MANY OF THE TOPICS INCLUDED IN THE PARDES CURRICULUM ARE FAR-REACHING AND HAVE BROAD RAMIFICATIONS. THE INTENT OF PARDES IS TO PROMOTE SENSITIVITY AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH THROUGH EXPOSURE TO A VARIETY OF TORAH SOURCES. IT IS NOT WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF PARDES TO ARRIVE AT CONCLUSIONS RELEVANT TO DECISIONS OF HALACHA. PLEASE CONSULT YOUR RABBI FOR PERSONAL DECISIONS.

INTRODUCTION

How do we move through life? Does the head direct the body, or does the body lead the head? This question applies on a personal, as well as on a communal, level. According to Kabbalah, all of society can be considered like one body: the workers are the hands, artists are the heart, financial backers are the spine and the leaders are the head.

Our question now takes on new meaning: How does society evolve and grow? Does the leader influence the followers, or do the followers influence their leader? Is it the leader’s role to direct the communal body, or is the leader merely a “figurehead,” subject to the whim and will of those beneath him? Or perhaps the relationship between leader and society is symbiotic, with each side influencing the other? As the saying goes, “The people get the leader they deserve.”

The Talmud puts this issue in the form of an argument: One rabbi said, a generation is as good as it’s leader; the other said, the leader is as good as the generation. (Talmud Bavli Archin 17a). Just as a tiny body cannot carry an oversized head, and a small head cannot lead a large body, a leader and his followers must be on parallel moral, ethical and spiritual levels.

Along these lines, the Talmud makes an amazing observation. When the Israelites sinned by building the Golden Calf, Moses was still on Mount Sinai with G-d. Suddenly, G-d told Moses, “Go, descend
from here, your people have become corrupt." According to the Talmud, G-d was telling Moses, "I've only given you greatness for the sake of the Jewish people, now that they are sinning, you must descend too." (Berachos 51).

We often excuse the misdeeds of our leaders by saying that as long as they are doing a good job, we shouldn't delve into their personal behavior. Aristotle said to his students, "Do as I say, not as I do." From a Torah point of view, however, we care as much about who a leader is as we do about what he or she does. Our concern is based on a simple premise: that the moral, spiritual and ethical fiber of a leader will influence people as much as the head influences the body. On the other hand, if the body is ill, won't the head also suffer? Can we really demand that the leader be on a higher moral level than we ourselves are? When our leader is corrupt, perhaps we should scrutinize our own behavior first. If G-d gives us leaders who mirror ourselves, then perhaps we should be the first ones to change.

Rabbi Yaacov Haber

HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND?

1 For several months you have been inspired and mesmerized by the new rabbi whose classes you have been attending. He has opened your heart and mind to concepts of spirituality, ethics and philosophy that have changed both the way you think, and the way you observe Judaism. Recently, however, you begin to notice in the rabbi certain characterological and behavioral deficiencies that are troubling. You begin to wonder whether you should continue to learn from this flawed individual.

2 You are proud of your many accomplishments, and are gratified that you have earned a significant degree of respect from your community. You are also comfortable with your relationship with G-d. Sure you have observance lapses, and you conduct yourself as less than saintly in certain private matters, but you decidedly conclude that those are issues of importance only between you and your Creator; really no one's business but your own. When invited, and then urged, to serve as president of your local Jewish community council, you responded that you will consider the invitation, but you knew immediately that you would accept. Later that evening, however, you begin to wonder whether you should withdraw your name from consideration in light of your habitual indiscretions. But you note that your private life is clearly irrelevant to the particular tasks that you have been invited to undertake. And moreover, your questionable behavior will certainly not be discovered by others. And you really are the most suited for the position. On the other hand, however, is it right?
This is the definition of a king: a man who transcends his environment by virtue of his spirit, who stands firm in his convictions so as not to be influenced by his surroundings, and remains unswayed by the many currents that sweep over him from every direction. True, this is difficult, for it is human nature to be influenced by one's society, and to be moved by everything that the masses agree upon. This is not only true of simple-minded men, who lack self-initiation, for even men of brilliance and understanding find it difficult to free themselves from the opinions of the world, and instead, build their entire philosophy and world-view upon "accepted" universal principles.

But when a person can rise high above his peers, firm in his conviction to Torah, empowered by his original thoughts that bring him above the head of the masses, to this degree he reigns over them, and influences and rules over society.

In order for a man to reach a level in which he rules over his environment, he must first rule over himself, his strengths and his passions; for this is truly the greatest and most far-reaching sovereignty in the world. Even the greatest monarch, who rules from one end of the earth to the other, still does not have as many servants to heed him as the man who rules over himself, over the myriad of feelings and forces that are found in his life and his heart, and that beckon constantly to find their purpose and their proper expression. This man is indeed the greatest, most exalted king.

