

**A TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF
MARAN HAROSH YESHIVA R' CHAIM PINCHAS SCHEINBERG, ZTK"l**

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RAMAT BEIT SHEMESH



It has been ten years since the passing of our great *rebbe*, HaGaon Rav Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg, *ztk"l*, and over fifty years since I entered his yeshiva, and the world of the Rosh Yeshiva.

During this time, many books have been published and numerous articles penned, attempting to capture the Rosh Yeshiva's greatness. *Sefarim* have been written to preserve his Torah, and hundreds of memorials have taken place. Yeshivos, schools, and synagogues have been named in his honor. Clearly, our Rosh Yeshiva left his mark, and his contribution will no doubt be felt for generations.

Yet, there is so much that is intangible — impossible to put into words or limit by description — and despite all the recounting, it will never again be experienced. It is these moments and teachings that are preserved only in the memory, and perhaps in the essence of his *talmidim*.

The students of the Rosh Yeshiva include many prominent scholars, *roshei*

yeshiva, *rabbanim*, teachers, authors, and community leaders. Yet, there were also thousands of what we would call "simple people" — whom the Rosh Yeshiva himself was known to describe as "not so simple." Many of those who were counted among his *talmidim* never heard his unparalleled *shiurim*, and even if they had, may not have fully understood the depth and breadth of his teachings. But every individual who encountered the Rosh Yeshiva can recall and reflect upon the experience of merely being in his proximity. So many people found themselves drawn to the Rosh Yeshiva, instinctively feeling that in his presence, their problems somehow lessened, the suffering was soothed.

Each person with whom the Rosh Yeshiva came in contact can recall every word of their conversation, every smile and every gesture. This too was something intangible — a sense that cannot be described in words. From every walk of life, no matter who they were or how learned they were, anyone who met the Rosh Yeshiva immediately knew they were in the presence of greatness. They understood that they were standing before an extraordinary human being. They were moved by his warmth, by his righteousness, and by his caring. With him, they felt closer to the Shechinah.

I remember when the Rosh Yeshiva once visited us in Melbourne, Australia, where I was Director of Outreach in Kollel Beis HaTalmud. On a Shabbos afternoon, a young man who had only recently been introduced to Judaism walked into the Lakewood Kollel of Melbourne, where the Rosh Yeshiva was sitting at a table with a *sefer*. This man, who was only beginning to learn about religious life and its intricacies, certainly did not know that the Rosh Yeshiva had the custom to not speak on Shabbos. He went over to the Rosh Yeshiva and extended his hand with a hearty *shalom*. The man began to speak, but the Rosh Yeshiva did not reply; he asked questions but received no answers. This went on for a few minutes, and all the

man received in return for his questions was a smile or a gesture.

I stopped this man on his way out of the Kollel and apologized to him for not having told him in advance that the Rosh Yeshiva doesn't speak on Shabbos. He looked at me, bewildered. He had not realized at all from his encounter with the Rosh Yeshiva that he was not speaking. "He greeted me," said the man. "He blessed me and alleviated my burden! I felt his presence permeate my soul." Indeed, when it came to the Rosh Yeshiva, no words were necessary.

The Rosh Yeshiva lived for the *tzibbur*. He would constantly teach his *talmidim* that not only must we carry the yoke of the *tzibbur*, but the *tzibbur* carries us. Everyone, he would say, must make sure to be valuable and relevant to the *tzibbur*.

He would reinforce this lesson with the words of Chazal, *Moshe shakul neged kol Yisroel* usually translated as "Moshe was equal to the entire Jewish People." The Rosh Yeshiva would teach that *shakul* is derived from the word "to weigh." Picture an old-time scale that has two sides, with a weight on one side and the item you are weighing on the other. If you were to remove the weight from one side of the scale, the other side would immediately fall, because in actuality, each side carries the other: they are *shakul*. The Rosh Yeshiva explained that if Moshe Rabbeinu was removed from the scale, the People of Israel would fall. And, at the same time, if the People of Israel were removed from one side, Moshe would fall. The Rosh Yeshiva understood that not only should his students carry whatever they could of the Jewish burden — but that to the extent that we carry that burden, the burden carries us.

