

THE GREATNESS OF ERETZ ISRAEL

Our Sages have said, "The land of Israel is holier than all other lands" (Kelim 1:6). This means that no one should think that if he goes outside the land, he can still infuse himself with holiness and purity. The Sages tell us that we can only discover the paths of holiness in Eretz Israel, and it is not without reason that they described other places as "the land of the nations." Such places hold impurity, whereas in Eretz Israel holiness is everywhere. In our parsha we are told of the nature of Eretz Israel and all the good it contains, as the Torah states: "For the L-RD your G-d is bringing you to a good land, a land with streams of water... a land of wheat, barley, grape, fig and pomegranate, a land of oil olive and honey, a land where you will eat bread without poverty" (Deuteronomy 8:7-9). If we were to examine these verses closely, however, we would discover something very surprising.

Why does Scripture not detail the spiritual advantages of Eretz Israel? Why does it only detail the material advantages of the land, namely one that is filled with rivers and valleys, where bread can be had without difficulty, and in which its fruit, the seven species, grow and enhance the surroundings? Would it not have been better for the verse to specify just how much holiness and purity exists in the land, how much Torah and prayer can be had in Eretz Israel? After all, spirituality is the main thing, while material things are secondary. We can all learn a great lesson from this, which is that if we go and find someone and tell him to study Torah, to pray and don tefillin every day, and to observe Shabbat in all its details, this individual is liable to respond, "How can I do all that, since I have almost nothing to live on? I have barely any bread to eat or clothes to wear, and morning, evening and noon I have to work in order to feed my family. How can I free myself from all these things to perform mitzvot?"

This is why the Torah comes and spells out the virtues and material benefits of Eretz Israel. It is telling us, "There is no Torah [learning] like the Torah of Eretz Israel" (Bereshith Rabba 16:4). There is no place other than Eretz Israel where we can perform mitzvot and study Torah so well.

Why is that? It is because everything that we need to serve Hashem in peace, calm, and tranquility exists in Eretz Israel.

We can earn a living in Eretz Israel, and it is there that we can eat bread without difficulty. There are springs of water in the land, and growing in its soil are the seven fruits that have made it famous. It is therefore precisely in Eretz Israel that mitzvot are easiest to perform. It is not without reason that among the Sages there is a concept of "mitzvot that are dependent upon the land." It is easier to perform mitzvot in Eretz Israel, for it is there that we find everything we need.

However this is not the only thing expected of us. True, it is easier to fulfill the Torah in Eretz Israel, but the demands are considerably greater there as well. Near the end of our parsha it is stated, "A land that the L-RD your G-d seeks out. The eyes of the L-RD your G-d are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to year's end" (Deuteronomy 11:12). This is difficult to understand, for if the eyes of Hashem are upon it from the beginning of the year to year's end, why does the verse add the word "always"? It is an apparently redundant word, since it would have been sufficient to state: "A land that the L-RD your G-d seeks out; the eyes of the L-RD your G-d are upon it from the beginning of the year to year's end."

The gaon Rabbi Zevulun Charlap, the Rosh Yeshiva of Beit Zevul in Jerusalem and one of the rabbis of the city, stated that from here we learn that it is completely forbidden to turn one's thoughts away from Eretz Israel. With regards to both tefillin and the Tzitz attached to the forehead of the High Priest (which the Torah also describes using the word "always" – Exodus 28:38), our Sages explain that it is forbidden for a person to turn his thoughts away from them. The same applies with respect to Eretz Israel, since Scripture also uses the term "always" in describing the land. This means that it is forbidden, even if just once, to turn one's thoughts away from Eretz Israel.

What is the issue here? It is precisely during this time, the days following Tisha B'Av, that people take their summer vacation. During this time, many Israelis travel abroad to spend their vacation, or

they leave for purposes of health or other reasons. At the airport's departure terminal, there's almost no empty place to be seen, for people are leaving precisely during this time. It is a time described by the Sages in the following terms: "From then on, one who adds [hours to his daily Torah study schedule] will add [days to his life]" (Bava Batra 121b). This means that it is a mitzvah to augment one's Torah studies during this time, yet people abandon their Gemaras to go on vacation, even traveling outside Eretz Israel to do so!

