

Rabbenu

Our Rabbi,

Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner

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Introduction

Just as we are obligated to learn from the teachings of our great Rabbis, so too are we obligated to learn from their actions, character traits and practices. The entire Torah and Gemara are full of such teachings. The Gemara instructs us regarding honor, love, and awe of Torah scholars. The essence is certainly the Torah learning and the ethical guidance we receive from Torah scholars, but there is also a place to have a personal connection with them and witness their proper conduct. Our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, wrote a booklet "Le-Sheloshah Be-Elul" about the ways and practices of Maran Rav Kook.

Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, a special emissary of G-d, was sent to us to teach the Nation the meaning of rebirth, the meaning of a Nation living independently in its Land, according to its Torah. He came to remind us of things we had forgotten.

Now, with the Nation's rebirth, these portions of the Torah are likewise experiencing a rebirth. At first, Maran Ha-Rav Kook was alone in his generation, and so too his son, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, after him. Slowly, however, disciples gathered to them, and more and more people came and lis-



tened, until there were dozens, then hundreds, then thousands and hundreds of thousands. Now the Nation is full of their students.

We pray that this volume will allow a small glimpse into the teachings and the Torah personality of this towering figure, whom we call "Rabbenu," our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Kook.

Mordechai Tzion

In the heart of Jerusalem between the Walls

1. His Younger Years

Our Rabbi was born on the night of Pesach in the year 5651 to Maran Ha-Rav Avraham Yitzchak Ha-Cohain Kook and Ha-Rabbanit Raiza Rivka. He was named Tzvi Yehudah after his mother's father, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Rabinowitz-Te'omim, the twin brother of Ha-Rav Eliyahu David Rabinowitz-Te'omim, the Aderet (the Rav of Yerushalayim, who was Maran Ha-Rav's father-in-law). With all of our Rabbi's great humility, he well understood his worth and would say: "My soul appeared on the night of the Seder."

Our Rabbi was his mother's first-born, but not his father's. During the time when Maran Ha-Rav was Rav of Zoimel, there was a plague and his first wife, Ha-Rabbanit Batsheva Alta, the daughter of the Aderet, died when their daughter, Freida Chana, was one and a half. The Aderet wanted Maran Ha-Rav to marry Raiza Rivka, the daughter of his twin brother, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Rabinowitz-Te'omim, Rav of Ragoli, who died in the middle of his life at the age of forty-four. His brother's children were raised in the Aderet's house and were like his own children. The Aderet said to Maran Ha-Rav: "It is a pity for me if with the loss of my daughter I also lose you from being a member of my

family. Marry my brother's daughter and you will be my son like before" (Shivchei Ha-Re'eiyah, p. 60). Maran Ha-Rav married his wife's cousin, and our Rabbi and two other sisters – Batya Miriam and Esther Yael – were born from this marriage.

Our Rabbi was born in Zoimel in the area of Kovno in Lithuania and then moved with his family to Boisk, next to Riga, where Maran Ha-Rav was appointed Rabbi. He learned Gemara from Ha-Rav Reuven Gutfried (Yedidya), the son-in-law of Rabbi Yoel Moshe Solomon, and Ha-Rav Binyamin Menasheh Levin, author of "Otzar Ha-Geonim," who came to dwell in the shadow of Maran Ha-Rav's Yeshiva in Boisk and then became our Rabbi's personal teacher (Sichot Ha-Re'eiyah, pp. 223, 233-234). Our Rabbi learned Tanach from Ha-Rav Moshe Dr. Zeidel, who also came to receive abundant holiness from Maran Ha-Rav. The essence of his learning, however, was from the mouth of his father, Maran Ha-Rav.

Maran Ha-Rav Kook was appointed Rav of Yafo and the surrounding settlements (i.e. Petach Tikva, Rishon Le-Tzion, Gedera, Rechovot, etc.) in the year 5664. After lengthy and exhausting negotiations with the community, the final letter with the travel expenses arrived, and Maran Ha-Rav Kook left a note for his daughter to pick up the letter. But our Rabbi, out of a love of Eretz Yisrael, rushed to get the letter himself in order to receive a letter from Eretz Yisrael. Our

Rabbi made Aliyah with his family shortly after his Bar Mitzvah.

When our Rabbi was fifteen, he ascended to Yerushalayim to learn in Yeshivat Torat Chaim in the Old City. Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank, Rav of Yerushalayim, Rav Yitzchak Herzog, Chief Rabbi of Israel, and Aryeh Levin, the Tzaddik of Yerushalayim, also learned in the famous Torat Chaim Yeshiva.

Yeshivat Torat Chaim

On Ta'anit Esther 5728, after the Six-Day War, the students of Mercaz Ha-Rav went to Daven at the Kotel. A student of our Rabbi, who had a car, took him home as usual. It was in the middle of the day and our Rabbi asked: "Don't you have a class now?" He answered: "Yes, but our Sages say that serving Torah scholars is greater than learning." Our Rabbi agreed by his silence. When they were near Sha'ar Shechem, our Rabbi asked to stop. Without saying a word, our Rabbi got out of the car and he began to quickly march on the bridge to go through Sha'ar Shechem when two students escorted him, one on each side. When he was close to Sha'ar Shechem, he began to run down the stairs and the students followed him. He momentarily stopped where the street splits and he continued on Ha-Gai Street. During that period, there were many Jews on the streets of the Old City. Our Rabbi recognized from a distance a Jew who he knew.

They stopped and talked, and our Rabbi pointed toward a particular spot. The Jew said: "I am certain that it is here" and pointed to the entrance of Yeshivat Torat Chaim (which is now the location of Ateret Yerushalayim – formerly Ateret Cohanim). Our Rabbi ran in the direction of the Yeshiva and ascended the stairs. The students asked him: "Ha-Rav, what is going on?" but he did not answer. He stopped in the hall in front of the window, held the bars, pulled himself up as much as he could and looked into the main room for a few minutes. When he came down, the students asked what this was all about. He responded: "I learned Torah here when I was young. This was the Yeshiva of Rabbis Epstein and Winograd. Abba Ha-Rav ztz"l sent me to learn Torah here." It was possible to make out some shtenders and tables with books on them. Everything was covered with ten centimeters of gray dust which had accumulated over the last ten years in this place since it had been abandoned. Our Rabbi was completely moved and slowly returned to the car. On the way, he related stories about the period he learned in the Yeshiva. For example, the Rabbis complained to the Turkish authorities that the muezzin was bothering the learning in the Yeshiva, and as a result, the Turkish silenced the muezzin during the classes in the Yeshiva.

Finding a place to learn

Our Rabbi aided his father in his many public and private matters which he dealt with as Rav of Yafo and the sur-

rounding settlements. When it became clear that this was becoming too distracting to our Rabbi's Torah learning, he moved to the Old City of Jerusalem, hid himself and learned in Yeshivat Porat Yosef. When it was too disturbing there as well, he considered traveling to one of the major yeshivot outside of Israel.

He consulted with Maran Ha-Rav Kook and Ha-Rav Binyamin Menasheh Levin and in the end decided to travel to Halberstadt in Germany in order to teach Torah to a group of young men. His good friend, Ha-Rav Dr. Moshe Auerbach, the principle of the "Netzach Yisrael" School in Petach Tivkah, also advised him to go and learn with his brother Ha-Rav Dr. Yitzchak Auerbach, the Rav of Halberstadt.

While he was in Halberstadt, our Rabbi taught Gemara, Kuzari and Tanach to the young men (Tzemach Tzvi, letter #21). In order to become closer to these young men in Germany, our Rabbi neatened his beard a little and wore similar clothing to them.

Our Rabbi with Maran Ha-Rav in Switzerland

When World War One broke out, Maran Ha-Rav Kook, who was invited to the Agudat Yisrael conference in Germany, was not able to return to Israel and was forced to stay in

Switzerland for an extended period. Our Rabbi said: "During that period in Switzerland, I learned the entire Torah with Abba: the Babylonian Talmud, the Jerusalem Talmud, Rambam, Tur – a few times – which we would not have been able to learn in one hundred years."

Ha-Rabbanit Chavah Leah, our Rabbi's wife

At the end of 5680, our Rabbi traveled to Europe as an emissary of his father, Maran Ha-Rav Kook, in order to participate in the Agudat Yisrael conference. His goal was to explain to the leading Rabbis and Chasidic Rebbes the outlook of the "Degel Yerushalayim" movement, which was established by Maran Ha-Rav. Its purpose was to instill a soul within the general Zionist movement and to enlist Torah-observant Jews for the sake of the spiritual return to the holiness of the Land of Israel.

During one of his trips, our Rabbi met the daughter of Ha-Rav Yehudah Leib Hutner of Warsaw, Ha-Rav Yehoshua Hutner's sister, for the sake of getting married. When our Rabbi saw her, he immediately loved her. They learned the entire book "Orot" together, while it was still in booklet form, before their marriage. They married on 26 Shevat 5682 in Warsaw.

Ha-Rabbanit Chavah Leah had Torah and general intellect, and was involved with education and social work. Our Rabbi said that she had a precise sense of people, and many

times after he spoke with his students, she would say: "You should not expend so much energy on student B, but it is worthwhile toward student A."

Our Rabbi related that on one extremely cold winter day, Ha-Rabbanit went out to bring firewood to the poor in the Old City in Jerusalem. He begged her not to go out of the house. She nonetheless went and returned with pneumonia, from which she died in 5704. Rav Hutner, her brother-in-law, said that the doctor gave her a shot and he did not know that she had a heart problem and she died from it. Our Rabbi, however, would not say such a thing.

Our Rabbi's sister, Ha-Rabbanit Batya Miriam, encouraged him to remarry, as did his former mother-in-law, but he refused. Ha-Rabbanit Cohain, the wife of the Nazir, also suggested a match. He responded: "You are right, but I am unable to." Our Rabbi did not remarry, but we do not know the reason.

Until his last day, a picture of his wife, taken before their wedding, hung over our Rabbi's bed, which was a clear sign to his students that this was an expression of an eternal connection. (Be-Derech Ha-Torah Ha-Goelet, p. 108)

Even forty years after she ascended on high, our Rabbi would speak with emotion and crying as if she had died that day. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

Our Rabbi did not say "Eishet Chayil" before Kiddush on Shabbat night. When a student asked him about this, he somberly responded: I do not have an "Eishet Chayil" (Woman of Valor – since Ha-Rabbanit Chavah Leah died).

After his wife's death, our Rabbi would regularly eat Shabbat meals at his sister and brother-in-law's house – Batya Miriam and Ha-Rav Shalom Natan Ra'anan. One day he suddenly stopped coming on Shabbat night. When they asked him the reason, he responded that his wife appeared to him in a dream and asked why he was leaving her alone in the house on Shabbat. (Ha-Rav Dov Lior heard from one of the students. *Be-Derech Ha-Torah Ha-Goelet*, p. 108)

Yeshivat Mercaz Ha-Rav

When Yeshivat Mercaz Ha-Rav was established in the year 5683, Maran Ha-Rav Kook appointed his son as the spiritual advisor – he was responsible for the spiritual instruction of the students. He also gave classes in Tanach and Emunah (faith), and Maran Ha-Rav was sometimes present and had great joy from them.

2. Maran Ha-Rav Kook

It once happened that our Rabbi went to Daven in a Shul in Meah Shearim with one of his students. After the Davening, the student said to our Rabbi: "Did Ha-Rav notice that they did not count us in the Minyan?" Our Rabbi responded to him: "I noticed. Some people once requested that I suggest to Abba Ha-Rav z"l [Rav Kook] to omit the section discussing exercise from his book 'Orot.' Abba Ha-Rav z"l explained to me that to do so would not be fear of Hashem, but fear of flesh and blood. From that moment, I stopped fearing flesh and blood" (In chapter 34 of Orot Ha-Techiyah, Rav Kook wrote that the merits of physical exercise by the young pioneers in the Land of Israel are similar to the merits of reciting Tehillim and the mystical unifications of the Kabbalists. The religious Jews of the Old Yishuv in Israel waged war with Maran Ha-Rav Kook over this idea). [Ha-Rav Oded Valensky – Iturei Cohanim #262)

Our Rabbi related that Maran (our revered mentor) Rav Kook needed glasses, but he did not wear them and he said: For a Jew, the essence is to learn Torah, and I am able to do so without glasses and it is not so terrible that I cannot see at a distance. When he was chosen as Chief Rabbi of the Land of Israel, he was forced to wear glasses, since the

consulate was across the street from the building of the Chief Rabbinate, and one must properly relate to these dignitaries. (Iturei Cohanim #57)

Maran Ha-Rav's Room

Once after Davening, our Rabbi went to a particular room where Rav Kook learned, and he removed his Tefillin in the hallway. He said: "It is an explicit Halachah in the Shulchan Aruch that it is forbidden to remove one's Tefillin in the presence of his Rabbi" (out of respect).

Once when our Rabbi entered that room, he not only kissed the mezuzah as is customary, but he also kissed the doorposts. Beit Ha-Rav, which was Maran Ha-Rav Kook's house and for a time the site of Yeshivat Mercaz Ha-Rav, still retains its holiness.

On one of the summer days in 5708, during the War of Independence, only two students – Ha-Rav Yosef Kapach and Ha-Rav Glazer – were learning in the old building of the Yeshiva, together with our Rabbi, who did not refrain from coming to the Yeshiva even during times of danger. There was a huge explosive near the Yeshiva from which two women were killed. Our Rabbi brought the two students with him into Maran Ha-Rav's room, pointed to his chair and announced: "In merit of the one who sat in this chair nothing will happen here!" (Ha-Rav Yosef Kapach)

Our Rabbi related that Maran (our revered teacher) Ha-Rav Kook once received a long letter which included reasons to be lenient in certain forms of use of electricity on Shabbat and Yom Tov. He briefly responded that it is forbidden since electricity is fire. Our Rabbi asked his father about this, since his usual way was to respond based on the length of the letter (i.e. if the letter was lengthy, he would respond at length), but here he did not respond in kind. Maran Ha-Rav responded: "When issues are clear, there is no reason to be lengthy." (Ha-Rav Avraham Remer – Iturei Cohanim #83)

Rabbi Binyamin Levin, grandson of Rav Aryeh Levin, related: "My father and Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach studied together as children at Yeshivat Eitz Chaim on Jaffe Road, and sometimes on Shabbat they would learn in a Beit Midrash. My father and Rav Auerbach both told me that sometimes they would close the Gemara and cross Jaffe Road to the home of Rav Kook. They would go upstairs to his home, taking turns for a moment to peek through the keyhole to watch how Rav Kook would learn. And they said that those few minutes to see his face radiating with holiness gave them the desire to return immediately to their studies, to the Gemara, to become great Torah scholars. (From documentary for 70th anniversary of passing of Rav Kook)

The father and the son

Our Rabbi related that when they moved to Jerusalem, Maran Ha-Rav said to him regarding the desk upon which

he did all of his writing: "Until now it was mine, now it will be yours" – i.e. our Rabbi was his spiritual continuation.

Our Rabbi also related: "Abba Ha-Rav, may his memory be a blessing, wrote his great response to the Ridvaz on this desk (regarding the Heter Mechirah – Igeret #555, Igrot Ha-Re'eiyah vol. 2, pp. 184-198). He received the letter close to evening and after Ma'ariv he began to write and continued throughout the night in one flow until his hand hurt."

Our Rabbi related that Maran Ha-Rav once dreamt about David and Shlomo, and in the morning told our Rabbi: "This dream is for you" – i.e. our Rabbi is the continuation of Maran Ha-Rav as Shlomo was the continuation of David.

Our Rabbi described himself as one who licks the dust of the feet (Yeshayahu 49:23) of Maran Ha-Rav. He also said that his voice was his father's voice. (Rafael K.)

At the dedication of the new Yeshiva building of Mercaz Ha-Rav in Kiryat Moshe, our Rabbi defined himself thus: "I am the servant of Avraham" (Bereshit 24:34) – i.e. his entire life was committed to his father Maran Ha-Rav." (Rafael K.)

Our Rabbi did not simply edit Maran Ha-Rav's writings, i.e. correcting mistakes, punctuation, etc., but engaged in creative, "high" editing.

Our Rabbi said that he gave the name "Orot" to Maran Ha-Rav's books (Ha-Rav Achyah Amitai).

Our Rabbi's serving a Torah scholar – his father, Maran Ha-Rav - was not the usual, but great and wondrous. He absorbed words of Torah, conduct and ways of Torah to the point of unification of their souls. (Maran Ha-Gaon Rav Avraham Elkanah Kahana Shapira ztz"l)

Maran Ha-Rav would clarify together with our Rabbi the halachic questions which were brought before him. In one of his responsa from the period of St. Gallen in Switzerland, he writes: "My son, may he live a long life, pointed out..." (Mishpat Cohain, p. 308)

When people would ask our Rabbi to speak about Maran Ha-Rav, he would say: "It is impossible to talk about Ha-Rav, perhaps it is possible to learn something from him."

Our Rabbi had complete respect for his father and he completely nullified himself before him. He had many things of his own to say, but he hid his greatness and did not work at developing them in order to be a mouthpiece for his father. He never disagreed with him.

Our Rabbi said on 3 Elul (Maran Ha-Rav's yahrtzeit): "There are Torah scholars who are the Gadol Ha-Dor (the great Rabbi of the generation), but Abba z"l was Gadol Ha-Dorot (the great Rabbi of generations).

One of our Rabbi's students suggested to him to publish his writings together with the writings of Maran Ha-Rav. Our Rabbi said: "I am embarrassed."

When people came out against Maran Ha-Rav and shamed him, his supporters turned to Ha-Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer and asked why he did not protest publicly. He answered that if one protests publicly, this will draw more attention, and it is better not to relate to it at all and it will be forgotten. This answer did not find favor in our Rabbi's eyes. He said that one must respond with strength and alacrity against them.

Our Rabbi related that when Maran Ha-Rav appeared before the British court in the matter of Abraham Stavsky (who was accused of murdering Chaim Arlozorov, the leader of the Mapai Party in 1933), the English judge said that he saw in Maran Ha-Rav's eyes the eyes of a man of war. Our Rabbi corroborated this statement and said: Abba z"l was full of kindness and mercy, from the students of Aharon, a lover of peace. But when it was required, he was a man of war.

Our Rabbi was opposed to being recorded. A student approached him one day and said: Ha-Rav, what would have been if we had recordings of Maran Ha-Rav ztz"l?! He

then agreed. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald in the name of Ha-Rav Avraham Remer ztz"l)

A donor asked our Rabbi what to donate to the Yeshiva, and he did not say: dorms, rooms, etc., but rather: "We are lacking chairs." He donated folding chairs and on each was written: "Yeshivat Ha-Rav Kook – the Yeshiva of Rav Kook." But our Rabbi refused to sit on them: "One does not sit on his father's name."

Our Rabbi said: "All of Abba Ha-Rav's words in 'Orot,' 'Orot Ha-Kodesh,' 'Orot Ha-Torah,' 'Orot Re'eiyah,' etc., were written with 'Ruach Ha-Kodesh' (divine spirit), like the words of the Maharal; even though they appear as literary-intellectual [writings], they are all with the divine spirit."

A student asked our Rabbi: "Why doesn't Ha-Rav write all of his ideas?" He responded: "I accepted upon myself to publish the books of Abba Ha-Rav ztz"l." Our Rabbi did not allow anyone to approach this holy work, rather he engaged in it with great self-sacrifice and amazing precision.

After Maran Ha-Rav ascended on high in the year 5695, our Rabbi secluded himself with Maran Ha-Rav's writings until the year 5712. He dedicated most of his time to publishing the halachic writings in order that the image of Maran Ha-Rav not only would be as a philosophical thinker and a

communal leader, but also so he could be seen in his full Torah standing as a great genius.

Some students have the ability to draw from the Torah of their teacher and give it to others to drink (see Yoma 28b and Rashi to Bereshit 15:2), but they can only give what they receive. Our Rabbi was much more than this. He absorbed the Torah of Maran Ha-Rav and it became an inseparable part of his soul and essence. He was thus able to lead a generation which had new problems that did not exist at the time of Maran Ha-Rav. He was able to tell us what Maran Ha-Rav would have said in a given situation. Anyone who looked at our Rabbi actually saw Maran Ha-Rav in him.

Our Rabbi said: "There are people who do not know what are Gan Eden and Gehinom: I can feel Gehinom in this world on account of the distance from Abba."

Our Rabbi said: "I do not understand how the world exists without Abba."

When our Rabbi got up to speak on 3 Elul, the yahrtzeit of Maran Ha-Rav, he was completely covered with his talit; he leaned on the podium and cried. It was clear from his words the close connection he had even now with Maran Ha-Rav, as if he had ascended on high at this very moment.

Regarding difficult matters of the Yeshiva, our Rabbi would say: "I am taking counsel with Abba Ha-Rav ztz"l."

Our Rabbi was once walking in the old Yeshiva building and

when he entered the little room where Maran Ha-Rav had learned, he stopped and not only kissed the mezuzah, but also kissed the door.

"I heard from Ha-Rav Natan Ra'anani ztz"l that there was once an exhibition about [Maran] Ha-Rav ztz"l at a university. He approached Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah and told him about the exhibition, but Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah refused to go, and he said with excitement: "Although they are presenting his wisdom there, his fear of G-d will not be seen there and his faith will not be seen there. Why then should we go there?!" (Ha-Rav Avraham Elkanah Kahana Shapira ztz"l)

Who is the host?

Maran Ha-Rav would occasionally travel from the city of Zolm, where he was the Rav, to visit his parents in his hometown of Geriva. On the way to Geriva, he would pass through Dvinsk, where the Torah giant of the generation, Rabbi Meir Simcha, the author of the "Or Sameach," was the Rav.

Maran Ha-Rav would say that the "Or Sameach" was the central Torah giant of the generation since he not only knew Torah, but he created Torah. When Maran Ha-Rav passed through Dvinsk, he would visit the house of Rabbi Meir Simcha in order to discuss Torah. He once visited Rabbi Meir Simcha and found him standing up and learning Torah

with many books open before him and he was looking in the Rambam.

They greeted one another and immediately began discussing Torah, which continued for an extended period – the entire time standing up! When the flood of Torah ceased, Rabbi Meir Simcha realized that he did not invite his guest to sit. He rectified the situation at once and invited him to sit and they both sat. Rabbi Meir Simcha began to tell a story: Franz Joseph II, the Kaiser of Austria-Hungary, was known as a kind king and loved to periodically travel around like one of the commoners without any royal trappings so that no one would know who he was. The King once went on one of his travels and entered the National Library in Vienna, and despite all of his efforts to hide himself everyone recognized him and stood in his honor, except for one person. This man remained seated in his place while deeply looking at the book in front of him. It was the brilliant author of "Yad Ha-Melech," the Rabbi of Brody in Galicia.

The King took notice of the man who was reading, but he did not take his eyes off of the book. He knew that the man meant no disrespect, but he was so engrossed in the book that he did not notice anything around him. The King approached him and began a conversation, while all of the people were shocked as to what was occurring.

The King asked him: "Who are you?"

He responded: "I am the Rabbi of Brody."

The King said: "If I come to Brody, may I visit your home?"

The "Yad Ha-Melech" said: "Certainly, it would be my great honor!"

Time passed and the incident was nearly forgotten. The King, however, remembered it. Years passed and one day the King suddenly entered the house of the Rabbi of Brody. At that moment, the Rabbi was standing next to his bookshelf engrossed in a book. Just like the first time, the King approached him. The Rabbi was surprised – and thus forgot to ask the guest to sit...and they began talking standing.

The King asked: "Rabbi of Brody, is the custom of receiving guests while standing based on the Talmud and the customs of Israel?" The question was challenging, but the Rabbi answered immediately: "G-d forbid! We follow the path of our forefathers who taught us that 'Welcoming guests is greater than receiving the Divine Presence,' but our proper etiquette is that the host asks the guest to sit, and the King, wherever he is – is the host!"

This is how the great "Or Sameach" appeased the young Rabbi of Zoimel whom he did not ask to sit, by referring to him as the King! Our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, added that Maran Ha-Rav would tell this story on Purim in his later years, but on account of his great humility, he did not relate all of the details of the story. He did not say to whom the "Or Sameach" told the story and did not relate the name of the guest. Only after Maran Ha-Rav passed away did this

detail become known: it was Maran Ha-Rav himself who Rabbi Meir Simcha appeased. (Ha-Rav Yitzchak Dadon, Nishkafah Kemo Shachar, pp. 47-49)

Ha-Rav Yosef Buxbaum, the editor of the journal "Moriah," had a very close relationship with our Rabbi, following the lead of his Rav, Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach. Our Rabbi would give him letters which great Rabbis wrote to Maran Ha-Rav Kook in order to publish them in "Moriah." Ha-Rav Buxbaum would often visit our Rabbi. And when a baby boy was born to him, he asked our Rabbi to serve as the Cohain at the Pidyon Ha-Ben.

It once happened that one of the editors of the "Otzar Mefarshei Ha-Talmud" (Treasury of Talmudic Commentators) included a ruling of Maran Ha-Rav Kook, but another editor removed it. Ha-Rav Buxbaum asked him why he removed the ruling: Was it because he raised a difficulty with it and it required further study? He answered: "I didn't even look into the issue. I just think that a ruling of Ha-Rav Kook is not appropriate for 'Otzar Mefarshei Ha-Talmud.'" Ha-Rav Buxbaum said to him: "From this moment, you are fired!" The editor did not accept his decision, and they went to Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv. Ha-Rav Elyashiv was shocked and said to the editor: "Did you know Ha-Rav Kook?! You should know – he was holy. He did not belong to our generation, and in his generation, they did not properly understand him. Reb Yosef was certainly permitted to

fire you. I would have done the same thing." (Ha-Rav Yosef Buxbaum ztz"l)

Our Rabbi related that Maran Ha-Rav would go to relax on Mount Carmel in Haifa because of his physical condition. Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer, Rosh Yeshiva of Eitz Chaim, once happened to meet him there. When he returned, he said: I merited seeing a Jew who does not have a moment devoid of holiness.

Our Rabbi related that Ha-Rav Meltzer said: If only our Neilah prayer was like Maran Ha-Rav's Minchah on a Friday.

Our Rabbi would not pass through the "Zichron Moshe" neighborhood since they had burned an effigy of Maran Ha-Rav there in the past. (Choveret Avanim Levavot, p. 24)

When Ha-Rav Yosef Chaim Zonenfeld ascended on high, Maran Ha-Rav Kook wanted to attend the funeral, but our Rabbi forcefully prevented him, saying that he would lay down in front of the wheels of the vehicle and stop him from going out of a fear that the zealots would attack him (Ha-Rav Avraham Shapira quoted in Imrei Shefer of Rav Yitzchak Dadon p. 261. And there were actual cases that zealots physically attacked Maran Ha-Rav at several funerals. *ibid.*).

Our Rabbi would go to hear Divrei Torah from the Brisker Rav, Ha-Griz – Ha-Rav Yitzchak Zev Soloveitchik – and when he was there, the "zealots" (extreme anti-Zionists) would insult him. When Ha-Rav Shabatai Shmueli, the

Yeshiva's secretary, heard about this he was shaken and pleaded with our Rabbi to stop going there. Ha-Rav Avraham Shapira also attempted to convince our Rabbi to stop, but he wanted to hear Divrei Torah from Ha-Griz. Ha-Rav Shmueli and Ha-Rav Shapira requested that Reb Aryeh Levin – who frequented there – speak with our Rabbi. He agreed and said to him: "Reb Tzvi Yehudah, you must cease going there. It does not bring honor to the Torah. It is also insulting to Maran Ha-Rav ztz"l." Our Rabbi tried to justify continuing the visits by saying that it does not affect him, and Ha-Griz is one of the great Rabbis of the generation etc., but Reb Aryeh interrupted him and said harsh things about the "zealots," even though there was a great loss in not hearing Ha-Griz. When our Rabbi heard this from the mouth of Reb Aryeh, he did not return (It was quite rare for Reb Aryeh to speak this way since he had incredible patience and was able to endure most anything. If our Rabbi had heard insults about Maran Ha-Rav Kook he would not have remained quiet) (Imrei Shefer of Ha-Rav Yitzchak Dadon, pp. 236-237).

Our Rabbi had a question on the Rambam and he went to present it to Ha-Griz from Brisk and Ha-Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer, since they both authored works on the Rambam. (Gadol Shimusha p. 45)

Ha-Rav Eliezer Melamed wrote in the newspaper "Besheva": "After the anti-Zionist Brisker Rav – Ha-Rav Yitzchak Zev Soloveitchik – harshly opposed the building of Heichal

Shlomo (the building of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel), Ha-Rav Yehudah Leib Maimon wrote a scathing criticism about him. My father and teacher, Ha-Rav Zalman Melamed, told me that he went to speak with Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah about this and asked him: When a lesser Rabbi disagrees with a greater Rabbi, isn't this an impingement on the honor of the Torah and shaming a Torah scholar? Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah answered: Certainly. Ha-Rav Zalman Melamed then asked about Ha-Rav Maimon: How does he harshly disagree with the Brisker Rav? Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah answered: 'But he is right' (meaning in regards to the dispute about Heichal Shlomo and similar issues). My father, who was then still younger, feared that he may have insulted Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah since the latter justified Ha-Rav Maimon's actions.

At a later period, my father accompanied Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah on his way, and Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah said: You think that you are honoring the Brisker Rav. But in order to honor, one must understand and know, and then the honor is true, and the criticism does not impinge upon that which he must honor. And he related that there is a question why the Rambam placed the laws of the head Tefillin before those of the hand Tefillin (which one puts on first), and Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah explained before the Brisker Rav that the Rambam wanted to teach the idea that the head Tefillin is a Mitzvah in and of itself, and he therefore did not teach them in the proper order. And he said that the Brisker Rav, who was an expert in the Rambam, liked his explanation."

A Torah scholar was delivering a eulogy for a great Rabbi and he spoke about Maran Ha-Rav Kook without explicitly mentioning his name. After mentioning his greatness, he added "But his love of Israel is contrary to normal behavior" (see Bereshit Rabbah 55:11 and Rashi to Bereshit 22:3). Our Rabbi explained that Maran Ha-Rav Kook's love of Israel was not in the usual sense, but came from a deep understanding of the love of Israel from which his own love flowed. And regarding the Torah scholar's words, our Rabbi cited the teaching: "One who prays: 'May Your mercy reach the bird's nest,' we silence him" (Berachot 33b). (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah – Devarim p. 334)

The words engraved on Maran Ha-Rav Kook's tombstone

Ha-Rav Avraham Yitzchak Ha-Cohain Kook

Born on 16 Elul 5625

Ascended to the Land of Israel on 28 Iyar 5664

Ascended to Jerusalem on 3 Elul 5679

Ascended to Heaven on 3 Elul 5695

Maran Ha-Rav Kook's grave

Rabbi Yaakov Filber relates that Maran Ha-Rav Kook's grave on the Mount of Olives remained completely intact during the period between of the War of Independence and the Six-Day War when the area was under Jordanian control. While most of the graves were vandalized and the tombstones were uprooted by the Arabs and used for paving roads, Maran Ha-Rav Kook's grave remained untouched. He heard from reliable sources that every time a Jordanian tractor came to reach the grave, the tractor would flip over. The Jordanians were struck by the holiness of the grave and left it alone. Our Rabbi filled in the details. While everything around Maran Ha-Rav Kook's grave was bombed out or destroyed, his grave remained whole. An Arab worker related that they received special instructions from their superiors not to damage the grave in any way (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah #51). (Mareh Cohain of Ha-Rav Yaakov Filber, p. 139 including pictures of the untouched grave and its destroyed surroundings immediately after the Six-Day War).