Shiurei Da'as 3, p.15
Source, p. 24 Biography, p. 14
It is customary to recite the following prayer before entering into a Torah discussion.
Shulchan Aruch O.H. 110

May it be Your will, Hashem my G-d and G-d of my fathers, that You illuminate my eyes with the light of your Torah and that You save me from all stumbling blocks and errors, whether it be in discussions of what is prohibited and what is permitted or in monetary matters, whether it be in any other Halachic decisions or just in theoretical study. I pray that I do not make any mistakes, and if I do, my study partners should not take delight in them. I pray that I should not proclaim the impure or the pure impure, the permitted forbidden or the forbidden permitted. I pray that I should not derive joy from the errors of my study partner. Open my eyes and allow me to see the wonders of Your Torah because it is from G-d that all wisdom comes forth, it is from His mouth that I will acquire wisdom and understanding. Amen.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Rabbi Yehuda Nasia and the Sages had an argument. One said, the generation is as good as their leader, the other said, the leader is as good as the generation.
Talmud Bavli, Archin 17a
Source, p. 25

2. It is precisely because of the broad vision of a leader that he is more likely to sin than the average person. Sometimes, it is the fault of the Jewish people that the king sins. If the people were devoted to G-d, then the leader would also guard himself to be clean like them, in order that they remain in awe of him.
Meshech Chochmah, Vayikra 4:21-22
Source, p. 26 Biography, p. 14

3. The leader of a people is the entire people itself. If he is pure, the whole nation is pure; if he is impure, the whole nation is impure, and is punished on his account.
Zohar Bechukosai 28
Source, p. 27 Biography, p. 15

4. R. Jose said, "Israel was exiled and the Temple in Jerusalem destroyed because its leaders were corrupt, for the spiritual state of the leaders will become the spiritual state of all Israel."
Zohar Vayikrah 349
Source, p. 28 Biography, p. 15
5 If a leader has not perfected himself before assuming power, the people will also not reach perfection. However, if he elevates himself first, his people will become elevated.

Adra Rabba 174

6 The greatness of a leader in Israel depends on the greatness of the Jewish people; for he is them. All of the greatness of Moses was because of the people. When they sinned, G-d told him “Descend!” Meaning, now that the Jewish people are sinning, you too must descend from your greatness.

Rabbi Yonason Eibeshitz, Yeiros Dvash, Drush 4

Source, p. 29 Biography, p. 16

7 A true leader is not merely like an army general, who directs his followers and holds the reigns of authority. A Jewish leader is completely different. Just as a father supports his son, physically and spiritually, feeding and sustaining him through his merit, so a true leader bears his followers, and because of him, they are blessed physically and spiritually.

Rabbi Yerucham Levovitz, Da’as Chochmah U’Mussar 68

Source, p. 29 Biography, p. 16

8 A leader is according to his generation; a flaw in the generation will cause a similar flaw in the leader.

Rabbi Tzadok HaKohen from Lublin, Poked Akerim p.49

Source, p. 30 Biography, p. 17

9a One should not appoint a leader for the people unless he has a sack of reptiles hanging behind his back (skeletons in the closet).

Talmud Yoma 22b

Source, p. 31

9b Even if he is appropriate for the role, in case he becomes arrogant, we can tell him to look at his own past before lording himself over others. The reason why the leadership of Saul did not last was because he had no fault in his family history. This brought him to arrogance and his reign ended.

Meiri Ibid.

Source, p. 32

9c The problem should be “behind his back,” that is, not so obvious and public. Because a blatant deficiency is a disgrace to the leadership.

Maharsha Ibid.

Source, p. 33 Biography, p. 18

9d Sometimes it is the very fault of the leader, which enables him to connect with his people. If the righteous man would always be perfect, there would be no place for the people to connect to him. Thus, he must always have a skeleton in his closet (a sack of reptiles) so that he can have a way to connect with the people.

R. Yaakov Yosef of Polnoye, Toldos Yaakov Yosef, Kedoshim

Source, p. 34 Biography, p. 19

10 A leader must be compatible with the people. Even though his soul is far above the masses, there must be some connection between them. When Israel was on a high level before they sinned [with the Golden Calf], Moses was also on an exalted level. But when they sinned, it wasn’t possible to lead them if he remained where he was. Therefore, he had to descend from his greatness, so that he could lead the nation on a lower level.

R. Avraham Yitzhak Kook, Ein Ayah, Brachos 51

Biography, p. 19
And Moses said to the L-rd, Let the L-rd, G-d of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, who may go out before them, and who may go in before them. So That the People of Israel should not be like sheep without a shepherd.

