

# The Torah Any Times

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## Rabbi Yaakov Moskowitz

### The Lights of Greatness

The teaching is well-known. Rav Huna (Shabbos 23b) tells us that one who is accustomed to lighting candles (Shabbos and Chanukah; see Rashi) will merit having sons who are Torah scholars. Many commentaries explain the connection between lighting candles and having children of such spiritual caliber. But let us shed some light on what it means to live a life as a talmid chacham. And to do so, let us briefly travel through the life and times of one of our recent gedolim, and gain a glimpse.

In Bnei Brak, a visitor once came to see Reb Aharon Leib Shteinman zt"l after not having been in his home for over thirty years. After looking around, he remarked, "Everything here still looks the same, Rebbe." Reb Aharon Leib let out a brief smile. "It's not the house that's supposed to be updated and renovated; it's the people who live in the house who are supposed to change."

Reb Aharon Leib lived a life of remarkable growth, always seeking knowledge. Those close to him recall how he would often be hunched over his sefarim, rarely returning to his room to sleep. Instead, he would doze off at his shtender for a few hours each night before resuming his studies. His dedication to Torah ultimately led him to publish his renowned work, Ayelet HaShachar, which comprises seventeen volumes on Shas and

five volumes on Chumash.

Yet, a few years before his passing, when his son attempted to arrange for him to learn in a quiet apartment away from distractions, Reb Aharon Leib politely declined. "If I do that," he explained, "where will I get my yissurim from? People come to me at all hours of the night for advice and blessings. I need those challenges."

It was well known that Reb Aharon Leib possessed a warm and caring heart, and his empathy was profound. This is why so many people lined up outside his house for counsel, where he would greet each individual personally. His sensitivity was such that most days, after meeting with everyone, he would sit with his eyes closed for about five to ten minutes, deep in thought and mumbling words of prayer.

At one time, his grandson asked him, "Saba, are you preparing for Rosh Hashanah? Are you learning Kabbalah? What are you doing?" He replied, "After I hear so many stories, I can't help but feel for everyone's pain and spend a few minutes davening for each individual."

Reb Aharon Leib was always seeking ways to help others. Despite his own personal poverty, he would discreetly put money in envelopes and deliver them to those in need. After Rebbetzin Shteinman passed away, several grandchildren would come and sing zemiros with Reb Aharon Leib to brighten up his meals. After seven years, Reb Aharon Leib told

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Meir Eliyahu ben Yaakov Dov

Bechor ben Rivkah

Shlomo Zalman ben  
R' Mordechai Yisroel Tzvi

Esther bat  
haRav Avraham Halevi zt"l

Moshe Simcha ben Doniel Dov Ber

Miriam bat Yeshayahu

Malka Bracha bat Shimon Chaim

R' Zechariah Shimon ben Yitzchok

L'refuah Sheleima

Deena bat Shoshana

Chaya Raizel bat Dena

Yerachmiel Eliyahu Ben Esther Riva

Reuven ben Rochel

Paysach Yosef ben Hinda

them they had to stop. When asked why, he explained that their neighbor upstairs had passed away recently and there was a widow living there. He expressed concern about how she would feel hearing the beautiful zemiros coming from their apartment, bitterly reminding her of the joyous Shabbat meals she once shared with her husband. It was only after they learned that her grandchildren were also coming to sing zemiros with her that Reb Aharon Leib agreed they could resume.

While he focused intently on individuals, he was equally dedicated to the entire Klal Yisrael. In 1998, at the age of 84, he resolved to build Torah throughout Eretz Yisrael. He founded Yeshiva Orchos Torah in Bnei Brak and subsequently established Rinah Shel Torah in Karmiel. As if this were not enough, he declared to also start a yeshiva in Ashdod. Later, he decided to open another yeshiva in southern Israel.