People who do this should realize and take what the Torah says to heart, namely that the eyes of Hashem are always upon Eretz Israel. It is there that holiness is found. It is not without reason that the Sages said, "Whoever lives outside the land may be regarded as one who has no G-d" (Ketubot 110b). This is because holiness is found primarily in Eretz Israel, not elsewhere. Jews who leave Eretz Israel must fully realize this and not turn their thoughts from the land. To our great regret, the reality of things is far different, for there are Jews who leave the country for good. It is true that at first they are simply "leaving," but with time they end up "descending." They settle elsewhere and completely forget Eretz Israel and its great virtues. Pity the generation whose offspring act in this way! Pity the generation whose children scorn the chosen land of their ancestors. Why is this happening to Eretz Israel? It is because the Jewish people want to be like all the other peoples of the world; hence the virtues of Eretz Israel no longer speak to the heart of Jews. During this time we are in the midst of the weeks of consolation, a time following Tisha B'Av. The Holy One, blessed be He, comforts us by the restoration of Jerusalem, as it is written: "By Jerusalem you will be consoled" (Isaiah 66:13). Yet are we consoled? Gentiles want to exterminate us and take over the Holy Land, and each day they try to hasten our end by their murderous attacks. We must strengthen ourselves against them. We must demonstrate our love for Eretz Israel, the Holy Land – the holiest of all lands – for only in this way will it remain ours. Amen, may it be so!

MUSSAR FROM THE PARSHA

Guard Your Soul Carefully

“You shall not bring an abomination into your home” (Deuteronomy 7:26).

The Gemara asks, “Who is called a epikoros [heretic]?” It replies: “Those who say, ‘Of what use are the rabbis to us?’” (Sanhedrin 99b). This means that a Jew who does not understand why the Holy One, blessed be He, created and sustains the entire world, and who doesn’t understand the role of rabbis who study Torah, such a Jew is called a heretic. The Rambam ruled, “If a Torah scroll was written by a Jewish heretic, it should be burned together with all its sacred names [of G-d].... It is a commandment to burn it, so that no memory is left of the heretics or their deeds” (Rambam, Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 6:8). Let us think about this for a moment: Whoever comes upon a Sefer Torah that has fallen to the ground must fast for an entire day. Yet despite the great holiness of a Sefer Torah, if it was written by a heretic – by one who says, “Of what use are the rabbis to us?” – it is a mitzvah to burn it! If a heretic did not write a Sefer Torah, but instead “only” wrote things that he saw or heard, and which seem reasonable to him, it is clear that we must immediately burn such writings as well. How dare we read such writings or even touch them? A person must flee from every word, written or spoken, emanating from a heretic as if he were fleeing a burning building! This is why we have a great duty to distance ourselves from all forms of media that are filled with words of hatred and incitement against Hashem and His Torah. On this Scripture states, “Do I not hate those, O L-RD, who hate You, and do I not strive with those who rise up against You? I hate them with the utmost hatred” (Psalms 139:21-22). Rav Schwadron Zatzal recounted the story of two great Torah scholars who lived in Jerusalem. All the children of one scholar grew up to be righteous, G-d-fearing individuals. The children of the other scholar, however, left the ways of Torah. This caused the scholar great anguish, and he was determined to discover where he had made a mistake in their upbringing. Since he and his fellow scholar had always studied together and sent their children to the same cheder, and since both homes were filled with the fear of Heaven, he failed to see where his error lay. The two scholars sat down to discuss the problem, at which point the difference between them became clear: Both men purchased fish from the same place, and the merchant wrapped each scholar’s fish in secular newspapers. However the scholar whose children remained Torah observant had a special rule in his home: Before any fish was brought inside, the newspaper wrapping was to be thrown into the garbage; it was not to enter their home. As for the other scholar, it was only after the fish was brought into his home that the wrapping – the secular newspaper – was thrown away! This was the only difference between the two households, yet it made all the difference in the upbringing of their children. This scholar had, in fact, paid great attention to the spiritual state of his children, lest they see something that was contrary to the spirit of Torah. Yet despite this – despite the fact that he was careful to bring only kosher things into his home – secular newspapers had made their way inside. No one can describe the magnitude of their wicked influence, nor the harm that they can do to people and their souls.

The Fear of Heaven

“Only to fear the L-RD your G-d” (Deuteronomy 10:12).