Numbers 27:15,16
Source, p. 34

"...Set a man over the congregation" — A leader should be over the people, and not under the people.
R. Zalman Serotzkin, Oznei LaTorah, loc. cit.
Source, p. 35 Biography, p. 23

"...who may lead them out, and may bring them in" — He leads them out of lowness and impurity, and brings them to nobility and holiness.
Chidushei HaRim
Source, p. 36 Biography, p. 20

"...as a sheep without a shepherd" — When there is no shepherd than the sheep become the shepherd. If there are no qualified leaders amongst the people, a vacuum is created and the self-interested underqualified people take leadership.
Malbim, HaTorah V'HaMitzvos
Source, p. 36 Biography, p. 21

A King of Israel should be humble and never conduct himself with excessive arrogance. ...He should take mercy on both young and old, and have compassion on people of even the lowest stature. When he speaks to the community, he should address them softly. ...There is none greater than our teacher Moses, and he said, "What am I." The king should bear the burden, pain and complaints of his people just as a parent bears the burden of his child. The Torah calls him a shepherd, and of a shepherd it says, he picked the little sheep up in his arms and carried him on his shoulder.
Maimonides, Laws of Kings, Chapter 2:6
Source, p. 37 Biography, p. 22

"Before the Messiah comes, the generation will have the face of a dog"
Sotah, Chapter 9, Mishna 15
Source, p. 38

Even though a dog runs ahead of its master, as though it were leading, it continually looks back to make sure that its master is behind it. Likewise, in the generation before the Messiah, the leaders will always be looking backward to see if the people are pleased with them. And if not, they will change direction, because they only want to flatter the people, and do what they want.
R. Yisroel Salanter quoted in Source 1, p. 24
Biography, p. 22

If you see a hypocritical or wicked man leading the generation, better that the people should flee like birds, and not be led by him.
Midrash Rabba, D'vrom 5:8
famous near prophetic passage written before 1926, he presents a brilliant theory of Jewish history in the Golah and refers to those who forget their origins and think “Berlin is Jerusalem,” and are doomed to destruction (B’chukosai). He wrote that it is not surprising that a Jew willingly gives his life to sanctify G-d’s name because it is natural that when one is confronted with an opposite force, his essence comes to the fore (V’aschanan).

His mastery of the Jerusalem Talmud was such that when in 1906 Shlomo Friedlander alleged to have discovered the missing Talmud on Kodashim he was able to immediately determine that it was a forgery.

Reb Meir Simcha served as Rabbi of Dvinsk for nearly 40 years and was deeply loved by his congregants. He frequently helped couples to become reconciled. A couple once visited him to discuss their problem and after a lengthy period there was a noise of singing and dancing. R. Meir Simcha’s secretary peeked in to see the strange sight of the Rav dancing with the couple to help them in their reconciliation. During World War I when many Jews fled from Dvinsk he said that if there were only nine Jews left he would be the tenth, and that each bomb has a specific address. He was respected by all segments of the population and was once described by Chaim Nachman Bialik as “a walking encyclopedia.” In 1906 he was offered the position of rabbi of Jerusalem but bowed to the entreaties of his congregants to remain in Dvinsk. In relation to this proposal 20 prominent leaders of Dvinsk wrote to Jerusalem as follows: “We of the Russian Golah in the city of Dvinsk rise up in response to the report that the sons of Jerusalem wish to take away our master, our teacher ... not only will they destroy us but the entire Golah for whom he is the teacher and the respondent for all who seek the word of G-d.” Reb Meir Simcha was a strong supporter of the settlement of Eretz Yisrael and greeted the Balfour Declaration with enthusiasm. He also believed that in order for a Rav to be a true leader of his community, he needed to be fluent in the language of the land.

Besides the above mentioned works, he also wrote novellea on the Talmud and a volume of responsa which were recently found and printed. M.G.

**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Rabbi Yosef Yehudah Leib Bloch (1860-1930)**

In 1910, Rabbi Yosef Yehudah Leib Bloch succeeded his illustrious father-in-law, Rabbi Eliezer Gordon, as Rosh Yeshiva of the famed Telzer Yeshiva. Rabbi Bloch created a new genre known as Shiurim Da’at, which were lectures on musar and basic principles. Four volumes of such lectures were published. He also had an original approach to halachah and some of his lectures have been published as Shiurei Halacha. Rabbi Bloch saw the unity of all aspects of the Torah and their root in the supernal world. Under his guidance, a little known elite society was formed, Agudas Emes V’Sholom, whose purpose was to develop individuals capable of influencing the generation. He warned that the purity of the idea might be tainted by publicity (see HaMayan, Tishrei Tashanah). The Telzer Yeshiva was a complex of institutions for all ages. The Yeshiva was also innovative in the education of girls.

