**Parshas Shelach – ולא תתורו**

**Sight Seeing**

No thinking person takes the blessing of sight for granted. How thankful we are, that we are not cut off from the rest of the world, walled up in a prison of perpetual darkness and uncertainty. Our eyes also serve as the primary gateway to wisdom and knowledge. Although we rely on our hearing for input as well, לא תהא שמיעה גדולה מראיה – the eyes have it. Through the complex genius of the eye’s design, we can take in and absorb everything there is to see, along with all that we should not see. The Meraglim were tasked with getting a good look at Eretz Yisroel – ויתורו. They failed miserably in their task. We are reminded, day after day, ולא תתורו – Don’t look at the things what will lead us to sin. The power of sight, holds the power for עליה or for ירידה.

R’ Reuven Karlenstein zt”l, in a talk on שמירת עינים, brought down the Rada”k on ספר ישעיהו. When the Ribono shel Olam answered the plea of the ailing King Chizkiyahu, granting him fifteen additional years, Chizkiyahu composed a song of thanks to Hashem. “I thought I was going to leave this world and my days would be cut short. I would not be able to see Hashem in the land of the living”. A person doesn’t see Hashem here, in the land of the living. Why was Chizkiyahu saddened that by going to the next world he would be unable to see Hashem? That’s exactly where one attains that level of spiritual clarity. The Rada”k says something profound. When a person is thankful and filled with praise for what Hashem does for him, that is called seeing Hashem. When you feel a personal connection to the Ribono shel Olam, you are seeing Hashem.

How do we achieve the ultimate vision – seeing Hashem? When you look at the Tzitzis, וזכרתם את כל מצוות ה' – think about all the opportunities Hashem gave you to fulfill Taryag Mitzvos. How lucky I am that Hashem gave me this זכות, to earn the endless rewards for קיום המצוות and live a fulfilling, purposeful life. וראיתם אותו – in your thankfulness for all this, you will see Hashem. The greatest קבלת פני השכינה comes through dedication to Hashem’s Mitzvos. Look at the message of the Tzitzis and see Hashem.

Farsightedness is one of the attributes of the great among us – איזהו חכם הרואה את הנולד. Where we direct our eyes, will have far reaching effects for the future. The Gemara in Zevachim teaches that the area reserved for eating from Korbonos was only within the walls of Yerushalayim and the Bais HaMikdash courtyard. In the Mishkan at Shiloh, which was built in the portion of the Bnai Yoseif, the area was expanded as far as anyone could still see the Mishkan. This greatly enlarged area of Kedushas Kodshim, was in the Zechus of Yoseif HaTzadik, of whom it says, בן פורת יוסף בן פורת עלי עין. When Yoseif, the newly crowned viceroy of Egypt, was paraded through the streets of Mitzrayim, the streets were mobbed with adoring crowds of well-wishers. Among them were the promiscuous Egyptian women, who were doing everything possible to catch Yoseif’s notice. Yoseif kept his eyes fixed on his future and his future generations. עין זו שלא רצתה להנות, תזכה ותראה בכל הרואה – The eye that did not want to enjoy the alluring sights, will be זוכה to eat from Kodshim from as far as the eye can see. The impact of resisting the urge to see what should not be seen, is so powerful, that it implants a Kedusha that benefits your descendants, hundreds of years later. So great is the זכות of resisting the urge to see what’s in front of you, that the Heiligeh בעל שומר אמונים, R’ Ahrleh Roth ztvk”l wrote, that at that moment, it is an עת רצון for any request you daven for, to be fulfilled.

A number of years ago, a Yeshiva Bachur riding on a bus, decided to change his seat in order to avoid sitting near some rather enticing and salacious sight. The only remaining seats were all the way in the back. He sat down and promptly dosed off. He dreamt that he was being told that there is a bomb right under his seat! He awoke and, sure enough, there was a bag with a bunch of wires sticking out. He immediately alerted the driver. The bus was evacuated and the bomb squad responded. The device was powerful enough to rip the bus and everyone on it to bits. Arriving finally back to his Yeshiva in Netivot, he made his way to the great Tzadik and master of Shmiras HaEinayim, Baba Sali ztvk”l. As the Bachur walked in the door, the Rav spoke up before the Bachur could say anything, that he was rescued from a horrific calamity in the זכות of his effort to safeguard himself from עבירה.

We don’t always get to see the actual reward in such dramatic fashion. However, we certainly have to believe, באמונה שלימה that the Ribono shel Olam keeps His promises and the reward will surely come through, לטובה.