Despite the fact that the Sages say, “Everything is in the hand of Heaven except the fear of Heaven” (Berachot 33b), people act as if the opposite were true. What do they do? They put a tremendous effort into earning a living, yet they pray to obtain a fear of Heaven! However as the Sages said, everything is in the hand of Heaven except precisely that. What a person can actually do for and by himself is to increase his fear of Heaven. However most people leave that up to Hashem! In fact it is precisely what people cannot achieve through their own efforts – earning a living – that they do all day long.

Sefer Chassidim states that the teaching, “Everything is in the hand of Heaven except the fear of Heaven” means that everything is in Hashem’s hand. We must pray and ask for what we want, and it is up to Heaven whether it will be granted or not. It is Heaven that decides. However with regards to the fear of Heaven itself, this is not up to Heaven to decide: If you put a true effort into praying for it, you will obtain it (Sefer Chassidim, par 131).

Leaders of the Blind

“You shall fear the L-RD your G-d” (Deuteronomy 10:20).

The word et at the beginning of this verse is meant to include Torah scholars. The Maggid of Dubno gave us a parable to illustrate this: A blind man had to travel to a distant land. He obtained a passport and arrived at the train station with his traveling companion. After the authorities checked his passport, they asked his companion to present his. The blind man replied, “My passport is also his passport, for how can a blind man travel alone? It’s clear that once you’ve given me permission to travel, by extension my companion also has permission to travel.” The Maggid of Dubno concluded this parable by saying, “You shall fear the L-RD your G-d” includes Torah scholars, for Hashem said that we must serve Him. Yet how can we do so, since we are blind? It is clear that Hashem wants us to have rabbis to teach us Halachah, great Torah figures and Poskim to show us what to do and what not to do.”

Full Satisfaction

“He afflicted you and let you hunger, and He fed you the manna” (Deuteronomy 8:3).

The Midrash says that this verse teaches that we must eat the Friday night meal by the light of the Shabbat candles (see also Shabbat 25b).

What connection is there between this verse and Shabbat candles? The Chida cites the Rambam (Hilchot Shabbat 5:1) in stating that it is not a mitzvah to have candles by the Friday night meal, nor is it optional; it is a requirement. How do we know that they are required? We learn this from the verse, “You shall call the Sabbath a delight” (Isaiah 58:13). What’s the connection here? How do we learn this from the verse in Isaiah? The answer is given in the Gemara, which states that a blind person does not derive full satisfaction from his food, since he does not have the pleasure of seeing it (Yoma 74b). How do we know that a blind person will not derive full satisfaction? We learn this from the verse, “He afflicted you and let you hunger, and He fed you the manna” (Deuteronomy 8:3). We can dream of a plump goose, but if we don’t see it, we will remain hungry. When we don’t see our food, we lack pleasure. Thus the Midrash says that here we learn that we must have light for the Friday night meal. This is because the mitzvah to “call the Sabbath a delight” requires us to eat by some light. Otherwise, what kind of pleasure could we have? Indeed, we would remain unsatisfied!

If You Will Hearken...

“It will be, that if you will hearken today...to love the L-RD your G-d and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deuteronomy 11:13).

Why does the verse not tell us to love Hashem “with all your might,” just as we are told in the first paragraph of the Shema? The Zichron Israel replies that whenever “With all your might,” this means (according to the Gemara) that there are people for whom money is more valuable than their bodies. Although there may be some people like this, the same cannot be said about the entire Jewish people! The answer is that the Hebrew word for “hearken” is written in the plural. Hence by addressing the entire people, there is no need for Scripture to say, “With all your might.”

The End Without the Beginning

“Then the wrath of the L-RD will blaze against you, and He will restrain the heaven so there will be no rain” (Deuteronomy 11:17).

A Jew went to see Rabbi Yitzchak of Vorki to ask for a blessing, since he had suffered a setback in his livelihood. The Rav gave him his response, and when the Jew left the Rav said that he had recounted only the end of his story, not the beginning. What did he omit? The Gemara recounts a statement made by Rabbi Shimon ben Eleazar: “In my entire life I have never seen a deer engaged in gathering fruits, a lion carrying burdens, or a fox as a shopkeeper, yet they are sustained without trouble.... How much more should I be sustained without trouble, I who was created to serve my Maker! Yet I ruined my livelihood because I have acted wickedly” (Kiddushin 82b). The Rav then said, “This Jew came to me and said, ‘My livelihood has suffered a setback,’ yet he forgot to say, ‘I have acted wickedly.’ As the Torah says, ‘The wrath of the L-RD will blaze against you.’”