**Rabbi Meir Simcha HaKohen of Dvinsk (1843-1926)**

Reb Meir Simcha was one of the most unique of the Torah giants of this century. He is renowned for two works: Ohr Samayach, a brilliant commentary on the Rambam's Mishne Torah and Meshech Chochmah, a profound commentary on Chumash. Rabbi Yehudah Copperman, editor of the latter work, describes it as a unique blend of “Halacha, thought and commentary.” In it R. Meir Simcha demonstrates the unity between the written and oral laws and presents strikingly original interpretations of both Biblical verses and Talmudic passages. His unusual mastery of the entire philosophic and kabbalistic literature is reflected throughout. In a

**Zohar**

The Zohar is the central work of the Kabbala and Jewish mysticism. It first became known in the thirteenth century. The Zohar is actually composed of several works, the most well-known that of the commentary of the five Books of Moses. Because of its esoteric nature, the Zohar was not published until 1558 when it appeared in Mantua, Italy amidst some controversy. Numerous commentaries have been written on different parts including those by R. Moshe Cordovero, the Gaon of Vilna, and R.
Gershon Henoch Lainer of Radzyn. R. Dovid Luria (Kadmus Sefer HaZohar) and R. Isaac Chaver (Magen Y'Tsina) wrote works to prove the antiquity of the Zohar. It is a complex work of varying levels of difficulty. It has inspired many generations to a deeper understanding of the Torah. R. Pinchas of Koretz, one of the Hasidic masters and an associate of the Ba'al Shem Tov commented that he could not exist without the Zohar.

Rabbi Yonason Eybeschitz (1690-1764)

An exceptional Talmudist, Halachist and Kabbalist, Rabbi Eybeschitz held positions as dayan of Prague, and later rose to the position of Rabbi of the "Three Communities," Altona, Hamburg and Wandsbek. He had contacts with Christian leaders of the period, debating religious and philosophical topics with them. His position was challenged on a number of occasions following allegations that he was a secret follower of the Shabbateanism, an outlawed movement centered around the false messiah Shabtai Zvi, despite Rabbi Eybeschitz supporting the excommunication of all Shabbatean followers. The controversy over whether Rabbi Eybeschitz was a Shabbatean spread to all major Jewish communities, and attacks by opponents lasted until his death.

Rabbi Yeruchem Levovitz (1875-1936)

From that day on I have striven to relive the sublime feelings, the awe, the joy, the inner fervor for holiness which were awakened by being in his presence.

—Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe (Preface to Alei Shur)

"The Mirrer Mashgiach," as Rabbi Levovitz was known, was one of the most influential musar thinkers of his time. He first studied with R. Noson Zvi Finkel of Slabodka, who sent him to Kelm where he arrived in the last year of R. Simcha Zisel, the Alter of Kelm's life. Rabbi Levovitz said that all of his thought was a commentary on R.S.Z. Reflecting back many years later he recounted his feelings at the funeral of his mentor: "I have only now begun to understand what man is, and what his obligations are, just now are my eyes opened as I heard your words just a few times and now you have left me."

Rabbi Levovitz first became "Mashgiach" (spiritual mentor) in the Mirrer Yeshivah in 1908, but during the dislocations caused by World War 1 he assumed various positions in different Yeshivos until 1923 when he returned to his position in Mir.

He was a man of powerful intellect who accomplished in the sphere of Aggada what others of his generation achieved in the sphere of Halacha. He unraveled many puzzling aggadic passages and made them shine with fresh clarity and light.

He believed that man's inherent nature was the best guide to understanding Torah. He once said, "a person who does not recognize his abilities cannot understand Torah." Man's labor must be from within himself, not imitating others; by bringing the grandeur of Torah to ourselves we can attain all we need for our avodah (service) in attaining shleimus (wholeness). Faith must reach the level of our instinctual being(chush). One's physical body must become one with his neshama.

In the last period of his life, highly educated students from Western Europe and America came to the Yeshiva with many questions. Reb Yeruchem devoted much time to explaining the difference between the knowledge of Torah and that of science and he had a great impact. After many years one of those students was asked why he became such a "fiery Chasid" of Reb Yeruchem. He replied that he was one of the dead whom Reb Yeruchem had revived and that was enough reason.

His personality was regal, but self-effacing. His devotion to his students knew no bounds. He once took sick and was prevailed upon to visit Carlsbad. At the time he wrote to a friend that he did not know whether it was proper to forsake the Yeshiva for "a man involved in the group can never leave and I question whether he may do so even when his life is at stake (pikuach nefashos)." Reb Yeruchem's essays are collected in Daas, Chochmah, and Musar and his lectures on Chumash in Daas Torah. A lengthy essay on Reb Yeruchem's life and thought, Adam Biykar, was written by Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe. M.G.