"Do something for the *rabim*," he would charge his students. "This will carry you for life." In this way, everyone who crossed his path was charged to take responsibility — for their community, their yeshiva, and if they were able to, for the entire Jewish People. He implanted a zeal within all his students to be *mezakeh ha'rabim*. No one was exempt.

He would often explain that when the Jewish People fell when they built the Golden Calf, Moshe was in the highest place, standing amid the holiness of Har Sinai. At this moment, G-d called out to Moshe, *Lech reid! Klum nasati lecha gedola ela bishvil Yisroel* - You, Moshe, must



fall with them, for any greatness you have obtained is only because of Israel; you cannot maintain any of your greatness, your holiness, or your prophecy without them.

In the same way, the Rosh Yeshiva taught the importance of loyalty. When his *talmidim* entered the *beis medrash*, it was not only to learn Torah — they were to strengthen others in the room by their presence. He often recalled what he had heard from the venerable Mashgiach of Mir, Rav Yerucham Levovitz. In the winter, he said, the *beis medrash* in Mir was very cold. If one of the students decided he would prefer to study privately, on his own, Reb Yerucham would reproach him, "Every person contributes a little bit of heat to the *beis medrash*. How can you not show up, and thereby keep that little warmth for yourself?"

I remember how every morning, for the first thirty minutes of *sefer*, the Rosh Yeshiva would stand by the entrance to the *beis medrash*. He would be there to greet his *talmidim* and gently admonish anyone who arrived late.

One time, I was stopped by the Rosh Yeshiva at the door of the *beis medrash*. "Where were you yesterday?" he asked. "We missed you!" It was only a few weeks before my wedding and I was busy with the myriad preparations. Not wanting to waste his precious time with the details of my day, I replied simply, "I had something

CONTINUED ON PAGE 153



THE ZECHUS OF A LIFETIME

MORDY MEHLMAN

In my career, I have been *zoche* B'ezras Hashem to work with many *mosdos haTorah v'hachessed*, with the unsurpassable privilege of dealing directly with leading Roshei Yeshiva, including some of the *gedolei hador*, past and present. Amongst those were the unforgettable HoRav Avrohom Pam, *zt"l*; and more recently, HoRav Chaim Pinchos Scheinberg, *zt"l*, who was *nifter* two years ago, at the age of 101. Their legendary *gadlus baTorah*, coupled with sterling *derech eretz* that was, of course, *kadma l'Torah*, left an indelible impression on everyone who was privileged to know them.

Focusing on Rav Scheinberg, *zt"l*, whose *yahrzeit* is 27 Adar, I would be remiss if I didn't put some of my feelings to paper.

For over a decade, I ran the Yeshivas Torah Ore office in America, and had the opportunity to meet the Rosh HaYeshiva, *zt"l*, on a daily basis when he was visiting America, or when I was visiting Eretz Yisroel. The way he treated me, and everyone, was startling. Here was a *gadol hador*, fluent in *kol haTorah kulah*, *posek hador* for generations, who at the same time greeted and treated everyone with the utmost respect. His warmth, good humor, and *simchas hachaim* were so welcoming, and made everyone feel so loved and important. How I miss his call from across the room: "Mordy, how are you? Mordy, it is so good to see you!"

His *ahavas habrios* was captivating, and his *ahavas ha-Talmidim* was so great, that it was as if they were his flesh



and blood. It is no wonder he was so beloved by his *talmidim* and alumni, many of whom reside in Flatbush, and considered him like their father. How lucky they were to have him as a Rebbi, and how lucky we all were to have him on this world.