May we be זוכה to see the most beautiful sight of Yerushalayim rebuilt – יפה נוף משוש כל הארץ. Have a wonderful Shabbos, yk

**L’Ravcha D’Milsa Parshas Shelach**

**Shabbos Kodesh Parshas Shelach, Shabbos Mevorchim-23 Sivan**

***Megilas Esther – The royal scribes were called on the twenty-third day of Sivan, to write all that Mordechai and Esther instructed, allowing all Jews to assemble and mount a defense against all that may attack them.***

In 1940 the Russians offered the thousands of Jewish refugees in Galicia to register as Russian citizens. The famed Tzadik, Reb Itzikel of Antwerp said not to register. The Russians exiled all those who failed to register to Siberia on this day. The Tzadik declared that no bad can happen to Yidden on this date. It wasn’t till the next year that they realized how right he was. All those who were permitted to remain in Galicia were captured by the German invasion and murdered. Whoever was sent to Siberia remained alive.

**Monday, Parshas Korach-25 Sivan**

**Asarah Harugei Malchus -** Rav Shimon ben Gamliel, Rav Yishmael ben Elisha Cohen Gadol, Rav Chanina S’gan Cohanim, of the Ten Martyrs killed by the Romans (115 CE), commemorated in the Kinah “Eileh Ezkera” we say on Yom Kippur, and “Arzei Halevanon” we say on Tisha B'Av (Megillas Taanis). Once a fast day, (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 580:2).

**Tuesday, Parshas Korach -26 Sivan**

**Rav Yonasan ben Uziel**, talmid of Hillel.

**Rabbi Michel Yehuda Lefkowitz (1913-2011)**

**R’ Michel Yehuda Lefkowitz** was a respected Gadol BaTorah and [Rosh Yeshiva](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosh_yeshiva) in [Bnei Brak](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bnei_Brak), for over 70 years. He was a [*maggid shiur*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maggid_shiur) at Yeshivas Tiferes Tzion from 1940 to 2011 and [Rosh Yeshiva](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosh_yeshiva) of Yeshivas [Ponovezh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ponovezh) L’Tzeirim from 1954 to 2009, raising thousands of students. He was a member of the [Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moetzes_Gedolei_HaTorah) of [Degel HaTorah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Degel_HaTorah), a member of Mifal HaShas, and *nasi* (president) of the Acheinu [kiruv](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orthodox_Judaism_outreach) organization, and played a leading role in the fight for Torah-true education in yeshivas and [Talmud Torahs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talmud_Torah) in Israel. In addition to his own Torah works, he published the teachings of his rebbi, Rabbi [Shlomo Heiman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shlomo_Heiman), in the two-volume *Chiddushei Shlomo*.

He was born in [Valozhyn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valozhyn) in 1913 to R’ Moshe Dovid and Chaya Lefkowitz. This was the second marriage for both his parents. His father was almost 80 years old when he was born. The family lived in great poverty. R’ Moshe Dovid had children from a previous marriage who lived in America; they would send their father three rubles (the equivalent of one dollar) each month. Lefkowitz would use two of the rubles to pay for a [melamed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melamed) for Michel Yehuda, and the other ruble to support the family. Chaya Lefkowitz's son and daughter from a previous marriage lived in Eretz Yisroel.

At age 12 Michel Yehuda began learning in a *yeshiva ketana* in the town of [Rakov](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rakaw), boarding with his uncle. He marked his [bar mitzvah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bar_and_Bat_Mitzvah) there in 1929 without his parents. A few years later, he journeyed to Vilna in order to be treated by an eye specialist, and joined the yeshiva in [Rameilles](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Rameilles&action=edit&redlink=1) under Rabbi Shlomo Heiman. In 1936 Rav Lefkowitz and his mother immigrated to [British Mandate Palestine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Mandate_Palestine) using certificates obtained by her son Aryeh Leib. At the same time, Rabbi Heiman immigrated to America, where he became rosh yeshiva of [Yeshiva Torah Vodaath](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yeshiva_Torah_Vodaath). Rabbi Heiman and Rabbi [Chaim Ozer Grodzinski](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaim_Ozer_Grodzinski) gave Rav Lefkowitz letters of recommendation to show the roshei yeshiva of the [Hebron Yeshiva](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebron_Yeshiva), in which they wrote, "He will enlighten the Torah world". At the Hebron Yeshiva, which had relocated to Jerusalem after the [1929 Hebron massacre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1929_Hebron_massacre), Rabbi Lefkowitz became very close to Rabbi [Leib Chasman](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Leib_Chasman&action=edit&redlink=1). Rabbi Heiman also referred Rav Lefkowitz to Rav [Isser Zalman Meltzer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isser_Zalman_Meltzer), rosh yeshiva of [Etz Chaim Yeshiva](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etz_Chaim_Yeshiva), and he became close to him as well. Rabbi Lefkowitz also developed a close relationship with the [Chazon Ish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avrohom_Yeshaya_Karelitz) in Bnei Brak. The Chazon Ish suggested for him a [shidduch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shidduch) with Chava Esther Gershonowitz, daughter of Rabbi Avraham Gershonowitz, Rav of [Zabinka](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhabinka_Raion) and rosh yeshiva of Tiferes Tzion of Bnei Brak. At Rabbi Lefkowitz's wedding on [Lag B'Omer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lag_B%27Omer) 1940, the Chazon Ish walked him to his [chupah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chupah).