Reb Tzadok HaKohein of Lublin (1823-1900)

Rav Tzadok, or "The Kohein" as he was known amongst Chassidim, was one of the most prolific authors in the history of the Chassidic movement. Born into a non-Chassidic rabbinic family, Rav Tzadok became famous as a child prodigy authoring articles and books which later became classics. Later in life, Rav Tzadok became Chassidic and became a Chassid of the Izbitcher Rebbe. Having excelled in both the Chassidic and non-Chassidic world, Rav Tzadok's writings became a synthesis of analytical logic and mysticism. Eventually, Rav Tzadok became the Rebbe of Lublin. His writings are treasured by scholars everywhere. Y.H.
Reb Shmuel wrote one of the most incisive and keenly analytical commentaries on the Talmud, Rashi and Tosafot. A model of logic and terseness it was quickly accepted and was printed in almost all editions of the Talmud. If one grasps the MaHarSha he has understood the Tosafot. R. Shmuel also wrote an extensive commentary on the aggadot of the Talmud which reflects his wide knowledge of philosophy and Kabbalah.

From the 16th to the 18th century Jewish autonomy reached its zenith in the Council of the Four Lands, through which the Jewish provinces were administered. The Council met twice a year at the Lublin and Yaroslav fairs. One of the greatest authorities of his day, the MaHarSha was an outstanding figure at the meetings of the Council. While away at the fairs he was absent from the Yeshiva when certain pages of the Talmud were studied. Because he could not benefit from the usual give and take when those pages were being studied, he refrained from printing his commentary on those pages. (See his remark at the end of the Seventh chapter of Shabbos and the Sixth chapter of Sanhedrin.)

For twenty years MaHarSha directed the Yeshiva in Posen. During this time all the expenses of the Yeshiva were assumed by his mother-in-law, Edel. In appreciation of her support he adopted her name. After her death he served as rabbi in the following prominent communities: Chelm, Lublin and Ostrog. His commentary on Aggada contains numerous references to the conditions and problems of his time. It also includes his sharp critique of contemporary failings such as wealth being a prerequisite to attaining positions in the community.

In his will, R. Yonah Landsberger admonishes his sons to be sure to carefully study Tosafot with the MaHarSha, as his commentary is true and profound and "the spirit of G-d spoke through him for without the holy spirit it would have been impossible to compose such a work."

The Hazon Ish had this to say about study of the MaHarSha: "I cannot refrain from pointing out that our generation has not done well in forsaking study of the MaHarSha which is a wonderful gift granted to Israel...to train them in laboring in Torah...which converts matter to spirit and body to soul...This holy book is full of profound ideas and trains a person in correct analysis. The Goan R. Akiva Eger did not neglect any part of this work. From the day that this book was neglected the understanding of Pschat was lost and students became accustomed to facile analysis."

On the door post of R. Shmuel's house were inscribed the words, "No sojourner spent the night outside, my door was always open to the guest." (Job 31:32) M.G.

Reb Yaacov Yosef of Polnoye (died 1782)

Reb Yaacov Yosef of Polnoye is the primary first-hand source for the Torah of the Ba'al Shem Tov. His main work, Toldos Yaacov Yosef, is replete with direct quotes from the Ba'al Shem. It is the first major work which expounds Chassidism. Reb Yaacov Yosef was a great talmid chochom and was the rabbi of Shargorod. When he embraced Chassidism, he was expelled from his position on a Friday afternoon. It is said that G-d sends the cure before the sickness. The rationalism of the enlightenment which undermined religion was met through Chassidism by an unprecedented yearning for spirituality. In the name of the Ba'al Shem, Reb Yaacov Yosef characterized foreign thoughts during prayer as "kelipos" (shells), which contained divine sparks waiting to be redeemed and elevated. By engaging in this process, a Jew participates in the end of the exile of the shechinah. Reb Yaacov Yosef developed the concept of the tzaddik as the conduit for spirituality to the masses and the interdependency of the two. Ironically, he did not personally enjoy a great following and Rabbi Dov Baer of Mezhirech, rather than he, became the successor to the Ba'al Shem Tov. However, his written words retain their power and influence. M.G.

Rabbi Abraham Yitzchak Kook (1865-1935)

The first chief rabbi of what was then Palestine, Rabbi Kook was perhaps the most misunderstood figure of his time.

Born in Latvia of staunch Hasidic and Mittnagdic stock, he retained throughout his life a unique blend of the mystical and the rational. He was a thorough master of the entire Halachic, Midrashic, philosophic, ethical, and Kabbalistic literature. But more important, he brought to bear the entire tradition upon the contemporary scene. He saw the return to Eretz Yisrael as not merely a political phenomenon to save Jews from persecution, but an event of extraordinary historical and theological significance. Rabbi Hutner once said that Rav Kook peered down on our world from great heights and hence his perspective was unique.

