

עֵפֶרֶת הַשָּׁבוּעַ

A Weekly Torah Publication from the Students of Mesivta Ateres Yaakov
Ruth & Hyman Simon High School

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Candle Lighting:	4:11
Latest שמע:	9:25
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Earliest הבדלה:	5:17

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ATERES HASHAVUA
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משה בן ישראל ע"ה

A LIGHT THROUGH THE DARKNESS Rabbi Yehuda Horowitz, 12th Grade Rebbe

In Parshas Vayeishev we find very peculiar events. The *shevatim* seem to be falling to very low levels. Yosef is saying *lashon hara* about his brothers. They are hateful of him and almost kill him. Yehuda seems to have failed as their leader. He then appears to be doing acts completely out of character in his relationship with Tamar. Yosef is faulted with making himself look beautiful which brought upon himself the *nisayon* of Potifar's wife. Are these the holy *shevatim*? Actually beneath the surface of darkness, the seeds of Moshiach are being planted in our parsha. As the midrash writes, "Yaakov was actively in a state of mourning over Yosef, Reuven was involved in fasting and doing *teshuvah* for having sinned. Yehuda was busy getting married, and Hashem was preparing the light of the *Melech HaMoshiach*." Yehuda seems to have a *ירידה*, as it says *יהודה יורד*, although actually together with Tamar he would give birth to Peretz who is the grandfather of Dovid HaMelech and *Moshiach ben Dovid*. So too, Yosef seems to have fallen as it says *מירידה מצרימה* yet there he would marry *Osnas* and bring forth the seed of *Moshiach ben Yosef*.

Chanukah is the time where everything seems so dark and dreary. It is during the longest winter nights, which represent the difficult struggles of *tumah*. So too we place our menorah to the *street*, on the *left* side of the door and *below ten tefachim* which are all areas of less *kedusha*. In that

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A FLEETING MOMENT

Avi Lieberman, 12th Grade

וינס ויצא החוצה [לט:יב]

AND HE [YOSEF] FLED, AND WENT OUTSIDE

When the Jews left Mitzrayim and came to the *Yam Suf*, they were scared and didn't know where to continue. They were then told to go into the waters and they will split. The waters however refused to do so, since there were some sinners among Klal Yisroel. The Midrash tells us that it was only when the *Yam Suf* saw the bones of Yosef HaTzaddik that it split.

We make reference to this in Hallel when we say *הים ראה וינס*, *the sea saw and fled* (separated). It was in the merit of Yosef HaTzaddik when he ran away; 'וינס' - from Potifar's wife when he was tested, that the waters allowed Bnei Yisroel to cross. As the Torah states, "וינס ויצא החוצה," so too do we say in Hallel, "הים ראה וינס."

Although, every one of Yosef's bones that didn't sin was rewarded, as the Midrash in Bereishis Rabbah enumerates, it still seems surprising that this act of *running* away was the merit that caused the *Yam Suf* to split - how does this action deserve a greater reward than his acts of actually not sinning?

My rebbe, Rabbi Yehudah Horowitz, quoting Rav Chaim Shmulevitz *zt'l* explains that the most fundamental method of overcoming our *yetzer hara* is to stay away from being tested. The *gemarah* relates to us that a person who passes by immodestly dressed women and doesn't look at them deserves much reward. However, if there was another way he could have walked instead, he's a *rasha* for not going that way! Even though he didn't sin, he's a sinner for putting himself into the *nisayon*. Yosef could have overcome her with physical

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AVI LIEBERMAN (continued from page 1)

strength, but he chose not to stay even for a second longer so that he wouldn't be near her. Although he had to shamefully leave his garment by her, he still ran away knowing that he may be framed. It was in this *zechus* that the waters split. How careful we must be in guarding ourselves from enticement and sinning.

When Bnei Yisroel were in battle, the Torah gives some allowance for the soldiers to live with a gentile girl, who is called a *yifas tohar*. The reason for this allowance is to appease the desires of the *yetzer hara*. Rav Shimshon Pincos *zt'l* wonders, isn't this contrary to the entire ideology of Torah which guides us to battle and overcome our *yetzer hara*?