After his wedding, R’ Michel Yehuda began learning in Kollel Toras Eretz Yisrael in [Petah Tikva](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petah_Tikva). He also began giving regular [*shiurim*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shiur) in his father-in-law's yeshiva, Tiferes Tzion, a position he held until his final days more than 70 years later. He began giving a nightly *shiur* to *baalebatim* in the Chazon Ish's home in 1953; he also continued this *shiur* until his final days. In [Cheshvan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cheshvan) 1954 the Ponovezher Rav, Rabbi [Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yosef_Shlomo_Kahaneman), opened a *yeshiva ketanah* in the [Ponovezh yeshiva](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ponovezh_yeshiva) and invited R’ Michel Yehuda to serve as rosh yeshiva together with Rabbi [Aharon Leib Shteinman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aharon_Leib_Shteinman). R’ Michel Yehuda raised thousands of students, and even taught the grandchildren of his original students. In the first and second years of the *yeshiva ketana*, R’ [Nissim Karelitz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nissim_Karelitz) and R’ [Chaim Kanievsky](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaim_Kanievsky) were his students. He also taught R’ Meir Tzvi Bergman, today rosh yeshiva of Yeshiva HaRashbi and a son-in-law of R’ [Elazar Shach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elazar_Shach). Rabbi Lefkowitz gave a regular daily *shiur* at the *yeshiva ketana* until his health declined in summer 2009; he continued to give *shiurim* and *shmuessen* there until his final days. In the late 1990s, Rabbi Lefkowitz started a [kollel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kollel) for the study of [*Tohorot*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tohorot), together with an evening kollel for in-depth study of this topic. Branches of the kollel were opened throughout Eretz Yisroel.

R’ Michel Yehuda was instrumental in saving the lineage of a variety of Balady Esrog called "the Chazon Ish etrog", which was certified as kosher for the [mitzvah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitzvah) of [etrog](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etrog) by the Chazon Ish himself. After one [Sukkot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sukkot), the Chazon Ish handed Rabbi Lefkowitz a packet of seeds taken from the [etrog](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etrog) he had used for the festival and instructed him to plant them in his yard. R’ Lefkowitz, who had no agricultural experience, followed his mentor's instructions to plant and water it, and the tree grew and bore fruit. Every year the Chazon Ish came to select his etrog for the holiday from the tree, as did his brother-in-law, the [Steipler Gaon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yaakov_Yisrael_Kanievsky), and other [Gedolei Yisrael](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gadol). Rabbi Lefkowitz also allowed etrog growers to take cuttings from the tree to grow entire orchards of etrogim certified as *mehudar* by the Chazon Ish. The tree itself defies natural laws, as etrog trees usually grow from the tree itself or from a cutting, not from seeds, and those planted from seeds usually don't yield fruit. Moreover, etrog trees typically produce for five to seven years, whereas Rav Lefkowitz's tree produced hundreds of clean, high-quality etrogim for over half a century. In a 2016 interview, Rebbetzin Leah Elyashiv, the daughter of Rav Lefkowitz, noted that the original tree is still growing in the backyard, surrounded by second-, third-, and fourth-generation offshoots.

From his youth, R’ Michel Yehuda was known for his humility and modesty, and the warm smile and respect he accorded everyone he met. He displayed deep insight into the human condition and empathy for those who sought his guidance. He was a master of [*chinuch*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_education) , drawing his students close with "love, acceptance, warmth, and tolerance", and forged relationships with students that lasted a lifetime.

