschernobler, of blessed memory, had an attendant named Chlavna. Anything Rabbi Motl did, he would consult with Chlavna to confirm its correctness. It happened that once, the holy Rebbe, Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heshel of Apt, of blessed memory, came to the city where the Holy Rebbe of Tschernobel was there, and the Holy Rebbe of Chernobel inquired of Chlavna whether he should go to greet the holy Rebbe of Apt. Rabbi Motl replied that he should not go because it is proper that the Holy Rebbe of Apt should come to him first. Rabbi Motl then retorted, "Do you know that is a great Torah scholar?" Chlavna answered, "If that's the case, the Rebbe should go to him." The Holy Rebbe of Apt inquired of his attendant, "Aren't we engaged in Torah study?" The attendant replied, "I don't witness the Rebbe studying." The Rebbe of Tschernobel then retorted, "How can we engage in learning when, upon waking up in the morning and saying Modeh Ani L'Fanecha (I Give Thanks Before You), I contemplate who 'I' is and who is 'before You'? This preoccupies me throughout the day, leaving me with no time for study."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The holy Rebbe, Rabbi Hershele, of blessed memory, from Ziditshov, remarked once in a playful manner to his son-in-law, the holy Rebbe, Rabbi Yehuda Hersch of Rozla, of blessed memory, that when he was accepted as rabbi of the city of Rozla, there was an intense heat beyond measure. People were greatly distressed. The aforementioned Rebbe said to his son-in-law, "I thought that now, when you become Rabbi, the heat would cool down a bit." His son-in-law asked for an explanation, and he replied, "It is stated in the Talmud, 'Any judge who judges a true judgment becomes a partner with the Holy One, blessed be He, in the act of creation.' Our Sages have said, 'The pot of partners is neither cold nor hot.' Therefore, it is fitting that the heat should cool down.'