He began yeshivas everywhere; starting with 20 talmidim, he built it up over 20 years to more than 2,000 talmidim and 1,300 avreichim. But he

did not stop there. Reb Aharon Leib recognized the urgent need for kiruv in Eretz Yisrael and became actively involved in it with Arachim. He was also one of the driving forces behind Lev L'Achim, one of the largest kiruv organizations throughout Israel.

It is no wonder that Reb Chaim Kanievsky zt"l considered Reb Aharon Leib a leader among all yeshivas and bnei Torah across the country. Roshei Yeshiva and kiruv professionals sought out Reb Aharon Leib for consultation and guidance on chinuch and raising the standards for Klal Yisrael's children.

Reb Aharon Leib believed that he was granted a long life specifically to strengthen Klal Yisrael. For this reason, even in his old age, he undertook missions traveling around the world with the purpose of increasing Torah observance and commitment among Jews globally.

One notable instance involved a young man who was scheduled to marry a non-Jewish girl six weeks later. However, after hearing Reb Aharon Leib's passionate speech about Jewish identity and values,

he decided to break off the engagement. Months later, when he spoke with Rabbi Aharon Leib about this decision, Reb Aharon Leib encouraged him by saying, "Now you've taken the first step. After this, we must learn what it means to truly be a Jew." The young man then committed himself to studying Torah and observing mitzvos. Today, he is a dedicated Rebbe and marbitz Torah in Eretz Yisrael.

Reb Aharon Leib Shteinman was a mechanech (educator), a posek (decisor of Jewish law), an advisor, and a mechaber seforim (author) whose every action centered around one mission: building Torah and nurturing Klal Yisrael. And now is the time for us to ask ourselves: Can I learn a little bit more like Reb Aharon Leib? Can I develop my sensitivities more like him? Can I become a person who genuinely cares about Torah and mitzvos just as Rabbi Aharon Leib did?

As you look at the Chanukah candles, take a moment and consider how.

Because, without question, your own greatness awaits you.

## Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair

### Your Spiritual DNA

**I**t's Chanukah. The whole family gathers for a festive celebration. Music plays, the table overflows with delicious food, and everyone enjoys the evening together. You wash, eat, and prepare to recite Birkat Hamazon. But then, oops—you suddenly realize you forgot to include Al Hanissim. Unsure of what to do, you quickly flip through the siddur and discover that you can insert it in HaRachaman.

You recite: "May the Compassionate One perform miracles and wonders for us, as He did for our forefathers in those days at this

time." But wait a second—there's a problem here, isn't there? After all, there is a clear directive in Jewish law that we are not allowed to pray explicitly for miracles. How, then, can we openly ask for one now?

The answer, Rav Kluger explains, lies in the unique nature of the miracle of Chanukah. Unlike the miracles of the Exodus—such as the Ten Plagues or the splitting of the sea—which were preordained from the very creation of the world and embedded into the fabric of existence, the miracle of Chanukah was fundamentally different. It was not

preordained; it came into being solely because of the mesirat nefesh—the extraordinary willingness of the Jewish people to sacrifice their lives rather than allow the Greeks to obliterate the holy Torah. This unparalleled dedication brought the miracle into existence.

But where did such incredible strength come from? Rav Shlomo Kluger suggests that it traces back to Yosef HaTzadik. Yosef, who withstood the ultimate test when tempted by Potiphar's wife, displayed the pinnacle of mesirat nefesh—a willingness to sacrifice his physical desires for spiritual purity. In doing so, Yosef implanted within the collective spiritual DNA of the Jewish people the capacity to resist the overwhelming al-

lure of materialism and the culture of the Greeks. It was this inherited strength that enabled the Jewish people during the Hanukkah story to stand firm and persevere.

Because the Jewish people demonstrated mesirat nefesh, they merited the unprecedented miracle of Chanukah. And this means that even today, during these sacred days, we too can tap into that immense power. We can ask for miracles during Hanukkah—miracles to overcome our challenges, achieve

our aspirations, and bring light into our lives. The spiritual potential of these days is limitless. Everything we've hoped for and dreamed of is within reach during Chanukah.