**Wednesday, Parshas Korach-27 Sivan**

**Rabbi Chanina ben Tradyon**, one of the Aseres Harugei Malchus

**June 21 – Summer Solstice 12:24 A.M. EDT**

*The timing of the solstice depends on when the Sun reaches its northernmost point from the equator. The word solstice is from the Latin*solstitium*, from*sol*(sun) and*stitium*(to stop), reflecting the fact that the Sun appears to stop at this time (and again at the winter solstice). In temperate regions, we notice that the Sun is higher in the sky throughout the day, and its rays strike Earth at a more direct angle, causing the efficient warming we call summer. This summer solstice is the day with the most hours of sunlight during the whole year. See our handy*[*sunrise and sunset calculator*](http://www.almanac.com/sun/rise)*for how many hours of sunlight you get in your location. At the*[*winter solstice*](http://www.almanac.com/content/first-day-winter-winter-solstice)*, just the opposite occurs: The Sun is at its southernmost point and is low in the sky. Its rays hit the Northern Hemisphere at an oblique angle, creating the feeble winter sunlight.*



**Thursday, Parshas Korach – 28 Sivan**

**Yom Kippur Katan Mukdam**

 **R’ Chaim Stein, Rosh Yeshiva Telz Cleveland** (2011)

Rav Chaim Stein, the Rosh Yeshiva of Telze Cleveland, passed away at the age of 99 years after one year of illness. Rav Stein came to Telze in Europe from a small town in Russia originally. While in Yeshiva, he quickly became one of the most outstanding Talmidim of the Yeshiva. Aside from Rav Stein’s brilliance in Torah learning, he was well known as an extraordinary Pikayach, having led a number of fellow Talmidim out the Churban that was Nazi occupied Europe. Until his last days, the Talmidim of Telze and others that he led through the dangerous abyss that the Nazis created felt a tremendous hakaras haTov to Rav Stein – whose sharp pikchus enabled them to find an escape route. The Roshei Yeshiva of the Yeshiva were in America raising funds, and the elder Talmidim were the one’s that had to lead the way out. “He argued with others as to the best way to proceed. Those that listened to him, survived. Unfortunately those who didn’t listen, were killed r”l.

“Rav Stein knew Shas. He was intimately familiar with all the Yeshiveshe Torah and Reid. He was a Baal Mussar extraordinaire.

“All the Roshei Yeshiva of Telze respected him, any halachic Shailah that came up they would direct to Rav Stein. He was the Posaik in Yeshiva. Yet, often, in his anivus, he would send the shailah to Rav Blum in Cleveland Heights.”

“One could see him working on his Middos. When he gave the Mussar Shmuess in Yeshiva -he spoke to himself as well - not that he needed it. But he was always working on himself,” remarked a second generation Talmid of Telze.

He gave Mussar to his talmidim out of love – One student recalled how when he first came to Yeshiva as a bachur of eighteen, he would ask questions constantly. Rav Stein put his hand on the Talmid’ shoulder and said lovingly, but forcefully, “You are working hard not to understand – you have got to work hard to understand.” The Talmid later recalled, “It was a lesson I never ever forgot. There is a Mitzvah to understand. This was a profound lesson in life for me and I quickly dropped that attitude that I had just to ask a question for the sake of asking.”

One could palpably see when it was Elul on his countenance. One would see his Aimas HaDin. All the Talmidim strove to be like him. They loved his learning. They loved his broad grasp of all aspects of Torah knowledge.

One student, by the name of Moshe, he lovingly referred to as “Moshe haMechuna Marvin.”

Rav Stein married the daughter of Rav Moshe Yehudah Leib Zaks, a brilliant Rav in Russia, who was extraordinarily impressed with his son-in-law. He lost one son a few years ago to illness – Rav Shalom Yehudah Stein. The Rosh Yeshiva led a difficult life, but managed to be a beacon of light to those who survived the churban and to thousands of Talmidim later on in America.

 **Rav Yisrael Zev Gustman** (1908-1991), a talmid of Rav Shimon Shkop in Grodno. Rav Gustman became rosh yeshiva of Ramailles when he was still a young man in Vilna. He served on the beis din of Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky. In fact, he was the youngest dayan in the history of Vilna (at age 19). When the Nazis invaded Vilna, they stormed the yeshiva beat Rav Gustman him until he collapsed. By a miracle he was spared, and he fled for his life. In 1961, Rav Gustman moved to Eretz Yisrael and transferred his yeshiva, Netzach Yisrael Ramailles, to the Rechavia section of Yerushalayim. Today its rosh yeshiva is his son- in-law, Rav Michel Berniker. One of his first students in Yerushalayim was Rav Moshe Francis, Rosh Kollel of the Chicago Community Kollel. Another talmid was Rav Moshe Lipke, Rosh Kollel of Y'kar Mordechai in Yerushalayim. Rav Gustman authored Kuntresei Shi'urim.

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