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The holy Rebbe, Rabbi Yehoshua, of blessed memory, from Belz, was twice at the home of the Holy Divrei Chaim of Zanz. On the day that the Rebbe of Belz announced that he would come to Zanz, the Divrei Chaim was full of joy. He entered the kitchen, stood by the doorstep, and told the women that they should know that today a great Rabbi, a King of Israel, would come to him. They were to prepare delicious foods as befitting to serve before a King of Israel. Upon the Rebbe of Belz's arrival at his residence, a young boy, approximately six or seven years old, was present. This boy was the grandson of the Rebbe of Zanz (specifically, the revered Rabbi Aharon Halberstam, the Rabbi of Biala, son of Rabbi Yosef, and grandson of Rabbi David of K'Shanev). He studied under the Rebbe of Zanz. It was the custom of the boy: if one of the Chassidim mentioned his name, he would respond with a verse from the Bible that began and ended with the letters of his name. It was truly remarkable, and the Rebbe of Zanz had great affection for him. The Rebbe of Zanz recounted to the Rebbe of Belz about his grandson, who recited verses. The Rebbe of Belz suggested that the boy say some verse for him as well. The boy asked, "What is your name?" He responded, "Yehoshua," To which the boy responded with some [offensive] verse, and the face of the Rebbe of Belz became contorted. And when the rabbi of Sanz saw this, he hit the boy on the head (with great affection) and asked him, "Don't you have another verse for our in-laws?" The boy quoted, "May the trees of the Lord be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon that He planted," and the Rebbe of Belz, with a joyful expression, gave him a golden coin. After the Rebbe of Zanz passed away, the young boy matured, assumed the role of the rabbi of Biala, and embarked on his initial pilgrimage to be in the company of the Rebbe of Belz. The Rebbe of Belz, recognizing him, inquired if he was Aharon, the grandson of the Rebbe of Zanz. And Rabbi Aharon was afraid, for he remembered the offensive verse that he said back then to the Rebbe, when he was a young boy in Zanz. But immediately after he asked if he was Aharon, the Rabbi of Belz jovially remarked, "I hold no grudge against you; it's nothing."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Holy Rabbi Yechiel Meir from Gostinin, a student of the Holy Rabbi Mendel from Kotzk, after the passing of his teacher, traveled to the Holy Rabbi, the Divrei Chaim of Zanz. Every time he visited Zanz, he wished to fulfill, “assisting the Torah scholars.” He asked for the attendant of the Rabbi of Zanz, that when the Rabbi entered his room and sat on his chair, that the attendant allow him to place a small stool under the Rabbi's feet. In return, he would give the attendant a bottle of good wine to take home. Once, the Rabbi of Zanz wanted the Rabbi to light his stem pipe, and he called the attendant to provide him with fire. Upon hearing this, the Holy Rabbi from Gostinin hurried to the kitchen ahead of the attendant. He quickly grabbed a burning coal from the oven to give fire to the Rabbi of Zanz, and his hands got burned in the process.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Holy Rebbe, Rabbi Yaakov of Novominsk, may his memory be a blessing, fell ill before his death. His family took him to the capital city of Warsaw for his recovery. And he said that after six weeks, he will return home, healthy and strong, as before. The Rabbi returned prior to the Holy Shabbat, prayed on his own, following his custom. He sat at the table during meals and during the Third Meal, all the people who were with him became very frightened. For when he began to sing the psalm of "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want," he repeated the words with intense enthusiasm about a hundred times the verse "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for You are with me." Afterward, when he came to the song "Command Your kindness," when he said the words, "gather the outcasts," he said that everything a person is sent into this world for is solely to gather and assemble the dispersed souls. He said this as well with enthusiasm and great fear. He repeated this statement forty or fifty times, and there was no longer a spirit left in the person who heard these words from him, for they knew that now something unfortunate happened. Nevertheless, he continued to sit at the table, and the Hasidim continued to sing. He recited Torah and said the Grace after Meals. When he finished, he said, "May the Lord bless His people with peace," laid his head on his hand, and leaned on the table as if to sleep. After two hours, when they saw that he did not rise, they approached him and realized that he had already passed away and departed to the next world. This account was told to me by one of the Hasidim of Gur who was studying at that time in the yeshiva of Novominsk.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Holy Rabbi Shlomo Lutsker, may his memory be a blessing, was a disciple and relative of the Holy Maggid Rabbi Ber of Mezeritch. At times, he signed himself as a disciple and relative of his teacher. He resided in Lutsk and had a brother in the city of Skohl in Galicia, named Rabbi Mordechai, who was wealthy. When his brother passed away at a young age, leaving behind small children, Rabbi Mordechai's widow implored her brother-in-law, the Holy Rabbi Shlomo, to come and live in Skohl, to study and oversee her children, and she would provide for all his needs. Rabbi Shlomo agreed, and over time, the people of Skohl became aware of the greatness and holiness of the Holy Rabbi Shlomo. He was appointed as the Maggid in the city and had an only son named Rabbi B'erish, may his memory be a blessing. Rabbi B'erish became the rabbi and Head of the Rabbinical Court of the city of Alesk and lived a very long life. Rabbi B'erish of Alesk had a son by the name of Asher. He was the son-in-law of the Gaon Rabbi Elazar, the son of the Holy Rabbi Sholom from Belz. Once, when the Holy Rabbi Yehoshua from Belz, visited the Gaon of Narol, he remarked, "What people say, that the reason Rabbi Shlomo Lutsker was not appointed nor ordained to become a famous Rebbe like other disciples of Rabbi Ber, was due to a grudge of the Holy Rabbi Mordechai from Neshchizh, is not the case. Rather, it was his wife who caused the issue, being an unpleasant *magid'ke* (wife of a Maggid)."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Chidushei HaRim, may his memory be a blessing, recounted to his nephew and student, Rabbi Avraham of Vayovidislav, may his righteous memory be a blessing, that the great Rabbi Yaakov, may his memory be a blessing, from Lissa, the author Chavat Daat, never missed a day without giving an in-depth [talmudical] lesson to his students. And the Rabbi of Lissa would come occasionally to Warsaw, and whenever he came, many scholars would gather around him to learn, and he would deliver an in-depth lesson before them. The Hidushei HaRim, may his memory be a blessing, would also attend the lesson. He was just a boy of sixteen then, and it was his custom to sit at the end, in the lesson, because he was the youngest among the students. Once, he asked some question to the student seated next to him, and he in turn asked the question to his neighbor until the question was brought before the Rabbi of Lissa, and the great Rabbi asked, "Who posed this question?" They gestured toward the youngster, and the Rabbi called him to sit next to him, for he was amazed by his sharp question, saying about him that he is young and wise. After the study, when all the students left, the Rabbi of Lissa asked R. Yitzchak Meir if he could stay with him. Later, he asked him personally if he was a Hasid and which Rebbe he traveled to, and he replied that he traveled to the Rebbe Rabbi Bunam of Peshischa. And the Chavat Daat told him that once he happened to be with two Hasidim from Strelisk in an inn, and he saw that they ate half a fried goose before prayer. This seemed strange to him, and he didn't say anything to them, only waited to see what they would do next. Afterwards, he saw that they stood up to pray and prayed with tremendous enthusiasm, so much so that he said it was worthwhile to eat before prayer in order to pray afterward with a good heart. And he would say to the Hidushei HaRim that if one knows they will pray with enthusiasm and intention like those Hasidim, then it is also appropriate to eat half a goose before prayer.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