3. Our Rabbi's Personal Traits

Not Using Another Person

Our Rabbi would not burden others. Therefore, at the end of a class when his students wanted to Daven Ma'ariv, our Rabbi would always get up himself to get his hat (This trait follows the Gemara [Sotah 10] regarding Shimshon, who asked Hashem to remember for him the merit that for all of the years that he judged Israel he did not burden another person to bring him his rod). These traits of our Rabbi were exemplary like those of our master, Rav Kook, his father, who was also known to act this way. Our Rabbi related that his father told him that someone who desires to attain lofty and deep levels of spiritual growth is obligated to act this way. Nonetheless, when the students saw that our Rabbi needed his hat, they brought it on their own initiative.

After our Rabbi's release from the hospital in 5733, the students took turns bringing lunch from the Yeshiva to our Rabbi each day during the course of a month. According to doctor's orders, our Rabbi was required to cease from eating his usual minimal amount. Our Rabbi apologized to each

student for creating a burden, having him bring the meal, and always asked the student to eat with him.

When our Rabbi was healthy, he was extremely particular not to ask for help from anyone. Even when during the course of a day he did not eat, he would not ask them to bring him food.

Our Rabbi's sister, Ha-Rabbanit Batya Miriam Ra'anan, used to send our Rabbi a jar of jam with one of the students when they went from the old Yeshiva building to our Rabbi's house. Our Rabbi would not touch these, and stacks of jars piled up. When Ha-Rabbanit asked for an explanation, our Rabbi said: "Send it with your son, not with the students."

It once happened that a bottle cap fell on the floor and a student bent down to pick it up. Our Rabbi said: "Oh sorry, sorry, I will pick it up." The student said: "It is nothing." But our Rabbi remained steadfast. It bothered our Rabbi to be on the receiving end; he wanted to be the one to give, even with little things.

A student escorted our Rabbi on the way. Our Rabbi was carrying a bag and the student's hands were free. The student asked to carry the bag, but our Rabbi declined. The student said to him: "If someone sees us walking and notices

that I, the younger one, am allowing my elder to carry a bag, I will appear cruel in his eyes. Therefore, if I take the bag, Ha-Rav is doing me a favor and not the other way around." He then agreed.

After Birchat Cohanim, our Rabbi would move his chair in order to tie his shoes. He would prevent his students from putting it back, and he would return it himself. One time a student succeeded in returning it before him. Our Rabbi sat for a moment and said: "Thank you very much," and immediately stood in order not to benefit from others.

Even when our Rabbi suffered from incredible pain, he was insistent that they should not support him. Once after a class, when the last of the students left his house, he sighed from the pain in his foot and he exerted himself to get up from his chair to get to his bed. The student, who lived with him to help him, knew that our Rabbi would be unhappy if he tried to help him get to the bed. An idea suddenly came to him to arrange two rows of chairs so our Rabbi could lean on them on his way, and he would not have to rely on flesh and blood. When our Rabbi saw this, he was very happy and a wide smile appeared on his face.

When our Rabbi had to send a letter, he wrote it himself, he put the stamp on it, and he brought it to the post office.

During Birchat Cohanim, when the Cohanim saw that they

had taken up all of the space on the rug and there was no room for our Rabbi, they moved to the side to make room. Our Rabbi hesitated and stood with one foot on the floor – in order to refrain from receiving help from others – and with one foot on the rug – in order not to insult someone who had done something for him.

Our Rabbi did not have a washing machine. He would hoist the laundry on his shoulder and deliver it to the laundromat in the neighborhood of Geulah. Sometimes a student would escort him and would want to carry the bag, but our Rabbi would never agree.

At the funeral of the father of one of the students, others were waiting for the funeral to depart and our Rabbi was greatly suffering from his legs. A student brought him a chair, but he would not sit despite his pain.

In his later years, when he needed medical treatment, he always said "thank you" whether to the nurses in the hospital or any person for everything that was done for him.

Our Rabbi was insistent on bringing his dishes to the kitchen after breakfast at the Yeshiva, and only after real arguments would he agree to give them to someone who he met in the middle of the stairs.

It once happened that when he was walking in the street to bring a cup of coffee to someone who was sick, a student asked to take it from him and he would not agree.

Our Rabbi participated in a funeral and the eulogies went

on for a long time. One of the family members of the deceased went to one of the neighbors and brought our Rabbi a chair to sit on. Our Rabbi refused and said: "Everyone is standing. I will therefore also stand." But he leaned one leg on the chair and explained: "I am standing like everyone else, but if someone exerted effort and brought a chair, I will use it." (Ha-Rav Mordechai Greenberg)

Separation-Holiness

Our Rabbi acted like Rabbi Yehudah Ha-Nasi (Shabbat 118b) and never put his hands in his pants' pockets; rather, he always held his hands up.

Anyone who paid close attention saw that during all of the classes, all of the meals, all of the discussions with people, our Rabbi always had his hands on the table, and he did not take them off and put them on his knees or in his pockets.

Our Rabbi would pray by heart or from a siddur which he took from an inner pocket in the upper part of his jacket, and only from the upper part, since he was extremely careful not to put holy words in lower pockets.

Our Rabbi was once looking for notes he had written on "Orot Ha-Torah." A student said to him: "Maybe it is in a

pocket." Our Rabbi responded: "I am not suspected of this," i.e. putting objects under his beltline.

Our Rabbi was once getting off on the bus and an elderly, modestly-dressed woman was getting on. Our Rabbi was glued to the wall and made way until she left.

Eating

In response to one Rabbi who said that Maran Ha-Rav Kook abstained from eating in an exaggerated manner, our Rabbi said: He did not abstain, but there are people who do not need a lot (see Even Shlomo, chap. 2).

Our Rabbi was not interested in eating, and he only ate for health reasons. He ate foods which were praised in the Gemara, such as olives, eggs, or honey, and no other food besides these entered his mouth. When the doctors instructed him to eat particular foods, however, he strictly fulfilled their instructions. In connection to this, he related the words of a doctor in Europe, who said that among hundreds of ill people whom he treated, only one precisely followed his instructions: Rabbi Yisrael Salanter, and it appeared that he was the only one who truly wanted to be cured. An example of our Rabbi's disinterest in eating: Our Rabbi once separated the tag with the name of the bakery from the bread in order to throw it out, but he put it in his mouth. When a student pointed this out, he removed it from his

mouth and said in seriousness: "This is what happens when we do not pay attention; we need to pay attention when we eat." He then praised one Rabbi who was surprised one day because the sugar cube which he would suck while drinking tea during his learning was not melting as usual. When they checked, they found that he was sucking a button that fell off his clothing without his noticing. (Ha-Rav Yosef Kelner. See *Sefer Chasidim* 569 and *Makor Chesed* *ibid.*, *Magid Meisharim*, p. 50 and *Even Shlomo*, p. 32)

It once happened that a student came to take counsel with our Rabbi who was sitting in the library after morning prayers. Our Rabbi said to him: "You already ate morning bread?" The student responded: "I'll eat afterwards." Our Rabbi said: "No, morning bread comes first, as is written in the Gemara" (*Baba Metzia* 107b). The student asked: "And what about the honorable Rav himself?!" Our Rabbi responded: "Blessed is Hashem, I am not yet enslaved to the routine of eating."

Our Rabbi said: There are those who call "morning bread" [*Pat Shacharit*, about which he was very particular] – "Aruchat Ha-Boker" [breakfast], and it is possible that the word "Aruchah" [meal] derived from the word "Orchim" [guests], to teach you that in relation to food we should be guests and not permanent residents. (*Kinyan Torah* of Rav Yosef Elnakveh vol. 2, p. 74)

When he was informed that one student was eating extremely minimal amounts, he said to him: "Every person

must eat in a normal manner in the amount which he requires."

Our Rabbi would sometimes eat breakfast in the afternoon. Sometimes after Yom Kippur he would only drink a little and delay a long time until eating. If it were not for the students who worried about his meals, our Rabbi would hardly eat anything.

They would bring him breakfast but he would not always eat it, even though he was particular about safeguarding the body. His mother, Ha-Rabbanit, would sometimes point out to him during the late hours of the night that he should eat something.

Our Rabbi had the custom to fast on his father's yahrtzeit. After one yahrtzeit, the students arrived for a class a few hours after dark and our Rabbi still had not Davened Ma'ariv since he was waiting for a Minyan and he had not eaten. They Davened and they suggested to our Rabbi that he eat before the class since he had not eaten anything all day. Our Rabbi rejected the idea: I am not enslaved to food. They said: Then only a cup of tea? He again completely rejected the idea: I am not enslaved to food! None of the pleas helped, and the class went on as usual into the night.

Our Rabbi's strength

During the weekdays our Rabbi would eat minimal amounts: An olive-size piece of bread or baked goods and

a cup of tea. It was difficult to understand from where the strength flowed for all of the classes which he gave and for all of the lengthy discussions with students and other people who would arrive early at his door.

Despite the minimal amounts he ate, our Rabbi possessed exceptional physical strength.

On Simchat Torah, he would carry a heavy Sefer Torah for hours.

Even our Rabbi's pat on the back was sometimes very strong. He once related that Rabbi Chaim of Tzanz – the Divrei Chaim - would deliver his blessings to his Chasidim with a pat on the back, and the stronger the pat, the greater the blessing that would come into existence. A few days later, he blessed a student along with a light pat on the back. The student gently reminded him about his words about Rabbi Chaim of Tzanz. Our Rabbi listened, and gave him a powerful pat that made him fly two meters.

When our Rabbi returned to his house from Hadassah Hospital in the year 5733, he emphasized that he was returning to all of his stringencies and pious customs.

Eating on Shabbat

A student related: On Shabbat, it was impossible to see the table. Rabbi Yosef Bedichi ensured that the Shabbat meal

would be like "Shlomo's feast." I was stunned every time how Ha-Rav, without any effort, would finish every dish which Rabbi Yosef Bedichi prepared, while I needed great exertion to do so. Many times he would mention during the meal the words of the Midrash Tanchuma (Bereshit, 3) that one who delights in Shabbat is equivalent to one who fasts one hundred times (see Ha-Torah Ha-Goelet of Rav Chaim Avihu Schwartz, vol. 4, p. 211 #30). It appeared as if he was a different person on Shabbat, as if the nature of the body changed within him on account of the extra soul of Shabbat. And this man, who virtually fasted all week, would delight in Shabbat.

Once at a Shabbat evening meal, a guest ate at our Rabbi's table, and after eating the fish he was no longer hungry. When Rabbi Yosef Bedichi brought the soup, he did not eat it and pushed it a little to the side. Our Rabbi noticed this and asked the guest what happened, and he responded that he was not hungry. He said to him in surprise: "Do we eat on Shabbat because we are hungry? We eat on Shabbat in order to delight on Shabbat." He mentioned various times the words of the Gemara in Sanhedrin (101a), "All the days of a poor person are bad," including Shabbat and holidays. The Gemara explains that even though on Shabbat a poor person eats good meals he is nevertheless mired in bad, as Shmuel said, "Changing habit is the beginning of intestinal illness" (which Rashi explains: "'Changing habit' - changing habit and eating more than one usually eats is the beginning

of intestinal illness, therefore even Shabbat and holidays are bad for him").

At Seudah Shelishit (the third meal of Shabbat), our Rabbi saw that one student was not eating and inquired as to the reason. The student answered: "I do not like this food." Our Rabbi said to him: "One needs to like all food."

On weekdays he would limit talking at meal time and would finish quickly in order to be free from it. On Shabbat, however, he would lengthen it with Divrei Torah, stories of great Rabbis of Israel and delight in hearing zemirot (Shabbat songs).

Seudat Mitzvah

A student related: Our Rabbi was invited to a Seudat Mitzvah with my family. He responded affirmatively and came to participate in it. After they finished serving the main course, the hostess stood up and asked: "Would anyone like more?" No one responded, but our Rabbi spoke up and said: "Please, I would like more." After the hostess joyously served Ha-Rav, and they gave Divrei Torah, the hostess again asked if anyone would like more. Again, no one responded to her proposal, and again our Rabbi spoke up and said: "If it is possible, please, I am interested..." We were somewhat confused; we could not understand how Ha-Rav could eat this amount. Ha-Gaon Rabbi Shalom Natan

Ra'anana (Ha-Rav's brother-in-law) stood up, came over to me and whispered to me: "Please tell the hostess not to propose an additional portion, since if she asks ten times, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah will not refuse. For a Seudat Mitzvah, he will never refuse..." (From the book "Berito Le-hodi'am" of Rav Yitzchak Dadon, p. 115)

At a Seudat Mitzvah, such as a Brit Milah, our Rabbi would eat as quickly as he could, because then there is a Mitzvah to eat.

It once happened that students found his sister, Ha-Rabbanit Bayta Miriam, crying: "Yesterday Reb Tzvi Yehudah participated in three Seudot Mitzvah in which he ate meat; now he will fast for a week!"

A student asked after a Seudat Mitzvah: "From where do you get the strength to eat so much?" Our Rabbi replied: "We receive the strength from the Mitzvah."

Our Rabbi related this Dvar Torah many times: The Gemara in Sanhedrin (71a) says that a Ben Sorer U-Moreh (Rebellious Son - see Devarim 21:18-21 - who is killed on account of where his current transgressions will lead. Among other things, he eats meats and drinks wine like a glutton) who eats as part of a group fulfilling a Mitzvah is exempt from the law of Ben Sorer U-Moreh. Rashi (ibid. 71b) brings two examples of such a group: eating a sacrifice in the Temple and eating the Korban Pesach.

But a difficulty can be raised on Rashi's comment: the Korban Pesach is eaten roasted, and a Ben Sorer U-Moreh – whether he eats as part of a group fulfilling a Mitzvah or not – only receives capital punishment if he eats raw meat. How then could Rashi bring an example of the Korban Pesach, which is never eaten raw?

Our Rabbi explains that the Ben Sorer U-Moreh in this case was not eating from the roasted Korban Pesach, but from his own raw meat, while sitting with a group who was eating the roasted Korban Pesach. Even this slight participation with a group fulfilling a Mitzvah exempts him from capital punishment, even though he was eating raw meat.

Our Rabbi would mention this Dvar Torah when he arrived late to a Brit Milah or had to leave a Simchah early, but was at least able to make it for part of the meal. He would use this idea to emphasize the great value in participating in a Seudat Mitzvah, even if only for a short time (Be-Shipulei Ha-Gelimah of Ha-Rav Yair Oriel, pp. 84-85).

Meal-time etiquette

The meal time was a great class for his students. Our Rabbi did not bend over the soup as most people do. He would bring the spoon up to himself while sitting in an upright position, since a person does not need to bend to the food, but conversely, to raise the food up to him.

Our Rabbi was very particular not to begin eating as long as all of those present had not received their food.

When our Rabbi sat down to eat and another person sat with him, he was also concerned that he would eat.

When a married couple ate at his table, he would give the man "a double portion" and point out with a smile: "You are obligated to provide her food!" And sometimes he even acted this way with an engaged couple, and he would say to the young man: "You will soon be obligated to provide her food..."

Our Rabbi was once drinking tea and a student asked him a question and he only answered him after finishing the tea. When the student asked our Rabbi about it, he explained that the whole thing about drinking tea is drinking it when it is hot. If it cools off, it is "Ba'al Tashchit" (wanton waste), and it was therefore preferable to finish drinking first. (Ha-Rav Reuven Hiller)

Our Rabbi and his stringencies regarding eating

The "Divrei Avraham" - Ha-Rav Ha-Gaon Rabbi Avraham Dov Ber Shapira of Kovno - participated in a gathering of "Agudat Yisrael," and since our Rabbi had a great desire to meet him, he came to the hotel where he was staying. They had a lengthy conversation, but when it came time for

lunch, our Rabbi moved to the side to eat bread and honey. This is how he acted during his travels in order to avoid kashrut problems (since any additional ingredients in honey ruin its taste and are noticeable). The "Divrei Avraham" invited him a few times to join the others, but he declined, and then the "Divrei Avraham" understood: "His honor simply has special stringencies regarding eating." Our Rabbi then resolved: "My thought was not to act this way in the presence of a great man" (See Ketubot 63a where Ben Kalba Shavua vowed that his daughter would not benefit from his property after she became engaged to the unlearned Rabbi Akiva. He later wanted to annul his vow and heard that a Rabbi had come to town. The Rabbi asked him, "Did you intend to make your vow even in the case that he would be a great man?" Ben Kalba Shavua said, "No, even if he had learned a little I would not have vowed." Rabbi Akiva then revealed to him that he was his son-in-law). Our Rabbi then established three general rules for himself: 1. All of his special practices regarding eating would be nullified in the presence of a great man who asked him to eat. 2. And similarly, when he was a guest of other people. 3. And even when people were his guests.

"Guarding One's Tongue"

Our Rabbi was not a quiet person. When he spoke, it was like a flood let loose from an inner storehouse, yet he never had a spiritual depreciation with even one word. This is sim-

ilar to what is said about the "Chafetz Chaim," that he would speak and speak and speak at great length, but he would not say one word of "lashon ha-ra" (evil speech).

Every word our Rabbi pronounced was carefully considered, and would not burst forth out of excitement. Someone once quoted a certain word in his name, and he responded harshly: "I did not say this word. Every word which leaves my mouth is precise and I am responsible for it."

A student related: It once happened that I was talking with our Rabbi on the way from the Yeshiva to his house, and it seems that I stumbled when I said something that should not have been said. He understood immediately that I stumbled, and he asked me to repeat what I said in order to clarify the matter. I was, of course, confused and in order to free myself I said that this was not a serious statement and I simply said something. To my surprise, he was even angrier and said that we do not simply say things, and that we must consider before every word if it is appropriate to say it.

Our Rabbi was the first who set aside time in a Yeshiva to learn the laws of guarding one's tongue. He instilled within himself in a powerful fashion – through learning, through teaching, and through the essence of his personal character – the need to guard one's tongue. He spoke respectfully to other people even when they disagreed. He distinguished

between a person's character and his beliefs. Even when people whose beliefs were extremely distant from his own came to his house, he received them with great love, without avoiding strongly pointing out to them what was needed.

On one occasion, when our Rabbi returned home from prayer, his taxi driver accidentally drove past his house. "Oops," said the driver, "I'll have to back up." Our Rabbi immediately corrected him, saying: "You have to proceed backwards."

On another occasion, our Rabbi was asked to "descend" a stairway. He immediately replied: "I do not 'descend'!" (implying that "descent" has a negative connotation and that such expressions should be avoided).

Don't get excited

The administrator of the Yeshiva once entered in a rage and said to our Rabbi: "It is written in the newspaper that they do not learn in the Yeshiva but waste all of their time with Soviet Jewry and politics. We cannot be silent. We must respond!" Our Rabbi did not respond. He took counsel with a few people and decided not to respond. A journalist once interviewed our Rabbi and published an article filled with distortions. A student said to our Rabbi: "You must respond. It is impossible to let this pass in silence." Our Rabbi did not

get excited. He explained that there is no need to respond to every little thing. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

"And His mercies extend to all of His works"

At the end of our Rabbi's class on Maran Ha-Rav Kook's commentary on the siddur, "Olat Re'eiyah," some students entered to talk to him about an important matter. He motioned to them not to say anything and that they should sit next to him on the couch. The students were surprised by the need for silence since nobody was in house. Our Rabbi also sat silently and left his book open. After a while, he said with a wonderful smile: "He has desired it for His dwelling" and he repeated: "He has desired it for His dwelling" (Tehilim 132:13). The students assumed that this was what our Rabbi was teaching from "Olat Re'eiyah." He smiled again and said: "He has desired it for His dwelling" and pointed at the book. The students looked closely and saw a moth on the book. Our Rabbi did not want the students to scare it; he therefore told them to enter quietly. After a few minutes, the moth flew away on its own. Our Rabbi closed the book and began to talk.

A student lived with our Rabbi to aid him, but our Rabbi would not allow the student to throw out the garbage, but he did it himself. The student once wanted to see why he acted this way. He saw that our Rabbi opened the garbage very gently, and he also heard him make all sorts of soft

sounds. He explained that he opened the lid this way in order not to scare the cats, and he made the sounds to move them from there.

Our Rabbi was once walking and talking to a group of people in the street when he suddenly stopped and put his finger to his lips to tell them to be quiet. He stood quietly for a few minutes, and then continued on his way. When he was asked why he did this, he explained that a cat was eating from the garbage, and if they passed it would get scared, run away, lose the food and be upset.

Our Rabbi once suddenly stared at a placemat on the table and intently watched an ant walking. He said in amazement and excitement: "Look, how wonderful! This is a little ant, who hardly has place for its brain to decide whether to turn right or left, frontwards or backwards." He was amazed with an innocence as if it was the first time he was seeing an ant. He did not want to clear the table in order not to disturb it; rather he related about the wisdom of Shlomo who taught about the ways of the ants (Mishlei 6:6 explained by Chullin 57b).

When our Rabbi saw ants on the stairs to the entrance to his house, he wanted the person escorting him to be careful not to step on them.

Once at the beginning of our Rabbi's class, a small bug jumped onto his book. On account of his righteousness, he did not want to hurt it. He did not begin the class, but stared

at the bug. He pointed out that it is interesting that something so small has a will and can decide whether to move forwards or backwards. We not only have the concept of "How great are Your works, Hashem" (Tehillim 104:24) but also "How minute are Your works, Hashem." And he mentioned how Rabbi Yochanan was amazed by an ant (Chullin 63a and see Kol Yehudah on Sefer Ha-Kuzari 1, 68b). The class was therefore delayed. One of our Rabbi's students, a Rabbi and Torah scholar sitting next to him, seeing the continued delay, took the book and removed the bug by blowing on it. Our Rabbi did not respond or say anything, and began the class.

Humility

Our Rabbi emphasized that humility is the most important of all traits (Avodah Zarah 20b), and it is related to Moshe Rabbenu (Bemidbar 12:3) and cleaving to the Land of Israel, as it says: "And the humble will inherit the Land" (Tehillim 37:11).

Out of his great humility, our Rabbi hid his greatness from most people, even from the Yeshiva students who did not participate in his classes. His external appearance was not exceptional and his talks lacked the polish of an orator. Only one who was close to him was able to recognize the greatness of his character traits and Torah learning.

The municipality of Jerusalem decided to honor Rabbi

Aryeh Levin with the title "Cherished Citizen of Jerusalem," but he refused on account of his great humility. He said that he was not worthy. They next turned to our Rabbi to honor him with this title, but he also refused on account of his great humility. They next turned to Rabbi Shalom Natan Ra'anana Kook, son-in-law of Rav Kook and our Rabbi's brother-in-law, and to everyone's great surprise he accepted. His close relatives were so surprised because of his great humility and they asked him: "Why did you decide to accept this honor when our Rabbi and Reb Aryeh declined?" The great Rav humbly responded: "If I would have refused, they would have placed me on the same level as our Rabbis, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah and Reb Aryeh, and they would think that I am as humble as them. I know that I have not reached that level. I therefore acted this way, so they would not be mistaken. (Ha-Rav Yitzchak Dadon, "Nishkafah Kemo Shachar" p. 135)

A student asked our Rabbi a halachic question relating to a custom of Jerusalem. Our Rabbi turned to Reb Shimon, the Yeshiva's secretary and said to him: It seems to me that Jerusalem's custom is such-and-such. Is that not so? (Ha-Rav Aharon Gelik)

Similarly, a student once saw a tiny piece of dust on our Rabbi's hat and he pointed it out to our Rabbi, since it is known that it is not proper for a Torah scholar to have a

stain on his clothing (Shabbat 114a). Our Rabbi responded: A doubtful Torah scholar, a doubtful speck, a doubtful (obligation to wear a) hat...

A student related: Our Rabbi was once invited to a Brit Milah and I came to pick him up in a taxi. When he entered the taxi, someone accidentally closed the door on his fingers. His face flinched for a moment but no sound came out of his mouth. When the young man noticed, he quickly opened the door, apologizing and asking forgiveness. Our Rabbi said to him: "No problem, nothing happened." But blood dripped from his fingers.

When he received his check from work, he did not send a messenger to cash it, but went to the bank himself and stood in line. He generally took a bus and not a taxi. At first, when he was called to the Torah with the title "Rav," he would begin to cry.

A student asked our Rabbi for the source of a Gemara he mentioned in class. He opened the Gemara but did not find it. He closed the Gemara and said that sometimes when a person feels arrogant because he knows something which someone else does not, Heaven hints to him that he should repent for this. After he finished explaining, he opened the Gemara and found the source. (Gadol Shimusha of Ha-Rav Avraham Remer, p. 97 #35)

During a class, a young student fainted, and when our Rabbi saw that he was being taken care of, he continued

with his class as usual in order that the student not be embarrassed by the attention of those around him.

Young students were once sitting around our Rabbi's table and they were discussing ideas that he had presented. When one student mentioned a particular idea, our Rabbi started beaming and said: "Did you hear what he said?" and he repeated the idea as if he was not the one who came up with the idea but the student. (Gadol Shimusha of Ha-Rav Avraham Remer, p. 87 #36)

Our Rabbi did not have personal demands. He was modest in every realm of life. He did not leave his four amot (cubits) and hardly ever left Jerusalem. He made do with very little. He greeted important and famous people at his humble home. They sat at his old table and on old benches and chairs.

Our Rabbi related: "I was once walking in the street here, nearby, to go to Daven. On the way, I met the Gerrer Rebbe ['Beit Yisrael']. He was walking as per the doctor's orders. He was accompanied by attendants and gaba'im. When we met, obviously in friendship, he asked those around him to clear away, and he asked me why I am walking alone in the street. I responded: 'There are those who require attendants and gaba'im, but I do not.' He said to me: 'But you had a father who was so great!'" (From "Ha-Torah Ha-Goelet" of Ha-Rav Chaim Schwartz, vol. 4, p. 206)

When people suggested that our Rabbi travel in a taxi, he

would refuse and would ride on the bus or walk, even if it took considerable time.

Our Rabbi did not agree to travel from his house to the Yeshiva, when it was housed in the old building on Rav Kook Street, even though it was a lengthy walk of fifty minutes. He said: "The Torah spares the money of Israel' (Chullin 49b), and Israel must spare the money of the Torah" (i.e. the money of the Yeshiva).

When the doctor informed our Rabbi that he could return home from "Neveh Simchah," where for many months he was recuperating from illness, he sat on his chair for a long time, and then slowly distanced himself from his bed. When he left the room, he burst out crying and explained the difficulty in his leaving: "The Divine Presence is above the head of the ill" (see Shabbat 12b). And when he was in Hadassah Hospital, he was once sitting on a chair, and hinted that he wanted to return to bed by saying: "The One who returns His Divine Presence" (from the end of "Retzei" in the Shemoneh Esrei).

Our Rabbi visited his brother-in-law, Ha-Rav Shalom Natan Ra'anani, in the hospital and took care not to sit but to stand in awe and caution as when praying, because of the statement of our Sages: "The Divine Presence is above the head of the ill" (see Shabbat 12b). Even when he left the room, he did not turn his back, but walked out backwards.

The Honor of Women

Our Rabbi gave classes for the Yeshiva students at his house, and they set up an amplification system so that women could hear in the apartment next door. There was sometimes a problem with the system and our Rabbi would wait until they fixed it. He would explain that for the honor of women he was obligated to delay his class so that they too could hear.

With all of our Rabbi's care regarding issues relating to modesty, our Rabbi was at the same time strict about women's honor. Before Kiddush on Shabbat day, he would ask over and over: "Are all the women here? 'Women are obligated in Kiddush during the day' (Berachot 20b)."

A student asked our Rabbi: how should one choose a spouse? He responded with one word: intellect. The student said: What about emotion? Our Rabbi answered: Animals also have emotion; the essence is intellect. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald – Iturei Yerushalayim #3)

Our Rabbi would remind his married students that there is an obligation to provide their wives with spiritual food. In contrast to the general thought that women are exempt from learning Torah, he would emphasize with a smile that this does not apply to learning about faith: "Is faith a time-bound, positive Mitzvah?"

It once happened that a newly-married young man came to our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, and told him that it was

difficult for him, since only half of a month is "a time to hug," while half of a month is "a time to distance from hugging" (when a woman is a niddah - menstruating and counting the clean days before she is able to immerse in a mikveh, when a husband and wife are not allowed to have any physical contact). Our Rabbi said to him: Look what is written [in the Sheva Berachot]: "Who created joy and happiness, a groom and a bride, etc." - You see, marriage is not just hugging and kissing, but before all else a soulful connection of love, brotherhood, peace and friendship, which apply equally at all times. The essence is friendship, to be good friends.

When the Beit Midrash was in the dormitory building, the women's section was close to the entrance to the Beit Midrash. There was a sign: "Women are requested not to linger in the hallway after Davening" [in order to prevent women and men from intermingling]. When our Rabbi saw it, he asked that the note be taken down and rewritten in a more general manner, in order not to offend the honor of the women: "The community is requested not to linger in the hallway after Davening."

Our Rabbi was extremely particular not to stare at women. Even when a woman came to him for a long conversation on an important matter, he listened to her carefully and responded warmly – but his eyes were always averted to the side. He was the same when he gave a class to women. He would stand for a woman who was a Torah scholar, but he

would not look at her directly (Ha-Rav Eliyahu Mali – Iturei Cohanim #176).

Advice

Our Rabbi did not force his opinion on his students; rather he would suggest, explain and attempt to convince. During the period of major settlement activity, he never instructed anyone to participate, but sent a note which emphasized its importance and added: "One who feels a need," it is proper for him to work for the sake of Eretz Yisrael. Even for those who requested his personal advice, our Rabbi would not force his opinion on them, but explain the essential principles according to the Torah so that they could decide on their own. (Ha-Rav Elisha Aviner)

Our Rabbi would not respond to those who turned to him for advice with specifics, but would discuss the general issues to help them to decide. He did not want to create Chasidim who hung on his every word, but that each person should create his own individuality. (Ha-Rav Tzefaniyah Derori)

A student asked him if he should accept a Rabbinic position in a certain place. He did not answer positively or negatively, but counseled him to travel there to see the reality. The student returned and reported to our Rabbi that people told him that there is nothing to do there. Our Rabbi responded: If that is so, you must go there. (Ha-Rav Tzefaniyah Derori)

A student asked our Rabbi which political party he should vote for. Our Rabbi did not answer him but explained at length the different perspectives. The student repeated his question, but our Rabbi explained the different advantages of each party. The student did not receive an answer, and our Rabbi asked the student to decide on his own. (Ha-Rav Mordechai Sadeh)

Following the Words of Sages

With all of the importance which our Rabbi placed on learning books of "Emunah – faith," he would emphasize that we are Gemara Jews. Every one of our Rabbi's actions was based on the Gemara. For example, a student who was aiding our Rabbi in his house, needed to travel to a wedding. He requested permission from our Rabbi in the morning, but he did not receive an answer. In the afternoon, he received a cold response and he did not understand the reason, since our Rabbi usually happily gave him a blessing in similar situations. When it came time to leave, he again turned to our Rabbi and he received a scold and a clear response: "We are not Karaites, we are Jews of the Gemara, which says that someone who is sick needs to be guarded" (Berachot 54b). Our Rabbi had a slight cold, but the student did not think it was a problem. Our Rabbi, however, emphasized that if the Gemara said that one who is sick requires to be guarded, that is the way we must act. These simple, fundamental practices take precedence over other

items such as traveling to a wedding. (Ha-Rav Yosef Bedichi)

Ha-Rav Natan Ra'anan was sick and one of the students was appointed to take care of him. Our Rabbi saw the student in the hallway and scolded him: "Why did you abandon him? A sick person needs to be guarded (Berachot 54b)!" When the student was putting Tefillin on Rav Ra'anan, our Rabbi scolded him: "A sick person is exempt from mitzvot." The student responded: "When Ha-Rav (i.e. our Rabbi) was sick, he put on Tefillin." Our Rabbi answered forcefully: "A sick person is exempt from mitzvot." (Rav Eitan Eisman – Iturei Cohanim #57)

Our Rabbi was asked about the end of statement, "Everything the host tells you to do, you must do, except for 'leave'" (Pesachim 86b): What right does one have to be stubborn and not leave? Our Rabbi responded that the emphasis is on "Everything the host tells you to do, you must do," that a guest should act like a guest and not initiate. He should wait patiently while the host establishes the order, except in one area: the person should not wait until the host tells him to leave, but he should understand on his own that it is time to go. (Ha-Rav Chanan Porat – Iturei Cohanim #219).