– Aish Dat

One Hundred Blessings

“Now, O Israel, what does the L-RD your G-d ask of you?” (Deuteronomy 10:12).

The Sages say, “Do not read mah [what], but meia [one hundred]” (see Menachot 43b). We must recite 100 blessings each day, a custom instituted by King David when he saw a plague afflicting the people. Each day 100 people died, yet its cause remained a mystery until King David realized, through Divine inspiration, that he was to institute the custom of reciting 100 blessings each day. At that point the plague ceased. The blessings that we recite in our three daily prayers, plus the blessings that we recite over food, number 100 on an ordinary day. On Shabbat we are missing some blessings: Instead of the 19 blessings that we recite in each of the 3 daily Amidahs of the weekday (3x19=57), we recite just 7 blessings in each of the 4 Shabbat Amidahs (4x7=28). We are therefore missing 29 blessings for Shabbat. For the third meal of Shabbat, we recite 4 blessings in saying grace after meals, 1 blessing over bread, and 1 blessing for the washing of hands, giving us a total of 6 blessings. This means that we are missing 23 blessings for Shabbat. During Kiddush we recite 2 blessings on Friday night and 1 blessing on Saturday, for a total of 3 more blessings. This means that we are still missing 20 blessings on Shabbat to reach our daily total of 100. The Shulchan Aruch advises us to reach this number by eating fruits and having things to drink. What should a person do if he wants to study Torah and therefore does not want to take the time to eat? The Mishnah Berurah advises him to have the intention of fulfilling his obligation by the blessings that others recite. He can also fulfill his obligations through the intention of hearing the blessings over the Torah.

Setting the Example

“You shall teach them to your children, to speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road, when you lie down and when you rise up” (Deuteronomy 11:19).

This verse does not appear to be written in a precise way. Since the verse is dealing with one’s children, it should have stated: “You shall teach them to your children, so they shall speak of them when they sit in their house....” The Chatam Sofer said that this verse teaches us a great principle in education, which is that before a father tells his children to constantly study Torah, he must first do so himself. He will thereby set a personal example for his children. This is why the verse rightly states, “You shall teach them to your children.” That is, if you want to teach your children to study Torah, then “when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road,” you – the parent – must also study Torah. Your children will then learn from you and do the same.

EISHET CHAYIL

The Segulot of Modesty

We must realize that when a Jewish woman conducts herself modestly, she merits that her husband will be a talmid chacham and tzaddik. She also merits having children who are righteous scholars, for our Sages have said, “The daughter of the king is all glorious within” [Psalms 45:14] – Every woman who conceals herself within the home is worthy of marrying a High Priest and giving birth to High Priests.” When a woman conducts herself with modesty in the home, just as the altar atoned for the sins of the Children of Israel, so too does she atone for the sins of her household, as it is written: “Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the recesses of your house” (Psalms 128:3). The “recesses” are the altar. When is she “like a fruitful vine” that yields fruit? It is when she conceals herself “in the recesses of your house.” She then merits having healthy children. Furthermore, we have heard that women who put an effort into maintaining their modesty (be it by covering their heads or legs according to Halachah) merit having children immediately.

A MATTER OF EDUCATION

The Fear of Heaven – Naturally Ingrained In Every Person

It is written, “What does the L-RD your G-d ask of you? Only to fear the L-RD your G-d” (Deuteronomy 10:12).

The language of this verse shows that Hashem is asking for only a minor thing: “Only to fear [Him].” The Gemara says, however, that fearing Hashem is not a minor thing. It can only be considered minor with respect to Moses, as the Sages said: “If a man is asked for a large article and he has it, it seems like a small article to him. If he is asked for a small article and he does not possess it, it seems like a big article to him” (Berachot 33b). In his tenth drasha the Ran underlines that this requires further explanation, for it seems that the Gemara is comparing the situation to an extremely wealthy person telling a beggar, “I’m only asking you for 70 pounds of silver! How hard could that be?” It is true that for Moses, this was a minor thing. However he was speaking on Hashem’s behalf to the Children of Israel, and for them, “only to fear” Hashem was a major thing. It’s like a giant asking a dwarf to walk at “only” half his pace. Hence the Ran states that from Moses we learn that even for the Children of Israel, the fear of Heaven could be a minor thing if they realize that it is natural for them to possess on an intellectual level, and if they yearn for it. This means that to achieve lofty heights in the fear of Heaven, there is no need to construct intellectual arguments for it, but rather to destroy any foolish intellectual arguments against it. At that point we will discover that the fear of Heaven is natural for a person to possess.