In the city of Lublin, there was a man who every Friday evening would hand out steel combs in the public bathhouse and the Holy Rabbi Chozeh of Lublin, may his memory be a blessing, would say about him the phrase "May my portion be with him." When the great Rabbi Azriel, may his memory be a blessing (the Iron Head), who was then the Rabbi and Av Beit Din of Lublin, heard this, he laughed and said, "Behold, it is mentioned regarding King David, peace be upon him, that when he entered the bathhouse and saw himself was unclothed, devoid of mitzvot, he was disillusioned. However, he could have handed out combs if indeed it is such a significant mitzvah. And when they told this to the Chozeh, may his memory be a blessing, that the Rabbi had laughed at it and brought proof from the Talmud, the Chozeh, may his memory be a blessing, remarked, "It is quite remarkable that such a brilliant individual (a man as tough as iron) could overlook an entire Mishnah, which prohibits bathing with the king."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The book "Zera Kodesh," from the holy Rabbi Naftali of Ropshitz, may his memory be a blessing, cites numerous times, "And when I was a jester in the prime of my youth, I would pray, 'May the union be a beautiful and successful one.'" I heard an interpretation of this matter, regarding why the Name Yud-Hei has the numerical value of 26, and the Name Aleph-Dalet has the numerical value of 65. The sum total is 91, like the word "Amen". It is mentioned in the writings of the Ari, may his memory be a blessing, that in Messianic Age, the Tetragrammaton* (Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei) will be equivalent to thirty. Therefore, the two Divine names, Aleph-Dalet, will be equal to ninety-five. It is known that these two aforementioned names are a pair. Therefore, the holy Rabbi of Ropshitz would pray that the match should be beautifully made, as it totals 95, meaning that redemption should come soon.

The humble Rabbi Eliezer of Lviv.

*And the Ari, may his memory be a blessing, said on this matter the explanation of the verse, "וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא" (and it will be on that day) "יְהִי" (Yud-Hei=30) and "ד'" (Aleph-Dalet=65) [i.e. יהיה אד"נ will be united as one equaling 95]. And analyze this.

The Rabbi of Ropshitz, may his memory be a blessing, also said: "Why in the four sons, one is wise, one is wicked, one is a simpleton, etc., does the author of the Haggadah place the simpleton after the wicked one? After all, the simpleton is a God-fearing and righteous man, and it would have been appropriate for the wicked one to be counted last." The Rabbi, may his memory be a blessing, said that the simpleton is foolish, while the wicked one is intelligent. The simpleton, even if he fears Heaven, is nothing because the wicked one, in one moment, if he contemplates repentance, will be more God-fearing than the simpleton because he is intelligent. Therefore, the wicked one deserves precedent though he is evil. And it is known how much our master, the Rabbi, may his memory be for a blessing, hated fools.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

Rabbi Yaakov, may his memory be a blessing, from Sadigura, said: "The Gemara in Berakhot explains [the verse] 'A psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son,' and raises a question: "'A *psalm* of David?' 'A lamentation to David' should be required?" And the Rabbi questioned: "Do we find in all of Psalms any chapter that begins with 'A lamentation to David?' And what is the Gemara's difficulty? For all the afflictions that David had, he did not say even one lament?" And the Rabbi explained the Gemara's question: [The fact is that] "this is not 'a psalm of David who fled from Absalom his son,' but rather a lamentation. Therefore, it was difficult for the Gemara why David said, 'A psalm.' It would have been sufficient for him to just start with 'to David when he fled', without the word 'psalm.' And similarly, there are many chapters in Psalms that begin like this. And the Gemara's inquiry goes like this: 'A psalm of David, etc.'? This is a lament, and what needs to be emphasized is not "a *psalm* of David."