Our Rabbi said that according to an explicit Mishnah, one should say "Shalom" and not use other greetings (Berachot 54a). When he was asked: But Jews customarily say good

morning or good evening in Yiddish? He responded in surprise: Is Yiddish our language?!

A student who was holding a chair was walking in a narrow hall in the old Yeshiva building. He met our Rabbi in the hall and immediately moved to the side to make room. Our Rabbi said: One who has a load and one who does not have a load – the one with the load goes first (Sanhedrin 32b), and he insisted the student go first.

Fear of Heaven

Our Rabbi Davened with great concentration, and he was very strict that the students not talk in the middle of Davening. He would repeat the words of our Sages: "These are things that are the most important in the world, yet people disgrace them" (Berachot 6b). New, young students occasionally chatted during the Davening. It once happened that our Rabbi pointed it out once, then twice, and the third time, when they were speaking during the repetition of the Shemoneh Esrei, he threw them an admonishing look. Right after the Davening, our Rabbi strayed from his custom and did not remain to hear the Halachah class given at the conclusion of Davening. Instead he went up to the library, where he usually removed his Tefillin. Those students felt responsible and went up to the library to apologize. When they opened the door, they found our Rabbi crying. They approached in trembling, asked forgiveness and promised

not to continue in their foolish ways. Our Rabbi then said to them: "You think I am crying on your account—I am crying on my account, since our Sages said: 'Anyone who has fear of Heaven, his words are heard' (Berachot 6b). And if I told you once, twice and three times and you did not listen, it is a sign that there is a blemish in my fear of Heaven." (Ha-Rav Chanan Porat. See *Or Le-Netivotai* 3, 308, 326)

Our Rabbi once joined a wedding for a short time, arriving while the bride and groom were in the "cheder yichud" (room of privacy where they go immediately after the ceremony). He refrained from partaking of the meal, quoting the Gemara (Berachot 6b): "Whosoever partakes of the wedding meal of a bridegroom and does not bring him joy violates 'the five voices' mentioned in the verse: 'The voice of joy,' etc. (Yirmiyahu 33:2)."

Whenever our Rabbi reached home, before entering, he would knock, even though he knew that nobody was inside. This practice was in keeping with the words of our Sages in *Derech Eretz Rabbah*: "A person must not enter his home suddenly."

When they called him up to the Torah, he reacted with alacrity, without delay, in keeping with what is written by *Pri Megadim* regarding the reason for taking the shortest route possible when going up to the Torah: "To demonstrate one's love for [the Torah] and one's desire to read from it."

Personal notebook

Our Rabbi had a small notebook in which he wrote personal things: innovative Torah ideas, thoughts and dreams. He was particular that the students not read it. At a later period, when he was sick, and various students aided him in his house, he placed the notebook under his pillow. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

Dreams

Many times our Rabbi woke up in the morning, ritually washed his hands and took books from the bookshelves to clarify about what he had dreamt. (Ha-Rav Yaakov Levanon)

Faith

Our Rabbi would often say that we need to increase the two alefs (i.e. the two words which begin with the letter alef): "Ahavah – love" and "Emunah – faith." "Ahavah – love" refers to the love of the Nation of Israel. "Emunah – faith" is not only believing that Hashem created the world, took us out of Egypt, gave us the Torah, and brought us to the Land of Israel, but faith that Hashem reveals Himself in our time and redeems us today. This is the reason that a Jew will be asked by the heavenly court: "Did you await the salvation?" (Shabbat 30), and the "Ron" (Rabbenu Nissim) adds one

word: "be-yamecha" - in your days, i.e. the recognition that every occurrence that is in your times is an act of Hashem. (Ha-Rav Chaim Druckman – Iturei Yerushalayim #18).

A neighbor's letter once arrived at our Rabbi's house by mistake. He said to the student who was aiding him: "This is not for me, but for the person who lives upstairs. Please bring it to them." The student forgot. The next night, our Rabbi asked again, and the student forgot again. When our Rabbi asked a third time, the student said: "Ha-Rav, it is not so terrible, it just came here by accident." Our Rabbi scolded him: "There is no such thing in the world! Everything is from Hashem! How can something be by chance? How can you be so brazen to say that this was by chance?" (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald – Iturei Yerushalayim #18)

When our Rabbi was in the hospital and people said to him: "It will be okay," he rejected this idea since it is based on the assumption that the past was bad. He would respond: "It is good now! It is always good!" (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald – Iturei Yerushalayim #18)

The Kabbalist Rabbi Mordechai Atiyah once came to visit our Rabbi in his house. They spoke for a long time and when the students arrived for the regular class, they waited outside. The door suddenly opened and both of them left together and they continued their discussion on the way. Despite the severity of the pain in his leg, our Rabbi escorted Rav Atiyah down the stairs and the entire way to the car in order to honor his exalted guest. During the walk and when

he was surrounded by all of the students, Rav Atiyah definitively stated from the midst of an exalted spirit: "I am certain that we will soon merit seeing the Resurrection of the Dead." Our Rabbi responded on the spot: The Maharshadam says in his responsa that there are two meanings of the concept of Resurrection of the Dead. The clear and obvious meaning is that the righteous will merit aiding the wicked to repent, those whom our Sages define as "they are dead in their lives," and by repenting they will merit to live anew (Orach Chaim #17). Our Rabbi made this statement in a loud voice so that all of the students who were around would hear. He seemingly did this in order to prevent the possibility of great disappointment of those who were waiting impatiently for the Resurrection of the Dead in its other meaning. (Ha-Rav David Goldenberg – Iturei Yerushalayim #18).

When our Rabbi met with Ben Gurion, he explained the difference between heretics, who are still part of the Nation of Israel, and apostates, who are no longer a part, as he would do when he began teaching the book "The Kuzari." Ben Gurion said to him: "Give me an example of a heretic so that I can understand who you are referring to." Our Rabbi responded: "There are many." Ben Gurion stubbornly and forcefully repeated: "Nonetheless, give me an example." Our Rabbi later explained to the students: "What did he want me to do? To say to him: You!?" Our Rabbi continued to explain that apostates, missionaries, have left the Nation of Israel. Ben Gurion again asked for an example. This time our Rabbi responded: "Rufeisen." (He was born a Jew, but con-

verted to Christianity during the Holocaust and became a Carmelite Monk and missionary. He applied to become a citizen of Israel as a Jew under the Law of Return. He wanted to increase his influence and show that it is possible to be a Jew and a Christian. He is known as "Brother Daniel.") Our Rabbi positively noted that Ben Gurion's spontaneous reaction was a Jewish one: "What is there to talk about?! He is not a Jew!" And the Supreme Court of Israel in fact refused to accept his application.

Love of Israel

At the end of morning Davening, a Jew knocked on the Bima of the Yeshiva and announced that he received permission from the Rosh Yeshiva to speak. Our Rabbi nodded his head in agreement. The Jew then explained at length that he was the Messiah but he did not demand any action. He just wanted them to know. After he finished and left, the students turned to our Rabbi in surprise for having given him permission to speak. Our Rabbi responded: "You can't perform a kindness for a fellow Jew?" (Iturei Yerushalayim #37)

It happened in the year 5732 that our Rabbi could not fall asleep. He roamed around his house like a caged lion and screamed: "Something terrible has happened in Israel!" In the morning one of the ministers of the Israeli Government

was found dead after he committed suicide following suspicions which were raised against him.

On a Friday at the beginning of Adar 5742, two weeks before he ascended on high, our Rabbi's fever rose without an understandable reason and intense pain racked him. The doctors could not explain it. Our Rabbi was then informed that the Minister of Defense established checkpoints so that no one could get to Yamit in the Sinai Desert. Despite his weakness, our Rabbi wanted to detach the IV so that he could go to Yamit. He yelled: "Is he the owner of the Land of Israel?" and he forcefully said that we must display self-sacrifice for every four amot of the Land of Israel. (Ha-Rav Yosi Bedichi – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

After our Rabbi's surgery, his situation was stable and he was resting comfortably in the hospital. Suddenly, he began sighing terribly. When they asked what was hurting, he responded: "The Nation of Israel hurts me." Later on, it became known that the Israeli athletes were murdered by terrorists at the Munich Olympics at that exact moment. This is despite the fact that our Rabbi later said in pain: "What were they searching for on that cursed, impure land?"

When our Rabbi was informed about the murder of the Israeli athletes in Munich, he groaned and yelled in great pain. The doctors said, however, there was no reason for this amount of pain from the wound in his foot. Our Rabbi said: "What do you know? I do not know where my suffering ends

and the suffering of Klal Yisrael begins." (Ha-Rav Yosef Kelner – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

It once happened that the door between our Rabbi's bedroom and where he gave classes in his house was open. A student pointed it out and said that perhaps they should close the door to ensure our Rabbi's private life. He responded: "A Rabbi needs to know that he is not a private individual." (Ha-Rav Binyamin Eisner – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

It once happened that a respected man who occasionally Davened at the Yeshiva said harsh things about either Maran (our revered teacher) Ha-Rav Kook or our Rabbi. On Shabbat night, one of the students approached him and told him to leave the Yeshiva. The man refused and an argument erupted until one of the Rabbis told the student to leave the man alone. The man made a claim against the student to our Rabbi. The student stated that our Rabbi said: "Someone who shames a Torah scholar, we should throw him out of the window." Our Rabbi said: "I never said that!" And he said to the man: "If you shame the Rosh Yeshiva within the walls of the Yeshiva, what response do you expect from the students?!" A half a year later, on Erev Rosh Hashanah, our Rabbi said to the student: "Go and ask forgiveness of him." The student went to the man, and received the answer: "I will only forgive you if you ask forgiveness in the same forum in which you embarrassed me." On Shabbat night at Davening, the student banged on the table and

asked his forgiveness. (Ha-Rav Eliyahu Mali – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

A horrible tragedy befell the family. Our Rabbi's nephew, Ha-Rav Natan Ra'anana Kook's son, Reb Avraham Yitzchak, fell from a cliff across from Bat Yam, and drowned in the sea, at the age of 18 or 19. He was loved by everyone. In the eulogy, our Rabbi said that when his grandfather called him to come, this young man would first go to the mikveh to immerse. Suddenly, in the middle of all the people comforting the mourners, our Rabbi said to Reb Nosen: "We need a fence", and he repeated the word "fence" a few times. Reb Nosen also repeated the word "fence." Our Rabbi explained: "We need to make a fence where he fell from the cliff so that another tragedy does not occur." Two Torah scholars sat in horrible, indescribable pain, but one thought also bothered them: Repairing the community. (From Ha-Rav Mordechai Piron in Iturei Cohanim Av 5766 #263 p. 48)

One year when Tisha Be-Av fell after Shabbat, a student escorted our Rabbi from the old building of the Yeshiva to his house and was going to the new building of the Yeshiva. For some reason the student stopped in Geulah and sat at a bus stop. The student suddenly saw our Rabbi coming towards him. Our Rabbi said: "It is after Shabbat now and you do not have any money to ride the bus; I brought you money for the ride." During this time our Rabbi suffered from indescribable pain in his feet and he still walked all of

this way to bring the money to the student. (Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

A student was traveling in a taxi with our Rabbi to Selichot at the Yeshiva. They passed a student walking on the sidewalk, but the student in the car thought that he should not stop to pick him up so he would not waste our Rabbi's time. Our Rabbi also saw him and insisted that they pick him up. (Ha-Rav Eliyahu Zohar – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

Originally, our Rabbi would pass out the mail to the students. How would the students know to come to our Rabbi? He would pass out a list, alphabetically ordered, with the students who received mail. Why did he order it alphabetically? So no one would be insulted by their place on the list. He did not, however, put the letters alphabetically in order to make the list. He went through the letters and ordered them in his head with the help of his exceptional memory. (Ha-Rav Shmuel Yaniv – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

When our Rabbi did not see a beloved person in thirty days, he would recite the Shehechyanu with Hashem's Name and Kingship when he saw them. For example, when a student returned from the army, our Rabbi would cry and recite the blessing. (Ha-Rav Mordechai Sadeh – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

Ha-Rabbanit Chavah Leah, our Rabbi's wife, met a couple in the street who had just made Aliyah and only had the clothing on their backs. She asked our Rabbi if they could

stay at their house. Our Rabbi replied: Of course. They divided their apartment into two rooms for two and a half years. This couple was not religious, and during this entire time, our Rabbi never tried to convince them to become religious, but only acted with friendship. (Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

After our Rabbi visited the grave of his nephew, R' Avraham Yitzchak Ra'anan, there was not any water to wash Netilat Yadayim. The students said: "Maybe we should go to the house next to the cemetery and ask if we could do netilat yadayim?" Our Rabbi said: "If there is no Lulav, we do not take the Lulav," i.e. do not bother other people. (Rafael K. – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

When our Rabbi would hear a student respond to someone's kindness with "Tizke Le-Mitzvot," he would ask: "Don't you know how to just say thank you?" (Ha-Rav Mordechai Sadeh – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

A student in twelfth grade came to our Rabbi and said that he needed to go throughout the country and influence others and not just to stay closed up in the Yeshiva. In response, our Rabbi asked him to pour him a glass of water. The student did not understand what he meant, but he began to pour. When he almost reached the top of the cup, he looked at our Rabbi, who said with full confidence: "Continue, continue." The water obviously overflowed onto the floor. Our Rabbi said to him: "Do you understand? When you yourself are full and overflowing, only then will you

truly influence others." (Ha-Rav Mordechai Elon – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

When people would ask our Rabbi to pray for a sick person, he would first ask: "Has he been to the doctor?" (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

In the year 5715, a student would learn with our Rabbi articles which he cut out of the newspaper "Ha-Tzofeh." Our Rabbi once told him that he feels like his colleague. One night, after Ma'ariv, the student went to his room and saw our Rabbi. He asked: Where did you come from? Our Rabbi responded that he had left a wedding in Tel Aviv early to make sure that they could learn together. (Ha-Rav Menasheh Komm)

A student would bring our Rabbi to Selichot at the Yeshiva in a taxi. He arrived to pick up our Rabbi at 6:30 a.m., but our Rabbi's clock said 7:30. Our Rabbi was surprised and began to fix it by moving it forward. The student suggested that he move it back an hour. But our Rabbi said: "Only forward," and he kept moving it. Our Rabbi passed the correct time a few times and he always went around and around again. He said: One should always move forwards and not backwards. (Ha-Rav Eliyahu Zohar)

4. Students

Our Rabbi as an Educator

Our Rabbi did not try to imprint his personality on his students, but opened the personality of each and every student. He would therefore talk to each student in a different way based on their strengths and weaknesses. Our Rabbi refused to create carbon copies of students, although many of the students desired this. Rather he wanted to bring out the blessing contained in each of them.

In order to instill within the students the fundamental ideas of the holiness of the Torah, the Nation of Israel and the Land of Israel, our Rabbi would repeat the same thoughts hundreds of times until the students knew them by heart. He would use the same story, the same expression and even the same facial expression. He did not repeat these ideas because he thought the students did not know them, but he decided that there was an educational need to do so (see Rashi on Shemot 6:30). These ideas thus became an inseparable part of the students. In times of crisis, especially in communal matters, these ideas find expression.

Our Rabbi once told one student one thing and another stu-

dent the exact opposite. When asked why he did this, he answered that in the past there were both Hillel and Shammai. Shammai was able to chase away with the builder's measuring stick because there was Hillel, and Hillel was able to teach the entire Torah while standing on one foot because there was Shammai. But what can I do, since I have to be both Hillel and Shammai. (Gadol Shimusha of Rav Avraham Remer, p. 51)

Our Rabbi related to every one of his students as if he were his only child. Even though thousands of students passed through the Yeshiva over the years, each one thought that he was our Rabbi's most beloved. Our Rabbi would invest everything he had in anyone who came to him. Even if many people or important people waited for him outside – whether for a class or a meeting – he would finish the discussion only after providing the student with what he needed.

Many times students sat in our Rabbi's house, hour after hour, until late at night. He was once asked, doesn't a certain student waste his time, since there are many students, and sometimes an entire community waits for him? He responded: "My wife also once said to me: Why do you sit so long with this young man, it is for naught. I said to her: I cannot separate myself. Someone who comes and needs me to speak to him, I devote myself, and devote myself, and devote myself without any calculation."

Our Rabbi knew the names of all of the students, and always referred to them by their first name. Each student felt that he was our Rabbi's student. It happened on occasion that a student would inform our Rabbi that he was leaving the Yeshiva, and our Rabbi would burst out in tears.

When there were weak students in the Yeshiva who had difficulty in learning, he would pair them together with stronger students and tell them: "Even if this holds you back, you need self-sacrifice."

Our Rabbi said to his students: If you see a "hanhagah" (practice) which I perform, do not perform it. I am not a Rebbe. Eat a meal with me because it is "seudah shelishit" (the third meal of Shabbat), not because I am a Rebbe who passes out "Shirayim" ("leftovers" – there is a custom to gather around a Chasidic Rebbe and to eat his leftovers). (Romem Eldobi)

Serving Torah Scholars

A student who was serving in our Rabbi's home was in doubt whether when Elisha poured water on Eliyahu's hands it was considered "serving Torah scholars" (Berachot 7b, Ein Aya – Berachot chap. 1:87). Once, when he brought our Rabbi a cup of tea, he asked: "Ha-Rav, is this serving a Torah scholar?" Our Rabbi was quiet for a long time and said: "It is unclear if I am worthy of being called a Torah

scholar." He was quiet again and then added: "The essence of serving a Torah scholar is learning (halachic) reasoning as Rashi explains" (Berachot 47b). (Ha-Rav Eliyahu Mali)

After the Yeshiva moved to the new building, our Rabbi noticed that there were students who were talking during Davening, and he looked at them with a severe stare. The same occurred the next day, and then a third time. On that day after Davening, he went to the library and cried. When he was asked about it, he responded: If my words are not heard, it is a sign that I do not have fear of Heaven (see *Or Le-Netivoti* 25, 308, 326). (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

When our Rabbi gave permission for students to attend a protest (since there are times when stopping learning Torah leads to greater observance of Torah), this ruling was for older students and not younger students. (*Iturei Cohanim* #57)

Our Rabbi said that "Get yourself a teacher" requires more toil than "Acquire a friend for yourself." (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald – *Iturei Cohanim* #266)

When Yeshivat Mercaz Ha-Rav was in its original building on Rav Kook Street, to our embarrassment and disgrace, there was a specific place right outside where people would wait for prostitutes. Every time the student left the study hall for any reason, they encountered this disgusting behavior, which was the complete opposite of the sanctity and holiness of the Yeshiva. The students complained to Rav Tzvi

Yehudah and asked him to move the Yeshiva to a different place, but he told them that at the present time it was not possible. He did however offer a solution: The students need to be strong, and even though he agreed to move the Yeshiva when it became possible, this was not because they were running away or avoiding the problem. Rather, it was because of self-respect and courage. Rav Tzvi Yehudah told the students not to go into seclusion. He advised them to continue to behave as normal, training themselves not to look at the behavior that was occurring outside. The Tur writes about this in his introduction to Orach Chaim: "'Be as light as an eagle' (Pirkei Avot 5:20), refers to avoiding immodest behavior and actions that your eyes can see - just as an eagle swiftly glides through the air, you must be swift to close your eyes to prevent yourself from seeing immodest behavior, because the sight of negative behavior constitutes the beginning of sin. The eyes see and the heart desires and the organs capable of action culminate the sin." (From Taharat Ha-Brit, translated into English "Pure Again" by Melech Peltz pp. 125-126).

On one occasion our Rabbi arrived at the Yeshiva for a class in Tanach, but no students showed up. The Rabbi immediately stepped forward and began to lead the Ma'ariv service. He informed the students that he would no longer be coming to the Yeshiva. When they responded: "But Rabbi, you are the dean of the Yeshiva – let the students leave and the Rabbi stay!" The Rabbi said: "I do not believe in religious coercion!"

Once, a group of students from the Religious Kibbutz Movement was scheduled to come and study at Mercaz Ha-Rav for a month. Some of the Yeshiva students complained that the Yeshiva was unable to absorb so many students, and that in order to strengthen the study atmosphere the Yeshiva had to first become crystallized from within. Our Rabbi, though, was uncompromising in his desire to receive the group, exclaiming, "Any thought of divorcing our Yeshiva from the concrete settlement of the Land of Israel, will not come to be."

A student once asked our Rabbi what he should do with his life. Our Rabbi asked him: "What do you want to do?" His dedicated student responded: "I want to do what the Rav wants me to do." Our Rabbi repeated: "But what do you want to do?" Once again, the student answered that he wanted to do whatever the Rosh Yeshiva advised. Patiently, our Rabbi asked him a third time, with a tone that demanded a more introspective response. Finally, the student revealed his heart's true desire. "Then do it!" Rav Tzvi Yehudah said. This was our Rabbi's way: to educate each student according to his natural direction, according to his individual talent and leaning, to encourage creativity and the free healthy development of each person's potential (see Mishlei 22:6). (Torat Eretz Yisrael – The Teachings of Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohen Kook, pp. 205-206)

A student told our Rabbi that he was going home because he ran out of clean clothing. Our Rabbi took money out of

his pocket, gave it to him and told him where he could do laundry. (Iturei Cohanim #35)

A number of students tried to refuse financial support from the Yeshiva (perhaps due to the opinion of Rambam that one should not receive money for learning Torah), yet our Rabbi was adamant that they receive a stipend.

In response to the claim that some married students received higher stipends than others, our Rabbi requested of Rav Noson (Rabbi Ra'anan Kook, Maran Ha-Rav Kook's son-in-law) to make all Yeshiva stipends equal so that there be no jealousy among students. In response to Rav Noson's "Where will I come up with the money?" our Rabbi responded, "From the place where there is for one, you will find for all."

When there came a request to increase stipends for students with larger families, our Rabbi said, "Mercaz Ha-Rav is not a Kollel. We help students until they find their place in life, with an emphasis being placed on the Rabbinate or education."

5. Torah Scholars

Honoring Torah Scholars

Our Rabbi immensely loved every Torah scholar. He would mention a Torah scholar with an awe of holiness and rejoicing of the heart. When he met many Torah scholars, whether or not they were his students, he would hug and kiss them – just as Yehoshafat, King of Yehudah, did (Ketubot 103b). He rejoiced in their honor, and was distressed when they were the subjects of derision, or worse, when they scorned others. He was exceedingly severe with one who shamed a Torah scholar, and would not be silent until he objected, even with Torah scholars who stumbled in this matter.

Our Rabbi stood before his students who were Torah scholars, and would say that the honor of Torah scholars requires one to be fastidious.

Our Rabbi honored every Torah scholar, even he if he disagreed with him, and he instructed his students to act in the same manner. When he heard a student repeat an expression which he himself had used disagreeing with

another Torah scholar, he chastised him: "That which is permissible to me is not permissible to you." Occasionally when he thought that a Torah scholar erred, he spoke harshly, but on subject and with respect.

[In this context, our Rabbi relied on what is related in the book "Keter Shem Tov," that the Ba'al Shem Tov, founder of the Chasidic movement, had a fierce opponent, Rabbi Nachman of Horodenka, who would constantly criticize him. One time that same Rabbi heard his students speaking against the Ba'al Shem Tov, and he castigated them, saying, "How dare you speak that way against a holy man!" They responded, "But you yourself spoke out against him." He then replied with exceeding severity, "The way that is permissible for me to speak is not permissible for you." He then told a story of two craftsmen who worked together for twenty years in order to fashion the king's crown. In the end, when the time came to set the diamonds in the crown, one said it should be one way and the other countered that it should be another. The argument grew in intensity until one craftsman called the other an idiot. A passerby who witnessed the argument injected his own words and called the man an idiot as well. The first craftsman, who had called the other an idiot, then said, "Are you aware that we are friends and that we have worked together for twenty years, making the king's crown? Our lives depend on this last detail, and that is why we are expressing ourselves so sharply. But you! Have you lifted even a finger for the king's crown? Have you ever in your life seen the king? YOU are the idiot!" Even

when Torah scholars argue over Halachah, we - the insignificant - must stand in fear and awe and honor them all.]

In all of his stories about his experiences with people, he had a completely different style of relating to Torah scholars. "Torah scholar" was the most important of titles in his eyes, without any distinction regarding which group he was connected with.

During a class, when our Rabbi saw a Torah scholar standing in the outer room, he would call to him to enter and to sit close to him, and would say: "There is room," even though the bench next to him was full. He once explained that one must honor a Torah scholar and make room for him.

Even though the Satmar Rebbe had a completely different outlook from our Rabbi, he never scorned or denigrated him. Once Ha-Gaon Rav Moshe Feinstein ztz"l issued a ruling regarding the height of a mechitzah between men and women in a shul, that in pressing situations it is permissible to be lenient in a particular issue. The Satmar Rebbe came out against him. Our Rabbi said: "It is known that our paths are separate and different, but in this issue he (the Satmar Rebbe) is correct." Even though they were polar opposites regarding the Redemption of Israel and Klal Yisrael (the entirety of Israel), our Rabbi never said one negative word about him.

Our Rabbi and Neturei Karta

Neturei Karta organized a protest against taxes on education which were established by the British in Eretz Yisrael, which would then be divided up by the municipality in a relative manner. Our Rabbi also participated in the protest. A student was surprised: Why is Ha-Rav participating in a protest with Neturei Karta, who caused so much trouble to his father (Maran Ha-Rav Kook)? Our Rabbi responded: "For what they did to Abba Ha-Rav z"l, they either have received a punishment or will receive one. Where they are correct – they are correct!" (Iturei Yerushalayim #64 in the name of Ha-Rav Yitzchak Dadon).

Our Rabbi said that not everyone in Meah Shearim is Neturei Karta. In fact, many people in Meah Shearim would greet him warmly (Iturei Yerushalayim #64).

It once happened that a student did not Daven Ma'ariv at the conclusion of Shabbat. He therefore went to find a Minyan in Meah Shearim, and he met up with our Rabbi, who also had not Davened Ma'ariv. Our Rabbi spoke with the student for an hour and three-quarters about the Neturei Karta, who are against the State of Israel and against Tzahal, even at a time when the Master of the Universe is showing us all of the signs of the Redemption, and when everything written in Yechezkel chapter 36 is materializing before our eyes. After all of this, our Rabbi brought him to the shul of the Chasidim of Reb Arele Roth (a group known as Toldos Aharon, who are intensely anti-Zionist), not by way of the

main road but by way of the courtyard. When they entered the large hall, all eyes turned toward him. They finished the blessing after eating and Davened Ma'ariv as if they were completely on fire. They then stood in line to say "Shalom" to our Rabbi. After they left, the student asked, "Before we arrived I heard an hour and three-quarters from you against the Neturei Karta, and now they stand in line to say "Shalom" to the Rav?" Our Rabbi responded, "One can learn from everyone. How to pray - this is learned here. You should know that when my father, Ha-Rav ztz"l, desired prayer of 'all my bones would speak' (Tehillim 35:10), he would come here." Two weeks later, the student was walking in Meah Shearim. One of the Chasidim of Reb Arele ran after him, saying "Send regards to Rav Tzvi Yehudah from so-and-so." When he related this to our Rabbi, he responded to him, "He is an expert in the writings of my father, Ha-Rav, but he learns them in secret, because if this was discovered he would be in danger, as he was born into Neturei Karta." In fundamental and principled matters, our Rabbi did not differentiate between this stream and that stream. For example, in protests against autopsies, our Rabbi would always participate with different Orthodox streams (Iturei Cohanim #248 - in the name of Ha-Rav Binyamin Eisner).

Disparaging Torah Scholars

Our Rabbi taught us to revere all Torah scholars. One of his students once disparaged Charedi (Ultra-Orthodox) Rabbis and blamed them for Jews dying in the Holocaust. Our Rabbi castigated him: "Before all else, you must learn the meaning of treating Torah scholars with respect!" He spent the next several hours explaining this to him. (Be-Ahavah U-be-Emunah Parashat Nitzavim 5765)

When our Master Ha-Rav sent him to Europe, he met with many Torah giants of Israel, and he would mention them with a trembling of holiness, and they were connected to the Charedi community and not just to "Mizrachi." Also while he was Rosh Yeshiva he had connections with Torah scholars from all of the groups. He was quite close with the Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Hevron, Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Yechezkel Sarna. And there was also great mutual respect between him and the Gerrer Rebbe.

When our Rabbi was informed of the passing of Ha-Gaon from Tshavil from the Council of Torah Sages, who was one of the Torah giants of the generation, he did not respond, since it was Shabbat, but during Havdalah his hand shook and wine spilled from the cup and immediately after Havdalah he burst into tears and continued bitter crying for several hours.

Vilna Gaon

Every time that our Rabbi mentioned the Vilna Gaon, he shuddered as if he stood before a divine angel, and he would refer to him with only one word: "Ha-Gaon" (the Genius). (Ha-Rav Eliyahu Mali)

It once happened that our Rabbi was called up to recite one of the blessings at a wedding and they referred to him as "Ha-Rav Ha-Gaon." He did not move. When he was told that he had been called up, he explained that he is not a "Gaon" and that it is only proper to use this description for the Vilna Gaon. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

Chafetz Chaim

Our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, spoke about the book "Likutei Halachot" of the Chafetz Chaim, which is like the "Mishnah Berurah" for sacrifices in the Temple. The Chafetz Chaim asked his close friend Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Eliyahu David Rabinowitz-Te'omim, Ha-Aderet – the Rav of Ponovezh and Maran Ha-Rav Kook's father-in-law – to write an approbation for the book. Ha-Aderet said to Maran Ha-Rav Kook: "I received a letter from Reb Yisrael Meir, the Chafetz Chaim, and he informed me that he is preparing to publish a sort of 'Mishnah Berurah' on sacrifices, and he asked me to write a letter of support and an approbation. I want to honor his request immediately, without delay. But you see that it is impossible, because of the great Rabbinic demands

of a big city which leave me absolutely no time to rest. I am therefore asking you do me this favor: You write it. What you write will be in my spirit, and it will be as if I wrote it." Maran Ha-Rav Kook prepared the letter for him and gave it to him to sign. Within the lengthy letter, full of feelings of holiness for the expectation of Salvation, preparations for the Temple and the sacrifices, he brought a teaching of our Sages: "Rabbi Yochanan said: The Torah scholars who engaged in the Laws of the Temple Service are considered as if they build the Temple in their days." But we must understand what being "engaged" in the Laws of the Temple Service means. It is not simply reciting it, as printed in the Sid-durim. Our Sages used the word "engaged in," i.e. to learn the subject with depth and toil in the manner of Torah scholar to elucidate the Halachah. Ha-Aderet said to Maran Ha-Rav Kook: How can I sign when you added your own teaching? How can I be a thief? Ha-Aderet therefore added before the innovative explanation: "And his honor, the well-known Gaon, who is praised, our teacher Ha-Rav Avraham Ha-Cohain, may his light illuminate, the Av Beit Din of Boisk, pointed out to me..." The Aderet then signed the letter but it was written by Maran Ha-Rav Kook.