It's crucial to recognize the extraordinary sanctity, uniqueness, and elevation of these days. And we must remember that it all began with Yosef overcoming his challenge. The next time you face a trial—when the "Greek culture" of materialism and temptation looms before you—remember this: you

have a spiritual legacy embedded in your very being, inherited from Yosef HaTzadik. Just as Yosef triumphed, so can you.

Chanukah teaches us that miracles are possible—not just in ancient times, but in our own lives. All it takes is the courage to stand firm, to rise above the challenge, and to tap into the light and strength within. And in doing so, we become worthy of miracles, just as our ancestors were.

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## Rabbi YY Jacobson

### I'm the Queen

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One of my favorite and true anecdotes about Queen Elizabeth II, who passed away on September 8th, 2022, involves a day when she and her mother, the Queen Mother, attended a West End performance together. On this particular occasion, the Queen Mother was in an especially irritable mood. It was simply one of those days when everything seemed to go awry, leaving her feeling rather grouchy.

At a certain point, the Queen Mother's frustration boiled over, and she snapped at Elizabeth, demanding, "Who do you think you are?" Without missing a beat, Elizabeth calmly replied, "Who do I think I am? The Queen, Mummy,

The Queen."

This anecdote carries a profound lesson for all of us. We often hear an inner voice questioning our worth and capabilities, asking, "Who do you think you are?" It may challenge our belief that G-d knows us personally and cares about our actions and choices. It might question our ability to live a deeply meaningful and inspired life, one of nobility and dignity. This voice may cast doubt on our capacity to nurture close relationships with our spouses and children.

Sometimes, we may ask ourselves, "Who am I to be talented and successful?" We might wonder, "Who do I think I am that I

can have a real positive influence on the world?" When that voice of self-doubt poses these debilitating questions, we must stand tall and declare, "Who do I think I am? The Queen, Mummy, The Queen."

Judaism teaches that each person, formed in the image of G-d, is a piece of royalty, nobility, aristocracy, and dignity. You are the flame of G-d sent into this world to shine your light. We were born to manifest the glory of the divine that resides within us. You are a divine ambassador of love, light, hope, and redemptive consciousness.

Never fear your own light, your glory, your power. Embrace it and set the world on fire.

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## Mr. Charlie Harary

### Ignite Your Soul

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Remember the story? Long ago, the Greeks invaded Israel, seized control of the Temple, and dominated its sacred grounds. The Maccabees

rose to the occasion, drove out the Greeks, returned to the Temple, searched desperately for oil, found one remaining jug, lit the menorah—and miraculously, it burned

for eight nights.

To put it in modern terms, imagine leaving your house one morning, thinking you charged your phone the night before, only to realize you hadn't plugged it in properly. Yet, as you head out, you discover your phone is fully charged.



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Not only does the battery last all day, but it stays charged for eight entire days. A miracle, right? That's what the oil was like back then. And so, to commemorate that extraordinary event, we light candles each night during Chanukah.

But here's the thing. There was an even greater miracle that preceded the oil. At the time, the Greeks, led by King Antiochus, boasted the most powerful army in the world. Elephants, countless soldiers, advanced weaponry—they had it all. The Jewish people, however, were divided: many sided with the Greeks, while others were paralyzed by fear. The only ones left standing for Judaism were the Chashmonaim, a small group of malnourished Kohanim hiding in caves with no military training. One day, they simply declared, "Enough is enough."

They launched a military campaign akin to a handful of scholars waging war against the full might of the United States military—and winning. Not thousands, but mere hundreds, defied the most formidable army of their time and prevailed over three grueling years. The victories themselves were nothing short of miraculous. Each battle defied the odds, a testament to Divine intervention.

Now, consider this: had G-d not performed the miracle of the oil lasting eight nights, what would have happened? Nothing catastrophic. They would have waited

a few days to produce new oil. But without the miracle of the war? The Jewish people would have been annihilated.