R. Eliezer of Lviv

The Baal Shem Tov, may his memory be a blessing, visited the esteemed Gaon, the Noda BiYehudah, may his memory be a blessing, two or three times, as he was close to the wife of the late Gaon. The Baal Shem Tov remarked regarding the Noda BiYehudah as follows: "Oh! A third of the world rests upon the Torah of the tall, slender, and dark-skinned Jew!" Each time the Noda BiYehudah visited him, he received him warmly and sat with him in conversation. When the Baal Shem Tov noticed that the Gaon stopped his study due to his arrival, he ceased visiting him. Once, when they were both seated at the table, along with the Gaon, a woman came with a question about a certain chicken. The Gaon told the Baal Shem Tov to answer the question. The Baal Shem Tov responded that he sees no pure [kosher] spirit upon this chicken. The Noda BiYehudah then took the chicken to examine the question and declared it "kosher" after half an hour. While they were still at the table, the woman herself brought the same chicken, as she found a question regarding its innards. She presented the innards to the Gaon, who ruled it as "treif."

When the woman left, the Noda BiYehudah turned to the Baal Shem Tov and said to him that a difficult Gemara now been resolved for him, as it is stated in the Gemara, "In the future, the Torah will be forgotten from Israel. What is it? A woman will come with a loaf of terumah to the study hall and will ask about a creeping creature [*sheretz*] that touched this loaf, whether the loaf is ritually impure or pure." And the Gaon told him that all his life he had found this Gemara difficult: Why is it said that a woman will come *with the loaf* to the study hall? It would have been enough to say that, God forbid, if the Torah were forgotten from Israel, a woman would come with *this query* to the study hall, and they would not know how to answer her? Why is it necessary for her to bring a thick loaf? Now, when he heard from the Baal Shem Tov this ruling that he couldn't discern the purity status of the chicken, everything is resolved. Because in the future, the Torah will be forgotten, and they will not know how to study, as there will be hasidim who will be endowed with the the Holy Spirit [*ruakh hakodesh*], and without the basket of terumah, and also without the chicken, they will not know how to rule. Therefore, they will be forced to bring a loaf of bread to the study hall to see if the Holy Spirit rests upon it.

R. Eliezer of Lviv

Rabbi Yehuda Zevi of Rozla recounted that he honored his father even while still in his mother's womb. The incident was as follows: To Rabbi Moshe of Samber, a man would come with grievances each time he had a grown daughter who reached marriageable age and was incapable of finding a match for her—since she was exceedingly unattractive and he himself was exceedingly poor and unable to offer a dowry for her; and every match suggested to him was declined as soon as they laid eyes on her. This man often came to the aforementioned Rabbi with this complaint. And on the last occasion, when the man came to grumble before him, Rabbi Yehuda Zevi said that he would marry her if her father agreed. Thus, Rabbi Moshe married her, and after seven months following the wedding, she experienced labor pains, and the entire town was spreading gossip about her, tarnishing her reputation. It reached the ears of her holy husband. However, he recognized her as a righteous woman and entered her room, saying: I decree that the unborn child to delay its birth for several more months, and the labor pains ceased. After nine months, a son was born to her, who turned out to be Rabbi Yehuda of Rozla. When he grew up, he learned about the aforementioned incident, and he commented on this that he honored his father even while still in his mother's womb.