Rav Scheinberg, *zt"l* had a special touch for *yidden* in distress. Hundreds of men, women and children, from all walks of life visited him weekly, seeking guidance, *chizuk*, and blessings. He was able to help them because his heart connected to them, overflowing with the love he had for every Yid.

The Chofetz Chaim once said, "At first I thought I would change the world, but realized it was impossible.

Then I sought to change my city, and saw it was impossible. Finally, I tried my family, but saw it was impossible. I then decided to try to change myself!" Rav Elchonon Wasserman, his beloved *talmid*, then added- "through himself, he changed the world." Rav Scheinberg taught the world by example. He taught the world by respecting others, smiling to a child, comforting an *almana*, giving *chizuk* to the downtrodden, and financial aid to the needy. He taught the world by working on himself- a boy raised in America, who soared to the greatest of heights.

I am definitely not fitting to explain or evaluate the Rosh Yeshiva's *gadlus baTorah*. All I can do is quote his son-in-law, Rav Dovid Weiner who said at the *levaya*, "Torah was the Rosh Yeshiva's life- his *chiyus*- it flowed through his bloodstream. It wasn't something he did his whole life, it *was* his whole life. *Tanach, mussar, halacha, shas*, they were all fluent to him and on the tip of his tongue."

His family - all of Klal Yisroel - misses him dearly. For over a century, he graced this earth and made it a holier place to live in. That *kedusha* is gone, but not forever, and not for long. I am sure the Rosh Yeshiva, *zt"l*, pours out his heart in *shomayim* from his seat right next to the *kisei hakavod*, and prays for the *geulah*. When Hakadosh Baruch Hu hears Rav Scheinberg's legendary *tefillos*, filled with heartfelt *kavana* and tears, He will certainly bring the *geulah, bimhaira b'yameinu, Amen*.

MARAN HAROSH YESHIVA R' CHAIM PINCHAS SCHEINBERG, ZTK"l

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 152

to do yesterday." He immediately quipped, "Do you mean to say you only come here when you have nothing to do?" The message of priority, loyalty, responsibility, and schedule entered deep into my bones. The Rosh Yeshiva's remark is what comes to mind whenever I'm faced with the choice of putting my own comfort and convenience before others.

Tens of thousands of people received and treasured the Rosh Yeshiva's blessings. But even more than we sought his blessings, we yearned for his advice. He only spoke *emes*, and he immediately saw through any convoluted thinking or cognitive dissonance. Personally, for more than forty years I never made a major decision without first consulting the Rosh Yeshiva.

Not long after my wedding, I left the splendor of Yerushalayim to become the rabbi of an of out-of-town community in the United States. A number of years later, we went to teach Torah in the southern hemisphere, followed by another period of time in the United States, after which we finally returned to Yerushalayim. Throughout all these journeys and the vicissitudes of life, the Rosh Yeshiva was with me and at my side, always there with his unmatched counsel and support.

I came to his Yeshiva when I was only fourteen years old. He took care of me from that moment on, and like so many thousands, we remain his *talmidim* until today.

Yehi zichro baruch



Rabbi Scheinberg & The Scorpions

In *Eretz Yisrael* lived a Jew named David. One day as David was walking in the street, he saw a poor man and invited him to come over his house for dinner. From that meal on, this poor man would frequently come over David's home for meals.

David was not happy that this poor man was coming to his home so many times throughout the week for meals. Shortly after, when David moved to a new home, he did not tell the poor man about his move. After living a few days in his new home, David saw scorpions in his house. Not knowing what to do or the reason for this uncommon and dangerous creature in his home, David went to seek insight and advice from the *Gadol Hador* Rabbi Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg.



Rabbi Scheinberg told David, "In *Perek Shira* it states that scorpions sing praise to Hashem, that Hashem has mercy on all His creations. Maybe there is a man that needs *Chesed* from you and you are not performing this kindness?"

Instantly David remembered the poor man. Immediately David went looking for this pauper. When he was found, David invited him to his new home. From that moment on, there were no longer any scorpions in David's home.