He explains that all other desires of the *yetzer hara* can be overcome by not remaining in the place of temptation. However this one time, the soldier isn't allowed to run away since in battle we're not allowed to abandon the battlefield. Since this option is unavailable the Torah must allow this desire to be fulfilled. This teaches us the importance of not putting ourselves into a place of *nisayon*. The *Mesilas Yisharim* writes that when we are far from a sin it's relatively easy not to come close, but when we're close it is most difficult not to sin.

Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser tells how Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Ruderman *zt'l*, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Ner Yisroel in Baltimore, was once staying in a New York Hotel. His assistant received a phone call from someone who identified

himself as a former classmate of Rav Ruderman whom he did not see for forty years, and expressed an interest in visiting him. Knowing that the Rosh Yeshiva suffered from debilitating ailments, and sure that it would be pleasant and uplifting for him to meet one of his boyhood friends, the assistant enthusiastically made the arrangements.

He then went to tell Rav Ruderman about the phone call. The elderly Rosh Yeshiva immediately asked for his coat and hat, left the hotel, and didn't return until late that evening. When the assistant asked the Rosh Yeshiva why he had left, Rav Ruderman replied, "Forty years ago, The Alter of Slabodka warned me to stay away from that bachur because he would have a negative influence on me."

Forty years later, although now a *gadol biTorah*, Rav Ruderman still heeded his rebbe's precautionary words. To place himself in a *makom sacanah* (area of danger) was not an option, for the influences he was warned about years earlier had ingrained in him the commitment to stay away from such *nisyonos* (tests). If Rav Ruderman felt the need to heed his rebbe's words forty years later, and Yosef HaTzaddik's greatest attribute was his *running* from sin, how much more should we be careful not to be tempted by the enticements around us? Let us safeguard ourselves against being in such atmospheres, and truly merit a life emulating Yosef HaTzaddik. Good Shabbos.

RABBI HOROWITZ (continued from page 1)

setting, the Menorah illuminates all the darkness. This is the message of our *parsha* as well. Although things seem so dark, they actually were very bright. In our lives we sometimes feel that we aren't succeeding due to the great strength of the forces of darkness. On Chanukah we become infused with the message that the little spark of *kedusha* in ourselves which is represented by the one pure *פך שמן* can and will overcome all of the impurity which stands in our way.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

It was the first night of Chanukah. Outside, a snowstorm raged, but inside it was tranquil and warm. The Rebbe, Rabbi Baruch of Mezhibuz, grandson of the Baal Shem Tov, stood in front of the menorah, surrounded by a crowd of his Chassidim. He recited the blessings with great devotion, lit the single candle, placed the Shamash in its designated place, and began to sing HaNairot Halalu. His face radiated holiness and joy; the awed Chassidim stared intently at him.

The flame of the candle was burning strongly. Rebbe and Chassidim sat nearby and sang *Maoz Tsur* and other Chanukah *niggunim*. All of a sudden, the candle began to flicker and leap wildly, even though there wasn't the slightest breeze in the house. It was as if it were dancing, Or struggling, and then, it disappeared!

It didn't blow out, there was no smoke, it just disappeared. It was as if it flew off somewhere else. The Rebbe himself seemed lost in thought. His attendant went over to re-light the wick, but the Rebbe waved him off.

He motioned to the Chassidim to continue singing. Several times, between tunes, the Rebbe spoke words of Torah. The evening passed delightfully, and the Chassidim present had all but forgotten about the disappearing Chanukah candle.

It was nearly midnight when the harsh sound of carriage wheels grating on the snow and ice exploded the tranquility. The door burst open and in came a Chassid who hailed from a distant village. His appearance was shocking. His clothes were ripped and filthy, and his face was puffy and bleeding. And yet, in stark contrast to his physical state, his eyes were sparkling and his features shone with joy.

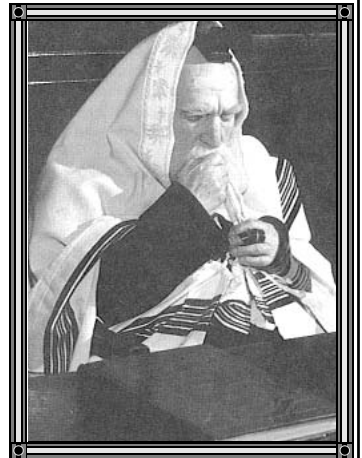
He sat down at the table, and with all eyes upon him, began to speak excitedly. "This isn't the first time I came to Mezhibuz by the forest route, and I know the way very well. But there was a terrible snow storm this week, which greatly slowed my advance. I began to worry that I wouldn't get here in time to be with the Rebbe for the first night of Chanukah."