R. Eliezer of Lviv

Concerning Rabbi Hersch of Rimanov, it was rumored that he would grasp a hot stove while praying, so consumed was he by prayer that he became entirely disconnected from his physical senses, oblivious to the burning sensation caused by touching the hot oven. I heard from a person who heard from Rabbi Ezekiel of Shinove (who often traveled to Rabbi Hersch) that they asked Rabbi of Shinove if he was aware of this, and he said he did not know, but he recounted two stories from Rabbi Hersch that he had witnessed himself. "Once, on a Sabbath during the recitation of "Nishmat Kol Chai," one of the bones in his ribcage broke, and another time, during a Sabbath, Rabbi Hersch was unwell, and his son-in-law did not allow him to go downstairs to the synagogue to pray (the Rabbi lived upstairs, and the synagogue was downstairs). When the burghers went to the synagogue, his son-in-law locked the door with the key so that Rabbi could not go out to pray because they knew he would not be able to restrain himself from going to the synagogue. Suddenly, during the prayer, everyone was amazed to see Rabbi. Rabbi Hersch recounted that when his son-in-law locked the door behind him, he agreed with him to go through the window to the synagogue, so he opened the window and was about to go (in a miraculous manner). But before he placed his foot on the window sill, he thought to himself, "Why bother the angel to perform a miracle for me? Perhaps the door will open without a key." And indeed, when he approached the door, he saw that it was open. Thus, he had the option to enter the synagogue.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

Rabbi Shalom of Belz jokingly remarked to explain the Targum on the verse in Parshat Balak, "Says the man with the closed eye." And the Targum interprets "closed eye" as "who sees clearly". The explanation of the Targum is similar to what we call a blind man as "Sagei Nahor" [plenty of light]. The Targum presents this in a cleaner language [i.e. in euphemistic language] . Rabbi Shalom questioned whether, if the Torah speaks in this manner, should the Targum be more careful to speak in a cleaner language than the Holy Torah? Rabbi Shalom remarked, "Should we not wonder about Balaam, who saw a vision of God, as it is said about him, "He sees a vision of God."? He was impure and detestable in all of his 248 limbs and 365 sinews, so how could he see such a vision?" This is the interpretation of the Targum: the Torah said that "the eye is closed," meaning that this eye did not commit any sin, yet with this eye, he saw all the visions. Therefore, it's apt to translate it as "closed eye." All of this was said in jest.

And in Hasidic style, he said that it is known that the eye is called Providence, and among Man there are four levels: Adam, Enosh, Ish, and Gever. Gever is the lowest level, where Providence is concealed, God forbid, and there is no one to watch over us. The meaning is as follows: "Says the Gever (who was in the level of Gever) with the closed eye," indicating that Providence is concealed, God forbid, and there is no one watching over us. "Says the one who hears the words of God and the vision, etc," indicating that whoever believes in all these things, "falls", even if he falls from his level, he says, "The eyes are open," that Providence is revealed.

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Rabbi Alter of Valbrom recounted that he heard from the Divrei Hayim of Zans, who said that he was a messenger from heaven to speak harshly about the sons of the holy Rabbi of Sadigura (as is known about the dispute that existed). Then, again, he heard from him that he said, "What's the harm in me speaking about the grandsons of the holy Rabbi R' Baer, may his memory be a blessing, and they punish me for it, saying I'll go to hell? For this, I am not afraid because even there, is God." Afterward, he said numerous times: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me." And he further said: "May a thousand souls like Chaim serve as an atonement, before allowing, Heaven forbid, even the tiniest detail of the holy Torah to be compromised."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

Rabbi Meir'l of Premishlan heard that a certain mitnaged ridiculed his behavior and way of worship, and the mitnaged began to reprimand him face-to-face on various issues until the verse (2 Kings 9:20) "He behaves with madness" came out of his mouth. The Rabbi, in a calm manner, responded, "Probably did not see the Targum on this verse, which translates (?) as 'He behaves with wisdom.' " And analyze this.

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The Rabbi of Kotsk, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of blessed memory, said to his Hasidim: "I ask only that you refrain from looking beyond yourself, avoid scrutinizing others, and in worship, don't consider yourself [as the focal point]."