Above all, Rav Kook pulsed with a sense of the Divine. And, he sought to reach those who had strayed. He once quoted the rabbinic dictum that one should embrace with the right hand and rebuff with the left and commented that he was fully capable of rejecting, but since there were enough rejecters, he was fulfilling the role of embracer. On the other hand, he was never tolerant of desecration of Torah, as will be clear to any objective student of his life and works.
Though keenly aware of the huge numbers of non-observant Jews, he had a vision of the repentance of the nation. His concept of repentance envisioned in addition to the repentance of the individual, a repentance of the nation as a whole; a repentance which would be joyous and healing. He refused to reject Jews as long as they identified themselves as Jews. In a noteworthy exchange with his great friend, admirer, and opponent, Rabbi Yaakov David Willowski, Rav Kook explained the two components of a Jew: his essential nature — the pintele yid, and the path he had chosen in exercising free will. Even if the second element were weak, as long as the first was not repudiated, there was still hope.

He called for and envisioned a spiritual renaissance where “the ancient would be renewed and the new would be sanctified.” His vision of repentance disdained fear and apprehension and looked forward to “the poet of Teshuva, who would be the poet of life, the poet of renewal and the poet of the national soul waiting to be redeemed.”

Perhaps he was that poet.

Rav Kook’s printed works to date are in excess of 30 volumes with many works still in manuscript. There are a number of translations into English of a small fraction of his works. M.G.

Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Rothenberg Alter
(The Chiddushei HaRim) (1799-1866)

Rabbi Yitzchak Meir was the founder and first rebbe of the Ger dynasty, which at one time counted over 100,000 Chasidim, and to this day remains one of the largest Chasidic groups. He was a child prodigy who was sought after by all the great Polish Chasidic leaders. The Rim’s mother Chaya Sara, was an orphan who was raised by the Koznitzer Maggid, and the Maggid played a great role in Yitzchak Meir’s early development. The Rim became a disciple of Rabbi Simcha Bunem of Pshischa and Rabbi Mendel of Kotzk. He once said that “according to Pshischa Chasidus a person does nothing with his external limbs, the main thing is the inner self, from which one is inspired to act.”

Ger emphasized the centrality of Torah and self-development, the externals of Chasidus were minimized or disdained. Though Pshischa and Kotzk were elitist, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir showed how their principles could be embraced by all Jews. From Pshischa and Kotzk Ger absorbed a healthy skepticism of human motivation and the demands of the ego.

The Koznitzer admonished Rabbi Yitzchak Meir to propound chiddushim (new thoughts) every day and one notes a freshness and dynamism in the Rim as well as in other Polish rebbes. In his approbation to Rabbi Bunem’s Kol Simcha printed just 33 years after the latter’s death, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir expresses the hope that “probably even today his words will inspire the hearts.” Presumably he could only say “probably” because the new generation needed fresh inspiration. He interpreted Hillel’s “if not now when” to mean that each moment has its own fresh demands.

Rabbi Yitzchak Meir was a true leader and was deeply involved in all political events affecting his flock. His halachic writings are characterized by scintillating brilliance and his non-halachic thought by great depth and warmth. The custom to make siyyumim during the nine days was seen by Rabbi Yitzchak Meir as motivated by a desire to bring Jews together in a harmonious spirit and thus rectify the sin of sinas chinam which had caused the destruction of the Temple.

Rabbi Yitzchak Meir’s personal life was filled with tragedy. All his thirteen children died in his lifetime. When he finally consented to assume leadership after the death of the Kotzker he remarked: “I am not a rebbe. I do not want money. I do not care for honor. All I want is to spend my years bringing the children of Israel nearer to their Father in Heaven.” M.G.

Reb Meir Leibush (Malbim) (1809-1879)

Rav and Biblical commentator, Malbim is an acronym of his name Meir Leibush ben Yechiel Michel.

He was born in Volynia and was still a child when his father died. He studied in his native town until the age of 13. He then went to Warsaw where he was known as the ‘Iley (prodigy) from Volynia.’ He was Rav of several cities but he suffered much persecution because of his uncompromising stand against Reform, leading even to a brief imprisonment on a false accusation. He wandered much of his life, serving as Rav in various cities for several years at a time—never serving for a short while as chief Rabbi of Rumania.

His fame and immense popularity rests upon his widely esteemed commentary to the Bible. His first published commentary was on Megillas Esther (1845). His commentary to the remaining books of the Bible were published between then and 1876.