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Rabbi Moshe Feinstein

7 Adar 5655 / March 3, 1895 – 12 Adar II, 5746 / March 23, 1986

- A boy was born to Reb Dovid and Rebbetzin Faya Gittel on a Sunday in 5655 (1895) in the town of Uzda, Belorussia, where his father was the rav .
- Having been born on the birthday of Moshe Rabbeinu, he was given the name Moshe.
 - ~ Young Moshe was a talented chess player in a country where chess was a popular pastime among talmidei chachomim. Yet at the age of eight, he gave up playing the game. In later years he explained why. "I told myself that if one is already using his mind, it should better be used in the study of Torah."
- Shortly before his bar mitzvah, Moshe's father sent him to Yeshivah Eitz Chaim in Slutzk, headed by Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer *zt'l*.
 - ~ While in Slutzk, Moshe quickly earned a reputation of amazing brilliance and vast diligence. He became known as the "Starobiner Iluy,"



and would remain in the Beis Medrash late into the night, sleeping barely five hours. By the time he turned thirteen, the young Moshe was fluent in two *masechtas* of gemara. Forty years later, Reb Isser Zalman would relate with admiration some questions and *chiddushim* from his thirteen year old talmid.

- At the age of seventeen, Moshe had already mastered all of *shas* with *tosafos*, and two years later he had completed all four sections of *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch*.

~ It was at this point in his life when, at his father's urging, he began writing *teshuvos* (halachic responsa). One of these teshuvos, dealing with the complex halachos of *shechita*, was later printed in his classic

Igros Moshe; a collection of *teshuvos* which cover a vast amount of halachic topics.

- In 1920 Reb Moshe became the rav of Luban (near Minsk), where he remained till he left Europe.
 - ~ When about six years old, Moshe and a friend became involved in a "serious" discussion. "When I grow up," the other boy said, "I would like to become a tailor, like my father."

It is good for a child to go in the ways of his father," young Moshe replied. "When I grow up I hope to become a rav."

~ Reb Moshe's davening was an inspiration for all who saw him. He would stand motionless during *shemoneh esrei*, except when bowing. In explanation, he related that when the communists brought him in for interrogation in Luban, he had been forced to stand at attention as a guard stood watch. Never had he felt so subservient. From then on he decided that he would demonstrate his subservience to the true Ruler by standing this way during *shemoneh esrei*.

- On Lag Ba'Omer of 1921, Reb Moshe was filled with feelings of danger, and immediately packed his most precious belongings (his Torah manuscripts) and fled the town. Minutes later, Luban was hit with a pogrom, and a bomb was detonated in the rav's house. Everyone assumed that Reb Moshe perished in the explosion.

~ After many days of being on the run, a fatigued Reb Moshe eventually made his way to the home of Reb Isser Zalman Meltzer. When the Cossack's threat had passed, Reb Moshe returned with the surviving townspeople to rebuild what was once their home. To commemorate the Lag Ba'Omer pogrom, Reb Moshe never took advantage of the break in the *sefirah* that Lag Ba'Omer offers. His *sefirah* bridged the entire period without interruption.

- In the following year, Reb Moshe married Sima, the daughter of Rav Yaakov Moshe Kastonowitz, the head of Luban's Jewish community, as well as the *shochet* and *mohel*.

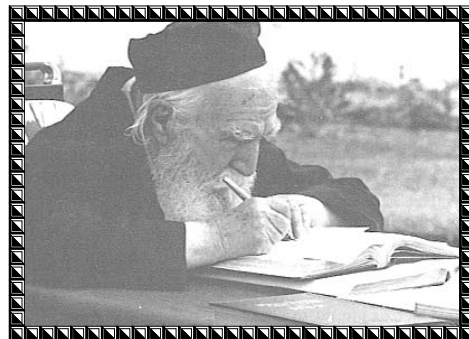
- Reb Moshe came to America in Shevat 5697 (1937), where he became the Rosh HaYeshiva of

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Mesivta Tiferes Yerushalayim (MTJ) in New York.