And when he passed away, the holy Hidushei HaRim eulogized him, and remarked about him with the verse: "The righteous one has perished, but no one takes it to heart," interpreting it as follows: "There is now nobody left to implant in the heart."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

A man came before Rabbi Zusha of Anipoli, and told him that his deceased father appeared to him in a dream numerous times at night and requested that he should convert, God forbid. The father always feared God. Therefore, he has from the dreams much pain and affliction. Rabbi Zusha advised him to visit his father's grave, suggesting that he might find something detestable there. Indeed, upon going to the grave and searching, he found a coin with a cross on it. He removed the coin from there, and afterwards, his father appeared to him again in a dream and thanked him. When this incident was related before the Vilna Gaon, he remarked to his students that it was not a miracle since the incident is recorded in the Jerusalem Talmud. However, it was a wonder how Rabbi Zusha knew stories from the Jerusalem Talmud, as he had never studied. When Rabbi Zusha heard this, he said that indeed he had never seen the Jerusalem Talmud himself—only he is also aware of it from the source where the Jerusalem Talmud presents the aforementioned narrative.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The Chidushei Harim, may his memory be for a blessing, once stated, "The rationale for the tradition of throwing nuts, almonds, and sweet candies on the groom when he is called to the Torah on the Shabbat before his wedding is derived from the Talmud (Kiddushin, page 29a) which says, 'With a millstone from his neck, and he shall engage in Torah study,' and in Pirkei Avot it is stated: 'Whoever takes upon himself the yoke of Torah, they remove from him the yoke of worldly concerns' (this refers to the burden of earning a livelihood). This is what we signify to the groom when we throw these items on him as he ascends to the Torah, because when he embraces the yoke of Torah, his livelihood will come to him effortlessly, just as it does now."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

Rabbi Naftali of Ropshitz, may his memory be blessed, during his youth, was approached by a mitnaged who asked him, "I will give you one reinesh if you disclose where God dwells." In response, the Rabbi of Ropshitz offered to give him two reinesh if he could specify where God does not dwell.

Likewise, the Rabbi of Kotzk, may his memory be blessed, once remarked, "God dwells where you allow Him entry."

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

In the yeshiva of the revered Gaon, the Noda BiYehuda, may his memory be a blessing, it was customary for students to be invited to households on Shabbatot. Their practice was to leave some of each dish uneaten. Once, during one Shabbat, a layman approached the Noda BiYehuda with complaints about a student who had dined with him, stating that he did not leave any leftovers but consumed everything placed before him. The Gaon responded by recounting a humorous incident from the Talmud (Tractate Chullin, page 7b), where Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair's donkey refused to eat untithed barley. The Gaon questioned, "Why didn't it eat? If it knew the barley wasn't tithed and the halacha required tithing, it should have also known the halacha 'He may set his sight on this side [with the purpose of separating tithes], and eat on the other side.' So why didn't it eat? The explanation is that the donkey feared that if it left leftovers, it would receive less next time than it did now. Consequently, each time it would be given less. The same principle applies to the student dining with you.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The revered Rabbi, Rabbi Bunim, may his memory be blessed, from Peshischa, once approached the esteemed Rabbi Fischel Strikover, may his memory be blessed, and informed him that he had stopped accepting "kvitelach" containing petitions for some time. This decision came about after a destitute man approached him, seeking help with his financial struggles. Rabbi Fischel advised the man to purchase a lottery ticket, assuring him that he would win and become wealthy. However, in the end, In the end, the poor man failed to win the lottery and also lost his money. Consequently, Rabbi Fischel decided to stop accepting "kvitelach." In response to this, Rabbi Bunim cited a passage from the Talmud (Ketubot, page 103a), which states, "The righteous decrees, and the Holy One, Blessed be He, fulfills." Additionally, he referred to the saying found in the Tana D'bei Eliyahu and the text of Ziduk Hadin: "Who can tell Him what to do?" This seemed to contradict the previous Talmudic statement. However, Rabbi Bunim explained that while the Holy One, Blessed be He, fulfills the decrees of the righteous, He does not seek advice from them. These words helped reconcile Rabbi Fischel's concerns.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

I heard that there was a time when a destitute man approached the revered Rabbi David Moshe of Tchortkov, may his memory be a blessing, seeking sustenance. The Rabbi counselled him to maintain constant joy, for it is a spiritual remedy to bring about sustenance. The poor man queried how he could find happiness without any means and an empty home. The Rabbi replied, "What indeed do we not do for the sake of earning a livelihood?"