His commentary on the Bible (as the author sets forth in his introduction to Isaiah) is based upon three fixed principles: in the text of the Torah and the figurative language of the prophets there are no more synonyms repetitions; profound and brilliant philosophical approach to Biblical commentary, his similar Commentary to Psalms, and Horeb, a philosophical analysis of the mitzvos.
Rav Moshe Ben Maimon (The Rambam) (1135-1204)

Moses Maimonides is known as the greatest Jewish philosopher and codifier of Jewish law in history. Born in Cordova, Spain, he was forced to flee from fanatical Moslems at the age of thirteen, where he traveled with his family to North Africa, and ten years later to Palestine. As a result of the devastation left by the Crusaders, Palestine was virtually uninhabitable, forcing the family to move to Fostat (current day Cairo). Throughout these journeys, the young Maimonides had concentrated on Torah studies under the guidance of his father, and by the time he reached Fostat had become a famous scholar. Supported by his merchant brother, the Rambam was able to write copiously, gaining international acclaim in both Jewish and secular fields of knowledge. After the tragic death of his brother, the responsibility of supporting his family fell on the Rambam's shoulders, and through his fame he was appointed chief physician of the Sultan. Despite the immense workload that was required, not only with his responsibilities to the royal family, but to the entire Egyptian community as the official Nagid (royally appointed leader), and to the halachic questions of world Jewry known as responsa, the Rambam was remarkably able to complete some of his greatest Jewish works, including his philosophical work The Guide for the Perplexed and his magnum opus the Mishna Torah — the great codification of all Jewish law. While he was considered an undisputed leader of world Jewry at the time, there was bitter opposition to much of his works because they incorporated much of Aristotelian philosophy that went against the traditional purist ideology of much of Ashkenazic Jewry, and others believed his codifications would make much of the role of the rabbi and the oral tradition obsolete. A.B.

Rabbi Zalman Serotzkin

Rabbi Zalman Serotzkin was one of the stellar Jewish personalities in pre-war Poland and post-war Israel. As Rav of Lutzk, head of the Vaad Hayeshivos, and close confidant of Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzenski, he was at the center of the struggle to preserve Torah values and foster Torah education - first in the embattled Jewish life of the pre-Holocaust generation and then in the formative years of the Jewish state, when the foundations of a Torah society were being laid.

That was one aspect of this multifaceted giant. As the spiritual leader of a major Jewish community, he was a Torah scholar of world stature. And as an international Jewish leader, who sought ideas and policies not in popular trends but in the timeless wisdom of the Torah, he became renowned for his insights into the Scriptures. Weaving the richness of his life experience with his profound knowledge of the Talmud, Midrash, and Codes, he was able to show how the verses of the Torah provided guidance and insight for every situation.

Oznaim LaTorah was his masterpiece. Into it he poured his massive intellect and wealth of accomplishment. A.S.

Rabbi Yisrael Salanter (1810-1883)

Rabbi Yisrael Ben Ze'ev Wolf Lipkin (of Salant) was the founder and spiritual father of the Musar movement. The movement taught techniques for spiritual and character growth. He held positions as the "mashgiach" (spiritual mentor) in a yeshiva, and as the head of a Yeshiva in Vilna. He went on to establish his own Yeshiva. There he began to spread the doctrine of Mussar, a moral movement based on the study of traditional ethical literature. Rav Lipkin founded a Musar Yeshiva in Kovno as well as a Kollel for young married students. Salanter moved to Germany and then to France in order to disseminate Judaism and Torah. Some of his revolutionary ideas included the compilation of an Aramaic-Hebrew Dictionary
SOURCES

Preface
Shirei Da’as 3, p.15

1.
Talmud Bavli, Archin 17a

24 PARDES PROJECT LEADERSHIP 25
2.

Meshech Chochmah, Vayikra 4:21-22

3.

Zohar Bechukotai 28

(כ) "י אמא, אנא אירצOAuth בר ירבד שאלא שאלת. כנף פרש ננגז
באלות לא עתרה, אנא עשתה דלת ושפתניה הילא רצה. לא ששת
בראתא ובראה בבלעא לא צברה עליי, Aphil צבר דשא עליי.
אפקי יירא אבנו לא נק까 עליי.

(מ) אדעת דיתון בתקופת, ציודתו דא אנסה אנד ובלביהו
בראש ציוו "ודא פארת 필" לבר פארת תנו טורפ. דאה
לא אירצอาท. אל האירפת דאה טאה. לא אירצอาท. דאה
לא אירצอาท. אל האירפת דאה טאה. דאה.

(ס) לא אverteffic זה יירא ביבריהו, אלו אנס ואת לא חדאר. דה
רבעיב דכלתו אצוא מוזון, והרה אצרה להcreen אלו החיה. דה
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בברך אמר כ"כ שלימדת שמי ישראל היא הארץ
בברך ישראל, כ"כ היא הארץ ממלכה.
שארו על שם שלשל שירתו היאبع bile שירה.
וכמותו במרד ( לךVICES ) מכל连载, בברך שירתו
לזרחה ולא büשכך ישראל, בכותש שירתו.
לפי זה זראה בברך שירתו, כותש שירתו.
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ראוי בברך שירתו, כותש שירתו.
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בברך שירתו, כותש שירתה.