~ One of the original talmidim in Tiferes Yerushalayim recalls how the esteemed principal, Rabbi Yosef Adler, introduced Reb Moshe to the yeshiva. Rabbi Adler told the talmidim, "Whenever we needed a Rosh Yeshiva, I brought a great talmid chacham from Europe. Baruch Hashem, you boys learn well, and before long I have to bring you a new rebbe who knows even more Torah. I am not a young man anymore, so I decided to bring you someone who knows so much that no matter how much you learn, he will always know more than enough for you."



• Reb Moshe was a dedicated and selfless leader whose rulings were accepted worldwide, and to whom people were able to come at any time with their problems.

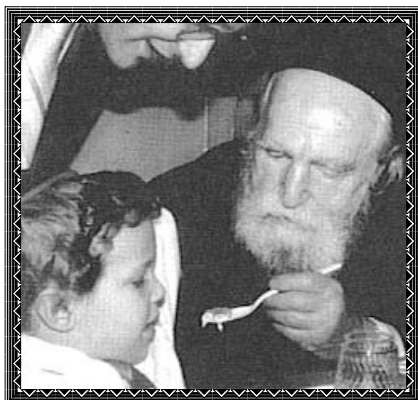
~ Distinguished rabbonim came and conversed with Reb Moshe on intricate and delicate topics, as well as the local housewives who would bring their strange-looking chicken parts – because he belonged equally to them all. It is thus not surprising that one woman used to call him every Friday afternoon to inquire about the time to light candles; Reb Moshe would answer and pleasantly wish her a *guten Shabbos*. Did it make a difference whether he was a twenty year old beginner in a tiny *shtetl* or a teacher of Klal Yisroel? His responsibility was to answer the queries of all Jews who needed him.

• He authored such works as his in-depth *sefarim* on the gemara, and multi-volumed collection of halachic rulings known as *Igros Moshe* (The Letters of Moshe).

~ A leading Rosh Yeshiva once called Reb Moshe with a list of difficulties in *Eizehu Neshech*, one of the most complicated *perakim* in *shas*. After they had discussed all of the questions and Reb Moshe had answered all the questions, the caller commented that he was fortunate to have called at a time when Reb Moshe had obviously learned the *perek* fairly recently. In the course of their conversation, it emerged that it had been more than eight years since Reb Moshe had learned the *perek* thoroughly.

• He was one of the last of our great leaders from Europe, and representative of the sages from pre WWII.

~ One time, a granddaughter and her husband came to visit Reb



Moshe and found him learning in his study with his back to the door. Not wanting to disturb him, the couple stood silently in the doorway, waiting for him to pause in his learning. Some time passed and Reb Moshe remained immersed in his learning. When the rebbetzin came by and observed the scene, she exclaimed, "If you are waiting for him to stop learning, you will be standing here all day!"

Hearing this, Reb Moshe turned around to his grandchildren and said laughingly, "How I wish that you should never find me sitting idle."

• Rabbi Moshe Feinstein passed away on Sunday night, the eve of *Taan'is Esther*, 5746.

~ Rabbi Elimelech Bluth said after his passing, "I don't think there was a mind in the world superior to that of Reb Moshe's – and I'm really not sure which was greater, his mind or his heart."

• Many people, some not even known to Rav Moshe, attended his funeral. They were some of the many whom were influenced by the humility, greatness and amazing wisdom possessed by our great Gadol Hador.

• His works are still being published today, close to seventeen years after his passing, and are studied in many yeshivos worldwide.



Reb Moshe with Rav Yitzchak Hutner zt'l

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Someone once spent the good part of a day accompanying Reb Moshe on a fund-raising mission. As the day wore on, the man noticed Reb Moshe growing weary and suggested that they return home. Reb Moshe insisted on continuing on, as he wanted to accomplish more. Feeling that the strain was too much for Reb Moshe, the man searched for some way to convince him to stop.

Suddenly, he hit upon the perfect argument. "The Rosh Yeshiva has not had much time to learn today. Perhaps we should go home now. . ."