So why, when choosing a symbol for the holiday, do we emphasize the lights?

Think about it. When we light candles, we ignite a flame—a profound symbol. Fire is the physical manifestation closest to the spiritual realm. It exists in our world only when tethered to a wick, yet it perpetually reaches upward, as though yearning for something beyond. Fire is timelessly associated with the soul. When someone passes away, we light a candle. On Shabbos and holidays, we light candles. As Shlomo Hamelech states, "Ner Hashem nishmas adam—The candle of G-d is the soul of man" (Mishlei 20:27).

The story of the Maccabees teaches us something fundamental: their victory wasn't due to superior strength or strategy. They were neither stronger nor smarter. They won because of their souls. When the world around them crumbled, these Chashmonaim stood up and said, "We don't know how we'll win, but we know we must try."

They chose not to ask, "Can I?" but "Should I?" And when faced with challenges, they drew from a deeper reservoir of strength—the Divine spark within, their soul. Each of us carries that same Divine spark. It powers us, fuels our resilience, and holds untapped brilliance, creativity, and fortitude. Often, it's only when

we face great challenges that this inner light emerges.

Throughout history, countless individuals have built communities, families, and institutions. If you ask how they managed, they'll tell you they didn't know if they could, but they knew they had to. And in taking action, they discovered a source of strength far greater than they imagined.

Chanukah reminds us of this light. God performed the miracle of the oil not as a mere display of power, but as a reminder: the Maccabees triumphed because of the light within them. The eight nights symbolize transcendence, as eight represents miracles and the infinite—going beyond the natural order. When we tap into our soul and ask not "Can I?" but "Should I?" we too can access the miraculous.

This Chanukah, as we light the menorah, remember that Chanukah isn't just a commemoration of the past, but a lesson for today. Each of us is a modern-day Maccabee. We face our own battles, our own challenges. When we feel overwhelmed, it's not about whether we can overcome, but whether we should try. By doing what's right, we unleash the light within us, just as the Maccabees did.

So this year, as you light the candles, don't just light a wick—ignite your soul.

**OWN A  
PIECE OF  
HISTORY**

**DAILY DESE**

**DEDICATE A  
CHAPTER  
RIGHT NOW**

**LEARN MORE!**

The advertisement features a stack of books titled "DAILY DESE" with the subtitle "THE 'YOUR FAMILY' SERIES". The books are decorated with portraits of various people. The text "OWN A PIECE OF HISTORY" is written in large, bold, blue letters on the left. On the right, the text "DEDICATE A CHAPTER RIGHT NOW" and "LEARN MORE!" is written in bold, blue and red letters. The background is white with colorful geometric shapes (squares and triangles) in blue, orange, and green.

# Bring Them Home!

## Names of Hostages in Gaza and Partial List of Injured Soldiers

(Updated: 25 Kislev)

### שמות חיילים פצועים לרפואה שלמה

אביתר מנחם חיים בן זהבה  
אברהם מרדכי בן יעל  
אהרן בן שרה הנדל  
אופק בו אלינור  
אורי אברהם בן הדסה  
אייל אליעזר בן חנה  
איתן אשר בן דבורה  
אלון בן מרים  
אלחנן יאיר בן דבורה  
אליה בן רות  
אלישע יהודה בן רות  
אלעד בן שרית  
אמיר בן אלה  
בנימין בן ריינה  
בנימין יצחק בן שרה  
בר בן נורית  
גלעד איתי בן אפרת  
דוד בן זיוה  
הראל בן חנה  
חיים מרדכי בן שרה איטה  
טל גרשון בן שרה  
יאיר יונה בן דרורה צפורה מלכה  
יהודה אהרון בן מרים אסתר  
יהונתן יאשיהו בן כרמית  
יהונתן יוסף בן שירה  
יואל בן אילה  
יוחאי יהודה בן סיגל חוה  
ירין אליהו בן סיגל  
כפיר חיים בן מירה מרים  
מיכאל בן פריידל  
מישל בת אנג'ליקה  
מנחם דוד חי בן מרים  
משה אהרן בן לאה בילא  
משה צבי בן עירית  
מתן בן דבורה  
נועם אברהם בן עטרה שלומית  
ניר בן אורנה  
עדי מנחם בן מורן מירה  
עודד אפרים בן וויאן  
עוז חי בן סמדר  
עידן בן טובה  
עמיחי בן סיגלית רחל  
עמית יהונתן בן מאיה  
רואי בן עופרה  
רון בן אבישג  
רון בן שרון  
רועי חיים בן מירב  
תום שאול בן דניאל  
תומר בן צפורה