In the year 5681, our Rabbi traveled to Poland to meet with Rabbis and Chasidic Rebbes to convince them to join the "Degel Yerushalayim" movement, which Maran Ha-Rav Kook established to infuse the Zionist movement with Torah and holiness. At that time, the Chafetz Chaim came to Warsaw, and our Rabbi, who yearned to see the splendor of the

most righteous person of the generation, went to where he was staying. He found him surrounded by people. After over an hour, our Rabbi approached to take leave from him. The Chafetz Chaim asked: "Are you a local?" Our Rabbi responded: "No, from Jerusalem," and he added: "Your honor was close with Reb Eliyahu David (the Aderet), father-in-law of my father." When the Chafetz Chaim heard whose son was standing before him, his face lit up and he joyfully said: "Your honor is the son of the Rav of Zoimel, the Rav of Boisk, the Rav of Yafo, the Rav of Jerusalem? Then why does he speak about his grandfather? Tell me about your father! How is he? We are old close friends."

Our Rabbi related that he heard from the family members of the Chafetz Chaim that during the late hours of the night, not exactly at midnight, the Chafetz Chaim would speak with Hashem regarding the Redemption of Israel, saying: "Master of the Universe, I, Reb Yisrael Meir, also want to merit greeting the King Messiah. Please, bring the Redemption," and other such prayers. Our Rabbi would add: "It seems that there is great value in heaven to prayers such as these from great Tzaddikim."

Teachings from the mouth of our Rabbi from the Chafetz Chaim

1. The Chafetz Chaim said: Fulfilling a Mitzvah in the Land of Israel is twenty times greater than outside of the Land

(Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah – Vayikra p. 265 and Le-Netivot Yisrael vol. 1 p. 160, 202).

2. Ha-Gaon Reb Leib, the son of the Chafetz Chaim, told our Rabbi that when they began to build "Rishon Le-Tzion" his father said to him: "Reb Leib, it has begun," i.e. the beginning of the Redemption has begun (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah – Bereshit pp. 457-458 and Devarim pp. 485-486, Be-Derech Ha-Torah Ha-Goelet p. 98).

3. "A few years ago, a Torah scholar told me that a few young men wanted to avoid military service in a non-Jewish army and wasting time from learning Torah. They wanted to physically injure themselves and disqualify themselves from Polish military service. But the Chafetz Chaim opposed this: 'A person is not permitted to injure himself. The body is not his. And why avoid? Practice in the Army. The Messiah will arrive soon. There will be a State. And when there is a State, there will be a need for an army. Prepare here. You have the opportunity to prepare for the army of the State of Israel'" (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah – Devarim p. 263).

Reb Leib, the son of the Chafetz Chaim

Reb Leib was a great Torah scholar and wrote part of the Mishnah Berurah with his father. When our Rabbi visited him, he gave him "Orot," "Eder Ha-Yekar" and other books of his father, our master, Rav Kook, to read. Reb Leib

flipped through them. At the end, our Rabbi gave him "Rosh Milin." Reb Leib began to read the first page, but he did not continue. He closed the book and said: "The Rav who wrote this is great in understanding. I do not understand." (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

Netziv

Our Rabbi related that the Netziv's wife traveled to Moscow for surgery. The students approached the Netziv and pleaded that he permit them to stop the learning in the Yeshiva so they could recite Tehillim. He reluctantly agreed on condition that it would be exactly for five minutes and not any longer. He stood over them with his watch so it would not be even a half a second too late. "Stop learning in the Volozhin Yeshiva? – Don't heaven and earth exist from here!" (Mi-Toch Ha-Torah Ha-Goelet vol. 4, pp. 207-208)

Ha-Rav Yitzchak Hutner

Our Rabbi said about Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Yitzchak Hutner, who was a relative and was raised by our master, Rav Kook: "It seems that he hates Zionists." Rav Hutner died during the period of our Rabbi's illness. The students feared for our Rabbi's health and they therefore did not tell him. The custom was to bring our Rabbi newly published books, and when the book "Igrot ve-Ketavim" of Rav Hutner was pub-

lished, it was also placed on the table of new books. Our Rabbi opened the book and read the epitaph indicating that he had passed away: "May the righteous be remembered as a blessing" on the title page and was shaken. He said: "What is written here? I do not understand?! How is this possible?" The students, who were concerned for his health, took the opportunity to hide the book. (Ha-Rav Achyah Amitai)

Rabbi Aryeh Levin – the Tzaddik of Jerusalem

Our Rabbi once walked with Reb Aryeh on Shabbat and someone was smoking. Reb Aryeh ran to the person and said: How can you smoke in the street on Shabbat where Rav Kook is walking?

Our Rabbi would direct people to him to take counsel. (Ha-Rav David Chai Cohain)

Reb Chaim Brisker

Our Rabbi would relate in the name of Reb Chaim Brisker that anyone who is not capable of closing the Gemara in order to perform an act of loving-kindness, when there is no one else to do so, is also not suited to open the Gemara to learn it! (Mi-Toch Ha-Torah Ha-Goelet vol. 4 p. 208. In the book "Gadol Shishuma" p. 15, it is related that our Rabbi said this statement in the name of Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin.)

Our Rabbi and Ha-Gaon Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik

Rav Norman Lamm writes that Rav Avraham Shapira ztz"l told him: "When the Rav (Rav Soloveitchik) came to visit Israel, the one and only time during his life, in 1935, it was the last year of the life of the elder Rav Kook. The Rav spoke at several places: at Mercaz Ha-Rav, at the Harry Fischel Institute, and at several other yeshivot. At every shiur that he gave, Rav Kook's son, R. Tzvi Yehudah, attended and listened attentively. When Rabbi Shapira asked R. Tzvi Yehudah why he was doing so, he answered as follows: His father received Rabbi Soloveitchik and they "talked in learning." When Rabbi Soloveitchik left, the elder Rav Kook told his son that the experience of speaking with Reb Yoshe Ber Soloveitchik reminded him of his earliest years when he was a student at the Yeshiva of Volozhin, during the time that Rabbi Soloveitchik's grandfather, Reb Hayyim Soloveitchik, first started to give shiurim. I believe, Rav Kook said, that the power of genius of the grandfather now resides with the grandson – and therefore, he said to his son, you should not miss a single shiur by Reb Yoshe Ber Soloveitchik" (Article in Tradition Journal 28:1 by Ha-Rav Norman Lamm and Gadol Shimusha p. 45).

When Rav Soloveitchik visited Israel, since it was said about him that he had a spark of Reb Chaim of Brisker, our Rabbi went from place to place to hear all of his talks. (Ha-Rav Amnon Sugarman – Iturei Yerushalayim #19)

Someone visited our Rabbi and told him in the name of Ha-Gaon Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, that the Torah scholars who are outside of Israel need to remain there in order to educate the community there (see *Nefesh Ha-Rav*, pp. 98-99). Our Rabbi responded harshly and painfully: "But assimilation devours them there."

Nechama Leibowitz

Our Rabbi said that she was a Torah scholar. He praised her greatly for her seriousness and fear of Heaven. When she heard about how our Rabbi related to her, she felt immense respect. In contrast, our Rabbi said that her brother (Yeshayahu Leibowitz – a controversial Israeli philosopher) caused damage and was dangerous. (*Iturei Cohanim* #39)

Ha-Rav David Cohen, "Ha-Nazir"

In the middle of a class at Ha-Nazir's house, on Rechov Amos in the Geulah neighborhood, he said to his students: "Stand up, stand up. Reb Tzvi Yehudah is passing by in the street." When they went out to the porch, they indeed saw our Rabbi Yehudah passing the house. This was the deep connection between the two of them.

Regarding the book "*Kol Ha-Nevu'ah*" (The Voice of Prophecy), our Rabbi said that this is the personal book of "Ha-Nazir." This book was placed in the last row in our

Rabbi's bookshelf, which was covered by a curtain. He said about this book: "It is dangerous to talk about prophecy today. (Ha-Rav Achyah Amitai)

When a student asked our Rabbi his opinion about the book "Kol Ha-Nevu'ah," he responded: I am not familiar with it. The student was surprised and said: Ha-Rav is not familiar with Ha-Nazir's book? Our Rabbi repeated: I am not familiar. Since the student was not satisfied, he said: I do not understand how it is possible to include quotes from complete heretics in a holy book. (Ha-Rav Eliyahu Mali)

Ha-Rav Natan Ra'anan (son-in-law of our master, Rav Kook)

At a gathering for Yom Yerushalayim, Rav Nosen (as he was known) was the opening speaker and our Rabbi was the closing speaker. Rav Nosen was introduced and referred to as Rav Kook's son-in-law and a few other titles. Our Rabbi felt that they did not honor him with enough titles and ask the introducer to add more.

Ha-Rav Shlomo Goren

Our Rabbi was asked why he respected Rav Goren when all of the great Rabbis of the generation came out against him, and he was therefore chosen to be Chief Rabbi by the secularists who also voted for the position of the Chief Rabbi.

Our Rabbi responded: It is not true that "all of the great Rabbis of the generation came out against him," and many great Rabbis, decisors of Halachah, publicized their opinions that no one should question his rulings. This included Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin, who publicized near the end of his life, that G-d forbid should anyone question the rulings of Ha-Gaon Rav Shlomo Goren Shilt"a (Letters of our Rabbi and see Shut Bnei Banim vol. 2, p. 210).

When Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Goren, the Chief Rabbi of the State of Israel, spoke in the Yeshiva on Yom Ha-Atzmaut, our Rabbi stood. (Ha-Rav Achyah Amitai)

Rabbi Yechezkel Sarna

When Rabbi Tzvi Yehudah used to meet with Rabbi Yechezkel Sarna, dean of the Hebron Yeshiva, they would embrace each other most warmly.

Rav Kahaneman

Once, when I learned that the Rabbi was planning to travel to the Ponovezh Yeshiva in order to analyze some handwritten manuscripts of the Aderet which were archived there, I decided to join him. As we entered the Yeshiva, the Rabbi told me that Rabbi Kahaneman was deserving of great merit for having established such a center for Torah study, but added that the institution's name was tainted by the fact that

its students had insulted two important Torah scholars therein - Rabbi Herzog zt"l and Rabbi Unterman zt"l - and the response of the Yeshiva's administration had not been strong enough. As we were leaving, Rabbi Kahaneman asked the Rabbi how he planned on returning. When Rabbi Tzvi Yehudah responded that he intended on taking the bus, Rabbi Kahaneman said that time is Torah, and suggested that the Rabbi take a taxi. When we arrived in Tel Aviv I asked the Rabbi how he intended on continuing the journey, and he responded, "It is a Mitzvah to obey the words of a Torah scholar," and traveled by taxi.

Reb Shlomo Carlebach

Reb Shlomo Carlebach would sometimes come to Daven in Yeshivat Mercaz Ha-Rav in the old building. Our Rabbi asked him what he teaches Jews who are far from Torah in order for them to give up drugs and transgression and to come close to Torah. He responded: The writings of Rebbe Nachman of Breslav and the Izbitzer Rebbe. Our Rabbi warned him: These teaching are themselves drugs.

When our Rabbi was asked about Reb Shlomo Carlebach's overly close connection to women, he responded that he is a Kosher person on a personal level, but we should not learn anything from him in this area.

Rav Meir Kahane

When Rav Kahane made Aliyah, our Rabbi greatly encouraged him, and when he asked for our Rabbi's support in his run for the Knesset, he gave him a letter and said it is proper to enable him to have his say in the Knesset. (Gadol Shimusha p. 67)

Now We Can Say Selichot

When Ha-Gaon Rav Shaul Yisraeli zt"l arrived from Kefar Ha-Ro'eh (one of the first religious agricultural settlements, where he was the founding Rabbi and served from 1938-1966) to Jerusalem, our Rabbi, Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook, appointed him as a maggid shiur (one who teaches a regular class).

His class was held every Thursday. Rav Yisraeli's class would run over time each week and Ma'ariv would be delayed until the completion of the class. On the third week that the class was given, it was the Thursday before Selichot are recited and Rav Yisraeli, as usual, ran overtime. A group of students stood outside and waited for Ma'ariv. When they saw that the time passed and Rav Yisraeli still had not finished the class, they stood in the women's section and Davened Ma'ariv. This obviously disturbed the flow of Rav Yisraeli's class. The next day this was related to our Rabbi. He did not respond at that moment (he waited for the appropriate time).

On Shabbat night, after his regular talk, the students asked our Rabbi when they should come in order to bring him to Selichot. Our Rabbi answered: "In Yeshivat 'Mercaz Ha-Rav' there are no Selichot." At first they did not understand what our Rabbi meant. Again they remind him that today began the recitation of Selichot. Our Rabbi's answer was: "I know, but Torah scholars are shamed in Yeshivat 'Mercaz Ha-Rav' and there is no reason to say Selichot." Midnight arrived. All of the Rabbis and students of the Yeshiva arrived at the Beit Midrash, except for our Rabbi. No one was brazen enough to defy the words of our Rabbi and no one said Selichot. Meanwhile, they sent emissaries to convince our Rabbi to come to Selichot, and after approximately a half an hour our Rabbi arrived. He entered the hall in anger, took the shtender (podium), placed it in the middle of the hall, pounded on it and said: "Here we will not say Selichot! Here Torah scholars are shamed!" After a short speech on the gravity of shaming Torah scholars, our Rabbi turned to the community and said: "Anyone who shamed and does not come forward, from this moment steals from the Yeshiva; anything he eats or anything he uses from the Yeshiva's property will be something which he stole." Three students, trembling with fear, approached and stood next to our Rabbi. Our Rabbi said: "Three does not make a Minyan. I am waiting for at least another seven." The students explained that the Minyan included guests and other students who were not currently in the hall. The Rabbi accepted their explanation, and from then on he lowered the tone of his

words. The Rabbi turned to the three students who stood before him, and said to them in a quiet tone: "You must know that what you did was grave and it is incumbent upon you to request, with all of your heart, forgiveness from Rav Yisraeli, and even though he is not obligated to forgive the insult done to him, you must plead before him that he should nevertheless forgive you."

Immediately after these words, the students approached Rav Yisraeli, and before they opened their mouths, he said: "I forgive you." Then our Rabbi declared: "Ashrei yoshvei veitecha..." (the beginning of Selichot) and everyone began to say Selichot.

We learned a great lesson that day and it was worth delaying the Selichot, in order for us to understand how severe is the transgression of shaming Torah scholars.

Dancing for the Chief Rabbi on Simchat Torah

It once happened that the political parties decided to arrange new elections for the Chief Rabbinate of Israel and to replace the Sefardic Chief Rabbi, Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Yitzchak Nissim, because of their unease with his great independence and his inflexibility with regard to all governmental demands. For example, on the day of the memorial for President Weisman, he refused to attend, because of two rea-

sons: A. It was established according to the Christian date.
B. The ceremony was devoid of any Jewish character.

Ben Gurion was extremely offended and said that the Chief Rabbi is a functionary (pekid - also a "clerk") of the State and he is obligated to come. Our Rabbi, Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook, was outraged by this audacity to designate the Chief Rabbi as a "functionary" and to order him around. On Simchat Torah, our Rabbi went out with the students and hundreds of others who joined, and danced from the Yeshiva to the house of the Sefardic Chief Rabbi in the neighborhood of Talbiya, in order to demonstrate his support for the Chief Rabbi and to protest against the politicians who think that the Chief Rabbi is a functionary who is easily changed. Despite the far distance, he girded his loins and danced the entire way.

The following year a call came from the home of the Chief Rabbi to ask what time the Yeshiva would be arriving. Our Rabbi, however, was not planning to dance this long distance, since the entire affair was over, and the Chief Rabbi remained in his position, but in order not to insult the honor of Torah, this custom continued, and also when Ha-Gaon Rav Isser Yehudah Unterman was chosen as Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi, the Yeshiva danced to the Yeshurun synagogue, in order not to favor one over the other.

The Pope

In the year 5723, the Pope was about to arrive in Israel and requested that the Sefardic Chief Rabbi of Israel, Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Yitzchak Nissim, come to greet him in Megiddo. He refused and said: He should come to me in Jerusalem. Rav Nissim stood firm against all of the pressure and our Rabbi strongly supported his position. (Ha-Rav Tzvi Kostiner – Iturei Cohanim #246)

6. Mitzvot

Honoring Parents

Our Rabbi would stand before his mother, and when he would separate from her he would walk backwards.

Our Rabbi's mother needed to send him a message to remind him that he needed to eat. When our Rabbi reached the age of Bar Mitzvah, he informed his mother that from now on he did not want her to determine what he ate, but he would decide on his own. Nevertheless, when there were days that she saw him and touched her finger on cookies that were on the table, he immediately took from them and ate in order to provide her with contentment.

Netilat Yadayim

One day, before netilat yadayim, our Rabbi said: "Blessed is Hashem. It is a meeting with King Shlomo," on account of a recognition and feeling that King Shlomo, who established netilat yadayim, was there (see Shabbat 14b and Rambam, Hilchot Avot Ha-Tumah 8:8).

Our Rabbi said that there is no need for netilat yadayim for a baby. The obligation is only for a child who reaches the age when we begin to educate him (This is also the ruling in Shulchan Aruch Ha-Rav, Orach Chaim 4:2). (Ha-Rav Yosef Kelner – Iturei Cohanim #236)

Prayer

Our Rabbi emphasized that because the foundation of everything is to show gratitude to Hashem, a person therefore begins his morning by saying "Modeh Ani" (I give thanks) even before washing Netilat Yadayim.

When our Rabbi was asked what should one do to strengthen one's spirit, especially in the area of prayer, he said that one must first learn the foundations of the laws of prayer according to the "Mishnah Berurah," and obviously put into practice what was learned. One must understand that prayer is a form of connection between a person and Hashem, as Maran (our revered teacher) Ha-Rav Kook explains. When people do not understand and do not pay attention to the content of the prayers, then they "say prayers," but they do not pray. One must learn the laws of prayer, which include proper intention during prayer, proper conduct while praying, the places where it is permissible and forbidden to pray, what direction to face and with what type of fear of Hashem we approach prayer. It is proper to learn the introduction to the siddur "Olat Re'eiyah" (thoughts of

Maran Ha-Rav Kook on the siddur), which explains the importance of prayer, and that one should pray with joy and under duress.

Our Rabbi emphasized that prayer is one of the things that starts at the pinnacle of the world (Berachot 6b), and he therefore taught an ongoing class in "Olat Re'eyah."

Our Rabbi prayed with incredible seriousness and concentration and put his entire self into his prayer. He never looked in a book (which was not a siddur) during the time of prayer, since learning Torah has its own time and prayer has its own time (Shabbat 10a).

He either prayed by heart or from a siddur which he removed from the inner pocket in the upper part of his jacket, since he was extremely careful not to put holy books in his lower pockets.

Our Rabbi would often emphasize the awe of holiness which is required during the time of prayer. He would say: How is it possible to pray quickly before the King?

All of his prayers were similar in their awe: he would always be joyous at the same spots and sad at the same spots.

Our Rabbi prayed as if this was the first and only time in his life that he ever prayed: By emphasizing every word, by enunciating every letter, each syllable served as a source for thoughts as if he had not been saying this prayer, in this same version, for twenty years, three times a day, every day. The words left his mouth as if they were new, a prayer which was not "commandments of people performing them by rote" (Yeshayahu 29:13) (newspaper interview, Zeraim 5720, in Ma'aracha Ha-Tziburit vol. 2 p. 78).

Our Rabbi would exert great effort in prayer, until sometimes sweat would run down from under his hat. He would say about this: "Fortunate is a man who will not forget You and a person who will exert great effort for You."

Our Rabbi requested from a student to be the Shaliach Tzibur (leader of the prayers). The student said that he did not have a good voice. Our Rabbi responded: "The essential thing is the intention."

It was extremely upsetting to our Rabbi when a Shaliach Tzibur would pray quickly, in a dry manner. He therefore preferred a fixed Shaliach Tzibur who would pray with fire, not too fast and not too slow, but the essence was with fervor and reverence.

One of the students was Shaliach Tzibur and prayed quickly. He related that our Rabbi called him into the side room, and

said to him: "If you spoke with such haste to your friend, he would certainly say to you that you are crazy. And you turn to the Master of the Universe in this way?!"

Our Rabbi did not admonish another student who acted this way: "He is a Torah scholar; I am obligated to tolerate him," he said

It once happened that a Shaliach Tzibur rushed through his prayers. Our Rabbi said to him: "In my family, it is an accepted tradition to lengthen one's prayer. It is related about my paternal great-grandfather [Rabbi Dov Ber Yafeh from Tuaratz] would sometimes lengthen Ma'ariv the entire night during the nights of Tevet [when there are long winter nights] on account of his great cleaving [to Hashem], and it is related about my maternal grandfather that he would lengthen Shacharit so much that he would begin with the first Minyan and finish with the last Minyan."

Our Rabbi would greatly lengthen his silent Shemoneh Esrei, and on the High Holidays, because of its great lengthen and his awesome cleaving [to Hashem], they could not wait for him.

In his final years, when he was sick, he said that sometimes in pressing situations one need to know to pray quickly.

One Shabbat, an elderly Jew who lived in our Rabbi's neighborhood came to Daven Minchah. Our Rabbi asked

him to lead the Davening, since he was the senior member of the group, being that the students were young and single. He refused, and our Rabbi insisted a few times. In the end, he agreed and said that he would borrow a suit jacket from one of the students. Our Rabbi said to him: The clothing is not important, the man is the essence. (Iturei Cohain #57 from Meir Eizman)

On the night of Yom Kippur 5726 [or 5727], it rained in an unusual quantity. It was a major storm, and they recited the blessing on the lightning and on the thunder. Our Rabbi prepared to leave at the end of the prayers. The students suggested to him that he wait a little until the rain stopped. Our Rabbi was surprised: "Is it raining?" The students said to him: "But we recited the blessing on the lightning and thunder?!" Our Rabbi responded: "I do not know, I did not hear it or see it." The room was illuminated from the lightning, but our Rabbi was so engrossed in his prayer that he did not feel a thing.

On Yom Kippur 5734, the day on which the Yom Kippur War broke out, at 2:00 p.m., when the center of the city shook from sirens and megaphones, some students who were called to the Army ran to depart from our Rabbi. At that moment he was engrossed in the repetition of the Shemoneh Esrei of Musaf. They called and yelled to our Rabbi, but he was engrossed in prayer and did not respond, until a Torah scholar was somewhat brazen to shake his shoulder, and informed him that the war broke out.

Our Rabbi turned with teary eyes and said: "Go to an obligatory war to sanctify Hashem's Great Name. There is no doubt that you will be victorious, the Guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps, and His word will not return empty. The Redemption continues on."

Our Rabbi would enter the Study Hall quickly despite his difficulty in walking and leave very slowly. He would remain among the last ones. He would fix the Tefillin of students who did not put them in the proper place and he would also fix the Tefillin straps which had turned over. He would also listen to the words of Halachah which were said at the end of Shacharit by one of the students.

Even in the hospital, when the doctors or nurses wanted to check our Rabbi or care for him before Shacharit, our Rabbi was adamant to pray first, and only afterwards would he agree to receive them, even though his refusal upset their schedules.

Once when they were in Rechovot, our master Rav Kook said to Rav Charlap: If I Daven Minchah now, I will die from divine pleasure, and so they went and looked at fields and cows. Another time Rav Bromberg said that our master Ha-Rav had a desire burning within him to pronounce the four-letter Name of Hashem. When our Rabbi read this he said: Other Torah scholars have different concerns.

Regarding the Shetibelach in Meah Shearim, our Rabbi would jokingly say that the gates of prayer are never locked

there, since it is always possible to find a Minyan there. (Ha-Rav Avraham Remer – Iturei Yerushalayim #21)

Our Rabbi was extremely particular that people not speak during the repetition of the Shemoneh Esrei, and this is how they acted in Yeshivat Mercaz Ha-Rav. One time, some students were talking because of some pressing matter. Our Rabbi knocked on the table until they were quiet. Afterwards, he explained: It is written in the Shulchan Aruch that one who speaks during the repetition of the Shemoneh Esrei, "his sin is too great to bear" (Orach Chaim 124:7) and he added that the Shulchan Aruch also says that we are to rebuke one who speaks (ibid.). Despite the fact that our Rabbi did not like to make such comments, he rebuked them in this case since it was written in the Shulchan Aruch. (Ha-Rav Zalman Baruch Melamed – Iturei Yerushalayim #21)

Our Rabbi saw a student learning during Davening. Afterwards, he approached him and showed him the Gemara: "There is a time for Torah, and there is a time for prayer" (Shabbat 10b). (Rafael K. – Iturei Yerushalayim #21)

A student asked our Rabbi: which is preferable – Davening with a Minyan or learning Torah? He responded: One must first be a normal Jew who Davens with a Minyan.

Our Rabbi did not Daven "vatikin" (Davening so that one arrives at Shemoneh Esrei precisely at sunrise), but he did Daven early in the morning. When he did not Daven in the

Yeshiva, he Davened in Meah Shearim and explained: They are Torah scholars, idealistic people, the first settlers who went outside the wall (of the Old City of Jerusalem). (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald – Iturei Yerushalayim #21)

After our Rabbi's class in his house, they would Daven Ma'ariv, and before the Davening he would say: "One who does NOT want, he should approach [to lead the Davening]," by which he was pointing out that one should not ask to be the Shaliach Tzibur. (Ha-Rav Achyah Amitai – Iturei Yerushalayim #21)

During the Torah reading, our Rabbi would sit, as was the custom of Maran Ha-Rav Kook. (Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Avraham Shapira ztz"l – Iturei Yerushalayim #21)

Our Rabbi only sang the zemirot which are printed in Olat Re'eiyah (Rav Kook's commentary to the siddur). He said that the rest of the zemirot mentioned food too much, such as swans, quail and fish. (Iturei Yerushalayim #21)

Our Rabbi would relate that when the Netziv's wife was extremely ill, those in the Yeshiva wanted to recite Tehillim for her, but the Netziv was opposed because it was "bitul Torah" (taking time away for learning Torah). At the end of a major disagreement, he agreed that they could recite Tehillim for five minutes and not any longer. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald – Iturei Yerushalayim #21)

When people would ask our Rabbi to pray for a sick person,

he would ask the name of the doctor. (Ha-Rav Achyah Amitai – Iturei Yerushalayim #21)

When people would ask our Rabbi for a blessing, he would brief respond: "A blessing!" or "All of the blessings mentioned in the Torah." (Ha-Rav Yosef Kelner – Iturei Yerushalayim #21)

Our Rabbi said that even though the "blessing against apostates" (Birchat Ha-Minim) was added to the Shemoneh Esrei and there are now nineteen blessings, the name of the prayer was not changed: it is still "Shemoneh Esrei – eighteen" since these eighteen prayers are the essential ones and the "Birchat Ha-Minim" is secondary and temporary. When apostasy is uprooted, may it be speedily in our days, the "Birchat Ha-Minim" will be unnecessary and will be uprooted as well. (Netiv Binah on the Siddur of Rav Yaakovson vol. 1, p. 261 – Iturei Yerushalayim #21)

Kippah

A woman once asked our Rabbi if it is okay that her husband wears a knitted Kippah. He answered:

- "What is the problem? Doesn't it cover his head?"
- "Yes."
- "Then what is the problem?"
- "I don't know. I have a feeling that it is not good enough."
- "It is totally fine."

Tzitzit

Our Rabbi would encourage his students to wear their tzitzit with the tzitzit hanging outside of their clothing, and he made no distinction between Sefardic and Ashkenazic Jews. One of our Rabbi's leading students, Ha-Rav David Chai HaCohen, once asked if this ruling to wear tzitzit outside of one's garments applied to him as well, for his family's custom was to wear tzitzit tucked in (Ha-Rav HaCohen's uncle was an important Torah scholar and a faithful follower of the Ben Ish Chai). Ha-Rav HaCohen said that he would abide by whatever ruling our Rabbi gave. Our Rabbi told him that he did not have to wear his tzitzit outside of his clothing. (From the article "The Appearance of a Meticulously Observant Jew" by Ha-Rav Eliezer Melamed)

Our Rabbi would often emphasize the words of the Magen Avraham (Orach Chaim 8:13) that the essence is that the tzitzit be seen outside of one's clothing. (Gadol Shimusha p. 71)

A newly observant Jew asked our Rabbi for the source for wearing a kippah. He answered that according to the opinion of the Vilna Gaon (Orach Chaim 8:2), there is no ancient source for a kippah, but wearing tzitzit outside of one's clothing is from the Torah. The newly observant Jew immediately bought long tzitzit, (and obviously wore a kippah as well!). (Gadol Shimusha p. 70)

Our Rabbi would wear his tzitzit not only during the day, but

when he slept at night as well. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

Our Rabbi would say that one should wear his tzitzit hanging outside of his clothing. A student asked: And what about the Arizal (who said that one should wear the tzitzit inside – although there is a dispute regarding the meaning of his words)? Our Rabbi responded with a smile: I know the Arizal. And he added: And do you perform everything that the Arizal says? (See Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 8:11, Magen Avraham *ibid.*, Mishnah Berurah *ibid.* Ha-Rav Yosef Bedichi)

Our Rabbi would teach that one should wear his tzitzit out, and that Jewish clothing is not necessarily a kippah, but tzitzit and Tefillin. Regarding a kippah, he would quote the words of the Vilna Gaon that wearing a kippah is an act of righteousness (Biur Ha-Gra, Orach Chaim 8). (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

Tefillin

A student did not have Tefillin. When this was told to our Rabbi, he gave him a pair of Tefillin and said: "These were from Abba, Ha-Rav ztz"l," i.e. the Tefillin of Rav Kook. After the student obtained Tefillin, he wanted to return Rav Kook's Tefillin, but our Rabbi said to him: "You merited!" The student said: "If so, I will give them to my grandson when he becomes a Bar Mitzvah," and thus it happened.

Since the boxes were already old, he replaced the boxes, but kept the parchment. One day [in the middle of Cheshvan 5763] the grandson was traveling on a bus, and sat towards the back. An explosive-laden car of a terrorist slammed against the back portion of the bus and exploded. The young man was thrown from the bus, but was saved. The boxes of the Tefillin were burnt and damaged but the parchment remained without a blemish.

Learning Torah

When our Rabbi was immersed in learning Torah, he did not see or hear anything. It once happened that he did not come to Minchah. The students knocked on his door, but our Rabbi did not answer. They knocked again and again, but it did not help. They busted down the door and when they entered, they found him learning Rambam. He did not understand what they wanted from him. (Ha-Rav Tzvi Kostiner – Iturei Yerushalayim #16)

During a class, our Rabbi asked the students where they had left off learning in a particular book at the end of last class. They told him and he began a few pages earlier and went over them again, and he did the same thing in various classes. (It seems that he acted this way in order to learn an entire issue and not to begin in the middle of a subject. Ha-Rav Yehudah ben Yishai – Iturei Yerushalayim #16.)

A new student once had a difficult time learning Gemara. He asked our Rabbi: Why should I learn Massechet Pesachim!? After Rashi, Tosafot, the Rif and the Rambam, what else is there for me – the small one – to add? Our Rabbi responded: You have yet to learn Massechet Pesachim! Two people are not the same, and no one in the world can grasp the way in which you learn. Your soul is not like Rashi's soul. Your soul can connect to Massechet Pesachim, and the light of the Oral Torah needs to appear through your individual soul. (Iturei Yerushalayim #16)

The Rabbi fostered in his pupils respect for the leading Jewish Sages of earlier generations, and would repeatedly quote the Talmudic adage, "If the earlier generations were like angels, then we are like ordinary human beings; if the earlier generations were like ordinary human beings, then we are like donkeys." The Rabbi would explain that when we relate to the Torah authorities of earlier generations as if they and we are on the same level, each with his own way of seeing things, "then we are like donkeys."

When Rabbi Tzvi Yehudah cited a particular Talmudic luminary he would expound not only upon the statement at hand, but also upon the personality in question as he came to light in the entire Talmud. He would explain that one must visualize the author of a statement as if he stood before one's very eyes. Upon hearing a certain student voice criticism of the great Jewish poet, grammarian, and Torah com-

mentator, Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra, Rabbi Tzvi Yehudah erupted, saying, "I fear Ibn Ezra!"