Reb Moshe replied, "In *shema*, we are commanded to love Hashem with all our heart, soul and resources. Chazal teach us that the intent of these words is that we are to serve Hashem with such devotion that we would sacrifice for Him whatever is most precious to us. My greatest love is learning Torah. I must sacrifice even this when my services to Klal Yisreol requires it."

וישב יעקב בארץ מגורי אביו בארץ כנען

by Tzadok Picker

AND YAAKOV SETTLED IN THE LAND WHERE HIS FATHER HAD LIVED, THE LAND OF CANAAN.

The Baal HaTurim explain that the *gematria* of the words, "וישב יעקב בארץ מגורי אביו" is equal to the words, "שב לקיים מצות כיבוד אב", *he returned there to fulfill the mitzvah of honoring one's father.* The Baal HaTurim explains that at the end of Parshas Vayishlach where the Torah listed the descendants of Eisav; a lot of them being nobles and kings, Yaakov knew that Eisav must have been *zoche* to this from the only merit he ever earned; that of *kibud av*. Yaakov realized that if so much can be gained through *kibud av*, he too must attempt to fulfill this *mitzvah*. He therefore returned to the land where his father had lived. From here we see the valuable lesson of how much we can gain through honoring our parents, thus representing the *hakoras hatov* we must all have for the ones who we came from - our parents and Hashem.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM (continued from page 2)

The thought disturbed me so much, I decided not to wait out the storm, but to plod ahead and travel day and night, in the hope that I could reach my destination on time."

That was a foolish idea, I must admit, but I didn't realize that until too late. Last night, I ran into a gang of bandits, who were quite pleased to encounter me. They figured if I was out in this weather, at night, alone, I must be a wealthy merchant whose business could not brook delay. They demanded that I surrender to them all of my money.

I tried to explain, I pleaded with them, but they absolutely refused to believe I had no money. They seized the reins of my horses and leapt on my wagon. They sat themselves on either side of me to keep me under close surveillance, and then drove me and my wagon off to meet their chief to decide my fate.

While they waited for their chief to arrive, they questioned and cross-examined me in great detail, searched me and the wagon, and beat me, trying to elicit the secret of where I had hidden my money. I had nothing to tell them except the truth, and that they weren't prepared to accept.

After hours of this torture, they bound me and threw me, injured and exhausted, into a dark cellar. I was bleeding from the wounds they had inflicted, and my whole body ached in pain. I lay there until the evening, when the gang leader came to speak with me.

I tried to the best of my ability to describe to him the great joy of being in the Rebbe's presence, and how it was so important to me to get to the Rebbe by the start of the holiday that it was worth it to endanger myself by traveling at night."

"It seems that my words made an impression on him, or else he was persuaded by my adamancy even under torture. But whichever it was, *baruch Hashem* he released me from the handcuffs, saying:

"I sense that your faith in Hashem is strong and your longing to be with your Rebbe is genuine and intense. Now we shall see if this is the truth. I am going to let you go, but

you should know that the way is extremely dangerous. Even the most rugged people never venture into the heart of the forest alone, only in groups, and especially not in a storm and at night. You can leave and try your luck. And I am telling you, if you get through the forest and the other terrible conditions safely, unharmed by the ferocious wild beasts or anything else, then I will break up my gang and reform my ways.

"If you actually reach the outskirts of the city, he commanded me, "then throw your handkerchief into the ditch next to the road, behind the signpost there. One of my men will be waiting, and that is how I will know that you made it."

"I then became terrified all over again. The hardships I had already endured were seared into my soul, and now even more frightening nightmares awaited me. But when I thought about how wonderful it is to be with the Rebbe at the menorah lighting, I shook off all my apprehensions and resolved not to delay another moment. My horse and carriage were returned to me and I set off on my way.

There was total darkness all around. I could hear the cries of the forest animals, and they sounded close. I feared that I was surrounded by a pack of vicious wolves. I crouched down over my horse's neck and spurred him on. He refused to move in the pitch blackness. I lashed him. He didn't budge.

I had no idea what to do. At that moment, a small light flickered in front of the carriage. The horse stepped eagerly towards it. The light advanced. The horse followed. All along the way, the wild animals fled from us, as if the tiny dancing flame was driving them away.