מקסיק המ"ש לברך שירתו, כותש שירתו.
בברך שירתו, כותש שירתו.

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8.
Rabbi Tzadok HaKohen from Lublin, Poked Akerim p.49

9a.
Talmud Yoma 22b
אין רועי העצמיות בין על העצמיות אלא מ
שניהם בדרכי עヴィי תשע רוח תבשלה
/>. המשנה אברית על התנ"ע על הב伸びי בדימה
עם כל זה upro מפי רבות ומכמה
שניהם מפרשים כנוריות ביימה למקנה
לروح הנפש. הירח שלח חמש אליסים חקיסים
cיב לכל עון שותה מבירם על אשה מוניה
שיריה ממוקד בידיו עלולות לשונה הרואים לח
ירח על ספיגית מהמת הקוסמ עמת סקיירית
בעצמות שעורית. א לפעול מא擘ית שית והי
חמש לוחות מבואות גזעמה החזון. אלא
אנסה שיכדי בעצמות שיבנימה ראיחה לק
いろ המה שמעה קור רכש של מי
ישרודים האמת יישרת לח האושמשלת.
דרי שלח עכי המקהเ. אברית אפשן
 והיא אברית אברית הוא של של שпуск
לצא חצרים אברית כל לח ש paginate
שניהם מפרשים כנוריות ביימה למקנה
לروح הנפש. הירח שלח חמש אליסים חקיסים
cיב לכל עון שותה מבירם על אשה מוניה
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iero המה שמעה קור רכש של מי
ישרודים האמת יישרת לח האושמשלת.
דרי שלח עכי המקהเ. אברית אפשן
ייאור אחריו שלישים יהודים♪.
11a.

Numbers 27:15,16

בערבי בֵּית הַמָּשָּׁרֶת, בֵּית הַמִּשְׁמָרֶת:

בִּשְׁלֹשָׁהּ עַל הַיַּעֲבָרָה בְּשָׁנָה בְּשֵׁמֶר בְּשֵׁמֶר בְּשֵׁמֶר.

11b.

ראוי להורות ולבל בשר. מה נתיימן מטעם שואת סבל כל ארץ על

ועברת. רֵי, לך לך, לך לך, לך לך, לך לך, לך לך...

אהת את ששת בני עשה שור רבי

לאמר, האם בסבבל סבלנו דעתוivanת שולחリアル כל ארץ אומץ העמיד ביניו

בדיוק,]<=עלייתו זה שור רבי, מвязה

המשגיתו שא אם הזב, דב, קרב רבי.

אומץ הזה החנה העמידה השולחリアルו.

שלא היה נָתִם (וָאֵם כְּבָה), כי צַרְיִוֹוָה שָׁוֵה

קֹמָה של שֵׁל פִּיוּלֶת אֵזוֹוָה זָה בָּא בָּא

לֹא הָיָה נַחֲלֵה טַעֲמֵּה מִלְּפֵּרֵמֹת וָנוֹמֵי

 podráך ד"א, איך על בשמים.

כַּשְׁלֹשָׁהּ עַל הַיַּעֲבָרָה בְּשָׁנָה בְּשֵׁמֶר בְּשֵׁמֶר בְּשֵׁמֶר.

כִּבֵּית הַמָּשָּׁרֶת, בִּשְׁלֹשָׁהּ עַל הַיַּעֲבָרָה בְּשָׁנָה בְּשֵׁמֶר בְּשֵׁמֶר בְּשֵׁמֶר.

רֵי, לך לך, לך לך, לך לך, לך לך, לך לך...

אם לא יִזְוִּא וְאֵאֵזִיָּה לָיַהַה, שָׁוֵה אֵזִיָּה לָיַהַה.

אם לא יִזְוִּא וְאֵאֵזִיָּה לָיַהַה, שָׁוֵה אֵזִיָּה לָיַהַה.

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11c.
Chidushoi HaRim

11d.
Malbim, HaTorah V’HaMitzvos

12.
Maimonides, Laws of Kings, Chapter 2:8
13a.

Setah, Chapter 9, Mishna 15

ניירוטא חוצה. לבו פנים קנים זריא אמרים: מישחרר Kháchה
בושש חבירו כפני חורי, חקיש רארש, חקלילד אesity פיצילו;
ובירצ הזכל והשתלך איילון, הוא בירצ מברך איילון שקול.
עלא מי על להקש? על אביהם שמשה. ובמי אילו חזרו,
אמרים: מי שחרר כיינא דמקוהו ש🙂 שמשייא ליה וירבדי.
קט RemoteException. קינא קינא דחרשים. קינא דחרשים.
קט RemoteException. קינא קינא דחרשים. קינא דחרשים.
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