He noted the unique divine assistance granted the commentaries of the Rif (Rabbi Yitzchak Alfassi), which were graced with clarity of exposition.

The Rabbi advised us to study the work "Shev Shmattah" because it covers each of the issues it deals with in its entirety and according to its order.

He pointed out that the Torah scholars who possessed greater depth of thought tended to prefer the "Netivot" to the "Ketzo" (commentaries on Choshen Mishpat section of Shulchan Aruch).

Our Rabbi said that the phrase in the Gemara, "People say" – for frequently used sayings – (see Baba Kamma 92-93) are not simply popular sayings, but what Klal Yisrael (the entire Jewish People) says has meaning (see there). (Ha-Rav Tzvi Kostiner – Iturei Cohanim #246)

Our Rabbi would repeat his teachings many times, hundreds and thousands of times, at different occasions without tiring. He explained: "The truth does not tire." And each time he would say them with passion as if it was the first time he was saying them. (Ha-Rav Yosef Zini – Iturei Yerushalayim #20)

Our Rabbi emphasized that one should review his learning

a hundred and one times (Chagigah 9b), not necessarily out of a need for great understanding but in order to cleave to the Torah and love it. (Ha-Rav Tzion Tevil – Iturei Yerushalayim #20)

Our Rabbi was asked: The Mishnah Berurah rules that the blessing of bread does not cover cooked fruit which is not eaten with the bread (Mishnah Berurah 167:4 and see Biur Halachah and Shaar Ha-Tziyun), but it is related in the name of Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Eliyahu Lopian that the Mishnah Berurah changed his mind toward the end of his life. How should we act? Our Rabbi responded that it is impossible to reject the explicitly written word based on what is heard orally. He was asked much later: It is now brought in writing in the name of Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Mendel Zaks, the son-in-law of the Chafetz Chaim, that he changed his position (Sefer Chafetz Chaim, p. 213)? Our Rabbi then agreed and said: "If it was taught, it was taught." (Iturei Yerushalayim #20)

Two students who were "Baalei Teshuvah" (became observant) through their professor, came to our Rabbi with many questions concerning what the professor told them, and he answered them. At the end, our Rabbi said to them: "Don't you have any questions of your own?" (Ha-Rav Hillel Gefen – Iturei Yerushalayim #20)

A Yeshiva student who was a Holocaust survivor came to learn with our Rabbi, but did not connect with his style. He was used to a different style when learning outside of Israel.

One day, our Rabbi and his students went to Mount Zion, as was the custom before the Six-Day War, to look at the Kotel. It was a military site on the border and it was forbidden to enter on that day. One of the officers recognized our Rabbi and gave permission for him to enter. He said: "I will not enter on my own without my students." They allowed them all to enter. When they returned to the Yeshiva, our Rabbi turned to the students: "I want to apologize for calling you 'students.'" At that moment, the Yeshiva student was transformed into his student and was connected to him with great love. Our Rabbi did not relate to his students as a Rabbi, but as a father. (Ha-Rav Yehudah Melamed in the name of Ha-Rav Yehoshua Rozen – Iturei Yerushalayim #20 and Be-Derech Ha-Torah Ha-Goelet p. 233).

The founders of a Talmud Torah asked our Rabbi to explain his instruction to begin teaching the children Parashat Lech-Lecha and not Vayikra, as it says in the Midrash. He responded: Do you follow every statement that is written by our Sages? (Ha-Rav Oded Valensky – Iturei Yerushalayim #20)

A student gave our Rabbi a booklet to read while walking, and he finished it after ten meters. The student asked if he read it all. Our Rabbi responded: I read eight lines at a time, and Abba z"l would read twenty lines at a time. (Iturei Cohanim #39)

Weddings

Rabbi Eliezer Melamed related: In our Rabbi's view, it was important that the students of the Yeshiva have their "Aufruf" (the Shabbat before the wedding) in the Yeshiva, since he said that this joy is for the young man and his friends in the Yeshiva. My father's "Aufruf," therefore, was in the Yeshiva, even though the family preferred that it would be where they lived in Tel Aviv. (Rav Eliezer Melamed in newspaper "Be-Sheva")

Our Rabbi would make a great effort to attend his students' weddings. When he was unable to attend, he was careful to send a telegram with a blessing. (Rav Eliezer Melamed in newspaper "Be-Sheva")

Our Rabbi was particular that one should not write the Christian date, and when he was invited to a wedding and the Christian date appeared on the invitation, he would not attend the wedding. (Gadol Shimusha p. 91 #31)

It once happened that our Rabbi was called up to recite one of the blessings at a wedding and they referred to him as "Ha-Rav Ha-Gaon." He did not move. When he was told that he had been called up, he explained that he is not a "Gaon" and that it is only proper to use this description for the Vilna Gaon. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

Brit Milah

[From Sefer Berito Lehodi'am of Rav Yitzchak Dadon, pp. 104-105, 108, 115-116]

Our Rabbi was very strict that the father of the boy should observe "a night of guarding" [leil ha-shemirah - the night before the brit milah] in learning Torah all night, and he insistently requested this from the students who were close to him. Our Rabbi's reason is that the brit milah is like a surgery, and there is danger in every surgery. It is therefore incumbent upon the father of the boy to increase merits on this night in order to protect the baby.

He was strict that they take an expert and punctilious Mohel. And they checked this before they checked his fear of Heaven.

He did not agree that two circumcisions occurring on the same one day could have a joint meal. And he said to the fathers of the boys: This one is special to his mother and this one is special to his mother, for this one a simchah (celebration) and for this one a simchah, therefore for this one is a meal and for this one is a meal.

It was awesome and wondrous to see our Rabbi at the time of being a sandak at a brit milah. Many times when we were present at a brit milah in which our Rabbi participated, and

it was coordinated beforehand that he would be the sandak, we saw how at the moment of the Mohel's announcement, "Our master, the Rosh Yeshiva Shilt"a, is honored to be the sandak," he would raise his head in complete surprise, while saying: Who?! Me?! And when he would slowly walk to the sandak's chair, an awesome fear would surround him, and he would perform this truly like the Divine worship of the Cohain. We concretely saw how the verse (Shemot 17:12), "And he remained with his hands in faithful service" was fulfilled by our Rabbi as well as "And he remained with his legs in faithful service."

He would try not to deliver a dvar Torah at the meal of the brit milah, and in place he would be firm that the father of the boy should say words of Torah, and he would say jokingly: "The father of the boy has a Divine spirit today [since he named his son], he should therefore speak."

He was particular to sing the entire song that they sang at the brit milah during the meal even though it was very long. Some of his students once wanted to abbreviate it and skipped the stanzas at the end of the song, and they thought that our Rabbi would not notice. Our Rabbi corrected them and began the song from the beginning.

He would try to taste something before the meal, so that he would not enter the meal when he was hungry, and he

would eat for the sake of the love of the Mitzvah meal and not because he was hungry.

Our Rabbi made a clear and definitive condition with the Mohel [who was usually Ha-Rav Yosele Weisberg z"l] that when he called him to arise to be sandak not to call him by any title [not "Maran - Our master" and not "Ha-Gaon – the genius"], and once when he forgot he was very upset with him.

When they sang songs, our Rabbi knocked his fist on the table to regulate the melody, and during the entire time his face emanated enthusiasm. He asked the student to say a dvar Torah, saying: "This day is yours!"

It once happened that a firstborn son was born to a student, but he was concerned about arranging the brit milah in our Rabbi's house, as was customary, in order not to burden him. And further, he related that he had approximately one hundred guests, and how could they fit into our Rabbi's house? When the matter became known to our Rabbi, he said to the student: "Everything is fine, and also the small space will hold the many." And this was the case.

He would not begin to eat the Mitzvah meal until after the father of the boy sat and began to eat.

At Mitzvah meals in which our Rabbi participated, the main course would be brought before him. Our Rabbi was known for his abstinence and asceticism from eating and drinking,

but at a Mitzvah meal he was strict to eat everything which was placed before him.

Once, one student saw that our Rabbi's glass was empty, and he approached and offered to the Rav to pour him wine. The Rav did not answer and continued to eat. The student offered again to pour for the Rav, but the Rav signaled with his eyes but did not answer. The student did not understand that when our Rabbi did not answer, he wanted to say: Your words are superfluous, and stop yourself from this action. The student, however, stubbornly offered again to pour wine into his glass. The Rav stared at him with an admonishing look and said to him: "At a Mitzvah meal, eating precedes drinking..."

Pidyon Ha-Ben

Our Rabbi always accepted an invitation to attend a Pidyon Ha-Ben since it is a Mitzvah for a Cohain to redeem a first-born [and our Rabbi was a Cohain] (Gadol Shimusha p. 95 #26).

We heard many times from our Rabbi himself that the money he received as a Cohain during the Pidyon Ha-Ben was the most Kosher money, because it came from a Torah requirement. And in two of his letters from the year 5697, our Rabbi wrote that he used this money to fix the binding of books. And it says in the book "Shivchei Ha-Re'eiyah" (p.

288) that Maran Ha-Rav Kook would buy books with the money he received at the Pidyon Ha-Ben.

When he was asked to receive the money of the Pidyon Ha-Ben, our Rabbi said: "This is finally an opportunity to make a little money." And after the surprise over his words, he would explain that this money is the most Kosher, since the Torah granted it to the Cohain and one should therefore be happy with it.

At the Pidyon Ha-Ben, he would read the Hebrew formula of the Cohain's questions as is found in the Siddur "Olat Re'eiyah."

A student had his son redeemed by our Rabbi with the famous coins of Ha-Rav Aryeh Levin, the Tzaddik of Jerusalem. After a few weeks, the student approached our Rabbi in order to buy them back. Our Rabbi waited until everyone left. When they discussed their value, our Rabbi removed the coins from his coat pocket. He had kept them there the entire time on account of their importance.

Before a Pidyon Ha-Ben, a student once came to our Rabbi, and he told him that Maran Ha-Rav Kook would use the coins of Ha-Rav Aryeh Levin, the Tzaddik of Jerusalem. Our Rabbi was particular not to return the coins immediately in order to emphasize that we are dealing with an actual

payment to the Cohain and not a temporary one which is automatically returned.

A student once came to pay the true value of the redemption to our Rabbi. Our Rabbi did not agree, and specified a much smaller amount. Even though the student replied that he had clarified what the correct amount should be, our Rabbi stood firm, stating that in the past a smaller amount was paid to him.

Halachot

Someone once read to our Rabbi a Chasidic saying that a "Chasid" fears Hashem and a "Mitnaged" fears the Shulchan Aruch. Our Rabbi responded: As if fear of the Shulchan Aruch is something other than fear of Hashem. (Iturei Yerushalayim #37)

A student noticed that our Rabbi did not take the shortest route to his house from the Yeshiva, but took an indirect route which required much effort. When he asked, our Rabbi responded that our Sages said that a person should always make all turns toward the right. (Ha-Rav Aryeh Horowitz)

"Why were the haters of Israel (this is a euphemism) of that generation worthy to be destroyed? It was because they benefited from the evil one's (Achashverosh's) meal (Megillah 12a)." It does not say they were worthy to be destroyed

because they ate at the meal but because they benefited from it, because there are times that the benefit from a severe transgression is more damning than the transgression itself. Our Rabbi had a gem of a teaching regarding this idea from an incident involving the Chafetz Chaim. A group of Jewish soldiers who were forced to serve in the Russian Army once came to the Chafetz Chaim and had a serious question. The Russian Army forced them to eat non-Kosher meat, and without this meat they would starve and be in serious danger because army service is difficult and breaks the body, and it is impossible to survive without eating the meat. They asked how they should act. The Chafetz Chaim thought and responded: "Dear sons, this is truly life-threatening and you can eat. But please remember, when you eat the non-Kosher meat, don't suck the bones." (Ha-Rav Yitzchak Dadon, Nishkafah Kemo Shachar, p. 26)

When a student tried to convince our Rabbi that one should not permit women to cover their hair with a wig (but with a hat or a scarf), our Rabbi forcefully rejected his argument and said: "Our holy mothers wore wigs" (Ha-Rav Binyamin Eisner – Iturei Cohanim #219)

Our Rabbi would not throw papers with Hebrew letters into public garbage cans, which are extremely dirty. He would put them in a clean garbage can, even though they would end up in the public garbage in the end, since this was indirect. He did what he could in order to preserve the holiness of the Hebrew letters.

Kosher Certification

Sometimes when a Kosher product was brought to our Rabbi and he was not familiar with it, he would ask: Does it have Kosher certification from a Rabbi? And when it was answered positively that Rabbi A. from community B. supervised it, he would be somewhat surprised and say that if it has the certification of A. from community B., who is a Rabbi in Israel, then it is okay and he would eat it. (Ha-Rav Oded Valensky)

Our Rabbi would not drink wine with the Kosher certification of Badatz (of the Ultra-Orthodox) in order to strengthen the stance of the Chief Rabbinate. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

7. Around the Year

Shabbat

When our Rabbi was stricken in his leg, he suffered terrible pain. But when Shabbat arrived, it was as if his suffering disappeared.

When our Rabbi said, "May you depart toward peace" in the song "Shalom Aleichem" before Kiddush on Shabbat night, he would pick up a cup of wine and say as one who is justifying his actions: Now that we are able to eat, what do the Angels have to do with us (This was to justify saying this stanza, since minhag in some places – like Volozhin – was not to recite it at all) (from Ha-Rav Avihu Schwartz – Iturei Cohanim #81).

Our Rabbi said that there is great importance in saying "Ve-shamru" before the Shemoneh Esrei during Ma'ariv of Shabbat, and there is also great importance in not saying it in order to connect "Geulah" (Redemption – mentioned in the prayer "Ga'al Yisrael) to the Shemoneh Esrei. But what should we do? It is impossible to fulfill both of them? Therefore, some Minyanim have the custom to say it and some

have the custom not to say it, and between the two customs both important acts are fulfilled.

Our Rabbi was careful not to allow the singing of "Who spreads the Sukkah of peace over us, over all of His Nation Israel and over Jerusalem" along with the person leading the Davening, since this is an interruption between "Geulah" and the Shemoneh Esrei, and the prayer "Hashkiveinu" was only added between them since it is an extension of "Geulah" (Berachot 4b). Our Rabbi was so strict about this that once when the people sang along, he refused to give a class.

It once happened that our Rabbi was wearing his weekday jacket on Shabbat night, despite the fact that he was careful to wear special Shabbat clothing. A student asked him the reason. Our Rabbi did not respond. On Motza'ei Shabbat, the student asked again. Our Rabbi said to him: On Friday, they brought my Shabbat jacket from the cleaners, but I did not have cash to pay them, and I would not take it without paying for it. (Ha-Rav Chaim Steiner)

During Ma'ariv of Shabbat, our Rabbi would not say "amen" to "Veyatzmach Purkanei Vekarev Meshichei" in the Kaddish if the person leading was Davening "Nusach Sefard." Since he Davened "Nusach Ashkenaz" and that phrase is not included, he considered it an interruption between "Geulah" and the Shemoneh Esrei. But he would also ask forgiveness from the person leading the Davening for not saying "amen." (Ha-Rav Yerachmiel Weiss)

Near the end of our Rabbi's life, his foot was amputated and he was confined to a wheelchair. When the time arrived to recite Kiddush, our Rabbi could not recite it while seated. He tried to stand, but was unsuccessful. He requested from a student to help him stand and he stood on one foot in honor of Kiddush. (Ha-Rav Yosef Bedichi – Iturei Yerushalayim #21)

When his sister died, he cried three days and sat seven days in serious mourning. In the middle of the days of crying, when Shabbat arrived, our Rabbi acted as usual on it, and even on Motza'ei Shabbat he decided, after conferring with Ha-Rav Natan, to sing zemirot. Afterwards he removed his shoes and burst out in terrible crying.

When our Rabbi was asked why he drinks the wine of Havdalah slowly, he responded: This is how I like to drink it. A different time he responded: This is the cup of salvation and the salvation of Israel comes slowly, slowly (Iturei Cohanim #112).

He pointed out the difference between the Land of Israel and outside of the Land, that outside the Israel there are "Shomrei Shabbat" (Shabbat observers), and even if they are numerous, since this is unnatural for outside of the Land, there they notice it. In the Land, however, one can meet "Mechalelei Shabbat" (Shabbat desecrators), since it is natural for the Land that they will observe Shabbat in it, and therefore they notice those who are violating, and even if they are numerous (Gadol Shimusha pg. 102-103).

Our Rabbi saw the comment of the author of the "Torah Temimah" that, in the blessing after eating, the fact that we say "magdil" on weekdays and "migdol" on Shabbat and holidays flows from a printer's error. The Torah Temimah writes: In the margin next to the word "magdil," the following appeared in parentheses: "B.S.B. migdol" (the Hebrew letters "Beit," "Shin" and "Beit"). He claims that the intention of that marginal note was that "in Shmuel Beit" (the second book of Shmuel) the word "migdol" appears in a similar verse instead of "magdil." Later printers who copied from the earlier manuscripts misinterpreted the abbreviation to mean that "migdol" is recited "on Shabbat" (which can have the same abbreviation). Our Rabbi was shocked and angry, and he boiled over: What does this Jew – with all of his importance – think! That the Vilna Gaon and Rabbi Akiva Eiger said "magdil" on weekdays and "migdol" on Shabbat because some young man made a mistake with a verse! (Ha-Rav Chanan Porat. See Olat Re'eiyah vol. 2, p. 421 #95 for our Rabbi's explanation of this change) (By the way, even according to the scientific-historical perspective, the supposition that there was a printer's error is incorrect, since Rabbi David Abudraham already mentions this custom before printing was invented. Furthermore, the split between the two books of Shmuel is a Christian division which did not exist at the time of Rabbi David Abudraham). (Iturei Cohanim #221)

When our Rabbi did not have bread for Shabbat lunch, he

would use two pieces of cake (for the two loaves). (Ha-Rav Eliyahu Mali – Iturei Cohanim #262)

Second Day of Yom Tov

In his youth, our Rabbi had difficulty learning without distractions in Eretz Yisrael, since he was the famous son of Maran Ha-Rav Kook. After consulting with his father and Ha-Rav Binyamin Menasheh Levin, he decided "to be exiled to a place of Torah" (Pirkei Avot 4:14 and see Igrot Re'eiyah vol. 2, letter 567 #2). He traveled to learn and teach in Halberstadt, Germany. On the second day of Yom Tov, our Rabbi would act like those who live in Eretz Yisrael regarding Tefillin and Havdalah but he would do so in private (One who is temporarily located in a different place than his home acts according to the stringencies of the place from which he left, and according to the stringencies of the place to which he came – (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 468). He must therefore put on Tefillin in private on his weekdays, and similarly perform Havdalah in private without extinguishing the candle - Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 493 and Mishnah Berurah #13, Chayei Adam 103:4 and see Shut Orach Mishpat #157-159 at length.

Despite all of our Rabbi's efforts to conceal his ways, the matter became known to the youths because of their great interest in him. They were not experts in the laws, and they did not know that there is only one day of Yom Tov in Eretz

Yisrael. They were shocked: Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah is putting on Tefillin on Yom Tov! He was concerned that the matter could impinge on the holiness of the Second Day of Yom Tov, and he therefore explained to them that there is only one day in Eretz Yisrael. Afterwards he heard them saying: If there is a difference between the Jews of Eretz Yisrael and the Jews outside of the Land, the Jews of Eretz Yisrael are obviously correct because of the abundant holiness of Eretz Yisrael, and we should therefore act like them. Our Rabbi responded: On the contrary, out of the faith of the holiness of the Land of Israel, one must understand that it is not possible to have the same order in Eretz Yisrael and outside of Eretz Yisrael, and there must be two days outside of the Land. The youths were not convinced. Our Rabbi then said that we must know that there can only be definite and clear Judaism in the Land of Israel since there can only be an ordained Beit Din in Israel, while there is doubtful Judaism outside of Israel. The observance of two days of Yom Tov outside of the Land expresses the belief in the holiness of the Land of Israel. One who is satisfied with one day of a holiday outside of Israel and disgraces the Second Day of Yom Tov is a heretic regarding the holiness of Eretz Yisrael. He ended with the strong words at the end of Massechet Berachot (63) that it is impossible to sanctify months outside of Israel and to create an independent Judaism which stands on its own outside the Land.

One young man explained the words of our Rabbi, that in Eretz Yisrael one day contains the holiness of both days of

Yom Tov outside of the Land. Our Rabbi pointed out that the holiness of the Land is not based upon human, emotional, societal values but upon essential, Divine values, and Eretz Yisrael is the Land of Hashem (from Tzemach Tzvi, igeret 27).

Much later when our Rabbi was with Maran Ha-Rav Kook in Switzerland, he related that on the Second Day of Yom Tov, when they Davened with the community, his father told him to skip over some of the verses in Hallel based on the statement of our Sages (Shabbat 118b): "Anyone who recites Hallel every day blasphemes" (from Le-Shelosh Be-Elul [Mehadurat 5763], p. 54, #50). (Tzvi Kodesh, pp. 59-60)

Rosh Hashanah

Our Rabbi would not eat anything before the blowing of the shofar on Rosh Hashanah (From Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Avraham Shapira in Mikra'ei Kodesh of Ha-Rav Moshe Harari p. 284).

Our Rabbi would pray at the old Yeshiva building on Rosh Hashanah. The prayers lasted many hours until late into the afternoon, and our Rabbi stood the entire time and did not sit for even a moment – until the age of 87. He did not even take a break for Kiddush, but only went to the restroom before Musaf. It was the same on the second day.

Before the meal, our Rabbi performed Tashlich in a well which was in the Yeshiva's courtyard. Our Rabbi would then relate how during the War of Independence a great miracle occurred in that the Yeshiva was saved from the bombs that fell nearby and from a bomb that fell in the courtyard but did not explode. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

During the High Holidays, our Rabbi would speak during the Davening: on Rosh Hashanah before the Shofar and on Yom Kippur before Kol Nidrei. He stood next to the Ark with his talit covering half of his face as when Davening the Shemoneh Esrei. He would begin with a great roar and slowly his speech would return to normal, and his talit would also slowly lift up to reveal his face.

Yom Kippur

A student approached our Rabbi on Erev Yom Kippur and asked forgiveness. He asked our Rabbi, "Have I injured you in any way?" To his answer that he did not recall a particular offense, the student said that it is nonetheless customary to ask for forgiveness. Our Rabbi responded, "If you did something, why have you waited until now? If you did not, has asking for forgiveness turned into some kind of refrain like this?"

On Yom Kippur, our Rabbi said that one day of the year is exclusively for the Holy One Blessed Be He: Yom Kippur,

since Satan and the evil inclination have no power to influence people on this day, as our Sages pointed out on the verse in Tehillim 139:16.

Our Rabbi would recite the Vidui of Erev Yom Kippur slowly and he would strike his heart hard, the sound of which striking could be heard from a distance (For which sins was our Rabbi striking himself so hard? Perhaps the sins of the community or sins which Hashem is exacting with the righteous within a hair's breadth). Our Rabbi said that it is not appropriate to sing "Ashamnu, Bagadnu...", rather it should be said with pain and hurt.

A student once wore a vest that was partially red on Yom Kippur. Our Rabbi pointed out to him that this was not appropriate for Yom Kippur. We have the custom to wear white and certainly not red (as it says in Yeshayahu 1:18: "though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool").

Sukkot

Our Rabbi would remind his students of the importance of sleeping in the Sukkah. When he was in Switzerland in the cold and snow, he would not forgo even one night of sleeping in the Sukkah.

A student related: "On Sukkot, great Rabbis sat in our Rabbi's Sukkah, and I brought my younger girls to visit so that he would know who they were. Suddenly my youngest daughter said out loud: 'What an ugly Sukkah, it is not Kosher at all!' Everyone stared, and I was embarrassed. Our Rabbi asked: 'Who said that?' I wanted to hide my daughter, but she answered: 'I did!' 'Come here,' the Rav said. 'What do you have to say about the Sukkah?' 'This is a Sukkah? It is just boards!' 'What do you want?' 'Schach, greenery, trees, leaves. This is not Kosher at all!' Our Rabbi said: 'Perfect innocence.' This is what he said about her."

It happened one time that some people brought our Rabbi a Schach mat (when they first became available); he examined it to see if it was Kosher, and he was satisfied. Another time, some people brought him Schach; he spent a long time investigating to be certain that it was taken from a permissible area and there was no fear of it being stolen. He requested that they check with the municipality that it was permissible to take them.

When he needed to leave the Sukkah (in the year 5740), when it was raining hard, he said: "It seems that there is a greater need for rain than our mitzvot" (this was after a few years of drought, and afterwards this year was a year of blessing). (Gadol Shimusha P. 102)

One year our Rabbi pointed out with joy that the Etrog came to him from Kefar Ha-Ro'eh (Gadol Shimusha p. 94).

When he would take the Etrog he would kiss it (ibid.).

Simchat Torah

Our Rabbi would carry a Sefer Torah that was given to him during the Hakafot until the end of the Hakafah, even if it went on for a long time. And when they wanted to make it easier for him and take it from him, he explained that a Sefer Torah is in the category of "a living being which carries itself." (Gadol Shimusha p. 91)

The Davening would become longer each year. They would take the Sifrei Torah outside and go to visit the Chief Rabbis. During the dancing, the students would stop traffic and our Rabbi would justify their actions, since one must honor the Torah when it is in the street.

There was a certain street famous for the desecration of Shabbat which occurred on it. Our Rabbi went around it on Simchat Torah, and he said that he avoids walking on it on Shabbat. (Gadol Shimusha p. 96)

On Simchat Torah, even though our Rabbi was elderly and suffered great pain in his foot, he went with all of the students dancing to the Kotel. One student suggested: "Ha-Rav is tired. Perhaps he should rest a little and afterwards say some Divrei Torah." These words startled our Rabbi: "Fatigue is not in our lexicon." (Iturei Cohanim #265 in the name of Ha-Rav Tzvi Kostiner)

On Simchat Torah, our Rabbi would begin the Hakafot at eight in the morning and finish at five in the afternoon. In order to strengthen the Chief Rabbinate, he would dance to the houses of the Chief Rabbis. The students would try to convince our Rabbi to shorten them, but he would not agree. During the entire time he would dance without a break, and he would encourage others to come with him, even though they wanted to end quickly and sit to learn Torah. He danced with vigor the entire time, even at the age of 80-90, and even though he had throbbing pain in his feet. One time at the end of the day when he removed his socks there was blood inside, but there was no sign of it on his face; rather he was happy the entire time. (Iturei Cohanim #265 in the name of Ha-Rav Tzvi Kostiner)

On Simchat Torah of the year 5738 or 5739, our Rabbi came to the old Yeshiva building on Ha-Rav Kook Street, without any strength, dragging his feet, and they were sure that he would not place a foot in the street. This was not so, however, and even though in the Yeshiva he succeeded in standing with difficulty, he went from there to King George Street to the building of the Chief Rabbinate and danced four straight hours, with great strength. After a half an hour, however, the students were spent, their strength was already gone. (Iturei Cohanim #265 in the name of Ha-Rav Tzvi Kostiner)

He would not make Kiddush before the Hakafot of the

morning. They explained that he acted this way because he did not want to drink wine before Birchat Cohanim of Musaf. (ibid. p. 95)

One year on Simchat Torah, the students were singing "Next year in Jerusalem." Our Rabbi stopped everyone and said: "This year!" (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald – Iturei Yerushalayim #3)

He explained the meaning of the second "Hakafot" (on the night after Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah concludes in Israel) in two ways: 1. Identification with the Jews in Exile (who celebrate Simchat Torah on that night). 2. The state of joy to which we reached in the string of holidays – Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret – brings us to an exalted state of joy, and this level does not end with nightfall. (Gadol Shimusha p. 119)

Chanukah

Our Rabbi once said to the Yeshiva students on Chanukah that one must remember that the holiday of Chanukah is a Jerusalem holiday (Gadol Shimusha p. 120).

When Our Rabbi would sing Maoz Tzur, he would cry during the sad stanzas and would be full of excitement during the joyous stanzas. (Ha-Rav Yehoshua Weitzman)

Our Rabbi would light his Chanukiyah inside.

Purim

Once on Purim, the students brought all types of alcoholic drinks to our Rabbi and he drank them all, but it did not affect him and he did not say a word. At the end of the meal, they Davened Ma'ariv and it was as if he had not had anything to drink and he was as usual. (Ha-Rav Yosef Kelner)

On another Purim, the students gave our Rabbi two bottles of Vodka to drink, but it did not affect him at all, and he continued his class in "Olat Ha-Re'eiyah" (thoughts of Maran Ha-Rav Kook on the siddur). (Ha-Rav Mordechai Sadeh)

On Purim, a drunken student asked our Rabbi: "Where is the shtreimel of Maran Ha-Rav? We also want a Rebbe with a shtreimel!" Our Rabbi smiled and responded: "One for whom it is proper to wear a shtreimel has a shtreimel."

On Purim, a drunken student asked our Rabbi to give him a blessing that he should merit the trait of truth. Our Rabbi smiled, but did not bless him.

On Purim, a tall Jew entered dressed in the uniform of a general of Tzahal: "Shalom, my master, Ha-Rav, I am Rav Goren," and he began imitating Rav Goren, and stating all kinds of halachic rulings. Suddenly, our Rabbi burst out in

awful screaming regarding shaming Torah scholars, and harshly scolded him.

It once happened that our Rabbi left in the middle of the Purim party. The students ran after him and asked him why he left. He said: "You also need to have awe of Hashem on Purim." (Ha-Rav Binyamin Eisner – Iturei Cohanim #196)

It once occurred on Purim that a student began to say "Purim Torah" and said "Rashi is a woman and Tosafot is a man because it says 'The entire glory of the princess is on the inside' (Tehillim 45:14) and Rashi's commentary always appears on the inside of a page!" Our Rabbi scolded him.

Pesach

A certain Rav explained the line in the Haggadah, "If we received the Torah, but did not enter the Land of Israel – it would have been enough," that it would have been better for the non-religious pioneers to have remained outside of Israel rather than to commit sins in the Land of Israel. These words caused much consternation, and when the students came to class, they told our Rabbi what they had heard. They thought he would discuss this issue at length, but he responded briefly: "See Yalkut Shimoni #1038" and taught the class as usual (The Yalkut Shimoni says: If only my chil-

dren, my Nation, would be in the Land of Israel, even though they make it impure). (Iturei Cohanim #181)

Our Rabbi was particular to use machine-made matzah, since it was decided by the halachic authorities that machine-made matzah is Kosher, and there is, in fact, greater care regarding the concern of chametz than with handmade matzah. (Haggadah with commentary of Rav Tzvi Yehudah, p. 93).

A student asked our Rabbi: Which is preferable, handmade matzah or machine-made? Our Rabbi answered: In the same time that we exert ourselves to make one handmade matzah, it is possible to make Reb Noson's (our Rabbi's brother-in-law), his and many other people's matzah for the entire holiday (Iturei Cohanim Nisan 5766 #259 in the name of Ha-Rav Achyah Amitai).

Yom Ha-Shoah

Our Rabbi was unable to mention the word "Holocaust" or to talk about the subject without shedding tears. He felt the great loss every time anew, even years after the Holocaust. (Yosi Bitan)

Students asked our Rabbi: The Chief Rabbinate of Israel established the 10th of Tevet as a remembrance of the Holo-

caust to recite Kaddish for the Kedoshim (holy ones) who perished in the Holocaust, but their date of death is unknown. If so, why did the Government of Israel establish the 27th of Nisan as Yom Ha-Shoah? Our Rabbi responded: One should mourn for the Holocaust every day.