The holy Rabbi Chanoch of Alexander, may his memory be a blessing, a disciple of the Rebbe of Kotsk, may his memory be a blessing, said that the matter of "I do not know" is exceedingly great and it is also the essence of knowledge, and one should train oneself to say 'I do not know' and using similar expressions. Therefore, the [precept of the] Red Heifer is a statute, and is aligned [with this notion of] 'I do not know.' Therefore, it can atone for the grave sin, the Golden Calf. And regarding the issue of 'not knowing,' individuals can be aided with all that is beneficial.

And he recounted a story regarding this: In ancient times, the gentiles frequently engaged in debates with our sages. Once, they appointed a certain rabbi to engage in debate with a bishop. The rabbi was very afraid that he wouldn't be able to withstand the bishop's arguments. He declared a fast for his community and recited Psalms and similar prayers before the Almighty, so that the rabbi not to be ashamed. The Gentiles reached an agreement with the Jews—leaving aside the obvious differences— that failing to answer a peer's question would result in his head being cut off.

But before the appointed time, a simple man approached them and requested the rabbi's permission to argue with the priest. The rabbi acceded to his request, and so it was when the appointed time arrived, the simple man ascended the platform and asked the priest to explain the interpretation of "Eni Yodea [I do not know]." The priest responded to him in German, "I do not know," and a miracle occurred. When the gentiles heard from the priest's mouth, saying, "I do not know", they pushed him off the platform, and the Jews emerged victorious. Afterwards, the rabbi inquired of the man, "How did you conceive of engaging in such folly, arguing with the priest and risking your life?" The man replied that he reads on the Sabbath the book Tze'ena Urena. There he read the words [in Hebrew] "Eni Yodea" and the Tze'ena Urena did not know its interpretation, for there he read explicitly, [in Yiddish] "I do not know" and if the Tze'ena Urena did not know the interpretation, he was sure that the despised priest also did not know. Thus, he proceeded with the argument.

The humble Eliezer of Lviv

The revered Rabbi Shalom of Belz once said an interpretation of the Midrash and the Mechilta on the holiday of Shavuot: “When the Holy One, blessed be He, gave the Torah to Israel, the angels said before the Holy One, blessed be He, 'Give glory to Your heavens.' He said to them, 'It is written in it that it is forbidden to eat meat with milk, yet yesterday you ate meat with milk at Abraham's.'” The revered Rabbi objected, 'But in the Torah it is written to reverse it, that they ate milk first and then meat, and thus it is permissible, for it is written: 'And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them...' And he interpreted, "Why is it prohibited to consume meat before milk? It is because, as stated in the Zohar and the writings of the Arizal, meat symbolizes justice while milk symbolizes mercy. Our revered sages determined, 'The lower one dominates.' Hence, if one consumes meat first, justice prevails over mercy. This principle of the lower one dominating applies specifically to us, who inhabit the earthly realm. Conversely, for the angels dwelling in the heavens, it is the upper one that dominates. Therefore, if they were to consume milk before meat (and the upper one dominates for them), this clarifies why, for them, it constitutes a mixture of meat and dairy."

Later, he further explained a difficult question from the Midrash, for it is stated that at the giving of the Torah, during the Ten Commandments, for each commandment, the Israelites responded 'yes' or 'no.' That is, for positive commandments, they responded 'yes,' and for negative commandments, they responded 'no.' The revered Rabbi objected: 'If so, how did the Israelites respond to the first commandment? Isn't it stated in the Talmud, "I am the Lord your God," and "You shall have no other gods before Me," were said simultaneously? What could they have answered? If their answer were 'yes,' it would pertain to, God forbid, a negative commandment, and if they said 'no,' it would imply, God forbid, rejection of the first commandment.' And the respected Rabbi stated that concerning the first commandment, the Israelites replied, "God is one," because they were unsure how to respond. He provided evidence from the Shabbat hymns, which state, “And they all came together in the covenant; 'we will do and we will hear,' they all responded as one, 'and they began' (specifically), and they affirmed, 'God is one.'” The revered Rabbi noted, “‘God is one,’ is not explicitly found in the books; rather, it refers to the first utterance.”

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