The Rambam writes that everyone is capable of becoming as great a tzaddik as Moses (Hilchot Teshuvah 5:2). The Rambam did not say that everyone could be as wise as Moses, but rather a tzaddik like him. With regards to wisdom, there exist differing amounts among people, just as faces differ among individuals. A tzaddik is a person who doesn’t act contrary to what – at his level of understanding – he knows he must do. This is similar to what Rav Zusha said: “When I arrive at the next world, I’m not afraid that they’ll ask me, ‘Why weren’t you like Moses?’ or ‘Why weren’t you like Abraham?’ I’m afraid that they’ll ask me, ‘Why weren’t you like Zusha?’” In other words, being a tzaddik like Moses means that a person should perfect himself according to the powers and abilities that Hashem has given him, not others. When we fail to realize this, the decision to act like a tzaddik is a difficult one to make. However for a person who realizes this and focuses on the fact that his natural inclination is to harmonize his actions with his knowledge, meaning to exercise his freewill, it is an easy decision to make. This is why the goal in educating people in the fear of Heaven is not to infuse them with a desire to resemble this or that great Torah figure. Rather, it is to help a person become aware of his intellectual tendency – naturally ingrained in every person – to do what is good in Hashem’s eyes in all areas according to his own abilities.

GUARD YOUR TONGUE

The Tongue Kills

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue” (Proverbs 18:21).

Not only does the tongue have the power to kill, it is also deadlier than the sword. The sword can kill only those nearby, whereas the tongue can kill those far away. Furthermore, it is very important to realize that the mitzvot relating to speech are more serious than those relating to deeds, as the Sages have said: “One who sins by his mouth, it is more serious than a sin committed by a deed.” In fact we see that the decree against our forefathers in the desert was only sealed on account of the sin of the spies, for they slandered the land of Israel. We must realize just how serious sins of the tongue are, for the tongue has the power to kill from a distance and bring devastation upon both the community and the individual!

REASONS FOR THE MITZVOT

Grace After Meals

It is written, “You will eat and you will be satiated, and you will bless” (Deuteronomy 8:10).

The Sages have said, “Where do we find that saying grace after meals is ordained in the Torah? It is because it says: ‘You will eat and you will be satiated, and you will bless’” (Berachot 21a). This applies, however, to the blessing said after a meal. How do we know that we must say a blessing before a meal?

The Sages reply, “We derive it by reasoning a fortiori: If one says a blessing when he is full, how much more should he do so when he is hungry?” (Berachot 35a). We need to understand why the blessing after meals is mentioned in the Torah, but not the blessing before meals. The answer is that when we eat and are satiated, we are more liable to sin than prior to having eaten, as it is written: “Jeshurun grew fat and kicked” (Deuteronomy 32:15).

The Gemara also says, “One who fills his stomach commits all kinds of evil” (Berachot 32a). This is why Hashem commanded us, after we have eaten and are satisfied, to mention the name of Heaven and remember that it is He Who gives us food and satiates us. It is from His hand that we have eaten and become full. One who eats to satisfaction and mentions the Name of Heaven will not do anything foolish as a result of his fullness. Sefer HaChinuch states, “I learned from my teachers that G-d protects anyone who is careful in reciting grace after meals, and he is assured of earning an honorable living throughout life.”

The mitzvah of reciting grace after meals is a segula for earning a good living. It is also among the positive mitzvot found in the Torah. It is one of the duties of a Jew to thank and praise Hashem for the food He has given us, for a person is forbidden to derive satisfaction in this world without saying a blessing.

The grace after meals prayer contains four blessings. The first (“Who provides food for all”) was instituted by Moses for the Children of Israel on account of the manna that fell to them from Heaven. The second blessing (“We offer thanks to You”) was instituted by Joshua because he had the merit of entering Eretz Israel. He therefore instituted it to recall the “good, precious, and spacious land,” the land that Moses yearned to enter, yet was denied. The first one to merit this was Joshua, which is why he instituted the second blessing.