A student who was caring for our Rabbi once sat next to his bed while he slept. Our Rabbi woke up in the middle of the night, sat on his bed and began to sob. The student asked him: "Why is Ha-Rav crying?" Our Rabbi answered: "I dreamt about the Telz Yeshiva, which was destroyed in the Holocaust." The student asked: "But Ha-Rav always speaks about the Torah of the Land of Israel...?" Our Rabbi sobbed even harder and said: "What do you know? Were you in Telz? Did you see the greatness and power of Torah?!" Our Rabbi cried until he finally asked for a pen and paper, and he wrote a eulogy for the Telz Yeshiva. He then calmed down and went back to sleep. (Ha-Rav Eli Horvitz HY"D in Me-Emek Chevron, 2 Elul 5762, p. 94)

At times he said: You don't know Lithuania and the other cities, the yeshivot and the Torah giants that were destroyed.

Once when our Rabbi mentioned the Holocaust he burst out in tears: "And what did it matter to the wicked one that Rabbi Menachem Zemba was alive?! And that Rabbi Hillel Zeitlin was alive?!" (Gadol Shimusha p. 46)

In preparation for Yom Ha-Shoah, a Rabbi in a Yeshiva for younger students brought a film to show the students. The

film included pictures which were shot by the evil ones during the Holocaust. There were those who sharply criticized the use of this medium to influence the students. When our Rabbi was asked about this matter, he responded that one must deepen awareness of the Holocaust in every possible way. (Gadol Shimusha p. 80)

Our Rabbi said that it would have been appropriate to lay Eichmann down on the ground and to have all of Israel step on him and trample him.

He once told his students that he recites "Av Ha-Rachamim" on every Shabbat and even Shabbat Yom Tov, Shabbat Rosh Chodesh and Shabbat Mevarchim (when we bless the new month). This prayer was written during the Crusades and the Rabbis established reciting it over the decrees of Tach ve-Tat (Chelminski Massacres - 5408-5409), and although these decrees were horrible, they were like nothing compared to those of the Holocaust. And although they refrained from saying it on special Shabbatot, after the Holocaust, it is surely appropriate to recite it every Shabbat. As was his way, he did not force the students but rather said: "I recite it, and if this is your desire, act this way." And this is in fact how they acted from then on in our Rabbi's Minyan. He would recite "Av Ha-Rachamim" with great emotion, and many times tears could be seen in his eyes. (Sefer Tzvi Kodesh p. 241)

The Holocaust

Our Rabbi gave a parable in relation to the Holocaust: There is a house next to a forest and a young child plays at the edge of the forest. It begins to get dark in the late afternoon, and the mother goes out and calls to the child: "Come inside the house, it is beginning to get dark and cold." The child does not listen. The mother goes out and calls again: "It is already cold. There is hot water for a shower, a hot meal and a clean bed. Come into the house," but the child does not hear. She yells next time: "It is already night, lions and bears roar in the forest, and they will soon go out to search for prey." It is dangerous to be outside, but the child continues to hide from her. The mother finally decides that she needs to bring him in by force. She approaches him and grabs the child, who is yelling and protesting by force. The time had arrived to go home, and to save him from the attacking animals, she would have pulled off one of his limbs, if she had to. (Ha-Rabbanit Chana Tau, *Am Nolah* p. 17)

Someone once came to pick up our Rabbi in a Volkswagen. He refused to enter (Ha-Rav David Goldenberg).

Our Rabbi disagreed with what Ha-Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik said in the name of his father, Ha-Rav Moshe, that anyone who arises against the Nation of Israel to wage war is in the category of Amalek in all respects (*Kol Dodi Dofek* p. 101, *Five Derashot and Nefesh Ha-Rav*, p. 87). And he said that it was only a *Derashah* (a homiletic teaching), and one should refrain from saying things such as this.

While Ha-Rav Moshe held that "Amalek" is defined by a philosophy and can apply to any nation, our Rabbi held that it only refers to the biological offspring of Amalek (Ha-Rav Yitzchak Shilat, quoted in the book "Melumdei Milchamah" of Ha-Rav Nachum Eliezer Rabinovitz. See Sefer Ha-Mitzvot of the Rambam #187 and Moreh Nevuchim 3, 50).

Yom Ha-Zikaron

Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook recited Tachanun at Minchah of Erev Yom Ha-Atzmaut, since the Chief Rabbinate of Israel decreed this day "Remembrance Day for the Fallen Soldiers of Tzahal," which is a day of mourning and pain for the loss and death of holy individuals. (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah - Eretz Yisrael, pp. 264-265)

For many years, the members of Bnei Akiva in Jerusalem had a custom on Simchat Torah after the Hakafot (encircling the Bima and dancing with the Torah scrolls seven times in the shul) to go outside with the Torah scrolls, for a great Hakafah in the streets of the city with singing and dancing. From the Bnei Akiva branch on Chaznovitz Street they arrived at Yeshivat Mercaz Ha-Rav on Ha-Rav Kook Street, and there they joined the Yeshiva students who also came into the street, with our Rabbi leading the way. One time the hour grew quite late - and they returned to continue the Davening for the day in Yeshivat Mercaz Ha-Rav.

During Yizkor, our Rabbi stood next to the person leading the Davening and supplied him with the communal memorial prayers. When he recited the memorial prayer for the souls of the soldiers of Tzahal, our Rabbi whispered to him a detailed list of the names of the Yeshiva students who fell in the battles of Israel, the young man's name and his father's name, and all from memory - not from a written list - slowly, gently, with a wrinkled brow and a strained tension. At that moment they clearly sensed the deep, loving connection of the Rosh Yeshiva for every one of his students who sacrificed his life for the sanctification of Hashem's Name, for the sake of the Nation of Israel and for the sake of the Land of Israel.

Yom Ha-Atzmaut

There are those who ask why Yom Ha-Atzmaut was established on the 5th of Iyar in particular, since on that day no miracle occurred. The Jewish State was declared, and with it a life-threatening situation began (Chanukah and Purim were established on the day after the "war" ended). Our Rabbi, Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook, explains that the courage to declare the State is the miracle of miracles, the soul and root of all of the miracles and wonders (Le-Netivot Yisrael vol. 1, p. 179). The Talmud discusses a shepherd who abandoned his flock, leaving it prey to either a wolf or a lion which came and tore it to pieces. The Rabbis established that his responsibility for the slaughter depends

on whether or not he would have been able to save the animals. If he would not have been able to overcome the attacking animal, he is exempt from all payment. The Talmud asks: Why is this so? Perhaps it would have happened as for David: "Your servant slew both the lion and the bear" (Shmuel 1 17:36)? Perhaps a minor miracle would have occurred (Baba Metzia 106a)? The Tosafot describe the miracle: "A spirit of courage and the knowledge to wage war" (Tosafot *ibid.*). So too in the matter of the declaration of the State: "The awakening, the exerting of effort, the philosophizing and the strengthening for the drive to rescue and revive," is a miracle from the Heavens, "with a supreme and inner stimulus of power." The fact that the Nation of Israel was filled with the spirit to fight and the knowledge to wage war is the foundation of all miracles (Le-Netivot Yisrael *ibid.* and see Sefer Tal Chermon - Moadim, pp. 95-96 note 97).

Our Rabbi was overtaken by excitement and exaltation on Yom Ha-Atzmaut: it seemed as though he was located in the upper worlds, so completely focused was he on the day's holy meaning.

He was vigilant about participating in the festive meal held at the Yeshiva (Mercaz Ha-Rav in Jerusalem) in order to demonstrate that Yom Ha-Atzmaut is a holiday and that its meal is a Seudat Mitzvah (a Mitzvah meal). Afterwards, when guests and students would speak, he would listen attentively to all of them. During his own speech he would

also respond to anything that was said which he did not think was correct.

Our Rabbi greatly valued going out into the streets of the city and participating in the dancing with "Amcha" (literally "your people," an affectionate term for "the masses"). At the end of the celebration he would go to dance in front of the President's House in order to express his full identification with the Jewish governing body of the State.

On the night of Yom Ha-Atzmaut, our Rabbi would dance from the Yeshiva to Beit Ha-Nasi [the President's House]. Even though the President was not awake at this late hour, our Rabbi would take this same path indefatigably each and every year. The students pointed out to him that each time they arrived at Beit Ha-Nasi, the President was sleeping and did not come out to them! To this our Rabbi responded: "What does it matter to me if he is awake or asleep? We are honoring the Kingship, since we have a President!" Furthermore, he always asked the guards to deliver his blessing and the Yeshiva's blessing to the President. He did not pay heed to the fatigue of those around him, rather he emulated the exuberance of Eliyahu the Prophet, who would gird his loins and run before the chariot of Achav until they reached Yizre'el, in order to honor the Kingship (see I Melachim 18:46 and Menachot 98a).

In the first years after the establishment of the State, no party for Yom Ha-Atzmaut was held in the Yeshiva. Our Rabbi said: "I am going out to the street to ask people why

they are dancing, to initiate conversation, to create a connection with our people. A year does not go by without people returning to faith. This is an evening to be spent with the entirety of Israel." Our Rabbi eventually agreed to have a party in the Yeshiva only on the condition that afterwards they would go out and dance together with everyone.

Our Rabbi insisted that his students dance in the Yeshiva on the afternoon of Yom Ha-Atzmaut after the festive meal, even if it was without fervor. He danced as "All of my limbs shall speak" (Tehillim 35:10).

Various students once asked our Rabbi before Yom Ha-Atzmaut if it is permissible to shave for this day (since there is a custom not to shave during the period of Sefirat Ha-Omer). Our Rabbi did not answer. Later he responded: "Tomorrow there will be an exam on your faces." On Yom Ha-Atzmaut he saw that some students had been strict with themselves and had not shaved. He said of them: "Their faces show their character" (Yeshayahu 3:9). He added: When there is faith, there is joy and when there is joy there are no halachic doubts. How long will we speak out of both sides of our mouths (see I Melachim 18:21)?! Do we believe in the Revealed Redemption or not?!"

In the year 5718, Ben Gurion gave an unequivocal and powerful directive to establish a military parade in Jerusalem, despite the United Nations instruction not to bring heavy weaponry there, the complaints of Jordan to the

Security Council, and American objections. Ben Gurion commanded our Ambassador Abba Eban to inform the Americans that we overrule their objections. And indeed he informed them and the UN that Jerusalem is ours and we will do within it what we want; nobody will dictate to us. During the party on the night of Yom Ha-Atzmaut, our Rabbi mentioned this whole incident with great excitement: "The non-Jews want us to do what they want, and our Abba Eban Shlit" a (May he live long and happily, amen! – an honorific usually reserved for a great Rabbi) informed them that we do not take their opinion into consideration, and we will do what we want in Jerusalem."

Our Rabbi would eagerly go to the military parade and stand with his students in solidarity across from the Knesset. He saw in this military display a revelation of the Israeli Statehood. With enormous joy he would say: "The tanks, the weapons, the planes, and the Tzahal uniforms are ritual objects used for the Mitzvah of settling the Land, for the Mitzvah of our authority over the Land and for our independence in the Land. If it is a Mitzvah - behold, it is holy! 'Who made us holy with His commandments' (part of the blessing before performing a Mitzvah!)."

Even though our Rabbi was more than seventy years old, he still stood for many hours in the sun during the parade. When they brought him a chair he refused to sit because he wanted to be with the people. He even entered the Beit Midrash (Study Hall) and urged the students who were sitting

and learning to go to the parade and to see this great sanctification of Hashem's Name. He would be interested in every vehicle and weapon that passed, and say about it: "Praiseworthy is the Nation for who this is so, praiseworthy is the Nation whose God is Hashem" (Tehillim 144:15).

How our Rabbi rejoiced over the State of Israel, even though it was not perfect, and on Yom Ha-Atzmaut he danced with great joy. He once said: "When I saw the Nation of Israel dancing, I saw the Holy One Blessed Be He dancing with them." (Ha-Rav Tzefaniyah Derori – Iturei Yerushalayim #6)

Yom Yerushalayim

That Very Wednesday

"...We are reminded of that very Wednesday. How is it possible not to remember? It is impossible to forget. An emissary of the Chief Rabbi [of Tzahal], Rav Goren, came to me. To hear the news, we were, of course, incredibly excited. Afterwards a telephone message arrived from Rav Goren. We did not have a telephone in our house. It was therefore quiet, but messages sometimes came to us through our neighbors. Thus, they sent in the name of Rav Goren a message that he wanted us to know that they were drawing near, they were currently located in the area of Rockefeller [Museum] and they were going to the Kotel, and that I should be ready to travel there. When the driver arrived I

asked him: 'How did you enter?' He said to me: 'All of the gates were open before us.' He brought me in an army jeep. We drove and drove. I asked him: 'Where are you going to bring me?' Suddenly he said to me: 'We are on the Temple Mount.' I was dismayed. We were across from their building [the Dome of the Rock]. The passage was in fact through the Lion's Gate. It was then impossible to approach any other way. They therefore brought me in through this passageway. There were groups of young men there. Large groups of soldiers from our Army were passing on all sides, and I heard a voice yell to me: 'Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah!' This was Chanan Porat. There were other Torah scholars, a large camp of soldiers of the Army [who were] Torah scholars! We arrived at the Kotel. We danced, we rejoiced, we were moved, we embraced and kissed each other with the soldiers. There is no need to relate the genius, the righteousness and the holiness of our Master, the Chief Rabbi of Tzahal (Shilt"a) [ztz"l], who went with courage at the front of the Army, at the front of the conquerors with two weapons. Do you know what his two weapons were? A small Torah scroll and a small shofar! Afterwards, he said to me: 'We have completed this visit at the Kotel, now I am going to Hevron.' I jumped. I was dismayed. I was afraid. I could not understand. Master of the Universe! What is the meaning of this? He was going to Hevron with the two weapons, with the small Torah scroll and with the small shofar! The next day they informed me in the afternoon: Rav Goren is at the house of his father-in-law, Rav David Cohain [This was al-

ready after the conquest of Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah - the Cave of Machpelah]. This was how it occurred. 'Were our mouths as full of song as the sea...we still could not thank you sufficiently' (from the prayer 'Nishmat' recited on Shabbat and holidays). How is it possible, Master of the Universe, not to see this? How is it possible not to fill ourselves with faith, how is it possible not to fill ourselves with the most glorious holiness for what the Master of the Universe has done, does and will do for us, before the entire world, before all of the non-Jews, before all of the believers and all of the nonbelievers?" (Sichot Rabbenu, Yom Yerushalayim 5733 [1974], #9).

Right after the liberation of the Temple Mount, our Rabbi and "The Nazir" were brought there in an army jeep. They were not told about this and they suddenly realized they were on the Temple Mount, but decided it was acceptable for the moment to be on the Temple Mount based on the concept of "kiboosh" (acquiring land through conquering). In general, it is forbidden to be on the Temple Mount at this time (because we are impure). On the way back from the Kotel, our Rabbi wanted to return by a different route, but they were told that it was dangerous so they went through the Temple Mount. (Iturei Yerushalayim #6)

It was so very natural that the first citizens who arrived at the Kotel on the first day of its liberation were our Rabbi and Rav David Cohain, "The Nazir."

Regarding the prayers of Minchah which he prayed with the paratroopers, our Rabbi said: "This was like the prayer of Neilah (the concluding prayers of Yom Kippur) in the Yeshiva."

When the book "Be-Shesh Acharei Ha-Milchamah" of Yosi Gamzu was published, it included the song "Ha-Kotel - The Kotel" and one of the stanzas began: "He stood facing the Kotel, with us, the elderly Rav," accompanied by the picture of our Rabbi. Our Rabbi said: "I am not elderly." (Gadol Shimusha p. 17 #20)

An escort to the Kotel

On one Shabbat during the time of the British Mandate, our Rabbi had an intense yearning to meet the Divine Presence which rests in the stones of the Kotel. But what could he do? The British placed a closure on the movement of the Jews. Our Rabbi decided to go anyway. He went to Yafo Street and began to march in the direction of the Old City. From one of the alleyways, an elderly Sefardic Jew, who looked like a Rabbi, came out to greet him. He asked our Rabbi: "Where are you going?" He responded: "To the Kotel Ha-Ma'aravi." The elderly man said to him: "Let's go together." Our Rabbi said to him: "Does his honor know that there is a closure and there will certainly be many British soldiers at the Yafo Gate of the Old City who will not allow

us to pass?" The elderly man said: "When we arrive, recite with me the verses from Tehillim that I tell you and everything will be fine." They continued on together, and they saw eight soldiers standing shoulder-to-shoulder, with rifles in their hands, ready to shoot. Our Rabbi said to the elderly man: "How are we going to get past the soldiers?" He said: "I told you, recite the verses with me and do not look at the soldiers at all." They recited the verses together and passed through the soldiers, and it was as if the soldiers did not see them. The Arab market was very crowded at that time and all of the Arabs moved to clear the way, saying: "This is a great master." They thus reached the Kotel.

The students asked our Rabbi how he returned and if the man waited for him. He said that the man disappeared, and returning was no problem. They also asked if he ever saw the man again. Our Rabbi said that he saw him a few times when there was a Brit Milah at "Sha'arei Tzedek" (the hospital which originally had a building on Yafo Street with an event hall). They further asked which verses he recited, and he said that it does not matter since one cannot rely on such things even in a similar situation.

This story was once told to Ha-Rav Rafael Levin, son of Reb Aryeh Levin – the Tzaddik of Jerusalem, and he said: "What? You don't know who the elderly man was? It is not clear to you that it was Eliyahu Ha-Navi?"

During the Motza'ei Shabbat classes, our Rabbi in fact spoke about Eliyahu Ha-Navi, who reveals himself throughout the

generations, from the earlier generations until now – and he would emphasize – to the most recent of times. (Be-Derech Ha-Torah Ha-Goelet, p. 158-159)

Tearing One's Garment upon seeing the Temple Mount After the Six-Day War

The Halachah rules that one must tear his garment when seeing the spot of the Temple in ruins (Moed Katan 26a and Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim #561). Rav Yosef Karo, in the Beit Yosef, in discussing the obligation to rip one's garment upon seeing the cities of Yehudah and Jerusalem in ruins, explained that we hold that "in ruins" means "under non-Jewish control." The Magen Avraham (#1) and Mishnah Berurah (#2) accepted this view. This means that even if there is a Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel but it is under non-Jewish control, it is still considered in ruins, and one must tear his garment upon seeing it. Our Rabbi, Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook, explained that the same applies for seeing the spot of the Temple in ruins, and just as "in ruins" means "under non-Jewish control" for the cities of Yehudah and Jerusalem, so too does "in ruins" mean "under non-Jewish control" for the Temple Mount. Therefore after the famous call of "Har Ha-Bayit Be-Yadenu - the Temple Mount is in our hands" during the Six-Day War, he ruled that there is no longer an obligation to tear one's garment when seeing the Temple Mount, even though the Temple is

still destroyed. Our Rabbi explained that it is possible to claim that since there is no Temple, one must tear their garment. One must understand, however, why we are prevented from fulfilling the Divine Commandment of "Make for Me a Temple" (Shemot 25:8). The Temple Mount is in our hands and our inability to build the Temple is not due to "exile." We are in control, but are prevented from building the Temple due to halachic and political reasons. These are our reasons, not those of the non-Jews (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah – Yom Ha-Atzmaut and Yom Yerushalayim, talk for Yom Yerushalayim p. 90 and Tal Chermon - Moadim, p. 218). Our Rabbi also wrote that we should also be concerned about ripping our garments when not obligated and violating "Bal Tashchit" (wanton destruction of items) when the whole prohibition for tearing when seeing the Temple in a destroyed state is a Rabbinic prohibition.

In the book "Mekor Chaim" (2:95 #1), Ha-Rav Chaim David Halevy – former Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv-Yafo for 25 years – wrote that he agrees with our Rabbi's opinion. He explained that when a close relative dies, we tear our garments when the "dead is before us." After the mourning, we observe an annual Yahrtzeit. Similarly, when our "dead was before us" – the Temple Mount was under non-Jewish control – we had the obligation to tear our garments. Now that we have control, the dead is no longer before us, and we observe an annual Yahrtzeit: Tisha Be-Av. Despite Ha-Rav Halevy's agreement, he concluded that in order to exempt

us from this obligation, the Chief Rabbinate of Israel must make this decision.

"On the day of the liberation of Jerusalem, our Rabbi and "The Nazir," Rav David Cohain, were together at the Kotel, and the next day our Rabbi went to him to bring him his book "Le-Netivot Yisrael" volume 1 which was published on that very 28th of Iyar 5727. Our Rabbi said that while standing facing the Kotel, he did not tear his garment upon his seeing the place of the Temple since "it is only considered in a destroyed state when the non-Jews rule over it" (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 561 and Mishnah Berurah #2), and this fundamental principle which was stated regarding the cities of Yehudah also applies to the spot of the Temple. "The Nazir" responded in agreement and added: "Is it not also true that his honor saw that our Master the Rav was there in his Shabbat clothing and he did not tear" (He saw a vision of Maran Rav Kook). All were astounded and all eyes turned to our Rabbi, and he also nodded his head approvingly: "Yes, certainly" ("Rabbenu" - On the Life of Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, p. 211).

[In the book "Peninei Halachah" (end of vol. 1 in the second edition), Ha-Rav Eliezer Melamed – Rav of Har Berachah – writes that our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, would agree today that one should tear his garment upon seeing the spot of the Temple, after the horrible desecrations of Hashem's Name which have occurred there. I asked Ha-Rav Aviner his opinion regarding our Rabbi's opinion today and he re-

sponded: "Baruch Hashem, the Temple Mount is still in our hands, and with Hashem's help it will remain so," i.e. our Rabbi's ruling still stands that we are exempt from tearing our garments upon seeing the spot of the Temple – M.T.]

One of the students, who was present with our Rabbi at the liberation of the Temple Mount, asked: "What about sacrifices now?" Our Rabbi responded in a sharp and powerful manner: "Reb David Karlin said (Shut She'eilat David #1) do not hasten to build the Temple!"

When asked about rebuilding the Temple, our Rabbi responded: "Israel was commanded regarding three mitzvot upon entering the Land: to appoint a king...to destroy the seed of Amalek...to build the Temple," and they are to be performed in this particular order (Rambam, Melachim 1:1-2). We must first build the State of Israel - the Kingdom of Israel - then defeat our enemies, and only then build the Temple. The Temple burns within you? Don't burn." (Rafael K.)

Right after the liberation of Jerusalem, our Rabbi informed the entire world on the radio: "All Israel, the entire world and all of the nations of the world must know that we have returned home. And since we have returned home, know that no power in the world will move us from here. Every house has an entrance way and a main room. We first entered the entrance way and now we have reached the main room." (Iturei Yerushalayim #6)

It once happened that two writers from outside of Israel, a Jew and a non-Jew, were preparing a book and a film about Zionism in Jerusalem. They met with one of the students of our Rabbi, for many hours and were deeply impressed by him. The student brought them to our Rabbi. After two minutes they were excited by him, and they understood that there was something unique here. One of the writers said: "We are going home, and we will return with all of the necessary equipment to film a movie about the 'settlements.'" After three months they returned to Israel and came straight to our Rabbi. Searching for a way to open the movie, they asked our Rabbi: "We have a question and the movie will begin with it: If you were given ten minutes, not a minute more, in order to explain your position to the President of the United States, what would you say, honored Rabbi?" Our Rabbi gave a lengthy smile, and said: "This is nine minutes too long. I would say only two words: Chazarnu Ha-Baita - We have returned home!"

Shavuot

On the night of Shavuot he would teach the Sefer Ha-Mitzvot in order, and the following year he would continue from the place at which he stopped the previous year (Gadol Shimusha p. 121).

Fasting for the Destruction of the Temple

After the Six-Day War, our Rabbi stated that we are still obligated to fast since we are not at peace with our neighbors. The fasts were established by the prophets and it is impossible to be lenient (see Rosh Hashanah 18b). (Arba'im Le-Binah of Ha-Rav Yitzchak Shilat p. 25)

8. Leader

The Struggle Against Missionaries

Our Rabbi waged war against the missionaries. He was a leader of the struggle and the headquarters was centered in his house. Everyone in the country knew that the most attentive ear was found with him, and he urged activity, obviously in conjunction with others.

A Christian missionary from Tiveria would come regularly, and our Rabbi would have him as a guest in his house. The students told him that they could not tolerate him, but our Rabbi sacrificed himself for this cause (by inviting him), because this missionary, out of friendship, would relate to him all of the missionaries' information. Our Rabbi would pass this information on to "Chever Ha-Pe'ilim" (an organization to protect against missionaries), and as a result many people were saved.

A protest against the missionaries was organized by one of the prize students of the Yeshiva. The protest was illegal, and the protesters were arrested. The next morning our Rabbi's voice thundered against the organizer: "In my

darkest dream, I never dreamed about violating the law." After the verdict, the students decided not to pay the fine and to be incarcerated. They were imprisoned in the Damon Jail on Mount Carmel. Our Rabbi went to visit them and upon entering the cafeteria – after everyone calmed down - he said: "One who sees houses of Israel in their inhabited state says: Blessed is the One who establishes the widow's boundary." He generally recited this blessing immediately upon arrival at a new community but when there was the possibility of "publicizing the miracle" [in a multitude of people] he delayed the blessing. This time, he said: "My visit to this place is not because of joyous circumstances, but we must remember that even a jail is an expression of the sovereignty of the Nation of Israel over its Land." And he continued with the words of the Gemara in Berachot (58b): "One who sees houses of Israel in their inhabited state..." and recited the blessing with Hashem's Name and Kingship: "Blessed are you...who establishes the widow's boundary." (Gadol Shimusha p. 38 #1)

A student related: "During one of the years when the production of Handel's "Messiah" (a Christian creation) was playing in concert in 'Binyanei Ha-Umah' (a building in Yerushalayim which hosts gatherings, shows, conferences, etc...), our Rabbi tried to have the concert canceled [largely because it was being held in a public building]. Our Rabbi requested that I go with him to the house of Ha-Rav David Cohain – Ha-Nazir - since there was a telephone there, and connect him to Chaim Moshe Shapira and Yosef Burg, who

were members of the Knesset from the National Religious Party. Our Rabbi asked them to work to cancel the concert, and their answer was that it is impossible to cancel this event. Our Rabbi was not satisfied and was concerned enough to send students who would disrupt the concert, and this is what indeed happened. After the concert-goers dispersed, however, the protesters from the Yeshiva and the police officers remained in the hall. The officers asked the protesters to leave the hall: 'The show is over.' But one of the students arose and lectured them about the grave act which occurred in this building and they therefore would not leave the building. When the officers' patience ran out, they took three of the Yeshiva students to prison, and this caused the rest of them to leave the place. The next day they turned to our Rabbi and asked him to work to free those who were incarcerated. The answer of our Rabbi was: 'I do not understand why they did not disperse according to the police's request after the concert ended, since we are not protesting against the police officers!'"

Our Rabbi praised the students who staged a protest at the time of the concert of "Messiah" and particularly the student who jumped onto the stage and told those attending how terrible this event was. He related that the police commander told him afterwards: "Your young men are gold, and the one who got up on the stage deserves a medal."

Hebrew Date

"I received your letter with a date which I do not know or understand, since I am unfamiliar with the counting of time from the year of the birth of 'that sinner of Israel whom the non-Jews made into idol worship' [the words of my father, my teacher and my Rabbi, Ha-Rav Kook ztz"l in 'Igot'], who practiced sorcery, enticed and led Israel astray (Sanhedrin 107), who caused Israel to be destroyed by the sword and its remnants scattered in humiliation, who exchanged the Torah and deceived the majority of the world to serve a god other than Hashem (Rambam, Hilchot Melachim chap. 11)" (Igot Rabbenu from 24 Adar Rishon 5727).

Our Rabbi was particular that one should not write the Christian date, and when he was invited to a wedding and the Christian date appeared on the invitation, he would not attend the wedding (Gadol Shimusha p. 91 #31).

A Rabbi of a community outside of Israel visited our Rabbi, and during the conversation our Rabbi asked about the date of a particular event. The guest answered with the date according to their count. Our Rabbi said: "Excuse me, I did not hear." He raised his voice and repeated his words. Our Rabbi again said to him: "I did not hear," and again a third time. On the fourth time the guest understood what our Rabbi did not hear, and he told him the Hebrew date. Our Rabbi heard and smiled, and the guest apologized.

Our Rabbi agreed to participate in an important ceremony

on behalf of the Municipality of Jerusalem, but when he saw that only the Christian date and not the Hebrew date was on the announcement, he refused to attend, and all of the attempts to persuade him did not help.

When the ruling of Rav Ovadiah Yosef that there is no prohibition in using the Christian date and those who use it have what to rely on (Shut Yabia Omer vol. 3 Yoreh Deah #9) was publicized, our Rabbi expressed deep pain (see Le-Netivot Yisrael vol. 2 p. 239. From Shut Sheilat Shlomo 3:14).

He was amazed every time he saw a stamp on a letter in Israel which was marked with the date from the Creation of the World (Gadol Shimusha pg. 93 #34).

A student once read a printed sentence "the seventeenth century" and added: "May they be blotted out," and it got a good laugh from our Rabbi (Iturei Cohanim #242 in the name of Ha-Rav Menachem Ha-Cohain).

Protest Over Autopsies

Our Rabbi related that Maran Ha-Rav Kook once heard they were planning an autopsy, a violation of Halachah, on a woman who was alone when she died. He called the hospital and said: "This is the Chief Rabbi of Israel, I am a

Cohain. It is forbidden for a Cohain to become impure by coming in contact with a corpse, but if need be, I will come and become impure for a 'met Mitzvah'" (burying a corpse which does not have anyone to bury it, which even a Cohain is obligated to do. He was suggesting that, if necessary, he himself would come to bury the body, rather than allow it to be desecrated).

Herzl

Our Rabbi was well known for his declaration that the majority of the world's Torah giants did not oppose Zionism. Once, one of the students at the Yeshiva said that he would not dare make such a statement in the vicinity of the Holy Ark. The student's words made their way to the ears of the Rabbi. Rabbi Tzvi Yehudah immediately ran to the Yeshiva, opened up the Holy Ark containing the Torah Scrolls and said, "Whoever says that the majority of Torah giants opposed Zionism is a liar. The truth should be told that Zionism was a new movement, and most of the leading Rabbis were uncertain as to how to relate to it. Most of those who did take a stand were actually in favor of Zionism. Only two Rabbis opposed it: Rabbi Chaim of Brisk and Rabbi David Friedman." I asked the Rabbi: "Why did they oppose?" He replied, "Were there not sufficient reasons for opposing?"

Our Rabbi related that when he was learning in Yeshivat Torat Chaim (in the place where Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim is now located, and where generations of

Rabbinic leaders, such as Jerusalem's Chief Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank, Ha-Rav Aryeh Levin and Ha-Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv learned), Ha-Rav Yitzchak Nissenbaum, who was the secretary and right-hand man of Ha-Rav Mohiliver (one of the founders of the Religious-Zionist movement called "Chibat Tzion") and famous for his Derashot, was invited to give the Derashah one Shabbat. This fact testifies to the position of the Rosh Ha-Yeshiva, Ha-Rav Yitzchak Winograd: He did not fear the zealots of Jerusalem at that time and he invited a well-known Religious-Zionist figure to give a Derashah in the Yeshiva. Hundreds of people, include many wearing shtreimels, filled the Yeshiva and listened to the gifted speaker. When he began discussing the foundations of Religious-Zionism, a screaming voice interrupted his words: "Is that what Herzl also says?" This caused a commotion among the listeners. Rav Winograd ascended the Bima, silenced the crowd, expressed his dismay and demanded that the brazen person be removed. Rav Nissenbaum adds in his book "Alai Chaldi" that he saw arms lifting the man above the crowd and taking him out through the window. At Seudah Shelishit, Rav Winograd told him that one of the zealots had come to him on Friday demanding that he not allow a talk about impure Zionism in the holy Yeshiva. Rav Winograd responded that the Yeshiva was his and anyone who disturbs the talk would be paid back in kind. He then hired two guards for the Yeshiva who stood near the window for the proper moment. When the brazen man began to yell, the young people next

to him grabbed his arms and legs and lifted him up to the guards. His comrades were shocked and did not dare to create a disturbance.