We followed that flame all the way here. I kept my end of the bargain and threw my handkerchief at the designated place. Who knows? Perhaps those cruel bandits will change their ways, all in the merit of that little light."

It was only then that the Chassidim noticed that the Rebbe's Chanukah light had returned. There it was, burning in the elaborate menorah, its flame strong and pure as if it had just been lit.



אמת ליעקב

Weekly Insights from Moreinu HoRav Yaakov Kamenetzky zt"l

In this week's *parsha*, we read about the sale of Yosef. The Torah tells us that the brothers were planning on killing Yosef until Reuven stopped them, and advised them not to commit active murder, but rather to throw him into a pit. Reuven went back home, planning on returning and rescuing Yosef when his brothers were gone. The *midrash rabbah* brings down a statement from Rabbi Yitzchak about this *pasuk*. The *midrash* states that this *pasuk* is teaching us a lesson in *derech erez*. When a person does a *mitzvah*, he should always do it with a complete heart. Had Reuven known that the Torah would record this incident, he would have immediately carried Yosef on his shoulders back to Yaakov. Similarly, had Aharon known that the Torah would record the fact that he greeted Moshe when he came to *mitzrayim* to free *Bnei Yisroel*, he would have come with a musical procession. Likewise, had Boaz known that it would be recorded in *Megillas Rus* that he had given Rus roasted grain, he would have instead given her an entire cow. The *midrash* continues with a statement by Rabbi Kohen and Rabbi Seemon ben Levi, in the name of Rabbi Levi. "In the past, a person did a *mitzvah* and the *neviim* recorded it. Now, when a person does a *mitzvah*, who records it? *Eliyahu HaNavi* and the *Melech HaMashiach* record it, and Hakadosh Baruch Hu seals it."

This *midrash* requires some explanation. Is it possible that such great *tzadikim* as Reuven, Aharon and Boaz only did *mitzvos* for the honor of having future generations know about them? Additionally, what is the second part of the *midrash* coming to teach us?

HaRav Yaakov Kamenetzky zt"l offers an explanation for this *midrash*. Reuven, Aharon and Moshe knew that they were doing



Reb Yaakov zt"l with Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l

mitzvos; however, they did not know the tremendous ramifications that their actions would have. Reuven thought that he was merely doing the right thing in saving his brother. Had he known that the sale of Yosef would lead to the *galus Mitzrayim*, he would not have taken any chances in making sure that Yosef got back home immediately. Aharon thought that he was going out to welcome his brother. Had he realized that Moshe's mission would lead to *yetzias Mitzrayim*, he would have pulled out all the stops. Boaz wanted to give *tzedakah* to a poor girl. Had he understood that he was also laying the groundwork for the birth of David HaMelech, he would have done even more. The *midrash* does not mean to say that these great *tzadikim* did *mitzvos* so that future generations would be aware of them, but rather that had they known the long lasting implications that their actions would have on future generations, they would have done even more. This is the lesson of the *midrash*. When a person does a *mitzvah*, he should go all out, for he never knows the effects that his actions may have.

Now we can also have a better understanding of the second part of the *midrash*. A person must never say that since the Tanach is completed, his *mitzvos* no longer have any effect. On the contrary, our *mitzvos* are potentially so important that they are recorded by *Eliyahu HaNavi* and the *Melech HaMashiach* themselves.

We must take a lesson from this. Our actions do not affect us alone, but rather affect our families, our neighborhoods, our *yeshivos*, and even the entire *Klal Yisroel*. With this in mind, let us work to improve our actions, so that we may be *zoche* to the coming of Moshiach, *bimheirah biyameinu amen*.

Someone once asked the Steipler Gaon, Reb Yaakov Yisroel Kanievsky zt"l, "Chazal teach that serving as a *sandak* at a *bris* is a *segulah* for attaining wealth. You have been honored as a *sandak* countless times, yet you are far from wealthy. What of the *segulah*?"

The Steipler Gaon replied, "Wealth is relative; different people have different ideas of what it means to be wealthy. To me, having my *sefarim* gain acceptance in the Torah world is wealth. *Baruch Hashem, I am wealthy.*"

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