אבינתן בן דיצה תרצה (אור)  
אביתר בן גליה (דוד)  
אגם בת מירב (ברגר)  
אוהד בן אסתר (בן עמי)  
אוהד בן קרן (יהלומי)  
אור בן גאולה (לוי)  
איתן בן רות אדית (הורן)  
איתן אברהם בן אפרת (מור)  
אלון בן עידית (אהל)  
אליה בן סיגלית (כהן)  
אליהו בן חנה (שרעבי)  
אלכסנדר ששה בן ילנה לאה (טרופנוב)  
אלקנה בן רוחמה (בוחבוט)  
אמילי תהילה בת אמנדה פרנסיס (דמארי)  
ארבל בת יעל (יהוד)  
אריאל בן סילביה מוניקה (קוניו)  
אריאל בן שירי (ביבס)  
בר אברהם בן גיוליה (קופרשטיין)  
גד משה בן שרה (מוזס)  
גיא בן מירב (גלבע דלאל)  
גלי בן טליה (ברמן)  
דוד בן סילביה מוניקה (קוניו)  
דורון בת סימונה שרה (שטיינברכר)  
דניאלה בת אורלי (גלבע)  
זיו בן טליה (ברמן)  
טל בן ניצה (שוהם קורנגולד)  
יאיר בן רות אידית (הורן)  
יוסף חיים בן מרים (אוחנה)  
יצחק בן אנטה חנה (אלגרט)  
יצחק בן דבורה (עידן)  
ירדן בן פנינה (ביבס)  
כפיר בן שירי (ביבס)  
לירי רבקה בת שירה (אלבג)  
מקסים בן טלה (הרקין)  
מתן בן ענת (אנגרסט)  
מתן בן ירדנה עינב (צנגאוקר)  
נמרוד בן ויקי (כהן)  
נעמה בת איילת (לוי)  
עודד בן בלהה (ליפשיץ)  
עומר בן ניבה (ונקרט)  
עומר בן שלי (שם טוב)  
עופר בן כוכבה (קלדרון)  
עידן בן יעל (אלכסנדר)  
עמרי בן אסתר ורוניקה (מירן)  
קית' שמואל בן גלדיס חוה (סיגל)  
קרינה בת אירנה (ארייב)  
רום בן תמר נועה (ברסלבסקי)  
רומי בת מירב (גוני)  
שגב בן גלית (כלפון)  
שגיאה בן נעמית (חן דקל)  
שירי בת מרגיט (ביבס)  
שלמה בן מרסל (מנצור)  
תמיר בן חירות (נמרודי)