It is well known that along with pictures of the Netziv, the Aderet, Maran Ha-Rav Kook and others, our Rabbi had a picture of Herzl hanging in his home.

Three stories about the picture:

Rav Avraham Romer related: "The picture of Herzl once disappeared from our Rabbi's house and there was a suspicion that one of the students wanted 'to teach him a lesson.' When I suggested that perhaps the picture fell behind the desk, he permitted me to look there. When I found the picture, he was extremely happy and saw a need to comfort me because he saw that I had been distressed. He told me wondrous stories about Herzl and his position. He repeated the opinion of Reb Aharon Marcus z"l who said that Herzl was a descendant of Mahari Titzak (a famous Rabbi) and was from a Sefardic family. (Gadol Shimusha, p. 54)

When a particular Jew from the neighborhood of Geulah would come to our Rabbi's house, he would flip over the picture of Herzl. Our Rabbi once caught him in the act and asked him: Why are you doing this? Doesn't he have all five corners of his beard [which may not be shaved according to the Torah]?! (Iturei Cohanim #212)

A student of our Rabbi saw Herzl's picture hanging in the room where our Rabbi taught classes in his house, and it was hanging among the pictures of our great Rabbis. He asked for an explanation and our Rabbi gave an entire class on the fact that Herzl was the agent of the Master of the Universe in returning independence to Israel in this generation whether we like it or not (ibid.).

Our Rabbi encouraged one of his students who was a baal teshuvah (a Jew who returned to being observant) to read Herzl's diaries. (Iturei Yerushalayim #6)

Herzliyah (a city on the coast of Israel named after Herzl)

When the Yemenite Chief Rabbi of Herzliyah was installed, our Rabbi said: Secular Zionism marches with Herzl, and we march with Herzl and Herzliyah (Herzl plus "Kah" – one of Hashem's Names). (Iturei Yerushalayim #6)

With the Leaders of the State

"...Just as one who vilifies the Army of Israel is like one who vilifies the Armies of the Living God (Shmuel 1 17:26), so too one who vilifies the Kingship (the legal ruling authority) of Israel is like one who vilifies the Kingdom of Hashem. This honor may not be waived (Kiddushin 32b). According to the words of our Sages (Jerusalem Talmud, Yevamot chap. 16), even Aviyah, King of Yehudah, was punished by

Hashem on account of his vilifying the Kingship in public - in the military campaign against Yerovam ben Navat, King of Israel. And Eliyahu the Prophet acted in a respectful manner – in the midst of his words of harsh rebuke - to Achav, King of Israel, and based on this our Sages established (Menachot 98a) the obligation for all people throughout the generations to act in this manner..." (Le-Netivot Yisrael vol. 2, p. 238 [in the edition of Mei-Avnei Ha-Makom vol. 2, p. 562]).

"From the first verse of the Haftorah (of Parashat Pinchas - Melachim 1 18:46), we learn the value of the Kingship of Israel and our relationship to it. 'And the hand of Hashem was upon Eliyahu, so he girded his loins and ran before Achav until the approach of Yizre'el.' Our Sages learned from here: 'The fear of the Kingship should always be upon you' (Zevachim 102a and Menachot 98a). It is known to us how strained was the relationship between Eliyahu the Prophet and Achav, to the extent that Achav referred to Eliyahu with the term 'troublemaker of Israel' (Melachim 1 18:17), and Eliyahu responded: 'I have not troubled Israel; but you, and your father's house' (ibid. 18). Nonetheless, the hand of Hashem was on [Eliyahu] to take him to the King, and [Eliyahu] arranged his clothes and pants in a manner to enable him to run quickly before Achav. Achav was worse than Yerovam ben Navat. Ostensibly, Eliyahu should have purposefully disregarded a horrible and dreadful king like Achav and not come to him. >From this,

we learn a lesson for all generations regarding the respect due to the Kingship" (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah - Bemidbar, p. 390).

Rabbi Yochanan learned from Eliyahu's relationship with Achav, about whom it was said: "But there was none like Achav, who gave himself over to perform wickedness in the sight of Hashem, because Izevel, his wife, incited him" (Melachim 1 21:25), about the relationship to the Kingship: On the one hand is criticism, even extremely harsh, and on the other hand is granting honor. Our Rabbi acted this way. Our Rabbi spoke at great length about the issue of giving honor to the Kingship, but he did not refrain from sharply criticizing the Government at the required time, regardless of the political spectrum to which it belonged.

Our Rabbi would rebel if someone defined him as a "right-winger." He did not see himself as affiliated to the right or the left. Political alignment did not have any meaning to him. His world views did not flow from the political situation in the slightest way; rather they were the Torah's world views. As a result, he had specific world views relating to the Land of Israel, the Kingship of Israel and the Government of Israel. He was not affiliated with the left, but according to the Torah's point of view, he supported specific socialist aims which characterized the left circles. He was not affiliated with a specific party, but saw himself above the parties. He nevertheless voted in elections, not out of a party affi-

ation, but out of the thought that in the given situation, this act could help the Nation of Israel.

It once happened that a Rabbi said: "We achieved this [particular] religious law with the help of dirty politics. Our Rabbi commented: "These politics are the politics of the Master of the Universe."

David Ben Gurion

Our Rabbi spoke sharply against David Ben Gurion for boasting that he lived with a woman without having performed the customary Jewish matrimonial procedures of Chuppah and Kiddushin. Our Rabbi explained that as long as Ben Gurion was the Prime Minister he did not speak out against him; he was bound by the Torah obligation to honor the kingship. Only after he left his position did the Rabbi permit himself to say such things.

When our Rabbi was asked if one should stand for the siren at the time of the death of Ben Gurion, he responded: "This is connected to the State, and the State is the fulfillment of a positive commandment, one should therefore stand. Even though Ben Gurion was a heretic, he nonetheless has the merit of developing the Negev."

Our Rabbi would speak out with great force against deficiencies in the State of Israel, but this did not limit his

love towards it. When people claimed that Prime Minister Ben Gurion permitted raising pigs in Israel, our Rabbi responded: I don't want Ben Gurion's pigs, but I love the State of Israel of which Ben Gurion is the head (Iturei Yerushalayim #65).

When Ben Gurion celebrated his eightieth birthday, everyone sent delegations to Sedei Boker (where he lived in the Negev) to bless him. When Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Shragai visited our Rabbi in his Sukkah, our Rabbi harshly criticized Mafdal (religious-Zionist political party) for also sending a delegation: "As long as he was the Prime Minister, we were obligated to honor him. Now – Baruch Hashem – we are free from him, and we have better Prime Ministers than him." Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Shragai said to him: "Ha-Rav, one should not speak badly about the Nation of Israel in the Sukkah." But our Rabbi repeated his words.

Golda Meir

An important Rabbi spoke with our Rabbi about the Prime Minister, Mrs. Golda Meir. Our Rabbi was silent and did not answer. But when he departed, our Rabbi said emotionally: "I cannot speak about the Prime Minister this way, the Prime Minister of Israel is an angel of G-d to me."

Dr. Zerach Warhaftig

Our Rabbi had strong criticism for the Minister of Religious Affairs, Dr. Zerach Warhaftig z"l, because he did not prevent the lectures of a certain philosopher at Bar Ilan University, and he did not relate to all of our Rabbi's critiques during their discussion. They needed to meet over a particular matter, and Dr. Warhaftig informed our Rabbi that he would come to his house. Our Rabbi wore his holiday clothing, and stood outside out of excitement, so that the guest would not have to knock on the door, rather our Rabbi would greet him and escort him inside. He said: "All of this is on account of the fact that he is a minister in the Government of Israel, and it is an obligation to treat him with the honor of the State. Furthermore, criticism of his positions does not nullify the honor of the State."

Chaim Moshe Shapira

So too did he relate to the Minister Chaim Moshe Shapira z"l, even though he had strong criticism of him over a particular issue. He treated him with honor in all places and at all times, and referred to him as "Our Interior Minister."

Michael Chazani

When the Minister Michael Chazani came to visit our Rabbi, our Rabbi illuminated all of the lights, as he did to honor

Shabbat. The students asked him: "Why?" He responded: "A Minister of Israel."

Moshe Dayan

On the Yom Yerushalayim after the Six-Day War, the Yeshiva planned a festive gathering and they sent invitations to various governmental ministers and important figures. A positive response was received from the Minister Moshe Dayan. Our Rabbi was extremely excited, despite the sharp public criticism he had for Moshe Dayan, and he blessed and praised him.

At that gathering, Moshe Dayan delivered a Dvar Torah in the Yeshiva and said that our forefather Yaakov was wounded by the angel, but in the morning the sun shone for him, and he added: "Even when there are those wounded in the war and even when there are casualties of the battles - the vision and the hope remain." Our Rabbi kissed him and said: "We hope that our Moshele will enter the Government soon." And it happened. Of course, our Rabbi did not agree with all of what Moshe Dayan did, but he greatly valued his cunning, truth and self-sacrifice.

Menachem Begin

Our Rabbi was once in the hospital, and he lay there and did not respond. Students tried to engage him in conversa-

tion, but our Rabbi did not answer. An announcement arrived that the Prime Minister, Mr. Menachem Begin, needed to see him. The students were concerned about what would happen; perhaps our Rabbi would be embarrassed because of his condition. The nurse came to perform a treatment for him, and our Rabbi awoke and said: "Perhaps later," because he did not want the Prime Minister to arrive in the middle of the treatment. He strengthened himself, sat on the bed and requested a towel. When the Prime Minister arrived, our Rabbi became completely alert, and everyone was amazed. Our Rabbi said: "Perhaps it is possible for just the two of us to be together?" Everyone left. At the end of the conversation, Mr. Begin said: "Jerusalem, mountains surround her, and Hashem surrounds His Nation" (Tehillim 125:2). This appears to have been the depth of the content of their conversation.

Tzahal - Israel Defense Force

Our Rabbi related: "A student of our Yeshiva approached me. I said to him: 'At first I did not recognize you.' He was wearing the army uniform. You know that I relate to this uniform in holiness. A lovely and precious man, full of G-d-fearing and holiness was approaching, and he was wearing an army uniform. At that occurrence I mentioned what I said at one wedding [of Ha-Rav Shear Yashuv Cohain], when the groom came dressed in an army uniform. There were some who were pointing out that it is in-

appropriate for a groom to stand under the chuppah with an army uniform. In Yerushalayim, the Holy City, it was customary that they came with Shabbat clothing, holy clothing, like a shtreimel. I will tell you the truth. The holiness of the shtreimel - I do not know if it is one hundred percent clear. It was made holy after the fact. Many righteous and holy Geonim (great Rabbis) certainly wore it. There is certainly so much trembling of holiness before them, and we are dirt under the soles of their feet, and on account of this fact, the shtreimel was made holy. Also Yiddish, the language of Exile, was made holy because of its great use in words of holiness. But from the outset - it is not so certain. In comparison, the holiness of the army uniform in Israel is fundamental, essentially holiness. This is the holiness of accessories of a Mitzvah, from every perspective, of all of the tanks, the holiness of our tanks will appear tomorrow [in the military parade of Yom Ha-Atzmaut]." (Sichot Rabbenu, Yom Ha-Atzmaut 5727, Mizmor 19 of Medinat Yisrael, p. 76 #11).

It once happened that our Rabbi sat next to a taxi driver who was wearing a Tzahal uniform, and our Rabbi was tapping on his leg during the entire trip. Before he got out the driver turned in surprise to the student who was escorting Ha-Rav and asked why the Rabbi was acting this way. The student responded that this was on account of our Rabbi's great love of the holy Tzahal uniform.

Our Rabbi was teaching a class, and a student who was on

leave from the army was standing next to him. During the entire time, our Rabbi rested his hand on the student's arm. At the end of the class, another student asked about this. Our Rabbi explained: "It is simple. He was wearing a Tzahal uniform and I was touching holiness the entire time." (Ha-Rav Yehoshua Zuckerman – Iturei Yerushalayim #6)

Our Rabbi's love of the Israel Defense Force and the holy soldiers of the Army was unique, and his students who were in the Army therefore loved to visit their Rabbi when they were in their army uniform in order to give him contentment. The blessing of our holy Rabbi to all of his students, before their departure to the Army, was pleasing and sweet. It once happened that a student came to our Rabbi on the day he was drafted into the Army at an early morning hour. The student who was helping Ha-Rav on that day got up and informed him that there was a student of the Yeshiva who came to receive his blessing before his draft. Our Rabbi got up with incredible zeal and with unlimited joy, recited the morning blessings, quickly drank the cup of tea which he was accustomed to do each morning in order to fulfill the Mitzvah of honoring his father who instructed him to do this, and then the young man entered the room... Ha-Rav kissed, blessed, and encouraged him, and even left his house to escort him. Our Rabbi said that he must always place before his eyes the verse from Divrei Ha-Yamim (2 36:23): "Whoever is among you of all His people - Hashem his G-d be with him, and let him go up!" (Kinyan Torah of Ha-Rav Yosef Elnakveh, 2, pp. 73-74)

Generally, in similar situations, our Rabbi would quote the verse (Divrei Ha-Yamim 2 35:3), "Serve Hashem, your G-d, and Israel, His Nation."

A reporter asked our Rabbi: "If the honorable Rav teaches that the Israel Defense Force is holy, he should close the Yeshiva and not postpone the army service of the students." Our Rabbi responded: "The Army - holy; the Torah - holy of holies."

After the Six-Day War, there was a meeting between government officials and the head of Yeshivot. Representing the government and army was Moshe Dayan, and representing the yeshivot were our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Yechezkel Abramsky and Ha-Rav Chaim Yaakov Goldvicht. When Moshe Dayan asked why Yeshiva students are exempt from the army while other youths fight and die to protect the country, our Rabbi responded that he rejects the term "exempt." His students are not exempt from the army but delay their entry for a few years to solidify their Torah education before going out to defend their country. Our Rabbi advocated juggling these two imperatives -- Torah study and army service -- by first solidifying one's Torah accomplishments and only then serving in the army. (Sidrei Tzava Vi-Yeshiva #4, Sefer Am Ve-Artzo vol. 2 pp. 523-531)

It once happened that Jews went to pray at the Cave of Machpelah and waved the Israeli flag there in defiance of

the orders of the Army and the Border Police. An argument broke out between them, and one side pulled the flag in one direction and the other side pulled in the other direction, until it ripped. When the matter was brought to the attention of our Rabbi, he said that placing the Army and the Police, who are our friends, in such an incredibly unpleasant situation of having to take the flag from Jews is more treif than pig.

When Tzahal blew up the Nuclear Reactor in Iraq in the year 5741, our Rabbi said in a voice trembling from excitement: "Did you hear! All of the non-Jews are shaking and scared from what the Jews did. Did you hear! Did you hear!" And he could not calm down. At that moment, a pregnant woman came in and requested a blessing for an easy pregnancy. Our Rabbi warmly blessed her, and then returned to saying: "Did you hear! Did you hear!" Klal u-ferat u-klal – the community, the individual, the community. (From Efrat Bedichi)

Rav Shear Yashuv Cohain, son of the Nazir and Rav of Haifa, related that during the War of Independence, there was a major dispute between Rabbis – including within Yeshivat Mercaz Ha-Rav – over whether Yeshiva students should be drafted into the military. The students followed the path of our Rabbi and the Nazir and were active in the Haganah, Etzel and Lechi. During the waiting period, after the UN votes and before the end of the British Mandate, Rav Shear Yashuv would learn in the Yeshiva. One day he

left the Yeshiva and saw a broadside with the huge title that Maran Ha-Rav Kook opposed drafting Yeshiva students into the army, and it included harsh quotes from one of his letters regarding this issue. He was unsure what to do, and continued on, deep in thought, when he bumped into our Rabbi. Our Rabbi, who recognized his state, said: "Shear Yashuv, what happened? Why are you so upset and pale?" He told him what happened and pointed to the broadside. Our Rabbi roared: "This is a distortion! This is a total distortion!" over and over.

After he calmed down, he explained that these quotes were taken from a letter of Maran Ha-Rav Kook to Rav Dr. Hertz, Chief Rabbi of England, regarding being drafted into the British army, which the latter presented to the government. Yeshiva students who arrived in London from Russia and Poland as refugees of World War I and were learning Torah were left off the list of those exempt from military service (for example, priests, who were exempted). Maran Ha-Rav Kook admonished him, and said that this has nothing to do with the war for Jerusalem (*Igrot Ha-Re'eyah* vol. 3, letter #810). Rav Shear Yashuv encouraged and aided our Rabbi to publish a booklet clarifying this issue (see *Le-Hilchot Tzibur* #1).

During the difficult battle for the Old City in Jerusalem, the Jewish community was defeated and Rav Shear Yashuv, who was badly wounded on his leg, and the surviving fighters were taken into Jordanian captivity. He thus did not

merit seeing the publication of the booklet he initiated. After approximately eight months and the establishment of the State, Rav Shear Yashuv was released and taken to Zichron Yaakov for rehabilitation. Within a day, at a time when buses were rare, our Rabbi appeared outside his window. He entered the room, hugged and kissed him and burst out crying. He removed a small booklet from his pocket and gave it to him. It was the first booklet printed dedicated to Rav Shear Yashuv (The booklet was printed in Le-Netivot Yisrael vol. 1 #23).

Reading the Newspaper

When our Rabbi returned from prayers he would spread out the newspaper "Ha-Tzofeh" in front of him and say: "Let's see what the Holy One, Blessed be He, is doing with us today."

When a student asked our Rabbi if he should read the newspaper, our Rabbi responded that he should not. The student said: "But isn't this the Yeshiva of Klal Yisrael [the entirety of Israel] and we need to know what is happening in the Nation?" Our Rabbi responded: "When you are a Torah giant of Klal Yisrael then you can read the newspaper."

During a class, our Rabbi was furious because of a particular

incident in the country, and he saw that a Torah scholar, who was one of his students, did not understand why. Our Rabbi asked him: "You do not know what is being discussed?" The student responded: "I do not read newspapers and do not listen to the media." Our Rabbi said with discontent and surprise: "Am I the only one who needs to be idle from Torah?"

9. Eretz Yisrael - The Land of Israel

When the school "Morashah" was established, our Rabbi instructed them to begin the young students with Parashat Lech Lecha with Avraham Avinu, the father of our Nation, and his connection with the Land of Israel. (From Ha-Rav Chaim Steiner)

A student introduced himself as an "American". Our Rabbi pointed out that he is not an American, since America is not our Land. Rather he should say: A Jew from the Exile of America (Iturei Yerushalayim #64).

During Birchat Ha-Mazon, our Rabbi would emphasize: "And build Yerushalayim, the holy city, speedily in our days." (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)

Our Rabbi would not recite "Al Naharot Bavel" but rather "Shir Ha-Ma'alot" at each meal, as a result of our return to our Land (although "Al Naharot Bavel" and when it is recited appears in Siddur Olat Ha-Re'eiyah vol. 1, p. 360 – A siddur with Maran Ha-Rav Kook's commentary which our Rabbi arranged and annotated). (Iturei Yerushalayim #26)

Our Rabbi used to say that the unique quality of the Land

of Israel is that it has the power to transform reality, turn bad to good, impure to pure, forbidden to permissible. The Torah (Shemot 3:8) describes our land as a "Land Flowing with Milk and Honey." Milk, note the sages, should have been forbidden by the Torah, given the fact that it is extracted from a creature - a cow - while the animal is still alive. Nevertheless, the matter was discussed in Tractate Bechorot (6b), and the sages eventually permitted the drinking of milk based on the verse that states that the Land of Israel "flows with milk and honey." If the Torah praised the Land as being a place flowing with milk and honey, they reasoned, it is hard to imagine that these very products would be forbidden to consume! Although the honey cited by the Torah is a specific reference to date honey, it certainly also refers to honey produced by bees. At first blush, bee honey, too, should have been forbidden by the Torah - since it originates in the body of a live insect. Here, too, our Sages conclude, however, that the special verse sanctions the consumption of this product. Milk and honey—two products that Eretz Yisrael is famous for—are symbolic, then, of the unique power of our land to sometimes overturn or transform previously existing realities.

Our Rabbi would eat the fruits of the Land of Israel with great pleasure and would mention the words of the Bach (Orach Chaim 208 – that the fruit of the Land of Israel is imbued with the Divine presence). (Ha-Rav Tzefaniyah Derori).

Our Rabbi did not accept the abbreviated formula of the Chazon Ish for separating Terumot and Ma'asrot, since Ha-Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank and his Beit Din disagreed (because it does not specify the location of the tithes). The shortened formula was printed in our Rabbi's siddur, and he wrote on the side that it should not be used. He also wrote this in communal siddurim. He once did this in a small shul in Meah Shearim, and someone asked him: Whose permission do you have to write in the shul's siddurim? He responded: I am an agent of the Beit Din. (Ha-Rav Eliyahu Mali)

When a student asked our Rabbi which is the preferred profession, he said "agriculture" without hesitation.

He saw agriculture and the mitzvot dependent on the Land as the central elements in the Mitzvah of settling the Land. He often participated in planting trees on Tu Bishvat. (Ha-Rav Yosef Bramson)

A group of religious Kibbutzim in the Beit Shean Valley (northern Israel) wanted to fulfill the mitzvot dependent on the Land, because without them it marred the feeling of settling the Land of Israel. They asked our Rabbi, and he responded: Ha-Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank already ruled that the Beit Shean Valley is exempt from the mitzvot dependent on the Land (since it is not within the territory to which Jews returned after the Babylonian Exile). If you want to obligate

yourself, it must be with the understanding that you are exempt. In the future, however, there will be an obligation in the entire Land of Israel.

Our Rabbi was once asked: Is it permissible to travel to Eilat for a trip (since some authorities state that it was not settled and sanctified by the Jews who returned from the Babylonian Exile)? He responded that there are different levels of holiness in the Land, and even if Eilat was not sanctified by the Jews who returned from the Babylonian Exile, it still contains holiness. He also added that such a trip would encourage and strengthen the place and its residents. It is therefore permissible, although there is reason for Cohanim to be strict (since outside of Israel is considered impure). Our Rabbi was asked about the Torah scholars who only escorted their colleagues until Acco (and not beyond since north of Acco was also not settled by the Jews returning from Babylonia – Gittin 76b). He responded that this was a stringency which they took upon themselves. (Ha-Rav Avraham Yitzchak Neriya in the book "Afik Ba-Negev," p. 233 – Iturei Cohanim #83).

Cohanim and Kivrei Tzaddikim

Our Rabbi told the following story about Maran Ha-Rav Kook (Le-Shelosh Ba-Elul vol.1 #76), that during his travels to oversee Jewish matters in the Galil, he did not visit Kivrei Tzaddikim when he was in Tzefat, because he was a

Cohain. Ha-Rav Mordechai Eliyahu wrote (Parashah Sheet "Kol Tzofa'ich #279), "In his time, I told Ha-Rav Ha-Gaon Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook, peace be upon him, that it is written in the book 'Kuntres Yechi'eli' that it is permissible for Cohanim to enter Kever Rachel. He asked me: What do they say there? I said that they read the verses about our mother Rachel there. He traveled there, but only went as far as the door. When he returned, I asked him: Why didn't you enter? He answered: My father did not enter, therefore I did not enter." In the book Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah - Eretz Yisrael (p. 142, note 1), it relates that after the Six-Day War, the students of our Rabbi organized a trip to the liberated areas in the Shomron. One of the places they visited was Kever Yosef. The students entered, but our Rabbi remained outside, because he was a Cohain. And on Maran Ha-Rav Kook's yahrtzeit, our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, would visit his grave on the Mount of Olives, but would stand at a distance since he was a Cohain (Be-Derech Ha-Torah Ha-Goelet, p. 170).

[In Iturei Cohanim (Sivan 5766 #261), Rav Aviner was asked, Is it permissible for a Cohain to enter Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah? He answered that there is a dispute, but Maran Ha-Rav Kook did not enter. In Shut She'eilat Shlomo (vol. 3 #329), Rav Aviner also writes that although there are authorities who permit Cohanim to enter "Kivrei Tzaddikim," since the righteous are called "living even in their death," the accepted halachah is that it is forbidden. There are also authorities who allow Cohanim to visit Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah

and Kever Rachel, because they were built in a way that the Cohanim would not become impure; but the acceptable halachah for this is also that it is forbidden. Therefore, we say that Cohanim should not enter "Kivrei Tzaddikim," but we can defend the practice of those who act in this way, especially entering Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah and Kever Rachel (note: Rav Aviner – who is also a Cohain – has not visited and does not visit any of the "Kivrei Tzaddikim") – M.T.]

Learning from the Secular

There was once a meeting on one of the secular Kibbutzim between the Kibbutzniks and some Yeshiva students. One of the Kibbutzniks asked what the “Religious” can learn from the “Secular.” The students did not respond. When this was related to our Rabbi, he said: There is certainly what to learn from the “Secular”: courage, self-sacrifice, settling the Land of Israel, etc. (Amnon Bardat from Ha-Rav Oded Valensky – Iturei Cohanim #57).

The Struggle over the Land of Israel

Our Rabbi related that he heard from Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Menachem Mendel Kashar, ztz"l (author of "Torah Sheleimah" and Shut Divrei Menachem), that during the period that the British Government was deliberating the Balfour Declaration, to give the Jewish Nation a national home-

land, the Jewish world was raging. Besides the wealthy British aristocracy who were opposed to it, there were some other small groups. Some of the public figures of Agudat Yisrael organized a gathering in Vienna whose purpose was to prepare a document to send to the British Government which said: "We pass on your favors." At the head of the gathering were the great authorities Rav Yosef Engel, ztz"l, Rav Meir Arik, ztz"l, and one other great Rabbi. They saw that the three Rabbis were whispering between themselves regarding the contents of the suggested document, and Rav Engel suddenly stood up and announced: "The hand which signs should be cut off!" With this, the gathering ended. (Ha-Rav Yitzchak Dadon in the book "Nishkafah Kemo Shachar," pp. 29-30 – Iturei Yerushalayim #6)

Even after the end of the War of Independence, our Rabbi continued to recite the Psalms which were fixed by the Chief Rabbinate in light of the war (Tehillim 2, 35, 46, 83). Our Rabbi seemingly held that we are in an overall period of war and there is only a temporary lull. (Ha-Rav Tzvi Tau – Iturei Yerushalayim #6)

After the Six-Day War, a document turned up that was attributed to the great Halachist and Kabbalist Rabbi Eliezer Rokeach of Worms, wherein it was written that if three hundred Cohanim were to circle the Mount of Olives, peace would be ensured. A Jerusalemite family publicized this document and began to organize a mass "priestly blessing" ceremony by the Wailing Wall. We asked Rabbi Tzvi Yehudah

what he thought of all this. He referred us to the Chief Rabbinate. Later he told us that, as important as he was, Rabbi Eliezer Rokeach of Worms himself understood that the formulas for protection mentioned in the Talmud carry greater weight than that mentioned in the document; the Talmud teaches us that the soldiers of Achav were victorious in battle because they refrained from verbally slandering one another.

When our Rabbi was asked his opinion regarding the involvement of Rabbis in politics, he answered as follows: "Rabbis are obligated by the Torah to involve themselves in politics, and if they refrain from doing so they are guilty of betrayal. It is written in the Torah: 'Do not fear any man!'" Once when, as a result of the words of our Rabbi, a public commotion arose and many claimed that Rabbis should not deal in politics, our Rabbi responded: "I am not asking anybody's permission. I am obligated by the Torah to proclaim and publicize that which is just and true. The political issues of the Community of Israel are themselves Torah. They are sacred."

After the Yom Kippur War, during the time of "The War of Generals," our Rabbi warned Arik Sharon about guarding his tongue (Iturei Cohanim Elul 5766 #264, p. 48 in name of Rabbi Yitzchak Shilat).

After the terrorist attack at the Hotel Savoy in Tel Aviv in 5735 in which 8 hostages and 3 soldiers were killed, one of

the terrorists was sentenced to death (although the verdict was never carried out). Our Rabbi was asked by one of the executioners: What is the opinion of the Torah of this verdict? He responded: The Torah states, "If one comes to kill you, kill him first." A person who pursues another to kill him, the Torah states, "Save the blood of this one with the blood of that one" (Sanhedrin 72b). "And cursed be he who keeps back his sword from blood" (Yirmiyahu 48:10). And if when an individual comes to kill another individual this is so, how much more so when a community comes to kill a community, and to terrorize the reality of our lives in the Land of our revival. "Because they did not come to help Hashem against the mighty men...but let them that love Him be as the sun when it comes out in its might" (Shoftim 5:23, 31) (Sefer Le-Hilchot Tzibur #98).

During the Sinai War and before it, the Chief Rabbinate of Israel directed people to recite specific Tehillim. After the victory, the students in the Yeshiva ceased reciting them. After the army's retreat from the Sinai, our Rabbi yelled: "Stopping the recitation of Tehillim in the Central Universal Yeshiva was part of the weakness which caused the retreat!" (Iturei Cohanim #35)

Rav Yitzchak Hutner – former Rosh Yeshiva of Rabbi Chaim Berlin in New York – once visited our Rabbi in Israel. Our Rabbi asked him which airline he was flying. Rav Hutner mentioned the name of a foreign airline. Our Rabbi pressed him: "You need to fly El Al." Rav Hutner responded that ter-

rorists were beginning to hijack planes and he was therefore concerned about flying an Israeli airline. Our Rabbi stood firm. In the end, the plane on which Rav Hutner flew was hijacked to Jordan, and was released only after negotiations with the terrorists. (Iturei Cohanim #176)

Our Rabbi was asked whether the victory of the Israel soccer team over the Russian soccer team was a "Kiddush Hashem – sanctification of Hashem's Name." He replied: To a very limited extent. (Ha-Rav Eliyahu Mali)

After a large protest in Tel Aviv in favor of withdrawing from parts of the Land of Israel after the Camp David talks, our Rabbi said: "The Nation is not with us." One of our Rabbi's students said: "We will continue to establish settlements and through this we will cause enthusiasm among the Nation for the Land of Israel." Our Rabbi lowered his hand in a movement of disregarding this idea. (Ha-Rav Yaakov Filber – Iturei Yerushalayim #6)

The Famous Speech – "Mizmor Yud Tet"

Each year on Yom Ha-Atzmaut, our Rabbi delivered a speech discussing the year of the State of Israel and the corresponding number Psalm. On the Yom Ha-Atzmaut before the Six-Day War (three weeks earlier), our Rabbi delivered his nearly prophetic speech "Mizmor Yud Tet" (Psalm 19). Who could have imagined that three weeks later, Israel

would return to the Sinai, the Golan, Yehudah, Shomron and the entire city of Yerushalayim?!

Nineteen years ago, on the first night when news of the decision of the non-Jews [the United Nations' vote in favor of the establishment of Jewish sovereignty in part of the Land of Israel - 17 Kislev 5708 - Nov. 29, 1947] reached us I was unable to go out to the rejoicing on Yafo Street and throughout the surrounding areas of Yerushalayim. There is no need to tell how all of us are connected. I am bound with a holy connection, a connection of holiness, of life and of soul, to the State, but I could not participate in the rejoicing at these hours [our Rabbi cried when he said this sentence]. I sat alone and silent, a burden lay upon me. During those first hours, I could not resign myself to what had been done with the words of Hashem in the prophecy "They divided My Land" (Yoel 4:2). It was not possible for me with all of my 248 limbs and 365 sinews, with all of my soul, my spirit and my being, to go out – "They divided My Land!" Where is our Hevron - have we forgotten her?! Where is our Shechem - have we forgotten her?! Where is our Yericho - have we forgotten her?! Where is all that lies beyond the Jordan River?! Where is each and every clod of earth, each and every part, each four cubits of the Land of Hashem?! Is it in our hands to relinquish even one millimeter of it? G-d forbid! I was therefore unable then, in that state, when I was completely wounded, torn to pieces. They divided My Land! They divided the Land of Hashem! Political considerations...I could not go out to dance and rejoice.