The third blessing (“Have mercy...upon Israel Your people, upon Jerusalem Your city...and upon the great and holy House”) was instituted by David and Solomon. David instituted it so we would pray for the peace of Israel and Jerusalem, for it was during his lifetime that Jerusalem was allocated greater holiness than the rest of Eretz Israel. Solomon instituted the blessing on the Temple, which was built in his lifetime, to prevent its destruction, for its location has even greater holiness than the rest of Jerusalem.

The fourth blessing (“Blessed are You...our Father, our King...”) was instituted by the Sages on account of those who died in the city of Beitar. The Sages tell us, “There were 400 synagogues in the city of Beitar, and in every one were 400 teachers of children” (Gittin 58a). The Roman Emperor Hadrian ordered them all killed, but not buried: “They slaughtered men, women, and children until their blood flowed and fell into the Great Sea [the Mediterranean]. Lest one say that it was close to the sea, it was a whole mil away” (Gittin 57a). Their bodies remained unburied for the remainder of Hadrian’s life.

After Hadrian died and his successor ascended to power, Rabbi Gamliel and his court fasted frequently and paid a great sum for money for permission to bury those who had died in Beitar. For seven years previous to their burial,

the blood from their corpses had been used by idolaters to irrigate their vineyards (Gittin 57a). The Sages say, “On the day on which permission was given to bury those slain in Beitar, they ordained in Yavneh that [the blessing] ‘Who is good and bestows good’ should be recited. ‘Who is good’ because [the corpses] did not putrefy, and ‘Who bestows good’ because they were allowed to be buried” (Berachot 48b).

A TRUE STORY

A Person Can Succumb to Pride Even When Removing Boots

It is written, “Lest you eat and be satisfied, and you build good houses...and your heart will become haughty and you will forget the L-RD your G-d” (Deuteronomy 8:12,14).

After Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin established his great yeshiva, he procured splendid and spacious rooms for its students. There were some who pointed out to him that this was liable to fill them with a sense of pride. Rabbi Chaim replied, “I will tell you something that happened to me, and you will understand the situation. I was once in a small town and went to the public baths one Friday. When I tried to remove my boots, the custodian of the facility came to help me and thereby earn some money. As he pulled on my boots with all his might, I calmly told him that in Volozhin we remove boots gently. Upon hearing this, he stood up and raised his hand as if to strike me: ‘How dare you give me lessons!’ he said. ‘Nobody knows how to take off boots better than me!’”

Rabbi Chaim explained: “You see my friends, even this man – whose job had him removing boots – grew haughty. It’s not necessary to live in a spacious room to succumb to pride. Anyone is liable to fall prey to it, and the only way to avoid it is to work on yourself.”

YOUR EYES SHALL BEHOLD YOUR TEACHER

Rabbi Avraham Mordechai Alter – The Son of the Chiddushei HaRim

Rabbi Avraham Mordechai was born on the first day of Parsha Mishpatim, Shevat 19, 5576, in Ger, Poland. The son of the saintly Chiddushei HaRim (Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Alter), Rabbi Avraham learned Torah with his father during his early years, studying until he became a gaon and holy man with absolutely no involvement in this world. At the same time, he suffered from poor health for his entire life, yet he never complained. To earn money he opened a bookstore in the city of Warsaw, where he lived. He would sit in his store and study Torah all day long. It is said that Rabbi Yechezkel of Kuzmir once walked into his store and saw Rabbi Avraham sitting there studying Torah. He asked who this avrech was, and when he was informed of his identity, Rabbi Yechezkel exclaimed: “The city of Warsaw does not realize whom it shelters. The entire street radiates with the light of his countenance!” Rabbi Yechezkel then let out a sigh and said, “Yet because of the sins of the generation, I don’t see many days for this avrech in this world.”

When Mordechai fell gravely ill in 5606, his father, the Chiddushei HaRim, prayed for his recovery. In that same year a son was born to Rabbi Avraham, a boy who would grow up to be the Sefat Emet of Ger. Even after he recovered, Rabbi Avraham continued to suffer, eventually dying during his father’s lifetime. He passed away on Av 26, 5615 at the age of only 39. He is buried in the great cemetery of Warsaw in Poland. May his merit protect us all