# *Bring Them Home!*

## *Names of Hostages in Gaza and Partial List of Injured Soldiers*

*(Updated: 25 Kislev)*

### **INJURED SOLDIERS**

Evyatar Menachem Chaim ben Zehava  
Avraham Mordechai ben Yael  
Aharon ben Sarah Hendel  
Ofek ben Elinor  
Ori Avraham ben Hadassah  
Eyal Eliezer ben Chana  
Eitan Asher ben Devora  
Alon ben Miriam  
Elchanan Yair ben Devorah  
Eliya ben Ravit  
Elisha Yehudah ben Rut  
Elad ben Sarit  
Amir ben Ella  
Binyamin ben Reina  
Binyamin Yitzchak ben Sarah  
Bar ben Nurit  
Gilad Itai ben Efrat  
David ben Ziva  
Harel ben Chana  
Chaim Mordechai ben Sarah Itta  
Tal Gershon ben Sarah  
Yair Yonah ben Drora Tzipporah Malka  
Yehuda Aharon ben Miriam Esther  
Yehonatan Yoshiyahu ben Carmit  
Yehonatan Yosef ben Shira  
Yoel ben Ayala  
Yochai Yehudah ben Sigal Chava  
Yarin Eliyahu ben Sigal  
Kfir Chaim ben Mira Miriam  
Michael ben Freidel  
Michelle bat Angelika  
Menachem David Chai ben Miriam  
Moshe Aharon ben Leah Beila  
Moshe Tzi ben Irit  
Matan ben Devorah  
Nir ben Orna  
Noam Avraham ben Atara Shlomit  
Adi Menachem ben Moran Mira  
Oded Efraim ben Vivian  
Oz Chai ben Smadar  
Idan ben Tova  
Amichai ben Sigalit Rachel  
Amit Yehonatan ben Maya  
Roi ben Ofra  
Ron ben Avishag  
Ron ben Sharon  
Roi Chaim ben Meirav  
Tom Shaul ben Danielle  
Tomer ben Tzipporah

Avinatan ben Ditzza Tirtza (Ohr)  
Evyatar ben Galya (David)  
Agam bat Meirav (Berger)  
Ohad ben Esther (Ben-Ami)  
Ohad ben Keren (Yahalomi)  
Ohr ben Geula (Levi)  
Eitan ben Ruth Idit (Horen)  
Eitan Avraham ben Efrat (Mor)  
Alon ben Idit (Ohel)  
Eliya ben Sigalit (Cohen)  
Eliyahu ben Chana (Sharabi)  
Alexander Sasha ben Yelena Leah  
(Tropanov)  
Elkana ben Ruchama (Buchbut)  
Emily Tehilla bat Amanda Francis  
(Damari)  
Arbel bat Yael (Yehud)  
Ariel ben Sylvia Monica (Konyo)  
Ariel ben Shiri (Bibas)  
Bar Avraham ben Julia (Cooperstein)  
Gad Moshe ben Sarah (Mozes)  
Guy ben Meirav (Gilboa Dalal)  
Gali ben Talya (Berman)  
David ben Sylvia Monica (Konyo)  
Doron bat Simona Sarah (Steinbrecher)  
Daniella bat Orli (Gilboa)  
Ziv ben Talya (Berman)  
Tal ben Nitza (Shoham-Corngold)  
Yair ben Ruth Idit (Horen)  
Yosef Chaim ben Miriam (Ochana)  
Yitzchak ben Aneta Chana (Elgarat)  
Yarden ben Penina (Bibas)  
Kfir ben Shiri (Bibas)  
Liri Rivka bat Shira (Elbag)  
Maxim ben Talleh (Herkin)  
Matan ben Anat (Angrest)  
Matan ben Yardena Einav (Tzangauker)  
Nimrod ben Viki (Cohen)  
Naama bat Ayelet (Levi)  
Oded ben Bilhah (Lifschitz)  
Omer ben Niva (Venkrat)  
Omer ben Shelley (Shemtov)  
Ofer ben Cochava (Kalderon)  
Idan ben Yael (Alexander)  
Omri ben Esther Veronica (Miran)  
Yitzchak ben Devorah (Idan)  
Keith Shmuel ben Gladis Chava (Segal)  
Karina bat Irena (Ariav)  
Rom ben Tamar Noa (Brasalevsky)  
Romi bat Meirav (Gonen)  
Segev ben Galit (Chalfon)  
Sagi ben Naamit (Chen-Dekel)  
Shiri bat Margit (Bibas)  
Shlomo ben Marcelle (Mansour)  
Tamir ben Cheirut (Nimrodi)