Thus was my state on this night and during these hours. The next day or two, the man of the covenant of our holiness, Ha-Gaon Rav Yaakov Moshe Charlap, z"l, came. He felt a need to come and how could he not come, and where would he go if not to this place? He came to us, to that small and holy room [the room that had been the study of Maran Ha-Rav Kook in the old building of the Yeshiva - "Beit Ha-Rav"]. We were in silence. We both sat in shock, in an awestruck state. We were in silence for a few moments, we regained our strength and both of us said together those words of holiness: "This is Hashem's doing, it is a wonder in our eyes" (Tehillim 118:23). The seal has been affixed! (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah - Eretz Yisrael, pp. 259-266)

On the holiday of Shavuot after the Six-Day War, on the way to the Kotel, when our Rabbi walked with great effort because his legs exceedingly hurt him, a student asked him: "How did our Rabbi know?" Our Rabbi responded: "I did not prepare a speech, I just spoke." (Tzvi Kodesh, p. 269)

After the famous talk "Mizmor Yud Tet" which was followed by the Six-Day War, we asked our Rabbi: how did you know to mention the wholeness of the Land and your response to the decision to divide it particularly at this time (since he gave a talk every Yom Ha-Atzmaut)? He answered: It is truly wondrous since for nineteen years I did

not tell this story, and I only recalled it this year. (Gadol Shimusha p. 89)

Our Rabbi was asked much later why he mentioned Hevron, Shechem and Yericho on that Yom Ha-Atzmaut. He responded that Hevron was the beginning of the Kingship of David (Shmuel 2 2), Shechem was the beginning of the Kingship of Israel (Melachim 1 12) and Yericho was the beginning of the conquest of Eretz Yisrael on the western side of the Jordan. He was asked why he didn't mention Jerusalem. He responded: We do not forget Jerusalem, and we need to mention more often things that we forget. (Ha-Rav Yitzchak Shilat in the name of Ha-Rav Yaakov Cohain in the booklet "Arba'im Le-Binah," p. 23)

A woman said to our Rabbi that she bemoans the fact that she was not there on the Yom Ha-Atzmaut before the Six-Day War during the talk when our Rabbi announced: "Where is our Hevron? Where is our Shechem?" Our Rabbi responded to her in a fatherly voice: "You were!" (Iturei Cohanim #242 in the name of Geulah Cohen)

Sometime after the talk, a young man from Etzel visited our Rabbi and told him how distressed he was about the truncated and divided State. Our Rabbi said to him: "Why are you sad? This is the beginning of the Redemption. One needs to rejoice," and he greatly encouraged him. It only became known to him later that our Rabbi himself was also

sad over this, but he nonetheless encouraged others. (Tzvi Kodesh, p. 269)

Along with his sorrow, our Rabbi saw in this UN decision a great miracle of the intermingling of Hashem with human free choice. (Gadol Shimusha, p. 30)

After the Six-Day War

After the Six-Day War, our Rabbi placed the issue of the wholeness of the Land of Israel at the forefront of his public activities. He repeated over and over that it is a clear Torah prohibition to give any territory of the Land of Israel to non-Jews. He wrote and publicized hundreds of letters and proclamations, in calls to the public and the heads of the State - since he remained in close contact with them - to stand firmly for the wholeness of the Land and settling in all parts of the Land.

Our Rabbi distributed many broadsides on the subject of our holding on to the Land of Israel. He never based his argument on issues of security with the Arabs; the broadsides were always built on Torah foundations:

1. "Do not show them favor" (Devarim 7:2) – “Do not give them a holding in the Land” (Avodah Zarah 20a).

2. "The Land shall not be sold in perpetuity" (Vayikra 25:23).
3. Not to annul the mitzvot dependent on the Land.
4. A legal argument that the Land not only belongs to those who live there now, but to all of the Jews in the past, present and future. Therefore no one has the authority to forfeit parts of the Land of Israel to the non-Jews, and there can be no referendum on Yehudah and Shomron, just as there can be no referendum on any Mitzvah in the Torah. He also emphasized the need for self-sacrifice for the Land of Israel which should ideally be self-sacrifice in life.

The first broadside was "Do Not Tremble" after the Six-Day War. Our Rabbi told the students: "You are to close the Gemara now and go out for a few weeks to distribute this broadside in the entire breadth of the Land." The broadside was distributed in thousands of copies throughout the world, translated into English and even Arabic. This broadside was written after the Six-Day War in light of the discussion of the Government about relinquishing parts of the Land which were conquered. Those who supported the idea of the Greater Land of Israel signed a different document, with the statement that now all of the Land of Israel has returned to our control. Our Rabbi refused to sign it because the East Bank of the Jordan was still not under our control. He therefore wrote his own document. (Sefer Eretz Ha-Tzvi, p. 19)

To the claims that he placed exaggerated importance on the issue of the Land of Israel, our Rabbi responded, "The words of our Sages are holy that the Mitzvah of settling the Land of Israel is equivalent to all of the mitzvot of the Torah" (Letter, Iyar 5735).

When the Jewish settlement was renewed in Hevron in Nisan 5728, a Jew visited there, and one of the settlers asked him why he did not recite the blessing of "Blessed is the One who establishes the widow's boundary" on the new settlement. This Jew responded: "Doubtful settlement, doubtful blessing." When these words were related to our Rabbi, he responded: "Doubtful in faith - doubtful in blessing."

Our Rabbi initiated the establishment of the movement "Gush Emunim" and threw all of his weight behind all of its activities. He encouraged many of his students to establish settlements in Yehudah, Shomron, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights, and he himself participated in the ground-breaking of various settlements, despite his advanced age, and through the following verse was fulfilled: "And those who place their hope in Hashem shall renew their strength" (Yeshayahu 40:31).

After Menachem Begin signed the Camp David agreement, our Rabbi took out the Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot and said, "Perhaps he forgot that we are not here today by virtue of Herzl and Zionism, but by virtue of the word of G-d as it

finds expression in the sacred writings of the Ramban" (Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman – Positive Mitzvah #4 in additions to the Rambam's Sefer Ha-Mitzvot)."

Our Rabbi took great pleasure when Yitzchak Tabenkin (the ideologue of the Labor Zionist movement before the establishment of the State, who was asked in 1947 for his position on the proposed UN Partition Plan) said: "The Land of Israel belongs to the grandfather who is no longer and to the grandson who is yet to be born; it is therefore impossible to relinquish parts of it."

Our Rabbi said: At times we are in coalition with the State, we are therefore in opposition to the Government. (Ha-Rav Chanan Porat – Iturei Yerushalayim #6)

Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Kook proclaimed before the Jewish People, and before the entire world: "Over Judea and Samaria there will be war," and "[We will halt its relinquishment] 'with our bodies'" (Le-Hilchot Tzibur, p. 214, p. 226). When he was asked whether he meant civil war, he refused to answer. Afterwards he clarified to the Tzahal Commander-in-Chief that he did not mean civil war, or a war of the settlers against the army.

Here is what he wrote:

"Our devoted Sages instructed the Jewish People in how to wage war against the nations. Let us hope that matters will

never come to the Jewish People waging war against their own failed government.”

Thus, what he was referring to was a situation in which the entire Jewish People are at war with their government. He wrote to the Defense Minister, “Over Judea and Samaria there will be an internal war, and when the entire Jewish People rises up against this government, we will obviously side with the entire Jewish People as G-d’s word achieves ascendancy over G-d’s people and inheritance. We will not take the side of the failed government. The government must serve the people, and not vice versa.”

He further explained to his students that he was not advancing a practical directive but a proclamation of educational value. “I said and I wrote that over Judea and Samaria, Jericho and the Golan, there would be a war. No concessions are imaginable. Such threats, such utterances, such educational messages, must be repeated with regularity, thousands of times, to uproot this corruption, this disease, this weakness, at its source. These lands do not belong to the nations. We did not steal them from the nations. Rather, thank G-d, we have grown, matured, and returned to them. Over Judea and Samaria and the Golan and Jericho there will be a war. We must repeat these threats, these utterances, tomorrow and the day after, relentlessly, in order to express our position with strength and fortitude. We must remind the government and the Jewish People that we must not entertain the least possibility of conceding any part of our Land. We

are not the owners of His Land. It belongs to the entire Jewish People. We are the Jews living on it. We are the representatives of the entire Jewish People. We must not betray our Land. We must increase our strength and fortitude to sanctify G-d's name" (from a tape recording).

Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah's style of speech was thus meant to emphasize in the sharpest terms that there is a terrible and tragic issue at stake.

Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah never gave practical instructions to anyone to go and wage war over Judea and Samaria.

A student related: On Simchat Torah (5728), our Rabbi and the entire Yeshiva danced around the Chief Rabbis as was our custom. Ha-Rav Nissim Shilt"a – Chief Sefardic Rabbi – said that he was extremely distressed by the words publicized in the name of an important Rabbi that the question of returning conquered territories is not a matter for Rabbis but for politicians and military experts, and he forcefully spoke against this idea. Our Rabbi agreed with him and said that maybe the newspapers distorted this Rabbi's words.

Ha-Rav Nissim added that he spoke with an American fundraiser for Israeli causes and told him that all of the Jews of America need to make Aliyah. The fundraiser responded: If everyone makes Aliyah, who will donate the money to support the State of Israel? Ha-Rav Nissim answered: "It is written that Eretz Yisrael is the "Land flowing with milk and honey" and she is similar to a nursing mother: just as she

produces milk when her children nurse from her, so too is Eretz Yisrael flowing with milk and honey when all of her children return to her – "And we can send it to America!"

Our Rabbi related to him that in the period of the Arab riots before the establishment of the State, there was a call for Jews to sign a document stating that we do not have any rights to the Kotel, and the National Committee was inclined to agree with the thinking that it would stop the killing of Jews. But Maran Ha-Rav Kook forcefully opposed it, explaining that capitulating in matters relating to Eretz Yisrael does not bring peace and security but the exact opposite. And the same applies now (this was right after the Six-Day War). (From the booklet "Arba'im Le-Binah" by Ha-Rav Yitzchak Shlita, pp. 27-28)

Establishment of Elon Moreh

In the period after the Six-Day War, the entire area North of Yerushalayim still remained empty of Jewish settlement; the idea therefore arose to establish a Jewish settlement in the area of Shechem, the center of this entire area. All of the many attempts to receive permission failed. Meanwhile the Yom Kippur War broke out. Then they decided to break ground even without permission, but it was clear that it was impossible to take a step like this without consulting with our Rabbi. When the leadership of the settlement group turned to our Rabbi, he responded that this was a difficult question

on account of the concern of confrontation with our brothers and all the more so with Tzahal soldiers. He informed them that he would leave to take counsel with different people. In truth, they confirmed his fears, and he refused to agree time after time. In the end the settlement group decided that it would turn to our Rabbi not in order to receive an answer but to receive a blessing. Obviously, this was not easy. The leaders of the settlement group sat with him for a long time but were not brazen; they were already standing by the door in order to depart from him. In the end they said: "We want to go up and we came to receive a blessing." Our Rabbi hugged them and said: "May you succeed!" Twenty families and others who escorted them, approximately one hundred people, came to "Mecholah" in order to leave from there to the destination. Then came an appeal on the phone that our Rabbi requested that they delay and postpone by a day the ascension. This was difficult both operationally and spiritually, but they obviously accepted it. Our Rabbi decided to make an additional attempt to attain permission, because he did not want frontal confrontation with soldiers. He called the Defense Minister to his house and requested permission, but he refused. Our Rabbi pressed him without results. In the end our Rabbi said to him: "If you do not give permission, I will be with them." In fact, the next day, on 15th of Sivan 5734, after they came there and set up tents, our Rabbi arrived, planted a tree and recited, with Hashem's Name and Kingship, the "Shehechyanu" and "Blessed is the One who establishes the widow's boundary" [Baruch Meitziv

Gevul Almanah]. By night there was nothing left of the tree, the fence, the tents and the shul – “But the righteous, the Holy One, Blessed Be He, does not bring failure through them” (Chullin 7a), and yet it seemed that here was a blessing in vain?! Not so. In this area are now located the settlements of Itamar, Elon Moreh and Yitzhar. The blessing was not in vain. During the day, the Prime Minister suggested that the group of settlers move to spend the night in the military camp, Kadum, and the next day he would receive them for a meeting. The leaders of the settlement group reasoned that this idea was the less bad. In any event they would be completely removed within an hour or two, so what was there to lose? It was preferable to spend a night and see what would happen the next day. Our Rabbi, however, refused and said: "Here is the Land of Israel! We do not make calculations! If they claim that this is not an appropriate place for a settlement, we can discuss, but the principle that we cannot settle in all places in the Land, absolutely not - no!" Our Rabbi, beforehand, was in doubt, hesitated and feared confrontation, but now he did not back down on account of this reason. Our Rabbi held onto the barbed wire fence and stood like a solid stone more than everyone. The leadership thought that this was a mistake and meanwhile they should compromise with any suggestion, but it became clear that our Rabbi was right. If they would have agreed, they would have met the Prime Minister - and in fact a meeting did take place - and everything would have ended with a quiet, little sound. But the firm

and resolute stance of our Rabbi brought about all of the activities of the other settlements, and established all of the activity of the settlement of Yesha. He vigorously refused an intermediate solution of deceit. Our Rabbi's strength was not thin; it was nuanced, it did not disappear, G-d forbid, because of problems of conflict and confrontation with brothers, rather when he saw the weakening of the settlement group, he took a firm stance and did not depart from it until the end.

When the first evacuation of Elon Moreh took place, Rabbi Tzvi Yehudah wept, and he explained that he was weeping for two reasons: 1) because Jews were being uprooted from Eretz Yisrael, and because 2) what was happening was causing Jews to quarrel with one another. He was opposed to all the quarrels and to all the tensions.

From the beginning, the settlers of Elon Moreh asked our Rabbi many times to visit them, but it was difficult for him. And one day our Rabbi was invited to a simchah, a brit milah or pidyon ha-ben in Ofra. One of the guests, a resident of Elon Moreh, asked him: "When will Ha-Rav come to us?" Our Rabbi answered: "Now!" In fact, our Rabbi arrived, entered the shul and gave a talk that a settlement and a Yeshiva are from the same source. The women sat behind the curtain. Our Rabbi requested that they come close to the curtain to make sure they could hear, and he spoke about the special value of women in the processes of greeting the Redemption and building the Land and their connection to

the Entirety. He spoke out of an enormous abundance of Torah and vitality. Afterwards they set up a meal. The way of our Rabbi was to eat an incredibly limited amount, and it was a wonder how he lived on this, but at a Mitzvah meal he would eat all of the dishes from the beginning to the end, even if he participated in two Mitzvah meals in the same day. It was impossible to believe that this was the same man that each day ate about the amount of a date of Rabbi Tzadok, but at a Mitzvah meal ate his fill. He related to his meal at Elon Moreh as a Mitzvah meal and ate from the beginning to the end. Anything which was offered to him, he accepted, while saying: "Everything that the host says to do you must do." After Birchat Ha-Mazon, he suddenly said: "Everything that the host says to you, you must do, except leave, since one should leave before the host says!"

The Kotel

Our Rabbi said on Ta'anit Esther: "I wanted to go to the Kotel, but since I have the practice of putting on Tefillin at Minchah on a fast day, I am concerned about appearing arrogant." When a student told him: "Many people put on Tefillin there and therefore you would not be viewed as arrogant," our Rabbi agreed to go. It was extremely hot and the student wanted to go back. Our Rabbi said to him with depth and gravity: "It is difficult for me to detach myself from here." When the student heard this, he was not tired or thirsty anymore for he felt the electricity of holiness.

Our Rabbi had reservations about placing notes in the Kotel, and he pointed out that there is a halachic problem of partially entering into the area of the Temple Mount by doing so.

When a Torah scholar mentioned to our Rabbi the custom of placing notes in the Western Wall, our Rabbi said that one should not do this, and one should even refrain from putting one's fingers into the Kotel [since it is forbidden for an impure person to enter the air of the Temple Mount in even the slightest way]. The Torah scholar said to him: "But this is the custom of Israel [Minhag Yisrael]?" Our Rabbi responded: The word "minhag" [custom] contains the same letters as "Gehinom" [purgatory].

He similarly said that Maran Ha-Rav Kook refrained from kissing a stone of the Kotel which was not protruding. And thus he wrote (Le-Sheloshah Be-Elul 1 p. 59 #71): "And he [Maran Ha-Rav] was cautious about placing fingers of his hand between the stones of the Kotel." Our Rabbi also refrained from putting one's fingers into the Kotel. He related that because of a love of holiness, he looks for a smooth stone and carefully kisses it, but he did not touch the Kotel besides this.

When a groom asked our Rabbi what to pray for at the Kotel before his wedding, he responded to him that the

Kotel is not a place to make personal requests but a place of meeting with the Master of the Universe.

Our Rabbi said that at the Kotel one should think about two things: A. We are located before the Divine Presence. B. The unity of Israel before the Divine Presence.

On the second Yom Yerushalayim after the Six-Day War, our Rabbi stood before the Kotel with his hand outstretched and prayed. Like one person, all of the students were startled on account of his trembling in holiness, and they felt as if our Rabbi was not standing with them in this world.

Our Rabbi only went to the Kotel on foot, and even from the Yeshiva (which is quite a far walk), and said: "We only go to the Kotel on foot." Only in his later years, when he was already unable to walk, did he agree to travel by car.

Students who lived outside of Yerushalayim came to visit him and told him that they wanted to travel to the Kotel. He said to them that he would have spent more time with them, but he cannot "compete with the Kotel."

At a time of distress a student requested from our Rabbi to pray for him. Our Rabbi hurried to go to the Kotel, because things are heard there.

Our Rabbi would not simply go to the Kotel at any opportunity. He said: "I do not go to the Kotel every day, but only when there is a need and a feeling; the Kotel is a special place, a place from which the Divine Presence does not depart."

After the Six-Day War, when the discussion arose about erecting a mechitzah to separate men and women at the Kotel, our Rabbi said that in the place where a person comes to seclude himself with his Creator in Heaven and to turn his eyes upward in prayer, it is simple logic that we must remove any seduction that might force him to turn his eyes downward and disturb his focus (The book "Rav Ha-Kotel of Rav Simchah Raz p. 239 and see Sichot Rabbenu 9, Ish Ve-Isha 15).

On Jerusalem, the Temple Mount and the Temple

[From Sefer Le-Mikdashech Tuv, pp. 11-14 unless noted otherwise]

A student related: When I asked our Rabbi the well-known question whether reciting the content of the prayer "Nachem," which is recited on Tisha Be-Av [in the Shemoneh Esrei in the prayer for rebuilding Jerusalem,] is speaking falsely in our time because of the passages of the "bitterness of our situation," he responded: "Jerusalem is still

scorned and desolate, since the essence of Jerusalem is the Temple. Furthermore, the Old City of Jerusalem is in a state of desolation without inhabitants. It is impossible to approach the Old City and see piles of stones of synagogues and not burst into weeping!" (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, addendum at the end of the talk "U-le-minim al tehi tikvah - And for the slanderers let there be no hope").

When I came to request permission and a blessing from our Rabbi (see Sanhedrin 5b, Eruvin 63a and Rambam, Hilchot Talmud Torah 5:3) in order to establish a Yeshiva in the heart of the Jerusalem, he rejoiced with great joy and encouraged me.

In the twilight of his years, when I asked him - in the name of my colleagues - if we should request that the guarding of the gates of the Temple Mount be placed in the hands of Tzahal and not in the hands of non-Jews, he did not see this as a pressing matter; he responded: "Slowly, slowly [Redemption arrives]" (see Jerusalem Talmud Yoma 3:2).

When I continued and asked if should we request the presence of our army on the Temple Mount, he again cooled with his glance what he considered an impure burning desire and said sternly: "Slowly, slowly [Redemption arrives]."

At the same meeting, when I mustered the courage, I asked - in the name of my colleagues who greatly pressed me to do so - if should we request that the flag of the State of Israel be flown on the Temple Mount. He looked at me with a

dreadful glance of pain and amazement that I had sunk so low to the point of asking such questions, and he said forcefully: "We will raise a banner in the Name of our G-d!" (Te-hillim 20:6). Despite this, "It is Torah and I need to learn it" (Berachot 62a). I therefore asked again, "Certainly, we will raise a banner in the Name of our G-d, but won't it be by way of the flag of the State of Israel?" Our Rabbi patiently repeated: "I told you: we will raise a banner in the Name of our G-d," with his absolute rejection of all the comparisons between any infringement of the holiness of the Temple Mount and the building of the Land of Israel.

At the end of this meeting, I told our Rabbi how we are continuing with the acts of redeeming the heart of Jerusalem, house after house, and then the stern and dreadful facial expression disappeared, and a full smile of eternal kindness enlightened his face. When I detailed the names of the streets, he said that I need not bother, because all of these places were etched in his memory from his youth.

A student was once scheduled to give our Rabbi a ride but was late because all of the traffic and he expressed his distress. Our Rabbi said: On the contrary, I am happy that Jerusalem is filled with people.

When a Torah scholar brought to our Rabbi researchers of the Temple Mount, whose purpose was to identify the boundaries of the Temple (since in their view it was permissible to enter there without fear of harming the sanctity of the Temple), our Rabbi said to the scholar: "What is all this

for?!" He compared this to a Rabbi who gathered many proofs for the existence of G-d, and the Aderet ztz"l [Rav Eliyahu David Rabinowitz-Te'omim, former Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem and father-in-law of Maran Ha-Rav Kook], said about this Rabbi's book: "For what do we need proofs?" (and he quoted the words of our Sages: "Any matter which is not clear, bring sources from the Talmud for it" - Jerusalem Talmud, Berachot 2:3, Eruvin 10:1). We believe in Hashem above all proofs" (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, sidra 2 Tazria, Parashat Ha-Chodesh 3-4; Emunah, sichah 15, 8). And so too in our matter: Behold, the Temple Mount's boundary is surrounded by a wall. We do not traverse it, and we have no need for researchers.

After the liberation of the Old City during the Six-Day War, there were extensive excavations of the Kotel Tunnels, which extend under the Temple Mount. Ha-Rav Meir Yehudah Getz, Rav of the Kotel, asked our Rabbi, is it permissible to excavate under the Temple Mount to find the Temple implements? Our Rabbi answered, "No, do not dig." Our generation is still not ready to merit discovering the treasures of the Temple. (The book "Rav Ha-Kotel" p. 306)

When it became known to our Rabbi that archeological excavations were being performed under the Temple Mount, he responded with great distress: "What is all this for?! For what purpose should one fuss there?"

When they asked our Rabbi if there is a need to organize

tours which encircle the Temple Mount in order to strengthen the fact that it belongs to us, he responded: "The Temple Mount is in our hands - there is no need for tours." They said to him that not everyone knows that the Temple Mount is ours. To this, he responded that if this is so, there is positive value in the tours in order to strengthen the proof of our ownership.

After the Six-Day War, when a Torah scholar and professor came to our Rabbi and asked him why he did not begin to build the Temple, he responded, "The Mitzvah of building the Kingdom of Israel takes precedence, according to the ruling of the Rambam at the beginning of the Laws of Kings" (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, chapters of Messiah 4, Talmud Torah 1 addendum 2). Later, this was explained extensively by our Rabbi in the article "From Behind the Wall" (Mei-Achar Kotleinu) in which he said that only after great improvement in the building of the Nation, both physically and spiritually, can we enter into the holiness of rebuilding the Temple (see *Le-Netivot Yisrael* vol. 1, #23).

When a delegation of public figures came to our Rabbi with the request to work as forcefully as possible against the threatened agreement which the Government of Israel was prepared to sign with the Country of Jordan, which included surrendering the Temple Mount to their control, our Rabbi reacted: "What about the entire Land of Israel?" They repeated their words many times, as did he.

After the Six-Day War, students approached our Rabbi and

quoted the words of Rav Tzvi Hirsch Kalisher in the introduction to his book "Derishat Tzion," which repeats a tradition recorded in the name of the Vilna Gaon: if we would only leap and sacrifice one lamb, then everything would be ready for Redemption. They asked: perhaps it is proper to sacrifice one Pesach sacrifice? When our Rabbi heard this he became enraged: "We need to strengthen the Kingdom of Israel and return the Torah to those who learn it in Israel; [we need] to bring great repentance, and [only then] will we ascend to the Temple Mount from the midst of this prophecy." He said these words emphatically and forcefully. (Le-Mikdashech Tuv, p. 180)

After the Six-Day War, the Minister of Defense, Moshe Dayan, evacuated the non-Jews from the Jewish Quarter of the Old City. A few young men who fought in the Jerusalem Brigade felt that it was not enough, and they prepared explosives to blow up the mosques on the Temple Mount. They nonetheless went to take counsel with our Rabbi, who rejected the idea: This must come from the entire Nation, and not a part of it. They went to Reb Aryeh Levin, thinking that since he supported Etzel and Lechi before the establishment of the State, he would respond positively, but he also rejected their idea for the same reason: that there is a need for National agreement. He related a story, which our Rabbi would also relate, that a certain influential preacher would travel to different cities and encourage belief in false messianism. When Rav Chaim of Volozhin was informed that he was scheduled to speak on Shabbat in a particular

community, he sent two messengers, who were to violate Shabbat to stop him, since it was a matter of life and death. They were successful. A rich non-Jew asked Rav Chaim if he had heard about the preacher and if, in his opinion, he was the Messiah. Rav Chaim responded: And what do you say? He answered: This has nothing to do with me. Rav Chaim said: You are wrong. When the Messiah comes even you will feel it.

The young men asked Reb Aryeh Levin, half in jest: If so, the building of the Temple also depends of the decision of the Knesset? He answered: It may be. (Iturei Cohanim #57 from Ha-Rav Avraham Remer)

Atchalta De-Geulah - The Beginning of Redemption

When our Rabbi would be asked, why isn't the Redemption explicitly mentioned in the Torah, he would quote from the book "Leshem Shevo Ve'achlama" that the Torah was given for us and not for Hashem. It includes things that we need to perform, not things that Hashem will perform. Hashem will perform the Redemption; therefore, it is only hinted at.

There is a dispute in the Gemara in Sanhedrin (97b) between Rabbi Yehoshua and Rabbi Eliezer. Rabbi Yehoshua says that there can be Redemption without repentance, and Rabbi Eliezer says that repentance will precede the final Redemption. Rav Elyashiv writes in the book "Leshem Shevo

Ve'achlama" that it is almost explicit that Rabbi Yehoshua is correct (since Rabbi Eliezer was silent – Sanhedrin 98a). Our Rabbi said: What is "almost explicit"?! It is explicit!

When asked what should be said to the unconvinced sector of the Charedi (Ultra-Orthodox) public regarding the Redemption, he said, "We are not Karaites! We are Talmud-faithful Jews, and the Talmud itself teaches us about the revealed Final Redemption. It says that there is no more clear sign of the Final Redemption than the Land of Israel's offering its fruit generously to the ingathering Jews. This idea is explicitly expressed in the Talmud" (see Sanhedrin 98a).

The Talmud tells us that one of the questions a person is asked on his day of judgment is, "Did you carry out your business matters faithfully (i.e. honestly)?" Our Rabbi would interpret this figuratively to mean: "Did you busy yourself with faith (i.e. Did you study Jewish faith)?" Regarding another of these questions, "Did you anxiously await the Redemption?" he would bring the words of the Ran (Rabbenu Nissim), "Did you anxiously await the fulfillment of the words of the Prophets in your days?"

Our Rabbi would say: Atchalta De-Geulah is not now; it was a hundred years ago! Now we are in a more advanced stage of the Redemption (Ha-Rav Eliezer Waldman).

In response to the question of whether or not we stand today at the threshold of the long-awaited Final Redemption, our Rabbi answered that Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz was already talking about the beginning of Redemption in his day (500 years ago). Our Rabbi also recounted how when he met with Rabbi Leib, the son of the Chafetz Chaim, Rabbi Leib recalled how when his father received word concerning the establishment of the city of Petach Tikva, he called for his son, and exclaimed, "Reb Leib, the event has begun."

A student asked our Rabbi how we know that this is the Redemption. He responded: Is there an ingathering of the exiles or not?!

A second student who was serving our Rabbi sat next to him while our Rabbi was sleeping. The student accidentally moved the chair and it made a loud noise. Our Rabbi woke up in alarm and said: "Did you hear?" "No, I did not hear anything." "You did not hear? You do not hear the powerful voice of Hashem which gathers the downtrodden of His Nation to the Land of Israel?!" (Ha-Rav Eli Horowitz HY"D in Me-Emek Chevron 2, Elul 5763, 94)

It happened that a farmer told our Rabbi that a red heifer was born to him and he asked whether this had any significance. Our Rabbi responded, "Sometimes brown cows

are also born," and he was not excited. However, when another student told him that his cousin was making Aliyah, and would be coming straight to the Yeshiva from the airport, our Rabbi became very excited, even though he did not know the student's cousin. He turned his chair facing the door and he continued to teach. Every quarter of an hour he inquired if the person making Aliyah had arrived yet. Finally he received the good news that he arrived. Our Rabbi stood up, and of course all of the students stood up with him, and he approached the *oleh chadash*, hugged him, kissed him, cried and recited the "Shehechyanu" with Hashem's Name and Kingship. (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah - Eretz Yisrael p. 374)

When Chabad advertised that they were writing a Torah which would help advance the coming of the Messiah, our Rabbi was asked how to relate to such a pronouncement. He responded: "One needs to be careful about such pronouncements which they make." (Ha-Rav Avraham Remer – Iturei Cohanim #83)

A student said: "This is the State which the prophets promised?" Our Rabbi stopped him and said: "This is exactly the State which they promised!" (Ha-Rav Yeshayahu Doron and see *Le-Netivot Yisrael* vol. 2, p. 159 – Iturei Yerushalayim #6)

10. Ascending on High

One of our Rabbi's students visited our Rabbi in the hospital during the last year of his life, the year 5742. The student said that the gematria (the numerical value) of "Avraham Yitzchak Ha-Cohain Kook" is also 5742. Our Rabbi did not respond, as was his way regarding gematria. A few weeks before our Rabbi's passing, when this student visited our Rabbi, our Rabbi pointed at him and said: "You are the one who told me the gematria!" (Yitzchak Viel - Iturei Cohanim #140)

After our Rabbi's surgery, the doctor came and saw that he was in pain. He asked our Rabbi: What is bothering you? He responded: That the majority of the Nation of Israel is in Exile. (Ha-Rav Tzvi Kostiner – Iturei Cohanim #246)

During his final days, when our Rabbi was extremely ill and suffered greatly, many people visited until late at night. After midnight, when the visitors left, he looked down the hall and said: "No one is here anymore." He then burst out in screams of pain which he had held in since he did not want to frighten anyone.

He refused to take painkillers, since they blur one's thought and he wanted to be clear and connected to Hashem all of

the time. Once the doctors, who knew his condition quite well, gave him painkillers in his medicine without his knowledge. Our Rabbi, however, felt it. He placed a student in front of him and spoke words of Torah. When he felt the influence of the painkillers waning, he told the student that he could leave. (Ha-Rav Nachum Rechel in the name of Ha-Rav Binyamin Eisner)

During his last hours (which was on Purim), our Rabbi did not have the strength to speak, yet he always smiled and held the hand of Ha-Rav Ha-Gaon R' Avraham Shapira ztz"l. He finally managed to say: May you have a happy Purim. (Ha-Rav Yaakov Shapira)

Slightly before our Rabbi left this world, he began to speak about going to the World to Come and meeting his wife and Maran Ha-Rav Kook. (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald)